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

Course Number:	SW385S1	Instructor:	D. W. Springer, PH.D., LCSW
Unique Number:	63125	E-mail:	dwspringer@mail.utexas.edu
Semester:	Spring 2006	Phone:	512-471-0512
Meeting Time:	Wednesday 2:30-5:30pm	Office Room:	2.202C
Meeting Place:	SWB 2.132	Office Hours:	Wednesday 1:30 to 2:30pm or contact Hollee Ganner (471-9824; hganner@mail.utexas.edu) to schedule an appointment

ADVANCED RESEARCH IN CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK

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 practice evaluation research methods in a concurrent field practicum.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed SW 385R and had a course in basic statistics with content on statistical inference.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Formulate and explain an evidence-based administration and planning practice approach for their agency, based on the theoretical and empirical literature, and taking into account issues of ethics, diversity and social justice;
2. Use single-case designs to evaluate their own practice;
3. Understand the application of qualitative and quantitative research methods in clinical practice evaluation;
4. Write and present reports of clinical practice evaluation.

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

Roberts, A. R., & Greene, G. J. (Eds.). (2002). *Social workers' desk reference*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Roberts, A. R., & Yeager, K. R. (Eds.) (2004). *Evidence-based practice manual: Research and outcome measures in health and human services*. New York: Oxford University Press.

OPTIONAL TEXTS

Briggs, H. E., & Rzepnicki, T. (Eds.) (2004). *Using evidence in social work practice*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum.

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

O'Hare, T. (2005). *Evidence-based practices for social workers*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum.

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 two (2) 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

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.

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://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/academicintegrity.html>).

Policy on Absence for Religious Holidays

The UT *General Information* catalog states that "A student who is absent from a class or examination for the observance of a religious holy day may complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence, if proper notice has been given" (p.79). Notice must be given at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates the student will be absent. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, notice should be given on the first day of the semester. For further information, the student may refer to the following link (<http://www.utexas.edu/cee/uex/resources/models.html>).

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 5 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 over the course of the semester as three papers (see outline below). The paper should be about 30-35 pages, double-spaced, in its entirety, and will be worth 70% 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 (70) points will be allocated for use of APA (5th 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.

Paper 1. 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 or maximum 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. (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.)

Paper 2. Single-Case or Program Evaluation Design

In Paper II, students will develop and describe a single-case evaluation design for evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention selected in Paper I. The idea here is to see if the intervention that was probabilistically effective (as appraised in Paper 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 Paper 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?

Paper 3.

Paper 3 includes the following sections: Results and Discussion; Integration of Four Areas of Social Work Education; and Conclusion. References and Appendices should also be included in Paper 3.

A. Results and Discussion

In Paper 3, you will begin by providing 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)? Analyze and discuss the findings of your single-case evaluation. Are they visually significant? Explain why or why not. Are they ambiguous? Explain why or why not? Are there rival interpretations of the findings? Explain. What are the methodological limitations of your study? Explain. (This section of the paper should be approximately 5 pages.)

B. 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?

C. 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.)

D. References.

E. Appendices (Include copies of measurement instruments described in Paper 2, Section D).

III. 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 7- to 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 4 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. 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, as well as the findings from their single-case study or program evaluation. 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 19th, 26th or May 3rd).

VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Human Subjects Training	5%
Class Attendance and Participation	5%
Promising Practices Paper (Total)	70%
Paper 1=22 points	
Paper 2=15 points	
Paper 3=33 points	
<u>Promising Practices Presentation</u>	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Grading Criteria for Promising Practices Paper

Introduction	7 points
Scholarly Literature Review	15 points
Evaluation Design	15 points
Results and Discussion	15 points
Integration of Four Areas of SW Education	5 points
Conclusion	5 points
References and Appendices	3 points
APA (5 th ed.) citation style, grammar, spelling, overall organization, flow, and structure	<u>5 points</u> 70 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.	7 points
Clear verbal and visual presentation of assessment tools (or other forms of measurement) for monitoring treatment progress with this client population.	6 points
Clear verbal and visual presentation of findings and interpretation of findings.	<u>7 points</u> 20 points

GRADING SCALE

100 - 94 = A
 93 - 90 = A-
 89 - 87 = B+
 86 - 84 = B
 83 - 80 = B-
 79 - 77 = C+
 76 - 74 = C
 73 - 70 = C-
 69 - 67 = D+
 66 - 64 = D
 63 - 60 = 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) – 5th 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

February 1 st	NIH Human Subjects Certificate of Completion Due Sign up for Individual Meeting Times with Professor
February 8 th	Meet Individually with Professor to Discuss Paper
February 15 th	Meet Individually with Professor to Discuss Paper
March 8 th	Paper 1 Due
March 15 th	No Class – Spring Break
March 29 th	Paper 2 Due
April 12 th	No Class – Library Day
April 19 th	Promising Practices Presentations
April 26 th	Promising Practices Presentations
May 3 rd	Promising Practices Presentations Turn in Promising Practices Paper in its Entirety as a Finished Product Last Day of Class

VIII. COURSE OUTLINE (TENTATIVE)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics, Readings and Assignments</u>
January 18	<p><u>Topics</u> Introductions and Class Overview Review Syllabus Basic Principles of Evidence-Based Practice</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Syllabus</p>
January 25	<p><u>Topics</u> The Process of Evidence-Based Practice Specifying Problems and Goals Treatment Planning</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Cournoyer, B. R., & Powers, G. T. (2002). Evidence-Based Social Work: The Quiet Revolution Continues (Ch. 143). In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, <i>Social Workers' Desk Reference</i>. Gibbs, L. (2002). How Social Workers Can Do More Good Than Harm: Critical Thinking, Evidence-Based Clinical Reasoning, and Avoiding Fallacies (Ch. 135). In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, <i>Social Workers' Desk Reference</i>. Roberts, A. R., & Yeager, K. (2004). Systematic Reviews of Evidence-Based Studies and Practice-Based Research: How to Search For, Develop, and Use Them (Ch. 1). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, <i>Evidence-Based Practice Manual</i>. Springer, D. W. (2002). Treatment Planning with Adolescents: ADHD Case Application (Ch. 58). In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, <i>Social Workers' Desk Reference</i>. Review Appendix in A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, <i>Evidence-Based Practice Manual</i>, entitled Internet Resources on Evidence-Based Practice and Research in Health Care and Human Services.</p>
February 1	<p>NIH Human Subjects Certificate of Completion Due</p> <p>Sign up for Individual Meeting Times with Professor</p> <p><u>Topics</u> Single-Case Evaluation and Monitoring Client's Treatment Progress</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Springer, D. W. (2004). Treating Juvenile Delinquents with Conduct Disorder, ADHD, and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (Ch. 27). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, <i>Evidence-Based Practice Manual</i>. Tripodi, T. (2002). Single-Subject Designs (Ch. 134). In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, <i>Social Workers' Desk Reference</i>.</p>
February 8	Meet Individually with Professor to Discuss Paper
February 15	Meet Individually with Professor to Discuss Paper

February 22

Topics

Client-Focused Measures
 Individualized Ratings Scales
 Client Logs and Client-Monitored Observation
 Goal-Attainment Scales

Readings

Pike, C. K. (2002). Developing Client-Focused Measures (Ch. 33).
 In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, *Social Workers' Desk Reference*.

March 1

Topics

Basic Principles of Measurement
 Selecting Measurement Tools
 Reliability and Validity

Readings

Corcoran, K. (2004). Locating Measurement Tools and Instruments for Individuals and Couples (Ch. 49). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.
 Faul, A. C., & Van Zyl, M.A. (2004). Constructing and Validating a Specific Multi-Item Assessment or Evaluation Tool (Ch. 61). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.
 Franklin, C., Cody, A., & Jordan, C. (2004). Validity and Reliability in Family Assessment (Ch. 45). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.
 Springer, D. W. (2002). Assessment Protocols and Rapid Assessment Instruments with Troubled Adolescents (Ch. 39). In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, *Social Workers' Desk Reference*.
 Also see Section VI: Assessment Tools and Measures in A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual* for select chapters based on your area(s) of interest.

March 8

PAPER 1 DUE

Topics

Qualitative Research

Readings

Casey, M. A., & Krueger, R. (2004). An Overview of Focus Group Interviewing (Ch. 6). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.
 O'Connor, M. K. (2002). Using Qualitative Research in Practice Evaluation (Ch. 139). In A. R. Roberts and G. J. Greene, *Social Workers' Desk Reference*.
 Oktay, J. S., & Park-Lee, E. Y. (2004). Using Qualitative Research to Enhance Practice: The Example of Breast Cancer in African American Women (Ch. 77). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.

March 15

NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

March 22

Topics

Program Evaluation
Formative and Process Evaluation

Readings

Smith, M. J. (2004). Process versus Outcome Evaluation (Ch. 65).
In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.
Smith, M. J. (2002). Program Evaluation (Ch. 136). In A. R. Roberts
and G. J. Greene, *Social Workers' Desk Reference*.

March 29

PAPER 2 DUE

Topics

Ethical Issues
Culturally Sensitive Evaluation Practice
Needs Assessments
Client Satisfaction

Readings

Antle, B. J., Regehr, C., & Mishna, F. (2004). Qualitative Research
Ethics (Ch. 13). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based
Practice Manual*.
Leigh, D. (2004). Needs Assessment: A Step-by-Step Approach (Ch.
68). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice
Manual*.

April 5

Topics

Making Sense of It All

Readings

Mullen, E. J. (2004). Facilitating Practitioner Use of Evidence-Based
Practice (Ch. 20). In A. R. Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based
Practice Manual*.
Nathan, P. E. (2004). The Clinical Utility of Therapy Research: Bridging
the Gap Between the Present and the Future (Epilogue). In A. R.
Roberts and K. R. Yeager, *Evidence-Based Practice Manual*.

April 12

NO CLASS – LIBRARY DAY

April 19

Promising Practice Presentations

April 26

Promising Practice Presentations

May 3

Promising Practice Presentations

**TURN IN PROMISING PRACTICES PAPER IN ITS
ENTIRETY AS A FINISHED PRODUCT (PAPERS 1, 2, & 3),
HAVING INCORPORATED ANY FEEDBACK FROM
PROFESSOR ON PREVIOUS SECTIONS**

Course Evaluation and Wrap Up