Wayne State University

Course Syllabus

LDT7150: Evaluation of Learning & Performance

Division: Administrative & Organizational Studies
Program Area: Learning Design & Technology
Course #: LDT 7150
Course Title: Evaluation of Learning & Performance
Term/Year: Fall 2017
Instructor: Heidi Kromrei, Ph.D.
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399 College of Education
Detroit, MI 48202
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Date/Time: Online, http://blackboard.wayne.edu

Course Description/ Approach
The purpose of conducting an evaluation is not for the sake of evaluating, nor is it to find someone or some group upon which to place blame or shame. While some experts would rightly say that the fundamental purpose of evaluation is the determination of worth or merit of a program or solution (Scriven, 1967), the ultimate purpose and value (particularly from the perspective of our field) of determining its worth is to make evidence-driven decisions that lead to improved performance. It is from here that all evaluation efforts stem. All components of evaluation must be aligned with the objectives of individual and team performance, programs, initiatives, and the organization, as well as to the specific decisions that will have to be made with the evaluation findings. These decisions are essentially concerned with how to measurably improve performance at all levels of the organization, including positive external impact. In this sense, evaluation is a means to a greater end…and end that should be clearly defined and understood before undertaking the evaluation.

This course is designed to support the development of your conceptual understanding, as well as your practical experience with the evaluation process described by the objectives in the following section.

Competencies and Objectives
  I. Conceptual Understanding
1. Examine foundations and issues in evaluation within the learning and performance improvement perspective
   a. Discuss key concepts in evaluation and their significance
   b. Compare and contrast other investigative processes with evaluation
   c. Explore various evaluation models
   d. Examine the process of evaluation
   e. Discuss popular tools in learning and performance evaluation (e.g. reaction/smile sheets)

II. Practical Application
   1. Develop an evaluation plan
      a. Identify an organization of focus and a program or project to evaluate.
      b. Determine targeted outcomes and pertinent measurable indicators
      c. Identify data sources
      d. Select the appropriate data collection instruments and develop a prototype for one of those methods
      e. Describe the key procedures required to conduct the data collection process
      f. Select appropriate data analysis and representation tools
      g. Describe your recommended approach for promoting change and the implementation of potential recommendations
      h. Describe your approach for sustaining continuous improvement in your organization.

Required Text


Other readings will be posted in the course content folder for each unit on Blackboard.

Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual: Reflections (Reading and Course)</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8 reflections, 5 points each)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Team: Evaluation Proposal (Composed of 5 Elements)</td>
<td>See Below</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. <em>Organization, Stakeholders, and Evaluand</em></td>
<td>10/08</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. <em>Target Results &amp; Measurable Indicators</em></td>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. <em>Data Sources, Methods, and Procedures</em></td>
<td>11/05</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. <em>Data Analysis and Representation</em></td>
<td>11/19</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Change Creation and Continuous Improvement</td>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
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</table>
| Team Feedback & Coaching Sessions (3 sessions x 5 points) | Element B: Week of Oct 16th  
Element C: Week of Oct 30th  
Element D: Week of Nov 13th | 15 |
| Total points available | 125 |

**Final Grade Distribution**

- 95-100% - A
- 90-94% – A-
- 87-89% – B+
- 84-86% - B
- 81-83% - B-
- 78-80% - C+
- 75-77% - C
- 72-74% - C-
- ≤ 71% - F

**Assignment Notes**

1. Grammar & Spelling: All work should be original and free of spelling & grammatical errors. If more than 2 errors of this type are found, this will result in a 1-point deduction. If more than 4 errors, there will be a 2-point deduction. I am attaching a consequence to this type of error because we want to get into the habit to building trust with our clients, and this is very difficult to do if clients spot simple errors in written communication. Think of other errors of which they might begin to imagine you’re capable… Remember, we ultimately want to influence decision makers into making good decisions to improve performance. Everything we do should feed into that ultimate purpose, not take away from it.

2. Submission and Resubmissions: All work should be submitted via Black Board by the end of the due date (midnight). If you are not satisfied with the first grade you obtain, you may resubmit one time for additional points, within 1 week of the date you received my original feedback.

3. The assignment information provided below is intended to provide an overview of the graded assignments. For further details, see UNIT AGENDAS posted on the Content link of the course web site.

**Assignment Overview**

Readings and Reading Reflections
As you will see in the agenda, this as many other graduate level courses require a significant amount of reading. Reading offers you the foundation for readings reflections and understanding. It is critical that you plan your time effectively in order to allow you to complete all the assigned readings.

For each unit with reading content, you will be expected to complete a short (about 1-page), reflective paper demonstrating your understanding of, and reactions to, the reading content. These reflections will be based on a trigger question that will be posted on each unit forum in the Discussion Board, and you should submit your reflection by starting your own thread in the unit’s forum or responding to someone else’s posting/thread. Reflections are not just summaries of the reading material (this should be the smallest section of the reflection); to receive full credit for the task you must demonstrate reflective consideration of the content and an understanding of its implications for practice. The trigger questions provided should help to this end.

**Note that reading reflections should be submitted well before the end of the unit, so as to allow everyone to have time to reflect and respond to others.** Do not submit your initial reflection on the last day of the unit. Take full advantage of class discussion opportunities by arranging your time so that you can submit your initial reaction at least 3-4 days (sooner if possible) and allowing others to respond. If all students do this, you will also benefit from this practice. Interaction and dialogue are an important part of learning, so please take advantage of the opportunity to understand and discuss the perspectives of others. As mentioned elsewhere, students are expected to monitor class forums, answer questions from colleagues, and thoughtfully participate in discussions. Please plan on devoting a couple of hours per week to discussion board participation.

**Evaluation Proposal**

Your evaluation proposal is designed to allow you to immediately put into practice the concepts and processes discussed in the course. This team-based, authentic learning approach is instrumental in facilitating your internalization of the evaluation process and logic, and the kinds of things that will naturally arise when you are simultaneously working with so many issues. **This evaluation proposal will be essentially an application of the Impact Evaluation Model** (you will not use any of the models discussed in Unit 2). The final evaluation proposal requirements are structured in such a way that you will be working on five individual building block elements, rather than having to submit one immense project at the end of the term. The evaluation proposal will be divided into the following elements:

- Element A: Organization, Stakeholders, and Evaluand
- Element B: Target Results and Measurable Indicators
- Element C: Data Sources, Methods, and Procedures
- Element D: Data Analysis and Representation
- Element E: Change Creation and Continuous Improvement

Detailed descriptions of each component are provided on the course web site, under the Assignments folder.

**Feedback & Coaching Sessions**
In order to compliment the asynchronous nature of this online course, we will also have three team coaching sessions (Component B, C, and D). These sessions are an opportunity to:

1. Present your assignment to me (all team members are expected to actively participate in all coaching sessions; each team member should be lead presenter in at least 1 coaching session)
2. Discuss particular challenges you overcame during that evaluation phase
3. Obtain immediate feedback
4. Address any concerns you may have about the work done thus far, and the work that is to come
5. Discuss any challenges with team dynamics (all should contribute equitably, if this is not occurring I want to hear it while there is time to improve things, rather than at the end of the course, when we no longer have the opportunity to improve things).

The instructor will be available for the team coaching session for one week (typically the last week) of the unit in which component B, C, and D are due. Specific timeslots will be offered and teams will be able to sign up for those slots on a first-come, first-serve basis. This is a synchronouss meeting (via Blackboard Collaborate). Instructional materials for Blackboard Collaborate are included on our course site, under Unit 3 Course Content.

**Participation**

Participation is a priceless piece of the mastery process, so it is critical that you actively participate in course activities. Conducting an evaluation is a ‘team sport’ and paying attention to interpersonal dynamics, and building strong partnerships can make or break successful evaluations (and course projects). Our activities are designed to help you develop those habits, so that you are able to successfully implement evaluation projects in organizations. Each activity is unique and has points associated, so you are strongly encouraged to participate and earn those points. In addition, we will be expecting students to actively monitor and contribute to the course discussion forums (the general support forum as well as the reflection forums for each unit). Please subscribe to each forum as it becomes available on Blackboard by opening the forum and clicking the “subscribe” button that appears under the forum title.

**Tentative Schedule**

Refer to the **UNIT AGENDAS** posted on the course web site for detailed instructions regarding weekly tasks and the order in which they are to be completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Deliverables Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | 08/30-9/10 | • Introduction  
• Conceptual Understanding of Evaluation  
• Selected Classic Evaluation Models | Book: Chapters 1, 2, 3. Articles: Guerra-Lopez & Hutchinson, 2013 | 1. Introduction  
2. Reading  
3. Reading reflection | 1. Reading reflection and discussion |
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Deliverables Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2    | 09/11-09/24| • Evaluation Models for Learning & Performance Improvement Programs   | Book: Chapter 4, 5, 6, & 8                                             | 1. Introduction  
2. Reading  
3. Reading reflection & discussion  
4. Form teams | 1. Reading reflection/discussion |
|      |            | • The Impact Evaluation Process                                       | Book: Chapter 7  
Articles: Guerra-Lopez & Hicks, 2014 Guerra-Lopez & Toker, 2012 | 1. Introduction  
2. Reading  
3. Reading reflection & discussion  
2. Evaluation Proposal: Element A |
| 3    | 09/25-10/08| • Theories of Change  
• Evaluation Planning Matrix  
• The Data: results and measurable indicators  
• The Methods: data collection tools, instrumentation, and procedures | Theories of Change Presentation  
Book: Chapters 10 & 11 | 1. Introduction  
2. Reading  
3. Reading reflection & discussion  
4. Work on Element B  
5. Set up coaching session for component B | 1. Reading reflection/discussion  
2. Evaluation Proposal: Element B |
| 4    | 10/09-10/22| • Performance-Focused Smile Sheets                                     | Thalheimer Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8                             | 1. Introduction  
2. **READING**  
3. Reading reflection & discussion  
4. Work on Element C  
5. Set up coaching session for component C | 1. Reading reflection/discussion  
2. Evaluation Proposal: Element C |
| 5    | 10/23-11/05| • Analyzing Data: analysis techniques and interpretation.  
• Communicating the Findings  
• Supporting change and continual improvement | Book Chapter 12, 13 & 15, 17 | 1. Introduction  
2. Reading  
3. Reading reflection & Discussion  
4. Work on Element D  
5. Set up coaching | 1. Reading reflection/discussion  
2. Evaluation Proposal: Element D |
| 6    | 11/06-11/19|                                                                        |                                                                        | 1. Introduction  
2. Reading  
3. Reading reflection & Discussion  
4. Work on Element D  
5. Set up coaching | 1. Reading reflection/discussion  
2. Evaluation Proposal: Element D |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
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<th>Tasks</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11/20-12/10</td>
<td>• Intelligence-gathering systems/Performance Dashboards</td>
<td>Book: Chapters 9, 14, &amp; 18</td>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1. Reading reflection/discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Meta-Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Reading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>12/12-12/17</td>
<td>• Course wrap-up</td>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>2. Course Reflection</td>
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<td>2. Course</td>
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**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism includes copying material (any more than 5 consecutive words) from outside texts or presenting outside information as if it were your own by not crediting authors through citations. It can be deliberate or unintended. If you're in doubt about the use of a source, cite it. Students caught plagiarizing information from other sources will receive a failing grade in the course. University policy states that students can be subject to multiple sanctions, from reprimand to expulsion as a consequence of academic dishonesty. To enforce this policy, all outside references must be submitted with assignments.

**Withdrawal Policy**

- Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the 4th week of class will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN.
  - WP will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested
  - WF will be awarded if the student is failing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested
  - WN will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade
- Students must submit their withdrawal request on-line through Pipeline. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal request before it becomes final, and students should continue to attend class until they receive notification via email that the withdrawal has been approved. Withdrawals can be requested at any point from the fifth week of class through the study day.

**Attention Students with Disabilities:**
If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for the current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

**Religious Observance Policy:**

Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provision for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternative arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.