University of Michigan School of Information

SI 633: Assessment in Cultural Institutions
Winter 2021 | Thursdays, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Ricky Punzalan
Email: ricpunz@umich.edu

Office hours: Mondays 10 am – 12 noon; or request for an appointment

All course sessions and office hours will be conducted via Zoom, which can be reached with this link: https://umich.zoom.us/j/4716837390. Class slides are available here. Weekly class agenda here.

Syllabus subject to change. Most current version always available on the class Canvas site.

The University of Michigan is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe people. In 1817, the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewademi Nations made the largest single land transfer to the University of Michigan. This was offered ceremonially as a gift through the Treaty at the Foot of the Rapids so that their children could be educated. Through these words of acknowledgment, their contemporary and ancestral ties to the land and their contributions to the University are renewed and reaffirmed.

Course Description
Application of research methods in the design and implementation of assessment and evaluation of cultural heritage collections, services, programs, and tools to document and measure effectiveness, meet user needs, and social impact, including recommending actionable and specific steps to respond to study findings.

Course Overview
Cultural heritage professionals and administrators improve the quality of resource and service delivery to their user communities and determine if missions and objectives have been met through assessment and evaluation. They document and assess the condition and care of collections; effectiveness and impact of their tools, services, and collections; perform user-based evaluation, needs assessment, and program evaluation in order to advance institutional missions and goals; demonstrate accountability to their stakeholders; understand user and research needs; identify gaps and redundancies in their collections; allocate resources and expertise; develop new programs or enhance services; support efforts towards diversity, equity, and inclusion; among others. Thus, assessment and evaluation are crucial to the sustainability, social and research relevance, and growth and innovation of cultural heritage institutions. Information professionals who work in cultural heritage institutions must learn how to measure information resources and services to assess their effectiveness and respond to insights learned from assessments.

This course will expose students to a number of evaluation strategies, literature, and methods. Given the breadth and depth of a number of these evaluation approaches, it will not be possible to cover all aspects throughout the course. Assessment and evaluation have a long history in the field of information. The class will offer both an historical and current perspective on the assessment of information services, with an emphasis on current practice in libraries and other cultural heritage institutions.
information organizations. The course will also introduce students to the context in which evaluation of information services transpire, which can affect the types of evaluation strategies, data, and analysis that cultural heritage and information organizations need.

Learning Objectives
The course will introduce students to a variety of evaluation frameworks, and what is necessary to engage in the evaluation of a range of information services. It builds on what students learned in SI 623: Research Methods for Information Professionals (and other relevant UMSI methods courses) and challenges them to apply those in library and other cultural heritage settings. Throughout the semester, the course will:

- Provide a critical assessment of selected evaluation approaches and frameworks;
- Offer both quantitative and qualitative methodological techniques for engaging in evaluation efforts;
- Assist in the development of evaluation planning and implementation;
- Help students assess the strengths, weaknesses, and trade-offs involved in evaluation activities;
- Provide a context for evaluation activities and the interpretation of evaluation results; and
- Provide an understanding of organizational, staffing, and a range of other requirements for effective evaluation efforts.

Learning During the Pandemic
This semester is going to be difficult for all of us. But keep in mind that some will struggle more than others, so to the extent possible, let’s bring our best that we can to each class activity, and be respectful, generous, and kind. The COVID-19 pandemic affects us all, and it disproportionately affects black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC). Some will experience housing, food, and job insecurity. We are also witnessing the effects of climate change, from ongoing wildfires in California to hurricanes in other regions of the country. Our current political climate that supports and displays white supremacy, anti-black and police violence, bigotry, sexism and hate are also adding to our collective stress and anxiety.

Remote teaching removes many aspects of the usual in-person interaction during a course like this, which can lead to further isolation. While I will do my best to keep you interested and engaged, we cannot distract ourselves from all the events happening around us. Self-care means survival. If you are pressed to choose between this class and your own safety, physical and mental health, or overall wellbeing, be sure to take care of yourself.

While I am here primarily to teach assessment and evaluation, a topic I am passionate and knowledgeable about, I am also available to talk to you if you are struggling and if any of the issues stated above is affecting you and your learning. My office hours are not limited to discussing your academic progress, but include making sure that you are safe, healthy, and feel supported. Please do not hesitate to contact me about things other than the class. I am here for you.
**Student Mental Health and Wellbeing**
The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students’ academic performance.

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and [https://caps.umich.edu/](https://caps.umich.edu/) during and after hours, on weekends and holidays. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (732) 764-8320 and [https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs](https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs), or for alcohol or drug concerns, see [www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources](http://www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources).

Since many students are remote during Fall 2020, **CAPS COVID-19 Support** offers SilverCloud, an online, self-guided, interactive mental health resource that provides cognitive behavioral interventions.

For a more comprehensive listing of the broad range of mental health services available on campus, please visit: [http://umich.edu/~mhealth/](http://umich.edu/~mhealth/)

**Code of Conduct**
I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

**Preferred Name/Pronoun Policy**
I will gladly honor your request to address you by the name and gender pronoun of your choosing. Please advise me of your preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. If you would like to do so, instructions for designating your preferred pronoun in Wolverine Access can be found here: [https://csprod.dsc.umich.edu/htmldoc/eng/dftie/lsaa/htm/cc_ss_genderid.html](https://csprod.dsc.umich.edu/htmldoc/eng/dftie/lsaa/htm/cc_ss_genderid.html).

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; ssd.umich.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information that you provide in as confidential a manner as possible.
Assignments/Evaluation

You will receive various forms of feedback (such as written comments and one-on-one consultations) on your class performance. Keep in mind that grades are only one type of indicator of learning and progress in this course. Grades will be based on the quality of your assignments and class engagement. If at any point during the semester you are in need of additional guidance or explanation on how your assignments are graded, please set up an appointment so we can explore ways to ensure that you are meeting the expectations of the course. Grade distribution and assignment deadlines shall be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% grade</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Class Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>All sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PEERRS Certification</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Article Review (Class Report)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Assigned</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluation Project - Proposal</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Assigned</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluation Project - Midterm Progress Report</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluation Project - Findings &amp; Recommendations</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluation Project - Final Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
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Each assignment will have corresponding written instructions, which will be available from the course site in advance of each assignment.

Class Participation and Attendance

This course makes active use of the class time and space. Students are expected to contribute productively to class discussions, debates, and exercises. Your ability to contribute to class activities will depend on your preparation in advance. Advance preparation includes completing all reading assignments; listening to/watching pre-recorded talks, lectures, presentations, videos, etc.; and completing on-line explorations and exercises. You will also have the opportunity to initiate discussions and bring related material to our attention. The quality of your contributions will be judged on that based on timeliness, relevance to the topic of discussion, contribution to moving the discussion forward, and thoughtfulness.

PEERRS: Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship

Before beginning any of the projects for this course, all students must complete the following PEERRS modules: Research Practice Foundations, Human Subjects - Social & Behavioral, and Authorship. Information about PEERRS, including links to the modules, can be found here: http://my.research.umich.edu/peerrs/

Article Review (Class Report)

The world of assessment and evaluation has produced numerous research articles, case study reports, and frameworks. This assignment requires you to identify one reading, published in any refereed, academic journal that you find worth sharing to the rest of the class. Make sure that this article is not one of the readings listed in the syllabus. You will deliver a 10-minute, in-class
slide presentation summarizing the key points of the article and your own analysis of its applicability, relevance, and importance to the class.

Evaluation Project - Proposal
Write an 800- to 1,000- word proposal that describes and situates the evaluation and assessment project that you will conduct with a client this semester. The proposal must cover a problem statement, enumeration of project goals and objectives, detailed workplan, and project timeline. This document will lay out the steps that students intend to take throughout the semester and should include major course deliverables as well as any client-specific deadlines.

Evaluation Project - Midterm Progress Report
The midterm status report will consist of a 10-minute, in-class presentation, followed by 3-5 minutes of Q&A, that should include: overview of the project (problem statement, goals, and workplan), the current project status, challenges/problems encountered, and next steps.

Evaluation Project - Findings & Recommendations
Following the implementation of your Evaluation Proposal, you will present your findings in class. Prepare a 10-minute presentation, followed by 3-5 minutes of Q&A, that presents your project findings and outcomes, including specific recommendations to your client. Your report will be graded based on your ability to effectively and succinctly communicate the major findings of your study, answer audience questions, and present within the time limit.

Evaluation Project - Final Report
The Final report must incorporate all the elements of the study (Evaluation Proposal & Findings with Recommendations). Your paper will be graded based on your inclusion of the elements specified above; evidence of critical thinking; adherence to the length requirement; adherence to the formatting and citation requirements; and, clarity and precision of thought in your writing.

Note: Your clients will be completing a survey about their experience over the course of the semester, and their feedback will also be taken into account in the grading of your final project.

Citation and Formatting
Use standard formatting (double spacing, 1” margins, Times New Roman, 12-point font) for all assignments. For citations, use the Chicago Manual of Style Notes and Bibliography system: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html.

Academic Integrity
It is important that you practice academic honesty in all aspects of the class. Much of your learning happens when you challenge yourself to produce original work. Academic dishonesty includes:

- **Cheating**: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
• **Fabrication**: Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

• **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty**: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

• **Plagiarism**: Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in an academic exercise.

Unless otherwise specified in an assignment all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts, statements, or phrases from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School’s policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Master's and Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in serious penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program. Violations of academic and professional integrity will be reported to UMSI Student Affairs. Consequences impacting assignment or course grades are determined by the faculty instructor; additional sanctions may be imposed by the assistant dean for academic and student affairs.

**Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic/Theme</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>Overview of Evaluation</td>
<td>PEERS / Identify Client-based Project</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Ethics and Values</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Building a Culture of Assessment</td>
<td>Evaluation Project Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Overview of Methodologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Assessing Needs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Evaluating Collections, Services, and Research Needs of Historically Marginalized Communities</td>
<td>Evaluation Project Midterm Progress Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>Outcomes &amp; Impacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>Assessing ROI’s &amp; Economic Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>Performance Measurement, Benchmarking, &amp; Service Quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>Evaluating Library &amp; Information Services: Reference Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>Evaluating Library &amp; Information Services: Collection Development, Space, and Websites</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>Final Project Presentations</td>
<td>Class Presentation of Findings &amp; Recommendations</td>
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Course Outline and Readings

Week 1: Course Introduction

- Introductions
- Overview of course syllabus, format, requirements, expectations, topics

Week 2: Overview of Evaluation

- Types of Evaluation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Program Performance and Evaluation Office.

Week 3: Ethics and Values


Week 4: Building a Culture of Assessment


Week 5: Overview of Methodologies


Optional sources on ethnography and Community-based participatory research:
• Ethnographic Research in Academic Libraries (The Librarian Parlor, 2018)
• Community-Based Participatory Research in Libraries: Reevaluating the researcher’s role in research by Kelsey George (The Librarian Parlor, 2019)

Week 6: Assessing Needs

• Community needs assessment for the Public Libraries of Craven County. Available at: http://newbern.cpclib.org/nbccpl/pdf/Craven_Assessment_2013.pdf [Note: You need to only skim the entire report]
• Review the interactive mapping tool at http://digitalinclusion.umd.edu/content/interactive-map

Week 7: Evaluating Collections, Services, and Research Needs of Historically Marginalized Communities


Week 8: Outcomes & Impacts

• Institute of Museum and Library Services, Outcome Based Evaluation Basics

Week 9: Assessing ROI’s & Economic Impact

• Tenopir, C. (2013). “Building evidence of the value and impact of library and information services: Methods, metrics and ROI.” Evidence Based Library and Information Practice (EBLIP), 8(2). Available at: https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/eblip/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/19527/15263


Do a quick skim of these:


Week 10: Performance Measurement; Benchmarking & Service Quality


• Review the Library Edge initiative (libraryedge.org). In particular, the benchmarks (http://www.libraryedge.org/benchmarks) and some of library profiles (http://www.libraryedge.org/toolkit/case_studies).


Week 11: Evaluating Library & Information Services: Reference Service


Week 12: Evaluating Library & Information Services: Collection Development, Space, and Websites


Week 13. Final Project Presentations

- In-Class Presentations

Week 14: Finals Week

- Final Project Report Due