
**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number:	SW 395R1	Instructor:	D. W. Springer, PH.D., LMSW-ACP
Unique Number:	61230	E-mail:	dwspringer@mail.utexas.edu
Semester:	Spring 2002	Phone:	471-0512
Meeting Time:	Monday 5:30 - 8:30pm	Office Room:	2.202C
Meeting Place:	SWB 2.112	Office Hours:	Monday 4pm to 5pm Or by appointment

**APPLIED SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH AND EVALUATION IN
CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK**

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 in the area of clinical practice. 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 course and/or be in their final field practicum.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Demonstrate skill in giving and using collegial consultation through the presentation and analysis of complex and vulnerable client population situations and those of related systems, with particular attention to diversity and empowerment.
2. Complete scholarly reviews of literature on assessment and intervention methods related to client/problem situations in their area of practice.
3. Critically evaluate research data supporting assessment tools and intervention strategies related to client/problem strategies.
4. Critically evaluate the appropriateness of assessment and intervention strategies related to characteristics of special population groups.
5. Demonstrate an individualized and integrated understanding of social work practice through the development of a paper presenting the student's personal practice model, with particular attention to conflicting values, ethical dilemmas, empowerment and social justice.

III. TEACHING METHODS

Teaching methods will consist of lecture, discussion, collegial consultation, and experiential learning through examples. The class is divided into three major components for learning: (1) Lecture and discussion on how to understand and conduct practice research. The purpose is to prepare practitioners to use evidenced-based practice as a foundation for their work and to be good consumers of clinical research; (2) Applications of learning are emphasized by requiring students to carry out single case studies and clinical monitoring of their practice, or a program evaluation, in their field placement; (3) Group case consultations on single case studies from the field experience will be used to help students with applications of research designs and evidenced-based practice with cases. The purpose is to help practitioners to learn how to receive case consultations, and apply critical thinking and research principles to on-going cases.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

Royse, D., Thyer, B. A., Padgett, D. K., & Logan, T. K. (2001). Program evaluation: An introduction (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Required Course Packet is available from Speedway Copying in Dobie Mall (Phone # 478-3334).

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (2000). Measures for clinical practice: A sourcebook. Volumes I & II (3rd ed.). New York: Free Press.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to attend class sessions regularly and to participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are expected to **complete the readings prior to class**, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions. Failure to regularly attend the class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade. Students are to notify the professor if they are going to be absent. Students are responsible for any material missed due to absences.
2. Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, **late assignments will not be accepted without penalty**. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date **at the beginning of class**. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. If accepted, late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of four (4) points each day late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.
3. Student feedback is welcome. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during office hours, by phone, by e-mail, and by appointment if they desire.
4. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades prior to the end of the semester. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable!**

Special Accommodations for Students with a Disability

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. Please notify the professor of any special accommodations that you may need prior to the end of the second week of class.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs>).

Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practice related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams

Students must complete the "Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams" online training and submit a Certificate of Completion to the professor no later than week 4 of this semester. The training can be found at the following web-site: <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/cbt/nonNIHpeople.html>. You may also go to the UT-Austin Homepage (<http://www.utexas.edu>) and follow the following steps: click on Faculty in the left hand margin, click on Research, click on the Research Web, click on Policies and Procedures, and then click on the Use of Human Subjects in Research, and finally, click on NIH's Protection of Human Subjects Research. Follow the directions for the training from that point. **Completing this training is worth 5 points of your final course grade.**

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

I. Personal Practice Model Paper

This paper is a cohesive statement of your current personal practice theory and model. Integrate past and recent theory and knowledge gained over the course of the MSSW program, as well as other relevant educational work and life experiences that have contributed to your preparation for professional social work practice. The paper should be 12 to 15 pages, and will be worth a possible 40% of the final grade. Be sure to proofread your paper; 5 points of the total (40) points will be allocated for use of APA (4th ed.) format and any errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling). This assignment is an opportunity for you to synthesize your knowledge and experiences in social work as it relates to your current philosophical views and belief systems. It is a personal statement about your theoretical orientation, assumptions, and views about human behavior and the best strategies for working with clients toward change. A well thought-out

practice framework will be a valuable part of your preparation for professional practice. Please limit your focus to 2 to 3 theories or models. When possible, the relevant literature must be used to support your arguments.

Outline for Personal Practice Model Paper

- I. A self-reflective personal statement about yourself (2 pages). Include a discussion about how your values, culture, and personal characteristics relate to your theoretical orientation for social work practice.
- II. Discussion of your theoretical model(s) (5-7 pages).
 - A. Major assumptions about the human behavior and change
 - B. Values inherent in the model
 - C. Strengths and weaknesses inherent in the model (this should include the degree to which the effectiveness of your chosen theory or model is supported by the empirical literature).
 - D. Your personal attraction to the model
- III. A statement about your personal philosophy for practice (2-3 pages). In your opinion, what really makes the difference between a competent practitioner and a less competent one? Address issues around culture, ethnicity, and gender.
- IV. Critical learning incidents (2-3 pages). What has been most effective in helping you learn to become an effective practitioner?
- V. Summary and critical analysis of your preparation for practice (1-2 pages)

II. Evaluation Paper

Students must conduct a practice evaluation study on a client-system in their field practicum. The purpose of this paper is to facilitate each student's development as a **practitioner-researcher**. The ability to integrate practice theory and skills with applied research is the key to becoming an effective and competent social work practitioner. Students have the option to either implement a single-system design on a client-system that they are working with in their practicum, or to conduct a program evaluation of a component of their practicum agency. Students need to get individual approval from the professor for their topic and design for this paper. The paper should be 15-20 pages, and will be worth 50% of the final grade. Be sure to proofread your paper; 5 points of the total (50) points will be allocated for use of APA (4th ed.) format and any errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling). A search of the literature should include journal articles as well as pertinent book chapters or monographs. Emphasis should be given to the most recent (within the past 10 years) literature and studies. Of course, seminal pieces that fall outside of this time parameter should still be included. While no specific number of articles are suggested for writing the paper, it is assumed that most papers will have a lengthy reference list to demonstrate one's mastery of the relevant literature. Although students are encouraged to utilize the Internet to search for material, they may not rely on web sites at the expense of using referred journal articles for the literature review. It is recommended that students set up the paper, using both headings and subheadings in their presentation, following the proposed outline below and to consult chapter 15 in the Royse et al. text.

Outline for Evaluation Paper

- I. Abstract (200 to 250 words)
- II. Scholarly literature review (4-5 pages). A review of the literature related to the problem area being studied. If conducting a single-system design with a client-system, this review should focus on outcome studies of specific interventions with the problem area(s) that you are targeting with your client-system. In other words, summarize the literature so that the reader knows which interventions are effective (or not effective) with this particular problem. If conducting a program evaluation of a component of your practicum agency, then this review should focus on similar programs (or components), any studies that have been done on these programs, and what the findings were. So, for example, if you decide to evaluate a therapy group in your agency to determine its effectiveness, you would be wise to start with a search in the group work literature.
- III. Methods section (5-7 pages).
 - A. A description of the client-system (case) or program.
 - B. A description of your research design and why you chose it (e.g., A-B, A-B-A, case study, program evaluation, etc.)
 - C. A thorough explanation of your methods of measurement. If conducting a single-system design, this would entail a description of any measurement instruments that you are using (i.e., validity, reliability, clinical utility) or analytical approach (i.e., analytic induction) if you are using narrative data in lieu of or in addition to quantitative data. If conducting a program evaluation, this would entail a description of how you will implement the evaluation and of the methods of measurement (i.e., staff interviews, measurement instruments, etc.) that you will use.
 - D. If conducting a single-system design, provide a detailed description of the intervention being studied (including what treatment was provided to the client-system), the number of sessions conducted, and the theoretical framework guiding the intervention(s). Also, describe what provisions you have made for follow-up. If conducting a program evaluation, provide a detailed description of the program under study, the theoretical framework(s) guiding the program, the players involved in running the program, which component of the program is being studied, and so on.
- IV. Results (3-5 pages). Provide a description of your findings. This should include a description of what happened in the study across time in the process of applying the intervention. Display graphs of data from measurement instruments at baseline and during the course of data collection. Describe in narrative the changes (or lack thereof) that you observed. In other words, what happened in the process of the case and what do you think this means in terms of the progress of the case (or the effectiveness of the program if you did a program evaluation).
- V. Discussion (3-4 pages). Revisit the results and the case process (or program evaluation) and discuss in more detail the implications of what you have learned and how it may apply to other clinicians who are working with similar problems, applying similar interventions, or working in similar programs. Have your findings changed anything about how you will practice when in the field?

VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Personal Practice Model Paper	40%
Evaluation Paper	50%
Human Subjects Training	5%
<u>Class Attendance and Participation</u>	<u>5%</u>
TOTAL	100%

GRADING SCALE

100 – 90 points = A
89 – 80 points = B
79 – 70 points = C
69 – 60 points = D
59 and below = F

Grading of all written assignments will take into account the quality of the writing as well as the content. The American Psychological Association (APA) – 4th edition format should be used. Written material should be carefully proof read and errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling) corrected. Good writing requires a reiterative process that must be followed if quality is to improve. I strongly encourage you to read your paper several times and, if possible, have someone else proof it.

VIII. COURSE OUTLINE (TENTATIVE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics, Readings and Assignments</u>
January 14	<u>Topics</u> Introductions and Class Overview Review Syllabus Integrating Research and Practice
January 21	No Class - Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
January 28	<u>Topics</u> Use of Theories and Models to Inform Clinical Practice Basic Principles of Intervention Research Specifying Problems and Goals Selecting a Design <u>Readings</u> Chapter 1 – Royse et al. Munson, C. (1993). Theory and Practice Connection - Coursepacket Prochaska, J. O., & Norcross, J. C. (1999). Comparative Conclusions: Toward a Transtheoretical Therapy - Coursepacket Springer, D. W. (2002). Treatment Planning with Adolescents: ADHD Case Application - Coursepacket

- February 4** **NIH Human Subjects Certificate of Completion Due**
- Topics**
 Ethical Issues in Program Evaluation
 Formative and Process Evaluation
- Readings**
 Chapters 2 & 5 - Royse et al.
- February 11** **Topics**
- Licensure Workshop – Utopia Theater @ 5:30pm
 Single System Research Designs
- Readings**
 Chapter 6 – Royse et al.
 Brophy, B. (2000). Social Work Treatment of Sleep Disturbance in a
 5-Year-Old Boy - Coursepacket
- February 18** **Topics**
- Single System Research Designs – continued
 Goal Attainment Scaling
 Individualized Ratings Scales
 Behavioral Observation
- Readings**
 Chapter 7 – Royse et al.
 Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Orme, J. (1999). Individualized Rating Scales -
 Coursepacket
- February 25** **No Class – Library Day**
- Topic**
 Writing-up Evaluation Findings
- Readings**
 Chapter 15 – Royse et al.
- March 4** **Personal Practice Model Papers Due**
- Topics**
 Selecting Measurement Tools
 Reliability and Validity
- Readings**
 Chapters 11 & 12 – Royse et al.
- March 11** **No Class – Spring Break**
- March 18** **Topics**
- Conducting Needs Assessments
 Qualitative Methods in Evaluation
- Readings**
 Chapters 3 & 4 – Royse et al.

March 25	<p><u>Topic</u> Group Research Designs</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Chapter 9 – Royse et al. Springer, D. W., Lynch, C., & Rubin, A. (2000). Effects of a Solution-Focused Mutual Aid Group – Coursepacket</p>
April 1	<p><u>Topics</u> Pragmatic Issues in Evaluation Treatment Fidelity Culturally Sensitive Evaluation Practice</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Chapter 13 – Royse et al. Nelson, J. C. (1994). Ethics, Gender, and Ethnicity in Single-Case Research and Evaluation - Coursepacket</p>
April 8	<p><u>Topics</u> Client Satisfaction Cost Effectiveness and Cost Analysis Designs</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Chapters 8 & 10 – Royse et al.</p>
April 15	<p><u>Topic</u> Making Sense of Evaluation Data</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Chapter 14 – Royse et al.</p>
April 22	<p><u>Topic</u> Making Sense of Evaluation Data</p>
April 29	<p>Evaluation Papers Due</p> <p>Last Day: Course Evaluation and Wrap Up</p>