THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

COURSE NUMBER: SOWO 810
COURSE TITLE: Evaluation of Social Work Interventions
SEMESTER AND YEAR: Spring Semester, 2010
TIMES: Fridays, 9:00 – 10:20 a.m.
INSTRUCTOR: Laurie Selz Campbell, MS, CPRP
TTK Building, Room 356
Phone: 919-843-6394
lauriesc@unc.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Monday 12 – 1:30 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.
RESOURCES:

1) SOWO 510 on line course materials
2) SOWO 510 texts:

TEACHING METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS:
The course is structured in “laboratory” fashion, in that students will be working on their individual projects and obtaining feedback from the instructor and peers as needed. Each class will include a brief review of information relevant to the current phase of the evaluation, with time for discussion, peer review, and individual meetings. These activities are crucial to your successful completion of your study. Your participation, therefore, is critical.

POLICIES ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM:
I expect that we will all be invested in creating a learning environment of respect and engagement. I welcome the use of laptops in class for taking notes or completing small group tasks. However, I ask that you use them only for relevant activities – not for checking email or surfing the Web. During class, cell phones and other devices should be silenced.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students with disabilities which affect their participation in the course should notify the instructor if they wish to have special accommodations in instructional format, examination format, etc., considered. Accommodations and services are provided by Disability Services (Voice/TDD 962-8300; 966-4041). Learning Disability Services (962-7227) provides supportive services for students with learning disabilities and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:
Academic dishonesty is contrary to the ethics of the social work profession, unfair to other students, and will not be tolerated in any form. All written assignments should include the following signed pledge: “I have neither given nor 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. Please refer to the APA Style Guide for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism, and appropriate citation.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
Late assignments are strongly discouraged, but may be accepted in some cases. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day noted. You must contact me prior to a due date if you would like to request an extension, or you will lose 10% of the assignment’s points per day (including weekends and the date on which the assignment was due, if submitted after the beginning of class). Incompletes may be granted if (a) there are extreme and unforeseeable circumstances that affect your ability to complete
the semester’s work, and (b) you meet with me in advance to develop a plan and timeline for completing your work.

**Assignment Guidelines:**
All written assignments must be typed and follow APA format. Several writing resources are posted on the SSW website. You can also refer to the APA Publication Manual (6th edition), and to a tutorial on APA style at http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/apa/index.html.

**Assignment Description:**
The primary assignment in this course is a needs assessment, process evaluation, or outcome evaluation related to an important social problem addressed by the student’s practice setting. This semester-long evaluation will include identification of an appropriate research question; a focused literature review; development of the evaluation design and sampling strategy, including selection of measures; data collection and analysis; development of a final evaluation report; and presentation of the report. The final product will be a written evaluation report, including an executive summary, introduction, review of the literature, methodology, results, discussion, references, and appendices. Details are included below:

**“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 2**
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 3**
In no more than two double-spaced pages, write your revised evaluation questions and a brief description of and justification for the evaluation you plan to conduct, including 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 4**
In no more than one double-spaced page, describe your evaluation design. Indicate the type of evaluation (e.g., needs assessment, formative evaluation, process evaluation, outcome evaluation), research design, and the strategy you will use to collect the data (e.g., focus groups, interviews, chart abstraction). 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 5**  
Obtain/develop a draft of the data collection instrument you propose to use; this may be an existing instrument, one your create, or a combination of the two.

**Phase V - Draft data analysis plan**  
**Due Week 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).

**Final Paper/Evaluation Report**  
The final report 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 your 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.

Length: Maximum 10 pages Due: Week 12 Value: 60%

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 12 & 13 Value: 5%

SUMMARY OF COURSE EVALUATION COMPONENTS AND GRADING SCALE:
Grades will be assigned based on the following components and weights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase Assignments 1-5</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Evaluation Report</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Scores:
- 94 - 100: H
- 80 - 93: P
- 70 - 79: L
- <70: F
COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 – Introduction to Evaluation of Social Work Interventions
  - Overview of the course
  - Review of required assignments for the course
  - Followup on last semester's proposals
  - Formation of class peer review teams

Week 2 – Development of Evaluation Justification
  - Phase 1 paper due
  - Small group discussion of draft evaluation questions
  - Discussion of how to develop evaluation justification

Week 3 – Development of Evaluation Designs
  - Phase 2 paper due
  - Small group discussion of evaluation justification
  - Discussion of how to develop:
    1. Proposal evaluation designs
    2. Evaluation logic models

Week 4 – Development of Data Collection Instruments
  - Phase 3 paper due
  - Small group discussion of evaluation designs
  - Discussion of how to develop and search for appropriate data collection instruments

Week 5 – Development of Evaluation Data Analysis Plans
  - Phase 4 paper due
  - Presentation on statistical analysis strategies
  - Small group discussion of proposal data analysis plans

Week 6 – Development of Proposal Statements of Implications for Agency Practice
  - 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

Week 7 – Consultation on Evaluation Implementation
  - Peer and faculty support to discuss evaluation implementation issues

Week 8 – Consultation on Evaluation Implementation
  - Peer and faculty support to discuss evaluation implementation issues

Week 9 – Progress Review Session
  - Small group reviews and discussion of evaluation progress
Discussion of how to write evaluation reports and funding proposals

**Week 10 – Consultation on Evaluation Implementation**
Peer and faculty support to discuss evaluation implementation issues

**Week 11 – Consultation on Evaluation Implementation**
Peer and faculty support to discuss evaluation implementation issues

**Weeks 12 and 13 – Presentations of Student Projects**
Presentations on evaluation proposals may include PowerPoint slides, or posters.