

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 547 - Evaluation Research
Class: Thursday 12:40-3:25
Office hours: Wednesday 2:30-3:30,
Thursday 3:30-4:30 & by appt.

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Fall 2002

Code of Conduct

It is the student=s responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook (www.csw.utk.edu).

Honor Statement:

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity (*Hilltopics*. 2000).

Disability Services

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library, (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description:

This course is one of three required core courses for Management and Community Practice concentration students. It focuses on the history and philosophies, conceptual approaches, techniques and methods, and issues in the practice and utilization of evaluation research as applied to the development and evaluation of social work programs and policies. The course utilizes an experiential format, integrating issues in the course with actual program evaluations in the field.

Rationale:

Social workers in a variety of management and community practice roles must be able to understand, appreciate and use diverse research and research methods in order to develop and

implement ethical, efficacious, and accountable programs and policies. Toward that end, it is essential that social work administrators and planners have the advanced knowledge and skills necessary to retrieve and critically evaluate existing program and policy research and the tools to carry out advanced evaluations of programs and policies.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students will demonstrate, through course requirements, the following knowledge and skills:

1. Knowledge of the history, definitions, and philosophies of evaluation research;
2. Skills in accessing relevant evaluation research literature, and how to critically interpret, synthesize, and use it in the development of social work programs and policies;
3. Skills in conducting evaluability assessments, determining program goals and objectives, and determining the needs of populations served;
4. Knowledge of the principles, logic, strengths, and limitations of advanced sampling techniques relevant to evaluation research, and be able to select appropriate sampling strategies for particular evaluation circumstances;
5. Knowledge of the principle, logic, strengths, and limitations of advanced experimental, quasi-experimental, survey, and qualitative research designs, and be able to select appropriate research designs for particular evaluation circumstances;
6. Knowledge of the strengths and limitations of measurement techniques relevant to evaluation research, and be able to select appropriate measurement techniques for particular evaluation circumstances;
7. Skills in data collection, preparation, manipulation, analysis, and presentation of evaluation research data using a microcomputer and statistical software;
8. Skills in appropriate ways to report and disseminate evaluation research results;
9. Knowledge of ethical, political, and organizational factors involved in the conduct of evaluation research;
10. Skills in conducting evaluation research within the ethical guidelines of social work and related codes of ethical behavior;

11. Knowledge of potential biases in evaluation research with minority and disadvantaged groups and the skills to avoid these biases.

Course Requirements:

A. Readings

Basic texts have been selected and readings are listed in the bibliography. In addition to assigned articles, students are encouraged to read from the recommended selections and independently from the professional journals.

B. Assignments and Evaluation

The course grade will be based on a combination of papers and projects conducted at your field placement.

Evaluation critique:	25%
Field Evaluation proposal:	25%
Final Paper	35%
Class Presentation	15%

Grading Scale

A =	90-100
B+=	87-89
B=	80-86
C+=	77-79
C=	70-76
D+=	67-69
D=	60-66
F=	<60

Text:

Required:

Posavac, Emile & Carey, Raymond, Program Evaluation : Methods and Case Studies, 5th edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1997.

Optional Texts:

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (1993). Research Methods for Social Work.

Project Evaluation Criteria: Find an evaluation problem in your field placement.

Criteria for Evaluation Proposal

1. Research Problem (20 pts.)

Select a program evaluation research problem which is of interest and concern to you. You may choose community needs assessment, monitoring of program implementation, outcome assessment, or other programmatic or managerial issues to address the problem.

- What is your programmatic problem?
- What type of evaluation will you use to study this problem?
- Explain why the type of evaluation method you chose is the best to study the problem.

2. Description of the agency (25 pts.)

Briefly describe the setting in which the study will take place.

**Chapter two in Schalock provides an outline which is worthwhile to read. I will have copies made for you.

- *the problem addressed by program
- *target population
- *services provided
- *evaluation context-general social and economic context in community
- *Expected Outcomes
- *justification (you don't need this one-it is encompassed in your lit review above)

3. Justify the need to conduct this study with appropriate literature review. (25 pts.)

- What has been done in the past?
- What is known and not known?
- What will drive your study?
 - *Program goals and objectives?
 - *Theoretical or conceptual assumptions of program?
 - why the program thinks their intervention will be successful.

4. Develop a set of evaluation hypotheses or research questions which you will use to guide and/or test in your study. (20 pts.)

- base this either on your program objectives or on the literature.

5. Technical aspects of the paper (10 pts.)

- APA style
- Headings, page numbers, spelling, grammar

Criteria for final paper

Attach revised first paper to second paper. Turn in two copies of each to instructor (10 pts.)

1. Methods (20 pts.)

A. Sample

- What kind of sampling technique did you use?
- What was the sample size?
- How representative to the program population is your sample?

B. Data Collection Techniques

C. Design

- What type of design was utilized?
- Any internal/external validity issues that need to be discussed? (e.g. attrition)

2. Measurement (20 pts.)

A. What were your variables?

- either list the variables, or if they were specifically delineated to control, independent/intervention and dependent/outcome, discuss this.

B. How were your variables operationalized?

- Discuss definitions and level of measurement here.(may want to create a table)

C. Are there any measurement reliability and validity issues that should be discussed?

3. Type of analysis (10 pts.)

A. What type of analysis did you use? (eg. frequencies, means, etc.)

B. What statistical test were employed, if any?

4. Outcome (10 pts.)

A. What were the results of the evaluation?

B. What were any problems that were encountered?

5. Discussion (10 pts.)

A. What are the implications of the results?

B. What recommendations do you have for the program?

6. Tables and graphs (10 pts.)

-Attach any tables and graphs which help the reader understand the analysis and refer to these throughout the discussion.

7. Technical issues (10 pts.)

-Page numbers, headings, spelling, grammar, APA style.

Class Presentation

1. Why you have done this study, based on literature and program goals. (25 pts.)
What type of evaluation did you do?
2. Research Questions or Hypotheses (15 pts.)
Short synopsis of: (15 pts.)
 3. Data Collection and Sampling Technique, Design used
 4. Variables, defined and operationalized
 5. Type of Analysis
6. Results, using handouts, overheads, etc. (25 pts.)
7. Discussion and recommendations

Students may critique either of the following articles:

Chen, H.T., Bersani, C., Myers, S.C. & Denton, R. (1989) Evaluating the effectiveness of a court sponsored abuser treatment program. Journal of Family Violence, 4(4), 309-322.

Marsh, J.D. & Wirick, Molly A. (1991). Evaluation of Hull House teen pregnancy and parenting program. Evaluation and Program Planning, 14, 49-61.

Criteria for Critique :

1. Purpose of the evaluation (10 pts)
 - Type of Evaluation
 - What are the research questions or hypotheses?
2. Theory or program driven (10 pts)
 - Is the evaluation theory driven?
 - What are the underlying assumptions?
 - Is the evaluation driven by the objectives of the program? If so, what are the objectives?
3. Methods (20 pts)

Sample

Units of analysis
sample size
representativeness

Data Collection Techniques

Design

Type of design
method of collection
internal, external validity issues

4. Measurement (20 pts)

Level of measurement (may want to create a table for this section).

Variables

What are the independent/experimental/treatment variables?
What are the dependent/outcome variables?
Do they have controls?
How are variables operationalized? (create table, for major variables only)
Any discussion of measurement reliability/validity

5. Type of analysis (10 pts.)

Statistical tests employed?

6. Outcomes (20 pts.)

Results of study
Problems they saw with study
Problems you see that they did not
Discrepancies, things that didn't make sense
Any ethical issues?

7. Technical aspects of your paper (10 pts)

APA style, Spelling, grammar, headings, page numbers.

Readings and Outline:

Class one: August 22

Introduction to Evaluative Research
Structure of the course
Understanding Evaluative Research

Class two: August 29

Purpose of Evaluative Research
History and Theories of Evaluation

Overview of Evaluation Research in Social Work

Readings:

- Posavac, Chapter one: Program Evaluation: An Overview
- Reichardt, C. S. & Rallis, S. F. (Eds.) (1994). The qualitative-quantitative debate: New perspectives, *New Directions for Program Evaluation*, 61. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gabor, P. & Grinnell, Jr., R. M. (1994). Should program decisions be based on empirical evidence of effectiveness? Yes. In W. W. Hudson & Nurius, P. S. (Eds.), *Controversial issues in social work research*. Boston. Allyn and Bacon.

Class Three: September 5

Types of Evaluation

Determining Community Needs and Organizational Goals

- Conducting an evaluability assessment
- Conceptualizing and operationalizing program goals and objectives
- Conducting a Community needs assessment
- What is Participatory Action Research?
- Increasing Empowerment and Reducing Oppression: The Antidiscrimination Principle

Readings:

- Posavac, Chapter 3, Selecting Criteria and Setting Standards
Chapter 6, The Assessment of Need
- Reese, Ahern, Nair, O'faire & Warren (1999). Hospice Access and Use by African Americans: Addressing Cultural and Institutional Barriers through Participatory Action Research.
- Gaventa, J. (1988). Participatory Research in North America, *Convergence*, XXI (2/3), 19-28.
- Sohng, S. (). Research as an empowerment strategy. In *Special Issues in Empowerment Practice*

Class four: September 12

Types of Evaluation, continued

- Monitoring (process)
- Program outcomes, impacts

Cost benefit and cost effectiveness analyses

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter 7, Monitoring the Operation of Programs
Chapter 9, Quasi-Experimental Approaches to Outcome
Chapter 11, Analysis of Costs and Outcomes

Class five: September 19

Research questions and evaluative hypotheses
Theory and Literature Review
Begin, Research Designs for Evaluative Research
Pre, quasi and experimental designs
Cross-sectional, exploratory and qualitative designs

Readings:

Chapter 10, Using Experiments to Evaluate programs

Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1979). Experimental & quasi-experimental design for research Chicago: Rand McNally & Company. Pages 6-12; 13, 24-26, 34-39

Class six: September 26

Research Design Issues, continued
Internal and external validity

Readings:

Campbell and Stanley pages 13-23

EVALUATION PROPOSAL DUE Sept. 26

Class seven: October 3

Sampling
Review, units of analysis, variables, levels of measurement

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter four, Developing Measures
Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (1993). Research Methods for Social Work. Chapter 8: The Logic of Sampling.

October 10, Fall Break, no class!

Class eight: October 17

Data collection
Secondary and primary data
Interviews, surveys, telephone, participant observation

Review Rubin and Babbie (1993). Research Methods for Social work: Chapter 6,
Measurement
Hand out; OBSERVATION/VARIABLE MATRIX

Class nine: October 24 ARTICLE CRITIQUE DUE

Data Management
Data entry
Micro Computer Lab
Readings:
Nurius, P. S., & Hudson, W. W. (1993). Human services practice, evaluation and computers. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole Publishing Company. Chapter 7 and peruse Chapter 8.

Class ten: October 31

Measurement, continued
Advanced measurement techniques:
standardized scales and survey questionnaires
Reliability and measurement validity
Understanding systematic bias against diverse groups: ethnic, gender, SES, and sexual orientation as a source of systematic bias.
Readings:
Review Rubin and Babbie (1993). Research Methods for Social work: Chapter 7, constructing measurement instruments.

Class 11: November 7

Data Analysis
Preparing, entering, and manipulating evaluation research data using a microcomputer.
Graphic and tabular presentation of evaluation research data

Class 12: November 14

Computer Lab

Data analysis, continues

Descriptive stats, averages, percentages, cross tabs

Understanding chi square, correlation, T-tests

Class 13: November 21

Interpreting and communicating findings

Ethical Issues in Social Work Education-NASW Code of Ethics

Political and organizational factors involved in planning, conducting, and interpretation of evaluating research

Professional guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluation research

Avoiding bias and understanding the perspectives of minority and disadvantaged groups:

Economic, gender, minority, sexual orientation, biases.

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter 2, page 27-40

Chapter 5, Ethics in Program Evaluation

Chapter 13, Evaluation Reports: Interpreting & Communicating Findings

Chapter 14, How to Encourage Utilization.

Madison, A. (Ed.) (1992). *Minority issues in program evaluation*, *New Directions for Program Evaluation*, 53. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

NASW Code of Ethics in Research (Handout)

November 28, No class, Thanksgiving!

FINAL PAPERS DUE: December 2, 5:00 p.m.

Bibliography

- Clark Abt, editor, The evaluation of social programs, Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1976.
- Scarvia B. Anderson and Samuel Ball, The Profession and Practice of Program Evaluation, Jossey-Bass, 1978.
- L. Angelo and J. March. ADo Training Programs Help AFDC Recipients Leave the Welfare Roles? An Evaluation of New York City's BEGIN Program. Journal of Health and Human Services Administration. 83-104, (Summer, 1997).
- R. G. Ballard, "Some Theoretical and Practical Problems in Evaluating Effectiveness of Counseling," Social Casework, Vol. 38(December 1957), pp. 534.
- Illene N. Bernstein, editor, Validity Issues in Evaluative Research, Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1976.
- Ralph Brody and Holly Krallo, "An Approach to Reviewing the Effectiveness of Programs," Social Work, Vol. 23, No. 3(May 1978), pp. 226-232.
- Richard Caputo, "The Tao of Evaluation: Desiring Good from Flawed Methodology," Administration in Social Work, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1988), pp. 61-69.
- Nancy Cochran, "Cognitive Processes, Social Mores, and the Accumulation of Data, Program Evaluation and the Status Quo," Evaluation Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 2(May 1978), pp. 343-358.
- A. Diabella, "The Research Manager's Role in Encouraging Evaluation Use," Evaluation Review, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1990), pp. 115-119.
- Irwin Epstein and Tony Tripodl, Research Techniques for Program Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation, New York: Columbia University Press, 1972.
- William J. Filstead, "Using Qualitative Methods in Evaluation Research: An Illustrative Bibliography," Evaluation Review, Vol. 14, No. 6(April 1981), pp. 259-268.
- L Forester, B. Evans and R. Fisher, "Evaluation of a Pilot Project in Service Coordination," Evaluation Review, Vol. 14, No. 6 (1990), pp. 616-631.

- Peggy C. Giordano, "The Client's Perspective in Agency Evaluation," Social Work, Vol. 22, No. 1(January 1977), pp. 34-39.
- C. Hudson, "The Performance of State Community Mental Health System: A Path Model," Social Services Review, Vol. 64, No. 1 (1990), pp. 94-120.
- Linda J. Lee and John Sampson, "A Practical Approach to Program Evaluation," Evaluation and Program Planning, Vol. 13 (1990), pp. 157-164.
- Jonathan A. Morell, Program Evaluation in Social Research, New York: Pergamon Press, 1979.
- David Nachmlas, editor, The Practice of Policy Evaluation, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.
- James Neff & W. Zule, "Development of a Measure of Treatment Readiness for Out of Treatment Drug Users: Psychometric Properties and Construct Validity," Substance Use and Misuse, 35: 585-599. 2000.
- Rino J. Patti, Social Welfare Administration: Managing Social Program in a Developmental Context, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983.
- Rino J. Patti, Managing for Effectiveness in Social Welfare Organizations, New York: The Haworth Press, 1987.
- Rino J. Patti, "Managing for Service Effectiveness in Social Welfare Organizations," Social Work, Vol. 32, No. 5(September/October 1987), pp. 377-384.
- Michael Quinn Patton. Utilization-Focused Evaluation, California: Sage Publications, 3rd Edition ,1997.
- Emil J. Posavac and Raymond G. Carey, Program Evaluation: Methods and Case Studies, 2nd edition, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985.
- Peter Rossi and Howard Freeman. Evaluation: A Systematic Approach, 6th Edition, California: Sage Publications, 1999.
- Jack Rothman, Social R and D: Research and Development in the Human Services, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980.
- Simon Slavin, Managing Finances, Personnel, and Information in Human Services, New York: The Hawthorne Press, 1985.
- V. Slonim-Nevo and Y. Anson. "Evaluating Practice: Does it Improve Treatment Outcome?" Social Work Research 22: 66-74. 1998.

E. A. Suchman, Evaluative Research: Principles and Practice in Public Service and Social Action Programs, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1980.

Tony Tripodi, Evaluative Research for Social Workers, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982.

Sonia R. Wright, "Evaluation Research: An Assessment of Theory, Practice, and Politics," Evaluation Quarterly, Vol. 1(February 1977), pp. 5-52.

Related Journals

Evaluation Review (was called
Evaluation Quarterly)
Evaluation Research
Harvard Business Review

Social Service Review
Evaluation and Program Planning
Evaluation Studies Review Annual
Journal of Policy Analysis and Management