

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

SW 526 Evaluating Clinical Practice

Course Outline
Spring 2005

Instructor: Marlys Staudt, Ph.D.

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Office hours: 8:30 to 9:30 am Thursdays and by appointment

Class times: 9:40 to 12:25, Thursdays

in Henson 206

Readings:

Text: Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Ormer, J. G. (2003). Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional. (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Other assigned readings are on reserve in Hodges Library.

Course Requirements:

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

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

Grading Criteria:

Three "quizzes" each worth 20 points: 60 points

Three small papers each worth 30 points: 90 points

Final paper: 100 points

Presentations and participation, including discussion of the readings: 50 points

(Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the readings. Presentations include the final practice evaluation effort (20 points), presentation with student colleagues on a measurement strategy (10 points), one or two (depending on time and the number in the class) smaller presentations on some aspect of the practice evaluation effort (5

points each), and 10 points for attendance/level and quality of participation.

Total 300 points

94-100 % (282-300 points): A
89-93 % (267-281 points): B+
84-88 % (252-266 points): B
80-83 % (240-265 points) C+
75-79% (225-239 points) C
70-74 % (210-224 points) D+
65-69 % (195-209 points) D
64% and below (194 points or below) F

COURSE OUTLINE:

Session 1: January 13, 2005

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, to decisions about termination and the revision of treatment plans, worker accumulation of practice wisdom, to improvement and refinement of worker skills, and to career advancement will be discussed. In addition, evaluation will be discussed in terms of consumer satisfaction, public accountability, establishing a basis for funding requests, and ethics. Additionally, 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.

Session 2: January 20, 2005

Practice evaluation is a way of thinking about your practice. In this session we will consider the whole of treatment planning--formulating problems, interventions, outcomes and the rationales provided for decision-making. We will do this by examining protocols and research on "systematic planned practice." Single system designs will be introduced.

Readings:

Text: Prologue, Chapter 1, Chapter 25

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

Session 3: January 27, 2005

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?

Readings:

Text: Chapter 2, Chapter 3

Pietrzak, J. et al. (1990). Outcome evaluation: Client level (chp. 5). In Practical Program Evaluation: Examples from Child Abuse Prevention. Newbury Park: Sage.

Gilbert, D. J. (2003). Multicultural assessment. In C. Jordan & C. Franklin (Eds.), Clinical assessment for social workers: Quantitative and qualitative methods (pp. 351-383).

In addition to the above required readings, the following resources may be helpful in locating a standardized measure.

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (1994, 2nd Ed.). 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.

Session 4: Feb. 3, 2005

We will discuss different measurement strategies. Students should read either Chapter 5, 6, 7, or 8 from the text and work in small group to present the material to the class, using power point, other audio-visuals, and hand-outs as appropriate.

All students should read Chapter 10. Instructor will present material on Chapter 9.

Session 5: February 10, 2005 QUIZ 1

Student presenters will present and lead a discussion on the target behaviors, how they are operationalized and measured.

Session 6: February 17, 2005 PAPER 1 DUE

- 1) An alternative to single system designs for short-term practice
- 2) Intervention Research

Readings:

Edmond, T., Sloan, L., & McCarty, D. (2004). Sexual abuse survivors' perceptions of the effectiveness of EMDR and eclectic therapy. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *14* (4),259-272.

Kuhn, D. R. & Mendes De Leon, C. F. (2001). Evaluating an educational intervention with

relatives of persons in the early stages of Alzheimer's Disease. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 11 (5),531-548.

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.

Session 7: February 24, 2005

Single system designs: Baseline, evaluation and experimental designs

Readings:

Text, Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 18

Session 8: March 3, 2005 PAPER 2 DUE

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:

Blythe, B. J. (2005). Evaluating the treatment of a sexually abused child. In C. W. LeCroy & J. M. Daley (Eds.), *Case studies in child, adolescent, and family treatment* (pp. 293-300). Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

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.

Session 9: March 10, 2005 QUIZ 2

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. Students should prepare hand-outs and/or

use power point. Role plays and video presentations are encouraged.

Session 10: March 17, 2005 PAPER 3 DUE

Gathering and presenting the facts.

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

Readings:

Text: Chapters 19 and 20.

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 24--No Class

Session 11: March 31, 2005

Statistical analysis.

Text, Chapter 21 and 22

Session 12: April 7, 2005

Computer Lab.

Sessions 13 and 14: April 14 and April 21 (QUIZ 3 ON APRIL 14)

These classes will be dedicated to student presentations of their final evaluation projects. In addition to the evaluation project, reflect on how the evaluation was helpful as well as the challenges you experienced. Students should use power point and provide hand-outs to enhance their presentation.

Final paper is due April 28.

Course at a Glance

January 13: First class session --introduction to the course

January 20: Lecture on systematic planned practice and introduction to single system designs.

January 27: Lecture on operationalization and measurement of target behaviors.

Feb 3: Student presentations on measurement strategies.

February 10: **QUIZ 1**

Student presentations on measurement of target behaviors.

February 17: Lecture on intervention research. Discussion of assigned readings. **Paper one is due.**

February 24: Lecture on single system designs.

March 3: Lecture on measuring the treatment. **Paper two is due.**

March 10: **QUIZ 2** Student presentations on their intervention

March 17: Lecture on presenting and interpreting data. Visual analysis. **Paper three is due**

March 24: Spring Break

March 31: Statistical analysis.

April 7: Computer lab session

April 14: **QUIZ 3** Student presentations of final treatment plan and evaluation efforts

April 21: Course evaluations. Student presentations of final treatment plan and evaluation efforts

Final paper is due on April 28.

Paper One is due on February 17. 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.
2. Develop operational definitions of the outcome you plan to assess.
3. Describe three different ways you could measure the outcome (even though you may not implement each of them). Choose a standardized measure, an in-session measure, and an in-vivo measure.

For each measure, describe:

- a) How, when, and where will data be collected? What are the procedures for observing and recording the data? Be specific.
- b) The reliability and validity of each measure.

Paper 2 is due March 3. Brief, 3-5 pages.

Select and review at least five articles related to the problem you intend to treat. The articles should specifically address the way in which the chosen problem can be treated and present empirical information about the effectiveness of the interventions.

In the paper, address the following:

1. Describe the problem (refer only briefly to your client; describe the problem in general).
2. According to the literature, what interventions are used to treat the problem? Briefly describe 2 to 3 interventions that are described in the literature.
3. What do we know about the effectiveness of the various interventions in the literature? Review the empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of each of the interventions you described in the last section.
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, sex, gender, or other client characteristic considerations?
5. End the paper with a clearly stated hypothesis, linking an intervention (independent

variable) to a change in a specified behavior (dependent variable).

Paper 3 is due March 17. Brief and concise paper on specifying the intervention.

1. Identify and operationally define the interventive technique or strategy and their components that you are using.
2. Identify the criteria by which this interventive strategy was selected from the range of other possible interventions.
3. Develop and describe a plan for monitoring the actual implementation and integrity of the intervention.

Guidelines for Final Paper:

Introduction/Background (3-4 pages)

The introduction should include a statement of the problem you addressed and the significance of the problem (non-client specific). Include, as appropriate, information on the prevalence (number of people in a population who have the problem) and incidence (number of new cases in a specified time period) of the problem.

Provide a summary of the research on treatments for the problem. In light of the empirical evidence, and given your practice context, provide a rationale for the intervention you implemented. Conclude this section with the purpose of your practice evaluation effort, including a practice hypothesis or question.

Methods (3-4 pages)

This section contains four subsections. Provide separate headings for each section.

Client: Provide relevant client information (age, gender, prior treatment, etc.) What is (are) the problem(s) as stated by the client, significant others, or referral source? Provide your formulation of the problem and, if it differs from the client, how you arrived at this formulation (what assessment information did you collect to lead you to formulate the problem differently). What are the priority problems for treatment and what is the rationale for these priorities?

Outcomes: State the desired outcomes. Discuss how these were operationalized and

measured. For each measure, describe the procedures for collecting the data (who, when, where, how, how often). For each measure, discuss its reliability and validity.

Intervention: Describe in detail the independent variable, including the amount, duration, and frequency of client contact hours. Report changes from the original intervention plan and the reasons for these changes. Describe how you monitored the intervention.

Design: Discuss the type of design and reason for its use. (how did you “put the data together” to make sense of and “track” the outcomes).

Results/Findings (2-3 pages)

This section should describe the findings of your practice evaluation effort (did the problem improve, remain stable, deteriorate?), Use graphs, tables, or figures to present the findings. Clearly label these and refer to them in the text as you discuss the findings. Discuss the findings in term of visual and/or statistical analysis. Describe the clinical and practical significance of the findings and how you assessed this.

Discussion (3-4 pages)

Describe the strengths and limitations of the practice evaluation effort. Include alternative explanations for the findings. Include probable reasons for the relative success or failure of the intervention and suggestions for increasing its effectiveness. Discuss the findings in relation to previous research.

What are the implications of your practice evaluation effort for social work practice and for the treatment of clients with similar problems? What’s the feasibility of implementing the intervention and using similar measures in the future?

Identify questions for future research.

References

Use APA style.

Appendix/Appendices

You may include here the operationalization of the intervention and copies of the measures.

Your paper should be 12 to 15 pages, not including references and appendix. Be explicit and succinct. Grading criteria include showing a grasp of content, as well as mechanics, organization, and readability of the paper.