

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW-526 - Evaluating Clinical Practice  
Course Outline  
Spring 2004

Section 76887	Instructor: John G. Orme
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Tuesday, 12:40 – 3:25	Phone: 974-7503
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### Texts

Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Orme, J. G. (2003). *Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

### Readings and Outline

- 1/13      Course overview  
            Basic principles of single-system designs  
            Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Prologue, Chapter 1
- 1/20      Basic principles of measurement  
            Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapter 2
- FIRST QUIZ**
- 1/27      Specifying problems and goals  
            Developing a measurement and recording plan  
            Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 3 & 4
- 2/3        Behavioral observation  
            Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapter 5
- 2/10      Individualized rating scales  
            Client and practitioner logs

- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 6 & 8
- 2/17 Standardized questionnaires
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapter 7
- 2/24 Non-reactive measures
- Selecting a measure
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 9 & 10
- 3/2 Basic principles of single-system designs
- Ethical considerations and controversial issues
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapter 11
- 3/9 **SPRING BREAK**
- 3/16 Baselines
- The A-B design
- Experimental single-system designs
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 12, 13 & 14
- 3/23 Basic principles of analysis
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapter 19 & 23
- 3/30 Visual analysis
- Descriptive statistics
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 20 & 21
- 4/6 Inferential statistics
- Selecting a procedure for analysis
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 22 & 24
- 4/13 Ethical considerations and controversial issues
- Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapter 25
- 4/20 Multiple baseline designs
- Changing intensity designs
- Successive intervention designs

Selecting a design

Readings: Bloom et al. (2003), Chapters 15, 16 & 18

## **PAPERS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**

### **LAST QUIZ**

4/27

### **Course Requirements:**

In addition to the assignments listed below, each student is expected to read 100% of the assigned reading material and to come to each class prepared to discuss (e.g., ask and answer relevant questions) the reading material.

### **Evaluation**

Weekly Quizzes 50%

Research Paper 50%

100%

#### **A. Quizzes**

Each week at the beginning of class the student will be given a short (i.e., approximately 10 questions) quiz. Each quiz will cover both class and reading material from all preceding weeks, although the primary emphasis will be upon information from the previous week. These quizzes will provide both the instructor and students with ongoing feedback concerning knowledge acquisition. This feedback will provide information necessary to take corrective measures by both the instructor and students to assure adequate learning. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes will count for 50% of the grade.

Quizzes will be discussed after their completion, and graded quizzes will be returned the next day. The quiz grades will be averaged and a final quiz grade will be assigned based on this average.

#### **B. Paper**

Each student must write up a research report that uses a single-system design. The research is to be fictitious, but the report should be written as if the research actually was conducted, and the "data" should be realistic. The paper should include the

following:

**Introduction** (3-4 pages)--Your introduction should include a statement of the problem to be addressed (e.g., increasing social skills, reducing depression or child neglect), and empirical research concerning the prevalence (i.e., the number of people in a population who have the problem) and incidence (e.g., the number of new cases over a period of time) of the problem. It should include a discussion of the importance of the problem(s) you are attempting to alleviate, as well as a rationale for the intervention you propose (e.g., why the existing research supports one type of intervention for this problem rather than another). Previous empirical research pertaining to relevant interventions and outcomes should be reviewed concisely and critically in this section. The importance and implications of your study for social work practice should be noted. This section should conclude with the explicit statement of your hypotheses or research question(s).

**Methods** Section (3-4 pages)--This section has four subsections. Please provide separate subheadings for each of these four subsections (i.e., Client, Design, Outcome Variables, Intervention).

- First, you should describe characteristics of the "client" (e.g., age, gender, history). These characteristics should be those that you believe to be related to the intervention or to the outcome.
- Second, the type of design (e.g., AB, Multiple-Baseline, etc.) and the reason for its use should be noted.
- Third, you should provide a description of the "client's" problems and how and why the particular problems were selected for intervention, as well as the outcome measures used (i.e., the dependent variables). The reason for using the particular measures should be noted, procedures for administering and scoring the measures should be described, and the reliability and validity of the measures should be reviewed.
- Fourth, you should provide a description of the intervention(s) as actually implemented (i.e., the independent variable). The intervention(s) should be sufficiently detailed to allow another person to replicate your intervention.

**Results** Section (2-3 pages)--This section should describe your results (e.g., Did the "client's" problem improve, deteriorate, or remain stable? If there was change, was it of a magnitude to be clinically important?). Present the data in graphic form and accompany them with a brief discussion of the observed changes or lack thereof. It is very important that your graph has all of the necessary labels and is carefully drawn according to the relevant conventions (e.g., the vertical axis represents the outcome measure). Report relevant descriptive and inferential statistics, and note the rationale for the techniques used.

**Discussion** Section (3-4 pages)--This section should start with a paragraph summary of the results; i.e., the results show that (this intervention) had (this much) effect on this "client(s)." This section also should include probable reasons for the relative success or

failure of the intervention program, suggestions for increasing the program's effectiveness, suggestions for other practitioners or involved individuals, and your plans, if any, for additional future work with this "client." It also should include a discussion of the limitations of the methods employed (e.g., measurement and design procedures), possible alternative explanations for the findings, and the implications and importance of your results (especially for practice). Finally, it should include a discussion of your results in relation to previous research (e.g., studies discussed in your introduction), and a discussion of future research that should be undertaken.

**Reference Section**--This should include an accurate list of all of the sources cited in your paper.

**Appendix**--This should include a listing of the sources and databases you searched and the keywords used in your literature search.

The paper must be typed, and references **MUST** be in the most recent APA format (See [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_apa.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html) and/or the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 2001, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association). ***The failure to use correct APA style will result in a reduction of one-half letter grade on your paper.***

Papers are due no later than the beginning of class on 4/22/02. The grade on any late papers will be reduced by one letter grade.

Papers will be graded according to the following criteria, and a number grade from 0-100 will be assigned:

- Mechanics (grammar, spelling, style, typing)
- Organization
- Logic
- Content
- Adequacy of the literature reviewed
- Ability to summarize and draw conclusions

### **Assignment of Final Grades**

The mean quiz score and the score on the paper will be averaged, and the final course grade assigned as follows:

A = 94 - 100  
B+ = 89 - 93  
B = 84 - 88  
C+ = 79 - 83  
C = 72 - 78  
D = 64 - 71

## Appendix I

### Starting Your Research Paper

Following are some suggestions you might consider to get started on your practice evaluation paper:

- Read Chapters 11 through 13 in Bloom et al. (2003) for a basic understanding of single-system designs.
- Read several of the selected single-system design research articles cited throughout the text.
- Review the journal Research on Social Work Practice for examples of single-system designs.
- In addition to Bloom et al. (2003), you might peruse the following books in preparation for your practice evaluation paper:

Barlow, D. H., Hayes, S. C. & Nelson, R. O. (1984). The scientist practitioner: Research and accountability in clinical and educational settings. New York: Pergamon Press.

Barlow, D. H. & Hersen, M. (1984). Single case experimental designs: Strategies for studying behavior change (2nd ed.). New York: Pergamon.

Blythe, B. J. & Tripodi, T. (1989). Measurement in direct practice. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Blythe, B., Tripodi, T., Briar, S. (1995). Direct practice research in human service agencies. Columbia University. New York: Columbia University Press.

Nugent, W. R., Sieppert, J. D., & Hudson, W. W. (2001). Practice evaluation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Tripodi, T. (1994). A primer on single-subject design for clinical social workers. Annapolis Jct., MD: NASW Press.

- Peruse the appendix in Chapter 7 of Bloom et al. (2003). This appendix provides a rich source of references for available standardized scales. You also might take a look at the following which are on reserve in the library:

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (2000A). Measures for clinical practice: A sourcebook. Vol. 1. Couples, families and children (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). New York: Free Press.

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (2000B). Measures for clinical practice: A sourcebook. Vol. 2. Adults (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). New York: Free Press.

Rush, A. J. et al. (2000). Handbook of psychiatric measures. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.

- Browse the *Evaluating Practice* web site:  
<http://utcmhsr.csw.utk.edu/evaluatingpractice/>