University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
School of Social Work

Course: SOWO 510, Foundations for Evidence-Based Practice and Program Evaluation
Spring 2013, Monday 9:00 – 11:50 A.M., Room 135

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Office Hours: Before and after class and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES: Social workers, whether they are front-line practitioners, program managers, administrators, or policy makers, routinely face complex human situations involving individuals who come from diverse backgrounds. The social interventions social workers have at their disposal vary in their degree of effectiveness with any given individual, family, group, organization or community. In order to provide the most effective social work programs, policies and interventions, social workers must be able to determine if what they are doing is beneficial to the individuals, families, groups, organizations, or communities they serve. To this end, students will develop knowledge of the purposes of research and evaluation and the approaches and methodologies necessary to evaluate social work interventions. Upon completion of this course students will be able to demonstrate:

1. Skill in developing and implementing social intervention evaluations that promote evidence-based social work practice and policy;
2. Skill in evaluating social intervention research and applying findings to social work practice and policy;
3. Skill in qualitative and quantitative evaluation design, measurement, data analysis, and knowledge dissemination;
4. Knowledge of the practical, political, and economic issues related to the evaluation of social interventions;
5. Skill in accessing and assessing public databases and research literature as a foundation for evidence-based practice;
6. Skill in designing social intervention research that is sensitive to racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, social, economic, and other issues of difference; and
7. Ability to apply social work ethics and values to the evaluation of social interventions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


The required text is available in the UNC Student Stores. Supplemental readings are available in a course folder located in the SOSW library on the 5th floor and/or on-line (noted below). Articles noted to be on-line are available through the UNC-CH Library electronic databases.
POLICY ON INCOMPLETE OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Students must notify the instructor at least 24 hours before an assignment is due if an assignment is going to be turned in late. Extensions may be given at the instructor’s discretion. Students will lose five points for each 24-hour period beyond the due date and time (including weekends) for unexcused late assignments. Assignments that are more than 5 days late will not be accepted. A grade of “Incomplete” will be given only in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with School of Social Work and University policy.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Academic dishonesty is contrary to the ethics of the social work profession, is unfair to other students and will not be tolerated in any form. Please refer to the APA Style Guide, The SSW Manual, and the SSW Writing Guide for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism and appropriate use of assistance in preparing assignments. All written assignments should contain a signed pledge from you stating that, "I have not given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work." In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action as required.

FORMAT FOR WRITTEN WORK: APA format should be used for all written assignments. Students should refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) for information on APA format. A self-paced APA tutorial can be found at http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/apa/index.html.

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University’s Disabilities Services (Voice/TDD 962-8300, 966-4041). Students must have a formal letter from the University’s Department of Disabilities Services to receive disability-based accommodations. Students should discuss the need for specific accommodations with their instructor at the beginning of the semester.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Quizzes: Each week at the beginning of class a short quiz covering material from the previous week will be given. Each quiz will be discussed after its completion and returned after grades are recorded. Quiz grades will be averaged and this final quiz grade will count for 25% of the total grade. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. These quizzes will provide ongoing feedback concerning knowledge acquisition and will provide the information necessary to take corrective measures, by both the professor and students, to ensure that adequate learning has occurred.

Midterm and Final Exams: The midterm and final exams will be worth 25% each. The final exam will not be cumulative. Exams will consist of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. These exams will make up 50% of the total grade.

Evaluation Project: An evaluation project related to each student’s field placement or specific interests will be the primary written assignment for this course. Students can choose one of two options: (1) students can conduct a real evaluation of a program or practice in the field (i.e., design an evaluation and collect real data), or (2) students can design an evaluation and analyze fictitious data. Students who elect to conduct evaluations in the field should meet with their professor as soon as possible. The project will make up 25% of the total grade.

The final product will be a report which contains the following: (1) Abstract, (2) Introduction and Literature Review; (3) Methods; and (4) Results, and (5) Discussion and Conclusion. Reports
should be no longer than 1500 – 2000 words (i.e., 7-8 pages). Drafts of all written assignments can be submitted for feedback as early and often as needed. The project will be graded according to the following criteria and a number grade from 0 – 100 will be assigned:

- Mechanics (grammar, spelling, style, typing)
- Organization
- Logic
- Content
- Ability to summarize and draw conclusions

### GRADING

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Proposal</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>94 – 100</td>
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<td>Quiz Average</td>
<td>80 – 93</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>70 – 79</td>
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<td>&lt; 69</td>
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### COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

**January 14**  
Course Overview and Syllabus

**January 28**  
Evaluation of Social Interventions and Evidence-based Practice

**Discussion – Assigned Readings**

**In-class Assignment**

**Review Instructions for Projects**


Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 1, 2, 16, and 17

**Supplemental Readings:**


based program research: context, program readiness, and evaluation usefulness. *Journal of Community Practice, 12*(1/2), 7 – 21. [on line]


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February 4

**Quiz 1**

**Identifying Outcomes**

**Developing Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Rubin and Babbie – Chapters 5 and 6

**Supplemental Readings:**


February 11

**Quiz 2**

**Measurement of Outcomes**

Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 7 and 8

**Supplemental Readings:**


February 18

**Quiz 3**

**Sampling**

**Internal and External Validity**

Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 10 and 11 pps 182 – 185, pps 199 – 200

February 25

**Quiz 4**

**Surveys and Needs Assessments**

**Qualitative Research**

Rubin and Babbie, Chapters, 9, 14 and 19

**Supplemental Readings:**

Buehler, C., Cox, M. E., & Cuddeback, G. (2003). Foster parent’s perceptions of factors that promote or inhibit successful fostering. *Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice, 2*(1), 61-84. [course folder – SOSW library]


March 4  Midterm Exam (and Quiz 5)

March 18  Research and Evaluation Designs

Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 11 and 12

**Supplemental Readings:**

March 25  Quiz 6

**Data Analysis**

Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 18

**Supplemental Readings:**
A pilot study of functional Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (fCBT) for schizophrenia. *Schizophrenia Research, 74*, 201-209. [on line AND course folder - SOSW library]


April 1

**Quiz 7**

Research and Evaluation Designs and Data Analysis - revisited

April 8

**Quiz 8 (distribute Quizzes 9-10)**

Research and Evaluation Designs and Data Analysis – revisited

April 15

Formative and Process Evaluations, Fidelity and Other Topics

Rubin and Babbie Chapter 13

**Supplemental Readings:**


April 22

**Final Exam (and Quiz 11); Project Evaluation Reports Due**