Instructor: Marcie Fisher-Borne, PhD, MPH, MSW
Visiting Assistant Professor, Room 216
Phone: 919-260-3680
Email: fisherm@email.unc.edu
Office Hours: 12-1 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description:

Students apply knowledge of research methods and evidence-based practice to the evaluation of social work interventions by developing and conducting a detailed evaluation of a specific social work intervention.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to draw from knowledge of research methods and evidence-based practice, and work effectively with supervisors, colleagues, peers, and consumers, to design, conduct, and disseminate the results of an evaluation of an intervention, program, service or policy implemented by their placement agency or needed by current or prospective consumers or program or policy planners. Specifically, students will demonstrate:

1) Skills for reviewing and presenting information about the importance of a social problem addressed by their agency, including its relation to discrimination based on culture, economic status, gender, religion, age, or sexual orientation;
2) The ability to consider this social problem in the context of current service delivery, and critically determine a matter requiring evaluation related to client need, the process of service delivery, or service outcomes;
3) The ability to design an appropriate evaluation, including describing a logic model, identifying a sample, determining a suitable study approach; and selecting appropriate, reliable, and valid measures (including consideration of validity for the targeted population);
4) The ability to plan, conduct, and synthesize appropriate qualitative or quantitative analyses;
5) The ability to apply knowledge of social work ethics and values to the design of practice intervention or other types of evaluations;
6) The ability to consider the implications of results for practice and policy (including implications related to the agency’s success in working with clients from different groups); and
7) The ability to summarize all of this material in a concise written document.
1. Available Resources:

1) Blackboard resources—updated weekly
2) SOWO 510 on line course materials
3) SOWO 510 texts:

2. Course Assignment:

The student’s primary assignment in this course is an evaluation of an intervention, program, service, or policy related to an important social problem that is addressed by the student’s practice setting. Students are expected to evaluate consumer/program needs or the process and outcomes of practice in their field placement, in the form of a needs, process, outcome, or other type of assessment.

This semester-long evaluation will include:

- a focused literature review of the problem being addressed,
- formulation of the practice or policy related question(s),
- development of the evaluation design and sampling strategy, including selection of measures,
- data collection,
- data analysis,
- writing a final evaluation report, and
- Presenting the report.

The final project will be a written evaluation report using the format presented by Royse, Thyer, & Padgett (Chapter 15); it will include an executive summary, introduction, review of the literature, methodology, results, discussion, references, and appendices.

Criteria for Grading

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phase Assignments 1-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper (Evaluation Report)</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Class Participation</td>
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Office Hours:

I will be holding office hours between 12-1 p.m. immediately after class. I am also available to meet with you by appointment. There does not have to be a “problem” for you to schedule time to meet. If you want to improve your writing, discuss your proposal, etc., I am available.

Teaching Methods and Collaborative Learning:

Because learning and teaching are interdependent processes, I would encourage each of us to view ourselves as having important ideas to teach and important ideas to learn. With this in mind, this course is primarily organized around group discussions and a consultant-style format. These discussions will require you to come prepared having not only read the readings, completed assigned tasks, but prepared to engage them within the class community.

This is the first semester for SOWO 810 to be taught in this format with a reduced course time. As such, it is a work in progress and the course syllabus may change throughout the semester based on your learning needs. As we move through the semester if something isn’t working or course material doesn’t make sense, please say so. You are responsible for your learning. I am responsible for creating a safe, accessible, and resource rich context for your learning.

This course is also highly self-directed and relies on your ability to identify the resources you need to complete your proposal and then actively seek out these resources on your own time. Given the shortened time frame of the course and the demands of completing an evaluation project within the semester, there is not time to re-teach the materials of SOWO 510. If there are gaps in your learning, I expect you to spend the time and energy to review the needed materials. In the event there are major challenges in understanding the materials, please come and talk with me as soon as possible.

Late Assignments Policy:

I will be available both via email and in person to help clarify assignments prior to their due dates. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignments that are late will lose one letter grade for each day it is late, extensions will be granted prior to the due date by special consideration of the instructor--do not come to class and ask for an extension for something due that day.

Class Absence Policy:

Because our class relies heavily on our group process, you are expected to attend class and participate in class discussion. Students who have more than two excused absences will lose 5 points from their final grade; two or more unexcused absences will result in the loss of a letter grade. Students who are persistently late for class will also lose points from their participation grade. Excused absences include: family emergencies, illness (with doctor’s note), conference presentation, and graduate school appointments. Let me know in advance if you have anticipated absences during the semester.
**Policy on Academic Dishonesty:**

Please refer to the APA Style Guide and the SSW Writing Guide for information on the attribution of quotes, plagiarism, and appropriate use of assistance in preparing assignments. All written assignments should be signed with the UNC Honor Code.

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.

**Policy on Accommodations:**

If you have any unique learning needs and are a student with a disability that may affect your participation, please notify me at the beginning of the semester so we can make the necessary accommodations.

**Course Assignment Description**

**Phase Assignments**

To ensure that the project is started promptly and can be completed during the semester, students will complete five phased assignments. These assignments can be used to develop the final evaluation report.

**Phase I – Description of social problem**

**Due: Week 3**

Length: Maximum 1 page  
Value: 6%

In no more than one double-spaced page, briefly describe the practice or policy related problem you will address and its importance. Include at least three citations. In addition, clearly state your draft evaluation questions.

**Phase II – Justification of evaluation**

**Due: Week 4**

Length: Maximum 2 pages  
Value: 6%

In no more than two double-spaced pages, write your revised evaluation questions and a brief description and justification of the evaluation you plan to conduct, include ethical considerations as appropriate, and evidence that suggestions for changes in service delivery are possible if indicated by the results. Include at least three citations.

**Note for Phases I and II:** The final paper will include a literature review with at least six scholarly citations that are pertinent to the evaluation. Pay special attention to the literature on relevant evidence-based practices in the area of study.
Phase III – Evaluation design  
Due: Week 5

Length: Maximum 1 page
Value: 6%

In no more than one double-spaced page, describe your evaluation design. Indicate the type of evaluation you will implement (e.g., needs assessment, formative evaluation, process evaluation, outcome evaluation), your research design, and the strategy you will use to collect the data (e.g., focus groups, interviews, chart abstraction). Make sure to include your targeted sample size and how you will identify and recruit your sample participants (or obtain existing records).

Phase IV - Draft instrument  
Due: Week 7

Length: As needed
Value: 6%

Obtain/develop a draft of the data collection instrument you propose to use; this may be an existing instrument, one you create, or a combination of the two.

Phase V - Draft data analysis plan  
Due: Week 8

Length: Maximum 2 pages
Value: 6%

In no more than two double-spaced pages, create a data analysis plan that includes your research question(s) and summarizes the data that will be available. Specify your analysis strategy and which technique(s) you will use to answer your research question(s) (e.g., t-test for independent groups, ANOVA, correlations, interpretation strategy for qualitative data).

Final Paper/Program Evaluation Report  
Due: Week 13

Length: Maximum 12 pages
Value: 60%

The primary written assignment for this course will be an evaluation of an intervention, program, service, or policy related to an important social problem that is addressed by the student’s practice setting. It will incorporate the five phased assignments as well as the results and interpretation of the findings. It will include an executive summary, introduction, review of the literature, methodology, results, discussion, references, and appendices. The paper is expected to require 10-12 pages, excluding the executive summary, references, tables/figures, and appendices. Its organization is as follows, with approximate page allocations indicated in parentheses:

Executive Summary: (1 page) – This one page summary will incorporate the introduction through the discussion/interpretation as described below.

Introduction (1-2 pages) – The introduction should include a statement of the problem to be addressed and its overall impact, such as evidence related to its prevalence (the number of people in a population who have the problem), incidence (the number of new cases over a period of time), and/or effect (the importance of the problem). This section
must explain why it is an important issue for social work practitioners to address and ethical considerations for this evaluation, and end with an explication of the research questions.

Relevance (Literature Review) (1-2 pages) – Previous empirical research pertaining to relevant interventions, outcomes, or other matters specific to your population and problem of interest should be reviewed concisely and critically in this section.

Methods (2 pages) – This section has the following four subsections: (1) Design, (2) Sample, (3) Measures, and (4) Data analysis. Provide separate subheadings for each section.

Results (2-3 pages) – This section will describe the results of your evaluation. If quantitative methods are used, descriptive statistics should be presented first and inferential statistics presented last. If qualitative methods are used, a description of the analysis themes is to be provided with illustrative narrative comments included as examples. Tables and figures should be used as appropriate, and are not included in the page count.

Discussion/Interpretation (3 pages) – This section should include the following, in this order: (1) a summary of your findings (e.g., related to the success of treatment, the discovery of new client needs, or whether staff are operating with a consistent program model); (2) a discussion of the implications of these findings and related recommendations (e.g., to change service delivery in a focused way to improve outcomes, better reach new clients, or assure consistency in service provision); (3) plausible alternative explanations for your findings; (4) a discussion of the limitations of your evaluation; and (5) suggestions for further evaluation (e.g., given the limitations of your initial design, how the next evaluation can be improved). This section should conclude with a discussion of the importance of your findings to social work practice and research.

References – Provide an accurate list of all cited sources.

Tables, Figures – Tables and figures are suggested to display you results. Typically, the first table describes the sample.

Appendix – Include copies of any scales or questionnaires used in your program evaluation and other relevant information.

The complete evaluation report should follow APA formatting, and should follow the structure and suggestions presented in Royse, Thyer, & Padgett, Chapter 15.

Oral presentation: Most evaluation findings are presented orally to stakeholders. Throughout the course, students will present to their classmates and answer their questions. The final presentation will allow students to present their overall projects as they would to those within their agencies.

Length: 10 min presentation, 5 min Q & A  Due: Weeks 13-15  Value: 5%
COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 – Introduction to Evaluation of Social Work Interventions

Assignment Due: Bring 2 copies of final SOWO 510 proposal and submit an electronic copy via Blackboard before class

- Overview of the course
- Review of required assignments for the course
- Discussion of:
  1. Evaluation proposals from SOWO 510
  2. How to identify issues to evaluate in a practice setting
- Formation of class peer review teams

Week 2 – Introduction to Evaluation of Social Work Interventions Continued

Assignment Due: 1-2 Evaluation ideas to class

- Discussion of:
  1. Identified issues in field practice setting
  2. 1-2 possible strategies

Readings (see Blackboard folder):

  Blackboard readings

  Introduction to Evaluation

  SOWO 510 texts to review:
  Rubin & Babbie: Chapter 4 and Appendix A
  Other relevant SOWO 510 texts:
  Royse et al.: Chapters 1 and 14
  Hatry et al.: Step 1

Week 3--Development of Evaluation Justification

Assignment Due: Phase 1 paper due

- Small group discussion of draft evaluation questions
- Discussion of how to develop evaluation justification
- Discussion of ethical issues faced in evaluations

**Readings (see Blackboard folder):**

Rubin & Babbie: Chapters 6 and 7
Hatry et al.: Step 2

**Week 4 – Development of Evaluation Designs**

**Assignment Due:** *Phase 2 paper due*

- Small group discussion of evaluation justification
- Discussion of how to develop:
  1. Proposal evaluation designs
  2. Evaluation logic models

**Readings (see Blackboard folder):**

Rubin & Babbie: Chapters 11, 12 and 13
Royse et al.: Chapters 9
Hatry et al.: Step 4

**Week 5 – Development of Data Collection Instruments**

**Assignment Due:** *Phase 3 paper due*

- Small group discussion of evaluation designs
- Discussion of how to develop and search for appropriate data collection instruments

**Readings (see Blackboard folder):**

Rubin & Babbie: Chapter 9
Royse et al.: Chapters 11 and 12
Hatry et al.: Step 5 and Appendix

**Week 6 –Consultations/Peer Review Team Meetings**

Faculty appointments, as needed, to discuss evaluation implementation issues and/or peer review team meetings
**Week 7: Development of Evaluation Data Analysis Plans**

**Assignment Due:** *Phase 4 paper due*
- Presentation on statistical analysis strategies
- Small group discussion of proposal data analysis plans

**Readings (see Blackboard folder):**
- Rubin & Babbie: Chapters 17 and 18
- Royse et al.: Chapter 13
- Hatry et al.: Step 6

**Week 8: Development of Proposal Statements of Implications for Agency Practice**

**Assignment Due:** *Phase 5 paper due*
- Small group discussion of evaluation plans
- Discussion of how to interpret evaluation findings in a way that is relevant for service planning and delivery

**Readings (see Blackboard folder):**
- Royse et al.: Chapter 15
- Hatry et al.: Step 8

**Week 9: Consultation on Evaluation Implementation**

Faculty appointments, as needed, to discuss evaluation implementation issues and/or meetings with peer review team

**Week 10: Progress Review Session**

- Small group reviews and discussion of evaluation progress
- Discussion of how to write evaluation reports and funding proposals

**Readings (see Blackboard folder):**
- Rubin & Babbie: Appendix A and B
- Royse et al.: Chapter 15

**Week 11: Consultation on Evaluation Implementation**

Faculty appointments, as needed, to discuss evaluation implementation issues and/or meetings with peer review team

**Week 12: Review Session to discuss final presentations and proposals**

**Weeks 13-16: Presentations of Projects**
# SOWO 810 Course Outline

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 12 Introductions, Class Structure</td>
<td>Bring 2 copies of final SOWO 510 proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 19 Introduction to Evaluation of Social Work Interventions</td>
<td>1-2 ideas for proposal focus</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 26 Development of Evaluation Justification</td>
<td>Phase 1 paper</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb. 2 Development of Evaluation Designs</td>
<td>Phase 2 paper</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 9 Development of Data Collection Instruments</td>
<td>Phase 3 paper</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 16 Consultations/Peer Review Teams</td>
<td>Phase 4 paper</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 23 Development of Analysis Plans</td>
<td>Mid-semester Evaluations</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>March 2 Development of Statements of Implications for Agency Practice</td>
<td>Phase 5 paper</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>March 9 SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>March 16 Consultations/Peer Review Teams</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>March 23 Progress Review Session</td>
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<td>March 30 Consultations/Peer Review Teams</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>April 6 Class Session to discuss presentations/proposals</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>April 13 Student Presentations</td>
<td>Final Proposals Due</td>
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<td>April 27 Student Presentations/Evaluations</td>
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*Syllabus may be modified as needed*