

University of Texas at Austin  
School of Social Work

Advanced Research in Community Practice  
Web-Based Instruction

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW385S2	<b>Instructor:</b>	Noël Bridget Busch
<b>Unique Number:</b>	63140	<b>Office Number:</b>	3.130D
<b>Semester:</b>	Spring 2006	<b>Contact</b>	512/794-1106
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<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	Web-based	<b>Office Hours:</b>	By email and telephone

**I. Course Description**

Building on all previous courses, and in particular the first research course, this course emphasizes applying an evidence-based practice approach and program evaluation research methods in the student's concentration field practicum.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed SW 385R, had a course in basic statistics with content on statistical inference, and be enrolled in SW 594R and enrolled in or have completed SW 394S.

**II. Course Objectives**

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

1. Formulate and explain an evidence-based administration and planning practice approach for the student's field agency, based on the theoretical and empirical literature, and taking into account issues of social work ethics, diversity and social justice;
2. Use qualitative and quantitative research methods to evaluate programs;
3. Write and present reports of program evaluation of substantive issues in human service administration and planning;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical, political and managerial implications of conducting program evaluation in human service organizations.

### 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, new articles, examinations, readings, and lectures will be considered. All materials will be available on-line. 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 Readings

The course packet will be available on E-reserves.

### V. Course Requirements

The final course grade will be determined based on scores of four (4) 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

100 - 94 = A	76 - 74 = C
93 - 90 = A-	73 - 70 = C-
89 - 87 = B+	69 - 67 = D+
86 - 84 = B	66 - 64 = D
83 - 80 = B-	63 - 60 = D-
79 - 77 = C+	59 and below = F

## 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 respond to **ALL** emails related to this course, to read **ALL** the assigned readings, and to participate in class discussions.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. All papers are to be word-processed or typewritten, double-spaced, 10 - 12 point font, and "normal" margins.
6. 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.
7. 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.

Assignment # 1.....	10 points total
Assignment # 2a .....	60 points total
Assignment # 3.....	<u>30 points total</u>
Total	100 points

### Assignment # 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 30 minutes to 1 hour. Use the follow site to complete this assignment: <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/index.html>

When you get to this site, click "Computer-based Training," click "IRB Members," click "New Student: Register for Course." After registering for the course you will take three (3) lessons and then get your certificate. If you can, send me the certificate by attachment or drop it in the mail to: Dr. Noel Busch, School of Social Work, 1 University Station, D3500, Austin, Texas, 78712.  
**Assignment is due by February 6, 2006.**

### Assignment # 2

For this assignment, students will conduct an agency-driven project. In collaboration with your field instructor, each student should develop a project that is relevant for her field agency. This project should involve some type of program evaluation or other research. The student and field instructor may decide to evaluate a program, conduct a client satisfaction survey, or take on another research project relevant for your field agency. The goal of this class project is two fold: 1. It gives the student an opportunity to apply her research knowledge and skills, and 2. It produces information that is useful for the agency with the intension that practice and/or policies are modified or improved.

The project should be realistic to complete in one semester. Therefore, it should be very reasonable in scope. Students may chose to evaluate a *part* of a program offered the agency and/or *one group* of constituents. Students should be aware that evaluation and research are fluid processes rather than static. Therefore, modifications, changes, and adaptations are expected to be incorporated as you learn more about the topic at hand and the feasibility of your project.

It is also important to understand that evaluation and research takes careful planning and consistent progress. You can not wait until the last month of the semester to adequately complete this assignment. It might be helpful to consider the following timeline. This timeline requires you to work on this project weekly. There is

not time to waste. I will be making weekly reading assignments to help you in each phases of the project.

Dates	Major Tasks
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Research and Evaluation in the Field</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss and brainstorm ideas with field instructor</li> <li>• Sketch out preliminary plans</li> <li>• Carefully think about feasibility and costs</li> <li>• Complete necessary IRB and other requirements</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search Literature &amp; Write Summary</li> <li>• Collect Data</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Data Collection</li> <li>• Analyze Data</li> <li>• Write First Draft of the Report</li> </ul>
May 1 - 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write Final Draft of the Report</li> <li>• Prepare for Presentation</li> <li>• Develop a Power Point Presentation</li> </ul>

The entire assignment is worth 60 points. There are three parts:

- A. Students will submit a brief summary of their projects to the instructor **for approval by February 13, 2006 at 10 am Austin time**. I will give you individual feedback on the feasibility of your proposed project and you may be asked to make modifications based on my feedback.

This summary should include;

1. Brief description of the agency
2. Brief goal of your research or evaluation project (one to two sentences),
3. A description of the program or clientele to be utilized,
4. The procedures you'll use to gather data (e.g. a survey, in-person interviews, etc.), and
5. Number of data collection points you expect (e.g. 10 interviews or 25 surveys) to collect.
6. Brief description of how you will analyze the data (summarize points, use tables and graphs to illustrate descriptive data, etc.)

Use this information to complete and build on the information in the required the form below. This part is worth 10/60 points.

- B. The second part of this assignment requires that students complete an IRB student class project form and submitted to the instructor by **February 20, 2006**. Although this information should be as complete and accurate as possible, it may be modified as you undertake this project. **However, you may not begin to collect any data until IRB approval is given**. I will notify you in writing when we've been approved by the UT Institutional Review Board. The form can be found at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humanresearch/forms/Student%20classes%20project%20form.pdf>

**Prior** to completing the form, students should read the information at the following website:

<http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humanresearch/manual/section8.php>

This second requirement is worth 10/60 points.

C. At the conclusion of this project, students will submit a professional report that summarizes the activities of the project and the findings. The following outline should be utilized. Additional information, including example reports will be available.

Outline for Report

- A. Abstract (200 - 500 words)
- B. Introduction (2 pages)
- C. Brief literature review (2 - 3 pages, 10 citations)
- D. Methods (2 - 4 pages, 2 - 4 references)
- E. Findings (2 - 4 pages)
- F. Discussion (2 - 4 pages)
- G. Summary (200 - 500 words)

Additional guidance on this requirement will be provided. This third requirement is worth 40/60 points. The final report is **due by May 8, 2006 at 10 am Austin time.**

### **Assignment # 3**

#### **Presentation of Findings to Key Agency Personnel**

Each student will present her report and findings to their field instructor, executive director, and other key organization and community members. The student will be responsible for making the arrangements for this presentation with her field instructor. The presentation should be scheduled for approximately 30 minutes and include a Power Point presentation. If the agency doesn't have the technology for Power Point, the student can distribute printed Power Point slides. The Power Point presentation should be built on the information presented in the report.

At the presentation, the student should also be prepared to submit their final report (Assignment #2C above) to her field instructor and the executive director. The student should ask her field instructor to complete a feedback form (See Section XIII for criteria and form) and submit **it to me by email by May 8<sup>th</sup>**. The student may choose to have other attendees complete this form, but should ask them to remain anonymous in their written feedback. These do not have to be submitted to me. The student will also be asked to complete the form on herself and **submit it to me by May 8<sup>th</sup>**. I will average the scores of the two (field instructor and student's self evaluation) and this will count for 10/30 points of this assignment.

Students will submit a copy of her Power Point to the instructor by **May 8<sup>th</sup> at 10 am Austin time.** This assignment gives students the opportunity to practice her skills in moving from how to present research and evaluation findings in written form to how to present

it orally. The Power Point presentation will be evaluated by the instructor and will count for 20/30 points of this assignment.

**X. Course Calendar**

<b>Day &amp; Date</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Topic</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Week of January 16	Introduction to Course Expectations and Research	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of January 23	Human Subjects Protection	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of January 30	The Research Question	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of February 6	The Literature Review	Weekly Assigned Readings  <b>Assignment # 1 Due by February 6<sup>th</sup></b>
Week of February 13	The Literature Review	Weekly Assigned Readings  Assignment #2 A Due by February 13th
Week of February 20	Methodology	Weekly Assigned Readings  <b>Assignment #2 Form Due by February 20<sup>th</sup></b>
Week of February 27	Methodology	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of March 6	Methodology	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of March 13	Data Analysis	<b>Spring Break</b>
Week of March 20	Data Analysis	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of March 27	Data Analysis	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of April 3	Report Writing	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of April 10	Report Writing	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of April 17	Report Writing	Weekly Assigned Readings
Week of April 24		
Week of May 1		
MAY 8		<b>Power Point Presentation Due Final Report are Due</b>

**\* All assignments are due at 10 am Austin time on the due day, unless otherwise indicated.**

**XI. 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?

### XII. Criteria for Evaluation of Written Work

#### 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

**XIII. Criteria for Evaluating Agency Presentation**

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Field Instructor's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Inadequate Or Poor</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Broad understanding of the issues				
Recapitulation without reading points				
Relevance of points on the Power Point or handout				
Ability to lead discussion				
Creativity of presentation				
Added to agency understanding				
Overall presentation style				

Strengths of the Presentation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Suggestions for Improvement:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_ (1 - 10; where 10 is high)

Other Comments:

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#### XIV. References

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