

**University of Texas at Austin
School of Social Work**

**Professional Colloquium: Applied Social Work Research &
Evaluation in Clinical Social Work**

Course Number:	SW 395R	Instructor:	Noël Bridget Busch
Unique Number:	61240	Office Number:	3.130D
Semester:	Spring 2002	Contact Information:	471-3198 nbusch@mail.utexas.edu
Meeting Time/Place:	Tuesdays 5:30 – 8:30 pm SSW 2.132	Office Hours:	Mondays 2:30 – 5:00 Tuesday 4:00 – 5:00 and by appointment

I. Course Description

This final course draws upon all previous courses and the opportunity presented by a concurrent field practicum to test and develop the skill, knowledge, and commitment necessary for ongoing critical evaluation of professional practice with diverse populations. This course will prepare students to integrate research methods into assessment, planning, intervention, and the evaluation of practice effectiveness. Students must have completed all other courses in their program of work before enrolling in this Colloquium and/or be in their final field practicum.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

1. demonstrate skill in giving and using collegial consultation through the presentation and analysis of complex and vulnerable client problem situations and those of related systems, with particular attention to diversity, empowerment and populations at-risk.
2. complete scholarly reviews of the literature and evaluate supporting research data on assessment methods and tools related to client problem situations;
3. complete scholarly reviews of the theoretical and empirical literature on the comparative effectiveness of alternative intervention strategies related to differing client problem situations;
4. critically evaluate the appropriateness of assessment and intervention strategies related to characteristics of special populations groups, as they support and encourage client empowerment;
5. demonstrate an individualized and integrated understanding of social work practice through the development of a paper presenting the student's beginning professional practice model, with particular attention to its empirical and theoretical bases as well as conflicting values, ethical dilemmas, empowerment, and social justice.

III. Teaching Methods

The primary teaching approach in this course will be collaborative learning. Material in the course will be presented through a variety of teaching strategies. For example, case studies, discussions, videos, small group work, field trips, new articles, examinations, readings, and lectures will be considered. Videos will be used as tools for addressing key concepts in the course. The goal is to stimulate critical thinking, intellectual creativity, and sharing of knowledge and skills with and through the class. Students will be responsible for material presented through all these activities. Assigned readings are for the week in which they are listed and students should complete the readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss them. However, the instructor may not review all assigned readings in class.

IV. Required Textbooks

Westerfelt, A., & Dietz, T. ((2001). Planning & conducting Agency-Based Research: A Workbook for Social Work Students in Field Placement. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Additional readings will be assigned and available at the LRC.

Supplemental References:

Bloom, M, & Fisher, J., & Orme, G. (1995). Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Corcoran, L., & Fischer, J. (1994). Measure for clinical practice. New York, NY: Free Press. [Volumes I and II are available in the LRC.]

V. Course Requirements

The final course grade will be based on evaluation of five (5) assignments or criteria that are designed to measure how well each student meets the course objectives. The additional information for completing each assignment is included later in the syllabus or will be distributed by the instructor later in the semester.

VI. Grading Scale

A = 90 – 100 points
B = 80 – 89.9 points
C = 70 – 79.9 points
F = < 70 points

VII. Students with Disabilities or Special Learning Considerations

Please let me know if you have a learning and/or another disability and if you require special accommodations. I am interested in this class being a productive learning experience for everybody.

The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

VIII. Course Policies

1. Students are expected to attend **ALL** class meetings, to read **ALL** the assigned readings, and to participate in class discussions.
2. There are no “excused” absences. Students missing more than two (2) class sessions will receive a 10% reduction in their overall course grade. Students missing four (4) or more class sessions may receive an “F” for the course. The instructor may use her discretion. As soon as you know that you will not be attending class, please let me know by email. Coming to class late or leave class early may count as an absence.
3. Assignments are to be submitted according to the schedule. All late assignments will receive a **five (5) percent penalty per day** (weekend days will be included). All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period—assignments turned in after the beginning of class will be considered late.
4. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) is the style manual to be used for all assignments. Incorrect APA style will result a deduction of points on assignments.
5. Appropriate referencing is required. Failure to use quotation marks for direct quotes or citation for indirect quotations and/or others ideas may result in a “0” for the paper and/or an “F” for the course.
6. All papers are to be word-processed or typewritten, double-spaced, 10 – 12 point font, and “normal” margins.
7. University policies governing scholastic dishonesty, as presented in the General Information Bulletin and the brochure prepared by Student for Academic Integrity apply in this course. Scholastic dishonesty may result in a report to the Graduate Program Director, the Dean of the School of Social Work, and/or the Dean of the Graduate School. Students may receive an “F” for the course and other sanctions in accordance with University policies.
8. Any modifications, amendments, or changes to the syllabus and or assignments are the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of the student to inquiry about any changes that might have been made in his/her absence.

IX. Explanation of Assignments

There are several assignments for this course. Students will also be evaluated on participation, contribution to others' learning, and attendance.

Assignment # 1.....	10 points
Assignment # 2a.....	10 points
Assignment # 2b.....	10 points
Assignment # 2c.....	10 points
Assignment # 2d.....	10 points
Assignment # 2e.....	30 points
Assignment # 3.....	5 points
Presentation.....	<u>15 points</u>
Total	100 points

1. Protection of Human Research Subjects On-line Training

Each student will be required to complete the on-line course offered by National Institute of Health on the protection of human subjects in research. Students will be required to submit a copy of the NIH Certificate of Completion to the instructor. The course takes approximately 1 hour.

Use the follow site to complete this assignment: <http://cme.nci.nih.gov>

2. Practice Evaluation Project

Each student is required to complete an evaluation of effectiveness of social work practice with one client system served in their field setting, or the evaluation of a program component or procedure. The evaluation should include the use of measurement tools or other indicators of change. Unobtrusive measures, client anchored scales, rating scales, client logs (structured or semi-structured), standardized measurements (Rapid Assessment Instruments--RAI) or other appropriate measurers should be used.

If the evaluation uses a single-subject research design, it should incorporate observable and measurable client behaviors relevant to the targeted behaviors. Behavioral observations may include both self-monitored behaviors and data collection through the observations by others. Ideally, the measures selected should include both specific observable behaviors, (motor behavior, verbalizations, emotional behaviors and/or verbal referents to attitudes, beliefs, and ideas) and broader measures of the target behavior such as standardized measures of anxiety or coping skills, unobtrusive measures, client's logs, and client anchored rating scales, etc.

If choosing the RAI for use in your project, consider the six factors discussed by Corcoran and Fischer (pp. 24 – 26) related to practical values of the instrument.

If you are evaluating a program or service in your field agency then you should be sure to clearly link the program goals with your chosen instrument for evaluation. For example, does or how does a client satisfaction survey evaluate program effectiveness?

In order to complete this assignment we will use large class discussions and lectures, small peer group discussion and feedback, and individual meetings with the instructor.

See Criteria for Evaluating Written work in section X.

Series of Mini-Assignments

Each student will be required to submit a series of mini-assignments that are directly related to the final course paper. Students should complete and submit assignments according to the course calendar, but should be prepared to modify those assignments for the final paper. Each mini-assignment will count for 10 points each toward the course grade.

Mini-Assignments

- a. Sections I & II
- b. Sections III & IV
(field instructor's name, email, and phone number should be included)
- c. Sections V & either VI, VII, VIII, or IX (depending on the focus of your research)
- d. Sections X & XII

Students should submit only type written work. Re-create textbook assignments into a word document so that you can cut and paste for the final project.

e. Final Paper

At the end of the semester students will be required to "put it all together" in a final, comprehensive, well-connected paper. Students should re-write and re-organize all previously written sections. Points will be deducted for papers that are not well organized and contain thoughts not organizationally or conceptually linked. The final paper will count for 30 points of the overall course grade.

Sections XI & XIII should be completed and incorporated for the final paper.

Outline for Final Paper

- A. Abstract (200 – 500 words)
- B. Introduction (2 pages)
- C. Scholarly literature review (3 – 5 pages, 10 citations)
In addition to the information and format of the textbook, include see information below*
- D. Methods (2 – 4 pages, 2 – 4 references)
- E. Results (2 – 4 pages)

F. Discussion (2 – 4 pages)

In addition to the information typically in a discussion section, see below**

G. Summary (200 – 500 words)

* Research and briefly summarize current standards for care, expert consensus reviews and best practices recommended by professionals and researchers for how to best help specific problems of clients. If you are conducting a program evaluation you must conceptually link your measures of evaluation to a theoretical framework supported by the literature.

**Discuss how these standards “fit” with your personal philosophy and beliefs about helping. It is okay to discuss misfits or concerns you have about the standards of care in relationship to how you would like to practice or ways to improve those evidence-based standards of care. A well thought out practice framework and knowledge of standards of care and/or best practices is a valuable part of your preparation for professional practice. If you are evaluating a program or service you should discuss the program goals and intervention with regard to the best practice models found in the literature.

3. Participation, preparedness, and contribution to other's learning

Students will be evaluated throughout the semester on their individual contributions to class discussion through preparedness (prior reading and thinking on the topics) and readiness and willingness to discuss topics in class. The expectation is that in all assignments the professor and students will perform at her/his/their highest levels and at a level commensurate with quality graduate study, teaching, and scholarship. In addition, this course provides students the opportunity of on-going discussions, deliberations, negotiations, and learning from others that is involved in policy analysis and practice.

Students will have an opportunity to evaluate all group members. These evaluations will be read by the instructor and may affect the overall participation grade. These evaluations will be anonymous, to the extent possible (no names will be recorded). All students will receive the feedback from their group members.

See Criteria for Evaluating Participation in section XI.

4. Presentation of Findings

Students will present their research findings before their peers, other faculty members, their field instructors and agency personnel, and the course instructor. Students should prepare a formal presentation that includes visual aides and handouts. The presentation should be a total of 20 minutes, including 5 minutes for questions. The focus of the presentation should be a brief overview of the project (single subject design or program), methodology, findings and discussion. The literature review should only be mentioned as support for the rationale of your focus or method.

Please invite your field instructor and other agency staff to attend your presentation. Dates and times will be scheduled during the last several class sessions.

Criteria for evaluating the presentation will be distributed during the semester.

X. Criteria for Evaluation of Written Work

1. Completeness and thoroughness

How fully has the issue been addressed? When appropriate, has the issue been sufficiently researched using library resources, interview, and other means in order to gain differing perspectives and full knowledge of the issue? Has the theoretical and empirical literature on the subject been incorporated in the paper? Does the paper leave the reader with the impression that major questions have been considered, or are important issues left unaddressed? Has the paper been carefully proofread?

2. Organization and clarity

Is the paper well written and organized in a logical manner? Are there appropriate transitions between sentences, paragraphs, and sections? Are the sentence structure, syntax, and grammar of appropriate quality? Have headings and subheading been used to improve organization? Has the student addressed issues in a way that can be understood by someone unfamiliar with the issues as well as by someone knowledgeable about the issues?

3. Referencing

Are there a sufficient number of appropriate references? Has referencing been done appropriately and according to the style of the American Psychological Association? Are the references well integrated in the text? Were the references obtained from various sources (scholarly, Internet, interviews, etc.)? Are short direct quotations noted in quotation marks; are longer direct quotations indented, and are page numbers indicated for all direct quotations? Are indirect quotes paraphrased sufficiently? Were interviews of those who are involved with the creation or setting of policy and those impacted by the policy included in the analytical discussion of the policy?

4. Originality and Creativity

Have different viewpoints been compared and contrasted in a way that shows that the writer has a thorough understanding of the issues? Has the writer used his or her analytical skills in a way that suggests more than a restatement of what others have said about this issue? Has the student suggested points that have not been addressed by others?

Criteria for Evaluation of Written Work _____

1. Completeness and thoroughness (25%)

Consistent throughout paper (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout the paper--needs work (Not enough)	
			Issue fully addressed
			Sufficiently researched*
			Theoretical & empirical literature incorporated*
			Major questions have been addressed
			Carefully proofread

2. Organization and Clarity (25%)

Consistent throughout paper (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout the paper-- needs work (Not Enough)	
			Well written & organized
			Appropriate transitions
			Sentence structure, syntax, and grammar
			Headings and subheadings
			Understandable to unfamiliar reader
			Understandable to familiar reader

3. Referencing (20%) (* criteria not applicable to this assignment)

Consistent throughout paper (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout the paper-- needs work (Not Enough)	
			Sufficient Number of References
			APA style utilized
			References well integrated
			References from various sources
			Correct use of quotations
			Indirect quotes paraphrased sufficiently
			Interviews included in analysis

4. Originality and Creativity (30%)

Consistent throughout paper (Yes)	Consistent throughout most of paper (Mostly)	Not consistent throughout the paper--needs work (Not Enough)	
			Different viewpoints compared and contrasted
			Use of own analytical skills not just restatement
			Suggested points not been addressed by others

Covered Issues/Questions in Text

 _____ **yes** _____ **no** _____ **need more depth, explanation, or discussion**

XI. Criteria for Evaluating Participation, Preparedness, and Contribution to Other's Learning

Student Name _____

Grade Assigned _____

Criteria:

Students will be evaluated throughout the semester on their individual contributions to class discussion through preparedness (prior reading and thinking on the topics) and readiness and willingness to discuss topics in class. The expectation is that in all assignments the professor and students will perform at her/his/their highest levels and at a level commensurate with quality graduate study, teaching, and scholarship. In addition, this course provides students the opportunity of on-going discussions, deliberations, negotiations, and learning from others that is involved in policy analysis and practice. Absences, tardiness, and leaving class early will affect the participation grade. Students are expected to dialog during class discussion and engage non-verbally by listening when they are not speaking. Participation will be based on the above criteria.

XII. Course Calendar

Day & Date	Topic	Assigned Readings	Assignments
Tuesday, Jan 15	Overview of Practice Evaluation Explanation, Structure & Expectations of Course		ALL meet
Tuesday, Jan 22		Introduction & How to Use the Workbook	ALL meet
Tuesday, Jan 29	Orientation to Agency Research & Protection of Research Participants	Sections I, II, & XI	ALL meet Assignment 1 Due
Tuesday, Feb 5	The Research Question	Section III	Groups 1, 2, & 3 Meet Assignment 2a Due
Tuesday, Feb 12	Literature Review and Methodology	Section IV & V	Groups 4, 5, & 6 Meet
Tuesday, Feb 19	Sample Design & Data Analysis		All Meet first 1/2 Assignment 2b Due Groups 4, 5, & 6 Meet
Tuesday, Feb 26			No Formal Class Meeting
Tuesday, March 5		Sections X & XI	All meet first 1/2 Groups 1, 2, & 3 Meet
Tuesday, March 12			Spring Break No Class
Tuesday, March 19	Final Report Writing	Sections XIII	Individual Meetings
Tuesday, March 26	Survey, Qualitative, Single-subject, and Outcomes Designs	Section VIII, IX, VIII, & IX	All meet full class Assignment 2c Due
Tuesday, April 2			Assignment 2d Due Individual Meetings
Tuesday, April 9			Presentations— All meet
Tuesday, April 16			Presentations— All meet
Tuesday, April 26			Presentations— All meet Assignment 2e Due
Tuesday, April 30			Wrap-up & Course Evaluations— All meet

We will meet

If you need an additional individual meeting to discuss your project, please schedule with me by email.