

UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course: SOWO 292, Evaluation of Social Interventions

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Course Description:

Students develop knowledge of the purposes of evaluation research, and the approaches and methodologies necessary to evaluate social work interventions.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

1. Skill in developing and implementing social intervention research that is relevant to social work practice and policy;
2. Skill in evaluating social intervention research and applying the findings to social work practice and policy;
3. Skill in qualitative and quantitative research design, measurement, data analysis, and knowledge dissemination;
4. Knowledge of the practical, political, and economic issues related to social intervention research;
5. Skill in designing social intervention research that is sensitive to and addresses racial, gender, social, economic, and other issues of difference; and
6. Ability to apply knowledge of social work ethics and values to the design of social intervention research.

Expanded Description:

This course introduces advanced students to the processes necessary for the evaluation of social work practice and policy evaluation. Building on the knowledge gained in the foundation course SOWO 102, Introduction to Research Methodology, the course provides a results-based accountability framework so that students may gain:

- (a) skills in accessing and assessing public databases and research literature as a foundation for evidence-based practice;
- (b) knowledge of evaluation models and methodology available to implement results-based evaluation; and
- (c) the ability to work within a results-based accountability system in their social work practice.

Required Texts:

- Hatry, H., van Houten, T., Plantz, M.C., & Greenway, M.T. (1996). *Measuring program outcomes: A practical approach*. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America.
- Padgett, D.K. (1998). *Qualitative methods in social work research: Challenges and rewards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Royse, D., Thayer, B.A., Padgett, D.K., & Logan, T.K. (2001). *Program evaluation: An introduction*. (3rd Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks-Cole.

Additional Required Readings:

- Eckert, J.K., & Zimmerman, S.I. (2001). Maximizing methods: interviewers as key informants. In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.) *Qualitative Gerontology: A Coming of Age*. New York: Springer. Comment: Update
- Kautz, J. R., Nettings, F. E., Huber, R., Borders, K., & Davis, T. S. (1997). The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993: Implications for social work practice. *Social Work, 42*, 364-373.
- Lydick, E., Zimmerman, S. I., Yawn, B., Love, B., Kleerekoper, M., Ross, P., Martin, A., & Holmes, R. (1997). Development and validation of a discriminant quality of life questionnaire for osteoporosis (the OPTQoL). *J Bone Miner Res, 12*, 456-463.
- Millstein, K.H., Dare-Winters, K., & Sullivan, S. (1994). The power of silence: ethical dilemmas of informed consent in practice evaluation. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 22*, 317-329.
- Rogler, L.H. (1999, June). Methodological sources of cultural insensitivity in mental health research. *American Psychologist, 54*, 424-433.
- Rutman, L., & Hudson, J. (1984). Evaluation research in human services. In B. Compton & B. Galaway (Eds.), *Social work processes* (pp. 580-591). Chicago: Dorsey Press.
- Scharlach, A. E., Mor-Barak, M. E., & Birba, L. (1994). Evaluation of a corporate-sponsored health care program for retired employees. *Health and Social Work, 19*, 192-199.
- Zimmerman, S. I. & Magaziner, J. (1994). Methodological issues in measuring the functional status of cognitively impaired nursing home residents: The use of proxies and performance-based measures. *Alzheimer Dis Assoc Disord, 8*, 281-290.

The required texts are available in the health sciences bookstore and on reserve at Davis Library. Copies of supplemental readings are available in the social work library and reading room on the fifth floor of the Tate/Turner/Kuralt Building. Additional supplementary readings may be assigned based on the needs of the class members at the discretion of the instructor.

Teaching Methods:

Most class periods will include a lecture by the instructor, class discussion, and a skill building activity. Each student is expected to participate regularly in class discussions about the concepts studied and to participate in each of the skill-building exercises; these exercises will integrate readings and previous assignments.

While integration of practice material is always encouraged in discussions, the written assignments are also designed to allow students to apply the knowledge gained from the readings, presentations, and assignments to their own field and/or practice settings.

Assignments and Course Performance Assessment:

An evaluation report related to the student's field of practice will be the primary written assignment for this course. Using the format presented by Royse et al., Chapter 15, the report will include an executive summary, introduction, review of the literature, methodology, results, discussion, references and appendices. The student will complete a draft of the introduction, literature review and methods (identified below as Part I) for submission at the time of the midterm examination. The instructor will provide comments to this draft, and these sections will be revised for inclusion in the (complete) evaluation report due at the end of the semester. More detailed instructions will be provided in a separate document. In addition, ungraded assignments will be due for individual class sessions, as noted on the syllabus.

<u>Component</u>	<u>Proportion</u>
Evaluation Report (Part I)	20%
Mid-term Examination	20%
Evaluation Report (Complete)	40%
Final Examination	20%

Grading System:

Points will be determined for all assignments, and the final weighted grade will be determined in accordance with the following guidelines.

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
<69	F
70 - 79	L
80 - 93	P
94 - 100	H

Format for Written Work:

Individual consultation with the instructor, field supervisor and other practitioners is encouraged as the student prepares for assignments. However, the student is expected to be the sole author of all written assignments. If the student has any questions about whether consultation with others is appropriate, he/she should ask the instructor. Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date noted; written assignments, including the midterm and final examinations, are designed to build upon each other.

Assignments must be typed and use APA format (including, but not limited to, APA guidelines on line spacing, margins, punctuation, within text citations, reference list and headings). Students should refer to the *UNC School of Social Work Style Guide: A Writing Manual for Social Work Students* and/or the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th edition) for information on APA format. In addition, students should refer to the School of Social Work Style Guide, pages 26-32, for guidelines on how to cite others' work properly and avoid plagiarism.

Policy on Unexcused Absences:

Because class periods contain skill building components it is important that students attend class. It is expected that students will attend each class. However, absences may be excused by the instructor for good cause. Students should request an excused absence in an email to the instructor (a) before the class period if the absence is anticipated, or (b) within a week after the absence if the absence was unanticipated. Students may have two unexcused absences with no penalty.

Policy on Incompletes and Late Assignments:

All class assignments have due dates that must be met for full credit to be assigned. Students must notify the instructor *before* the due date and time by email if an assignment is going to be turned in late. Whenever possible, students should notify the instructor at least 24 hours before the due date. Extensions may be given at the instructor's discretion for extenuating circumstances, but extensions will not be granted in all cases. Students will lose five points (i.e., from an 85 to an 80) for each 24 hours beyond the due date and time (including weekends) for unexcused late assignments or late assignments that are not discussed with the instructor.

Consideration for a grade of incomplete will be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon circumstances.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty:

All written assignments should include the following signed pledge: "I have neither given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work."

Students are also held responsible for properly citing references in their written work. This topic is discussed at length in the SSW Writing Guide. Students should review the Writing Guide content on citations and plagiarism.

Students in the class who observe or are aware of academic dishonesty on the part of classmates are expected to inform the instructor. Academic dishonesty is contrary to the ethics of the social work profession, unfair to other students, and will not be tolerated in any form.

Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course or fulfillment of course requirements may notify the instructor. Special accommodations in instructional format or the format of assignments will be considered.

<u>Class Session/Date</u>	<u>Topics and Readings (due on the date shown)</u>
Session 1	8/23 Course Orientation: Accountable Practice and Evaluation of Social Interventions
Session 2	8/30 Foundations for Accountable Practice; Ethics, Diversity and Social Justice <u>Readings:</u> Royse et al., Chapters 1 Kautz, 1997 Rutman, 1978
Session 3	9/6 Issues of Ethics: Informed Consent Need Assessments, Formative Evaluations and Process Evaluations Writing Evaluation Reports <u>Readings:</u> Hatry et al., Chapter 8 Millstein, 1994 Royse et al., Chapters 2, 3, 5, 15
Session 4	9/13 Outcomes and Logic Modeling <u>Readings:</u> Hatry et al., Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, 3 Scharlach, 1994
Session 5	9/20 Outcomes and Logic Modeling (continued); Outcome Designs <u>Readings:</u> Royse et al., Chapters 8, 9
Session 6	9/27 Methodological Considerations, Qualitative Methods, and Measurement Instruments <u>Readings:</u> Hatry et al., Chapters 4, 5, Appendix Royse et al., Chapters 4, 11, 12 Lydick, 1997 Zimmerman, 1994
Session 7	10/4 Methodological Considerations, Measurement Instruments, and Issues (continued) Issues of Racial, Gender, Social, Economic, and other Differences <u>Readings:</u> Rogler, 1999
Session 8	10/11 Evaluation Report Part I Due (two copies) Midterm Examination (in class)
FALL RECESS	
Session 9	10/25 Peer Editing Cost and Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation of Results (bring calculator) <u>Readings:</u> Hatry et al., Chapter 6 Royse et al., Chapters 10, 14
Session 10	11/1 Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation of Results (continued)(bring calculator)

- Session 11 11/8 **Qualitative Methods, Data Quality and Analysis**
Readings: Padgett, Chapters 1 – 10
Eckert, 2001
- Session 12 11/15 **Multimethod Research and Overcoming Evaluation Challenges**
Readings: Padgett, Chapter 13
Royse et al., Chapters 13
- Session 13 11/22 **Qualitative Data Collection: Focus Groups**
Guest Presenter: Gratia Wright, First Research
- THANKSGIVING
RECESS
- Session 14 12/6 **Final Examination (in class)**
Program Evaluations Due
Student Presentations (Optional)

SOWO 292 ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

<u>Due</u>		Type	Description
Session	Date		
1	8/23/02		
2	8/30/02	- Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to discuss two new insights of evaluation derived from the readings
3	9/06/02	- Forms - Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring copies of your agency's missions, goals and objectives • Based on an interview with your field supervisor and your own observations, bring a list of five areas in which the services your agency provides might be improved
4	9/13/02	- Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring copies of (1) the forms you agency uses to collect information, and (2) the reports your agency generates from this information
5	9/20/02	- Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring one testable question, the knowledge of which could improve the services your agency provides; highlight the most important variable(s) of your question
6	9/27/02	- Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring the key words on which you will conduct a literature search
7	10/04/02	- Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a list of (1) existing instruments that will answer your research question, and (2) one new, fully-developed survey/interview item
8	10/11/02	- Written* - Exam*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Evaluation Report, Part I – BRING TWO COPIES • Midterm Examination (in class)
9	10/25/02	- Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring peer-edited comments (written directly on Evaluation Report)
10	11/01/02		
11	11/08/02	- Written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring results for sample problems (chi-square and t-test) http://home.clara.net/sisa/two2hlp.htm http://home.clara.net/sisa/t-thlp.htm
12	11/15/02		
13	11/22/02		
14	12/06/02	- Written* - Exam*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Examination (in class) • Submit Program Evaluation

* Indicates work that will be graded.

**SOWO 292: Evaluation of Social Interventions
Evaluation Report, Part I**

Introduction*	description of the problem* significance of the problem* statement of the questions to be explored rationale for undertaking <i>this particular</i> evaluation
Literature review*	theoretical and historical perspectives evidence-base gaps in the literature
Methodology	overall design sample data collection methods instruments

* The introduction and literature review are often integrated and presented in one section; literature is used in the description and significance of the problem, as well.

Guidelines for literature (used in introduction and review): Aim to identify 10-12 articles that are highly relevant to your topic. You will know that you have conducted a complete review if each article fits at least one of the following criteria and if all/most of the criteria have been addressed:

- The article is a classic, written by well-known experts; it is often cited by other researchers
- The article reviews and summarizes past work on the topic
 - theoretical issues related to the topic
 - the history of the topic – how it has been conceptualized and studied
 - different methods that have been used to study this topic
- The article presents and/or attempts to resolve controversies relate to the topic
- The article is a meta-analysis that statistically combines results from many studies on the topic (*Note: These types of articles are less common.*)
- The article is timely, presenting important new findings or improvement in methods

Questions to consider as you plan your evaluation:

- Why is this the question to be explored, and not another one? (*Note: The literature should justify the selection of this question.*)
- Will the results of this evaluation be accepted by the agency and have the potential to improve practice?
- What information will you need to fully examine this issue and be able to draw relevant conclusions? (*For example, will influencing factors be of relevance? Literature should guide this consideration.*)
- What literature will you explore?
- How feasible is the design in terms of the time and resources it will demand?
- How feasible is the design in terms of the sample and data it will require?

**SOWO 292: Evaluation of Social Interventions
Program Evaluation Report**

The student will prepare a program evaluation that is targeted to his/her field of interest and based upon a program of which he/she has actual knowledge. The evaluation should be relevant and pragmatic, and fulfill the mission of examining a human service program for the purpose of improving it. While it is desirable that the student actually undertake the evaluation, doing so may not be feasible given the research design or constraints of time and/or setting. Nonetheless, the program evaluation must be salient, feasible and defensible. The content and structure of the evaluation will be discussed across multiple class sessions. An initial draft of the introduction, review of the literature and methodology will be submitted in advance of the final document. All written material is to be typed, double-spaced, and follow APA guidelines. The final document should be limited to ten pages (excluding the executive summary, references, tables/figures and appendices), and should follow the structure and suggestions presented in Royse et al., Chapter 15. Grading will be based on a five-point system (absent through exceptional) for each component of the evaluation.

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|-------|-------------------|---|
| I. | Executive summary | summary of purpose, methods, findings and discussion |
| II. | Introduction | description of the problem; statement of the questions to be explored; significance of the problem and rationale |
| III. | Literature review | theoretical and historical perspectives; gaps in the literature; reiteration of the purpose of the evaluation (may be integrated with the introduction) |
| IV. | Methodology | design and data collection methods; sampling; description of subjects and instruments; procedures for analyzing data |
| V. | Results | factual information; statistical and practical significance |
| VI. | Discussion | summary of findings; explanation; application to practice; weaknesses or limitations of the evaluation |
| VII. | References | APA style |
| VIII. | Appendices | measurement tool (may be pre-existing, but student must include some new items); supporting material (if any) |