

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 526 Evaluating Clinical Practicee
Course Outline**

Fall 2003

Instructor: Marlys Staudt, Ph.D.
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Class times: 9:05-12:05, Thursdays
Office hours: 8-9 am Monday and
Thursday and by appointment

Readings:

Assigned readings are on reserve in Hodges Library. There is no text for the course.

Course Requirements:

The instructor will present materials on practice and evaluation and the students will integrate them with their readings and apply the information to cases in their practice experience and field settings. Students will present these applications on a regular basis.

Students will be expected to read assigned materials, attend class and participate in discussions, and present case applications, including a final treatment evaluation project.

Grading Criteria:

20% of the grade will be based upon the final paper reflecting the results of the evaluation effort.

45% of the grade will be based on 3 brief (3-5 page) papers required throughout the course. Each paper may be adapted for incorporation in the final paper, if applicable. Each paper is worth 15% of the grade.

30% of the grade will be based on three quizzes (10% each).

5% of the grade will be based on attendance, and level and quality of class participation. The class will

be conducted as an integrative seminar; students are expected to discuss their readings, to provide relevant case material from their field sites, as well as contribute to class discussions of other students' case material. Student will present their practice evaluation and aspects of it. Besides showing a grasp of clinical evaluation methods, students must demonstrate a grasp of the ethical issues in practice and its evaluation and special issues related to women, people of color, gay/lesbians, elderly, (e.g., lack of standardized instruments, differential definitions of and terms used to describe problems and outcomes).

No incompletes will be given except in extreme situations. In order for an incomplete to be given, there must be prior negotiation with and agreement from the instructor.

94-100 A
89-93 B+
83-88 B
76-82 C+
70-75 C
68-69 D+
below 68 D

COURSE OUTLINE:

8/21 Session 1

Overview of Course and the Importance of Evaluation

The importance of evaluation in direct social work practice will be discussed, in particular, the ways in which evaluation can contribute to treatment planning and decision-making. In addition, evaluation will be discussed in terms of consumer satisfaction, public accountability, establishing a basis for funding requests, and ethics. Single system design and systematic planned practice will be overviewed as well as goal attainment scaling and some strategies for evaluation of short-term practice. Finally, we will re-visit the purpose of assessment and how the process of assessment leads to the formulation of desired outcomes.

Students will be asked to talk about their placement setting, the types of presenting problems they see, and how their agencies undertake evaluation activities.

8/28 Session 2

Measurement of outcomes and target behaviors. Choosing the questions, measures, and instruments

In this session, we will address three issues central and crucial to the evaluation effort.

- A. What aspects of client's or other's behavior will be evaluated? In other words, what are the dependent variables, the ultimate and intermediate outcomes?
- B. How will the behavior be measured or observed? How can you access reliable and valid indicators of the target behaviors? How can they be assessed, specified, measured?
- C. How can client willingness to participate in data collection be facilitated? What instructions, assistance, guidelines, should be provided to clients?

We will address how gender, sex, sexual orientation, spirituality/religious beliefs, ethnicity/culture influence problem formulation, and the importance of considering these factors in assessment and treatment planning.

Readings:

Berlin, S. B. & Marsh, J. C. (1993). Ongoing assessment: Assessing client progress. In Informing Practice Decisions (pp. 75-91). New York: Macmillan.

Berlin, S. B. & Marsh, J. C. (1993). Guidelines and strategies for data collection. In Informing Practice Decisions (pp. 92-110). New York: Macmillan.

In addition to the above required readings, you should familiarize yourself with the following resources, as they will be helpful in locating a standardized measure.

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (2000). Measures for clinical practice. New York: Free Press.

Edleson, J. (1985). Rapid-assessment instruments for evaluating practice with children and youth. Journal of Social Service Research, 8, 17-31.

Fredman, N., & Sherman, R. (1987). Handbook of measurement for marriage and family therapy. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Harrison, D. F., & Westhuis, D. J. (1990). Rating scales for sexual adjustment. Journal of Social

Service Research, 13, 85-100.

Hudson, W. W., & Harrison, D. F. (1986). Conceptual issues in measuring and assessing family problems. Family Therapy, 13, 85-94.

Keyser, D., & Sweetland, R. (1985). Test Critiques. Kansas City: Westport Publishers.

Levitt, J., & Reid, W. R. (1981). Rapid assessment instruments for practice. Social Work Research and Abstracts, 17, 13-19.

Tutty, L. M. (1995). Theoretical and practical issues in selecting a measure of family functioning. Research on Social Work, 5, 80-106.

9/4 Session 3

In this session, we will continue to discuss measurement of client behaviors, including the assessment of validity and reliability. Also, we will discuss treatment “processes,” with a focus on client participation. This is important because high drop-out rates are documented across a range of treatment settings, and clients will not benefit from treatment if they do not participate (assuming the treatments are effective).

Reading:

Berlin, S. B., & Marsh, J. C. (1993). Ongoing assessment: Assessing therapy process. In Informing Practice Decisions (pp. 156-187). New York: Macmillan.

Grinnell, R. M. (1997). Measuring variables (chp. 7). In Social Work Research and Evaluation. Itasca, ILL: FE Peacock.

9/11 Session 4 Student presenters will present and lead a discussion on the target behaviors, how they are operationalized and measured.

Paper One is due on 9/18. Brief, 3-5 pages.

1. Decide upon some dimension of client behavior as an outcome for assessment and monitoring over time. Defend (in terms of its relevance to the client’s problem situation and your treatment plan) the importance and relevance of the outcome you have chosen to focus upon. (20%)

2. Develop operational definitions of the outcome you plan to assess. (20%)
3. Describe three different ways you might measure the outcomes. For each, be specific. Describe, in detail, procedures for observing and recording. Attach the measures you have described. Standardized measures, within interview measures, in-vivo measures, rating scales you develop--all of these are possible strategies to consider. For each measure, describe its reliability and validity. Also, describe gender, sex, or cultural considerations. (60%)

Possible Ways to Ask Questions and Find Answers

Practice evaluation requires planning for treatment and developing a design for evaluation. This requires familiarity with some of the available single system designs (AB, ABAB, B, etc.), the assumptions for each design and the appropriate uses and limits for each design. In addition, goal attainment scaling and systematic planned practice will be discussed.

9/18 Session 5 QUIZ 1

Practice evaluation is a way of thinking about your practice. In this session we will consider the whole of treatment planning--formulating problems, interventions, and outcomes and the rationales provided for decision-making. We will do this by examining protocols and research on "systematic planned practice." Students will be asked to discuss whether and how treatment plans in their settings contribute to decision-making.

Readings:

Rosen, A. (1992). Facilitating clinical decision-making and evaluation. Families in Society, 73, 522-532.

Rosen, A. (1993). Systematic planned practice. Social Service Review, March, 84-100.

Rosen, A. & Proctor, E. K. (1981). Distinctions between treatment outcomes and their implications for treatment evaluation. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 49, 418-425.

9/25 Session 6

10/2 Session 7

In these sessions we will consider traditional group and single system designs for evaluation and experimentation. Goal attainment scaling will be discussed, as well as strategies for short-term practice. Internal and external validity will be reviewed.

Readings:

Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Orme, J. G. (1999). Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional. Chapter 13: From the case study to the basic single-system design: A-B; and Chapter 14: The experimental single-system designs: A-B-A, A-B-A-B, and B-A-B.

Grinnell, R. M. & Unrau, Y. A. (1997). Group designs. In RM Grinnell, Social work research and evaluation: Quantitative and qualitative approaches. Peacock.

Nurius, P. (1992). Practice evaluation methods: Practical variations on a theme. In CW LeCroy (Ed.), Case studies in social work practice (pp. 268-277). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Pietrzak, J., Ramler, M., Renner, T., Ford, L., & Gilbert, N. (1990). Outcome evaluation: Client level (chp. 5). In Practical Program Evaluation: Examples from Child Abuse Prevention. Newbury Park: Sage.

Slonim-Nevo, V., & Vosler, N. (1991). The use of single-system design with systemic brief problem-solving therapy. Families in Society, January, 38-44.

10/9 Session 8 QUIZ 2

1. Students will present their evaluation strategy, including the dependent and independent variables, the hypothesis, the design, rationale for choosing the design, and design limitations.
2. The instructor will present information on what to consider when reading and evaluating intervention research studies, including issues related to sampling and generalizability of research findings, especially in relation to women, people of color, the aged, gays/lesbians, ses, and other groups

oppressed or discriminated against.

3. Students will be asked to discuss the readings.

Readings:

Derose, S. (1997). Demographic and psychosocial factors. In R. L. Kane (ed.), *Understanding Health Care Outcomes Research* Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen.

McGlynn, E. A. (1996). Setting the context for measuring patient outcomes. In DM Steinwachs et al. (Eds.), *Using Client Outcomes Information to Improve Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment*, Jossey-Bass.

Snowden, L. R. (1996). Ethnic minority populations and mental health outcomes. In DM Steinwachs et al. (Eds.), *Using Client Outcomes Information to Improve Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment*, Jossey-Bass.

10/16 FALL BREAK

Paper 2 is due October 23. Again, short, brief, and concise.

Select and review at least five research articles about interventions and treatments used to treat the problem or behavior you are focusing on. The articles should be research studies about the effectiveness of the way(s) in which the problem can be treated. The articles should present empirical information about the effectiveness of the intervention.

In the paper, address the following:

- 1) Describe the problem (refer only briefly to your client; describe the problem in general). 10%
- 2) According to the literature, how is this problem being treated? Briefly describe 2 or 3 approaches commonly used to treat the problem. (30%)
- 3) What do we know about the effectiveness of the various interventions in the literature? Here, discuss the studies, their findings, their strengths and limitations. (30%)

- 4) Based on the review, which intervention seems most likely to be effective with your client for the ultimate outcome you selected? Provide a rationale for your conclusions. Any cultural, ses, gender, or other client characteristic considerations? End the paper with a clearly stated hypothesis, linking an intervention (independent variable) to a change in a specified behavior (dependent variable). Reference should be APA style. (30%)

10/23 Session 9

Measuring the treatment.

To what will change be attributed? What is the independent variable in your design?
This requires specifying and monitoring the intervention.

Readings:

Cormier, W.H. & Cormier, L. S. (1991). Selecting helping strategies. In Cormier & Cormier (Eds.), Interviewing strategies for helpers: Fundamental skills and cognitive behavioral interventions (3rd ed.) (pp. 292-306). Pacific grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

10/30 Session 10

Students will present the interventive technique and will discuss how this strategy was chosen among others, and to what degree it met the selection criteria. The monitoring plan should also be discussed. Role plays and video presentations are encouraged.

Paper 3 is due November 6. Brief and concise paper on specifying the intervention.

1. Identify and operationally define the interventive technique or strategy and their components. (30%).
2. Identify the criteria by which this interventive strategy was selected from the range of other possible interventions, and discuss how the chosen intervention met the selection criteria outlined in Cormier and Cormier. Cultural, ses and gender considerations should be stated explicitly. (35%)
3. Develop and describe a plan for monitoring the actual implementation and integrity of the intervention. (35%)

11/6 Session 11

Gathering and presenting the facts.

What do you do with the data? Data summary, ordering, presentation. Clinical and statistical significance.

Readings:

Berlin, S. B., & Marsh, J. C. (1993). Organizing and analyzing data. In Informing Practice Decisions (pp. 111-139). New York: Macmillan.

11/13 Session 12

Computer lab

11/20 Session 13 QUIZ 3

Course evaluations

Student presentations of final practice evaluation effort.

11/27 HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!

Final paper is due on 12/1

Course at a Glance

August 21: First class session --introduction to the course

August 28: Lecture on measuring outcomes and target behaviors

September 4: Continue lecture on measurement of target behaviors. Lecture on and discuss issues related to client participation.

September 11: Student presentations on measuring outcomes and target behaviors

September 18: Lecture on systematic planned practice and treatment planning

Paper one is due.

QUIZ 1.

September 25/ October 2: These two class sessions will consist of lectures and examples of group designs, single system designs, goal attainment scaling, strategies for short-term practice. Internal and external validity will be reviewed.

October 9: Students present their evaluation strategy. Lecture on reading and understanding intervention research studies.

QUIZ 2

October 16: Fall break

October 23: Lecture on measuring and monitoring the intervention

Paper two is due.

October 30: Student presentations on their intervention

November 6: Lecture on presenting and interpreting data

Paper three is due.

November 13: Computer lab session

November 20: Course evaluations

Student presentations of their practice evaluation efforts

QUIZ 3

December 1: Final paper is due