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

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW395R1	<b>Instructor:</b>	D. W. Springer, PH.D., LMSW-ACP
<b>Unique Number:</b>	62281	<b>E-mail:</b>	dwspringer@mail.utexas.edu
<b>Semester:</b>	Spring 2003	<b>Phone:</b>	512-471-0512
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	Tuesday 5:30 - 8:30pm	<b>Office Room:</b>	2.202C
<b>Meeting Place:</b>	SWB 2.112	<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesday 4:30pm to 5:30pm or contact Hollee Ganner (471-9824; hganner@mail.utexas.edu) to schedule an appointment

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**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

This course is designed to include a variety of teaching methodologies to achieve the expectation of student mastery of theoretically-grounded advanced practice skill competencies as a practitioner-researcher. Learning activities will include readings, writings, discussions, lectures, speakers, videos, and experiential exercises.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

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

Required Course Packet is available from Speedway Copying in Dobie Mall.

### RECOMMENDED TEXTS

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

Fonagy, P., Target, M., Cottrell, D., Phillips, J., & Kurtz, Z. (2002). What works for whom? A critical review of treatments for children and adolescents. Guilford Press.

Nathan, P., & Gorman, J. M. (2002). A guide to treatments that work (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Oxford University Press.

Westerfelt, A., & Dietz, T. J. (2001). Planning and conducting agency-based research: A workbook for social work students in field placements (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

### 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 three (3) 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.

## **VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **I. Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams**

Students must complete the National Institutes of Health (NIH) "Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams" online training and submit a Certificate of Completion to the professor no later than week 3 of this semester. To complete the online training, you should go to <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/cbt/nonNIHpeople.html>, and scroll down until you see "Click on [HERE](#) to start the training module for extramural researchers, 'Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams'". From there, click on Register. On the registration page, when it asks what type of course credit, choose "Completion Certificate only, no continuing education credits." Completing this training is worth 10 points of your final course grade.

### **II. Promising Practices and Intervention Plan Paper**

Students need to get individual approval from the professor for their topic for this paper, which will be completed in four parts (see outline below). The paper should be about 30-35 pages, double-spaced, in its entirety, and will be worth 60% of the final grade. The paper will be turned in throughout the semester in components, so that students receive feedback on their papers over the course of the semester. Be sure to proofread your paper; 5 points of the total (60) points will be allocated for use of APA (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) format and any errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling). It is recommended that students set up the paper, using both headings and subheadings in their presentation, following the proposed outline below. For additional specificity on each section, refer to chapter 15 in the Royse et al. text.

## Part I. Scholarly Literature Review

The focus of this portion of the paper is on developing or selecting an evidence-based intervention plan for a problem related to social work practice. The level of practice should be micro or mezzo. A few examples of problems might be: abusive parents (prevention or treatment), traumatized children or adults, family preservation, substance abuse, depression among nursing home residents, preventing hospitalization among individuals with chronic brain disorders, coping with death and dying, marital problems, runaways, school dropout, HIV/AIDS prevention, caregiver burden, and many more - these are just some illustrations to help you consider what you may want to choose. The intervention plan you select or develop should emerge from a comprehensive review of recently published outcome studies on the effectiveness of interventions that have been tested in the past for your selected problem (or related problems). If there is adequate empirical evidence suggesting that a particular intervention approach may be the most effective way to intervene with your selected problem, then you should select that approach and justify your selection based on the evidence. If the existing studies fail to provide such evidence, you may devise something different, and supply a rationale as to why the approach you devise is worth trying and evaluating. Perhaps it was effective with a different type of problem, and you may think it might work as well with the problem you've selected. Or perhaps nothing in the past has worked with your problem, and you want to test out a new approach being promoted in the literature that may or may not work better than what has been tried before. In your review of research be sure to address the major methodological strengths and/or weaknesses of the key studies you review. Do NOT just cite reviews of studies. Be sure to review the main studies first-hand, yourself. Show that you can distinguish those studies that are sufficiently sound methodologically to guide practice from those whose methodological weaknesses imply the need for more rigorous research before evidence-based practice implications are warranted. Explain/justify your intervention plan based on the evidence you have found in your review. There is no specific minimum number of studies that you need to review. Just make sure you've found the most relevant recent as well as seminal studies. For some problems, this may be less than a handful. For others, it may be several handfuls. If you cannot find ample evidence in studies published within the past several years, you may have to look for earlier studies. One highly rigorous, internally valid study is worth much more than a multitude of studies that lack validity. This portion of the paper can be broken down into two major components, as outlined below. (This section in its entirety should be about 10 pages.)

- A. **Introduction.** This section of the paper serves three purposes. First, it describes the targeted problem or client population, placing them within some context. Second, it provides a statement of the problem or questions to be explored. Finally, it states the significance of the problem and the rationale behind examining it. See the Royse et al. text and selected readings from the Coursepacket for examples. (This section should be approximately 3 pages.)
- B. **Scholarly Literature Review.** The literature review should begin with a comprehensive review of key databases, such as PsychLit., Medline, and so on. The literature review should include journal articles as well as pertinent book chapters or monographs. Emphasis should be given to the most recent (within the past 5 years) literature and studies, with primary emphasis given to methodologically sound outcomes studies and meta-analyses that examine the effectiveness of existing interventions (what works?). Of course, seminal pieces that fall outside of this time parameter should still be included. 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. (While literature reviews will vary depending on topic area, this section should be approximately 7 to 8 pages.)

## **Part II. Single-Case Evaluation Design**

In Part II of this assignment, students will develop and describe a single-case evaluation design for evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention selected in Part I. The idea here is to see if the intervention that was probabilistically effective (as appraised in Part I) is also effective when you apply it to a particular case. The methodology you design should contain as high a degree of internal validity and design rigor as possible, given feasibility constraints. History should be well controlled, and measurement bias should be minimized within the constraints of feasibility. If existing measurement instruments are used, they should have established reliability and validity, and their reliability and validity should be documented in your paper. If feasibility constraints require that you use a weaker type of design, or less rigorous measurement procedures, this should be well justified.

This section includes five major components, and will be written in future tense, as here you are proposing to implement a single-system design or a program evaluation. This section should also be informed by the scholarly literature review from Part I. (This section in its entirety should be about 8 to 10 pages.)

- A. Provide an overview of the evaluation design (e.g., A-B, A-B-A, case study, program evaluation, etc.) and data collection procedures (including who will collect the data, and the number of data points in each phase). If there are plans for follow-up, those should be described here.
- B. Describe the sampling design. This should entail a brief description of the individual, group, or family that will be the target of intervention.
- C. Describe the intervention or program (independent variable). If proposing to conduct a single-system design, provide a detailed description of the intervention to be studied (including what treatment will be provided to the client-system and the theoretical framework guiding the intervention). If proposing to conduct a program evaluation, provide a detailed description of the program under study, the theoretical framework(s) guiding the program, which components of the program are to be studied, and so on.
- D. Provide a thorough explanation of your methods of measurement and instrumentation. If conducting a single-system design, this will entail a description of any measurement instruments that you would use (i.e., reliability, validity, clinical utility). If conducting a program evaluation, this would entail a description of the methods of measurement (i.e., staff interviews, measurement instruments, etc.) that you would use.
- E. Describe the procedures that you will use to analyze the data (e.g., visual inspection of the data, comparing group means, etc.). According to the existing knowledge base, what outcomes (dependent variables) seem to be the most clinically significant or meaningful? What outcomes should practitioner-researchers be interested in with this client population?

## **Part III. Integration of Four Areas of Social Work Education**

How does knowledge gained in Social Work Practice, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Policy, and Research interact with and/or effect your understanding of the client system or program under study? Keep in mind the relevance of issues, such as diversity, culture, life-cycle, spiritual, and/or sexual orientation, that may impact the treatment and research (single-system design or program evaluation) with this population. (This section should be approximately 5 to 6 pages.)

Examples:

1. You are working with a recently separated, Hispanic woman who has experienced spousal abuse.
  - *Practice:* What spousal-abuse practice models are currently being used which can best inform your work with this client?
  - *Human Behavior in the Social Environment:* What theoretical model(s) of human behavior may be impacting your understanding of this client and her relationship with her spouse and/or family?
  - *Policy:* What relevant policy/laws (national or state) may be impacting this client and her options?
  - *Research:* What is the current, evidence-based practice research related to spousal abuse interventions among Hispanic couples that might inform your work with this client?
  
2. You are evaluating why there is a high attrition rate in your agency, which is an outpatient substance abuse treatment program for adolescents.
  - *Practice:* What does the current evidence-base literature say about the most effective methods of engaging substance-abusing adolescents in outpatient treatment? What factors predict treatment retention?
  - *Human Behavior in the Social Environment:* What theoretical model(s) of human behavior may impact this agency's approach to service delivery with substance-abusing adolescents?
  - *Policy:* What relevant policy/laws (national or state) presently influence funding to substance abuse treatment programs for adolescents?
  - *Research:* What research has been conducted that examines attrition rates among substance-abusing teens? What does this research reveal?

**Part IV. Conclusion**

Given your review of the literature, synthesize any implications for social work practice. Have your findings from the literature review changed how you will practice when working with this problem area or population? Identify and discuss any potential limitations of the methodology (described in Section III). Outline your recommended suggestions for the future direction of social work practice in this area based on your review of the literature. For example, what interventions should the field abandon, and what ones need further testing? Is there empirical support for certain interventions? Do the existing interventions appear to help clients? If so, to what extent? (This section should be about 4 to 5 pages.)

**V. References.**

**VI. Appendices.**

#### **IV. Presentation of Promising Practices**

Having gained expertise in a specific area of study, students will share what they have learned with their peers through a 10-minute oral presentation. If students have areas that overlap (e.g., one student has researched the outcome literature for treatment of depression in adults, and another student has researched treatment of depression in children and adolescents), they may choose to co-present a 15-minute presentation (no more than 3 students per presentation). Prior approval from the professor must be obtained for co-presentations. Students are encouraged to use PowerPoint or other visual aids in their presentation, and to provide handouts to the class summarizing the content of their presentation. Students will present the “state-of-the-art” related to the client population or problem area that they examined through their search of the literature, and will lead a class discussion that focuses on how the four primary areas of social work education (practice, human behavior in the social environment, policy, and research) may intersect with or effect the client issue or problem area that they researched. The presentation should also cover the “state-of-the-art” with regard to standardized instruments (or other forms of measurement) that are available to monitor treatment progress with the client population. Students are welcome to invite their Field Supervisor or Field Liaison to attend their presentations. The presentation will be worth 20% of the final course grade (co-presenters will receive the same grade). Presentations will be delivered over the last three classes (April 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, or 29<sup>th</sup>).

#### **VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA**

Human Subjects Training	10%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Promising Practices Paper	60%
<u>Promising Practices Presentation</u>	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

#### **Grading Criteria for Promising Practices Paper**

Introduction	7 points
Scholarly Literature Review	15 points
Methodology	15 points
Integration of Four Areas of SW Education	8 points
Conclusion	7 points
References and Appendices	3 points
APA (5 <sup>th</sup> ed.) citation style, grammar, spelling, overall organization, flow, and structure	<u>5 points</u>
	60 points

### **Grading Criteria for Promising Practices Presentation**

Clear verbal and visual presentation of population or problem area researched, summarizing the existing literature with regard to the effectiveness of relevant interventions.	8 points
Clear verbal and visual presentation of assessment tools (or other forms of measurement) for monitoring treatment progress with this client population.	7 points
Inter-relationship of the four areas of SW education with treatment and research of this client system.	<u>5 points</u> 20 points

### **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) – 5<sup>th</sup> edition format must 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 read it (before turning it in!)

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

January 28 <sup>th</sup>	NIH Human Subjects Certificate of Completion Due Sign up for Individual Meeting Times with Professor
February 4 <sup>th</sup>	Meet Individually with Professor to Discuss Paper and Presentation
February 11 <sup>th</sup>	No Class – Student Day at the Legislature
February 18 <sup>th</sup>	Part I of Paper (Literature Review) Due
March 11 <sup>th</sup>	No Class – Spring Break
March 18 <sup>th</sup>	Part II of Paper (Single System Design) Due
April 1 <sup>st</sup>	No Class – Library Day
April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Promising Practices Presentations
April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Promising Practices Presentations
April 29 <sup>th</sup>	Promising Practices Presentations Parts III to VI of Paper Due - Turn in Promising Practices Paper in its Entirety as a Finished Product, Incorporating Feedback from Professor on Previous Sections

## VIII. COURSE OUTLINE (TENTATIVE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics, Readings and Assignments</u>
January 14	<p><b><u>Topics</u></b>            Introductions and Class Overview            Review Syllabus            Integrating Research and Practice            Basic Principles and Philosophical Assumptions            of Empirical Clinical Practice</p>
January 21	<p><b><u>Topics</u></b>            Use of Theories and Models to Inform Clinical Practice            Intervention Research            Specifying Problems and Goals            Treatment Planning</p> <p><b><u>Readings</u></b>            Chapter 1 – Royse et al.            Springer, D. W. (2002). Treatment planning with adolescents:            ADHD case application - Coursepacket            Thyer, B. A. (2002). Principles of evidence-based practice and treatment            development - Coursepacket</p>
January 28	<p><b>NIH Human Subjects Certificate of Completion Due</b></p> <p><b>Sign up for Individual Meeting Times with Professor</b></p> <p><b><u>Topics</u></b>            Ethical Issues in Program Evaluation            Formative and Process Evaluation            Orientation to Agency-Based Research</p> <p><b><u>Readings</u></b>            Chapters 2 &amp; 5 - Royse et al.</p>
February 4	<p><b>Meet Individually with Professor to Discuss Paper and Presentation</b></p> <p><b><u>Topics</u></b>            Writing-up Evaluation Findings</p> <p><b><u>Readings</u></b>            Chapter 15 – Royse et al.            Reid, W. J. (1997). Evaluating the Dodo's verdict: Do all interventions            have equivalent outcomes? <i>Social Work Research</i>, 21, 5-16 –            Coursepacket</p>
February 11	<p><b>NO CLASS – STUDENT DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE</b></p>

**February 18**

**PART I OF PAPER (LITERATURE REVIEW) DUE**

**Topics**

Single System Research Designs  
 Goal Attainment Scaling  
 Individualized Ratings Scales  
 Behavioral Observation

**Readings**

Chapters 6 & 7 – Royse et al.  
 Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Orme, J. (1999). Individualized Rating Scales - Coursepacket  
 Brophy, B. (2000). Social Work Treatment of Sleep Disturbance in a 5-Year-Old Boy - Coursepacket

**February 25**

**Topics**

Single System Research Designs - continued  
 Basic Principles of Measurement  
 Selecting Measurement Tools  
 Reliability and Validity

**Readings**

Chapter 11 & 12 – Royse et al.

**March 4**

**Topics**

Conducting Needs Assessments  
 Qualitative Methods in Evaluation

**Readings**

Chapters 3 & 4 – Royse et al.

**March 11**

**No Class – Spring Break**

**March 18**

**PART II OF PAPER (SINGLE SYSTEM DESIGN) DUE**

**Topics**

Group Research Designs

**Readings**

Chapter 9 – Royse et al.  
 Arnold, Smith, Harrison, & Springer (2000). Adolescents' knowledge and beliefs about pregnancy: The impact of ENABL – Coursepacket  
 Springer, D. W., Lynch, C., & Rubin, A. (2000). Effects of a solution-focused mutual aid group for Hispanic children of incarcerated parents - Coursepacket  
 Valentine & Smith (2001). Evaluating Traumatic Incident Reduction therapy with female inmates: A randomized clinical trial – Coursepacket.

**March 25**

**Topics**

Pragmatic Issues in Evaluation  
 Treatment Fidelity  
 Culturally Sensitive Evaluation Practice

**Readings**

Chapter 13 – Royse et al.  
 Nelson, J. C. (1994). Ethics, Gender, and Ethnicity in Single-Case  
 Research and Evaluation - Coursepacket

**April 1**

**NO CLASS – LIBRARY DAY**

**April 8**

**Topic**

Client Satisfaction  
 Making Sense of Evaluation Data

**Readings**

Chapters 8 &14 – Royse et al.

**April 15**

**Promising Practice Presentations**

**April 22**

**Promising Practice Presentations**

**April 29**

**PARTS III TO VI OF PAPER DUE.**

**TURN IN PROMISING PRACTICES PAPER IN ITS ENTIRETY  
 AS A FINISHED PRODUCT, HAVING INCORPORATED ANY  
 FEEDBACK FROM PROFESSOR ON PREVIOUS SECTIONS**

**Promising Practice Presentations**

**Course Evaluation and Wrap Up**

### Required Coursepacket Readings

- Arnold, E. M., Smith, T. E., Harrison, D. F., & Springer, D. W. (2000). Adolescents' knowledge and beliefs about pregnancy: The impact of ENABL. *Adolescence*, 35(139), 485-498.
- Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Orme, J. (1999). Individualized rating scales. In *Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (pp. 182-198). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Brophy, B. (2000). Social work treatment of sleep disturbance in a 5-year-old boy: A single-case evaluation. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 10(6), 748-758.
- Nelson, J. C. (1994). Ethics, gender, and ethnicity in single-case research and evaluation. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 18(3/4), 139-152.
- Reid, W. J. (1997). Evaluating the Dodo's verdict: Do all interventions have equivalent outcomes? *Social Work Research*, 21, 5-16.
- Springer, D. W. (2002). Treatment planning with adolescents: ADHD case application. In A. R. Roberts, & G. J. Greene (Eds.), *Social Workers' Desk Reference* (pp. 324-327). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Springer, D. W., Lynch, C., & Rubin, A. (2000). Effects of a solution-focused mutual aid group for Hispanic children of incarcerated parents. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 17(6), 431-442.
- Thyer, B. A. (2002). Principles of evidence-based practice and treatment development. In A. R. Roberts, & G. J. Greene (Eds.), *Social Workers' Desk Reference* (pp. 739-742). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Valentine, P. V., & Smith, T. E. (2001). Evaluating Traumatic Incident Reduction therapy with female inmates: A randomized clinical trial. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 11(1), 40-52.