

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 520 Foundations of Evidence-Based Practice
Section 3 - On-line Course
(1 credit hour)
Spring, 2008

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Office Hours: Mondays 4-6 pm
Thursdays 11:00-12:30 pm.
Also by appointment

Pre-requisites: 510, 512, 513, 517, 519, 522, 538.

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.utk.csw.edu).

THE 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*, 2007).

DISABILITY

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact The University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a required Advanced curriculum course. The course examines how to (1) convert information needs related to practice decisions into well-structured answerable questions; (2) efficiently locate the best evidence with which to answer such questions; (3) critically appraise such evidence; (4) apply results to practice and policy decisions; and (5) evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the application of such results to practice and policy decisions.

COURSE RATIONALE

In order to maximize services to client systems that are effective in achieving valued outcomes, and to minimize ineffective and harmful services, social workers must have the knowledge and skills to formulate well-structured answerable questions about practice and policy decisions, and locate, critically appraise, apply, and evaluate the best evidence for making practice and policy decisions within a culturally affirming generalist social work context.

COURSE COMPETENCIES

By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1. Define, articulate, and apply principles of critical thinking, by learning how to recognize, define, and avoid practice fallacies, to improve care given and care received with diverse clients/client systems. (*content: assertions and assumptions of practice; common logical fallacies when examining evidence; common errors in reasoning that violate principles of science called "practitioners' fallacies"; steps in evidence based practice; controversies and misconceptions about evidence based practice*).

2. Formulate well-structured answerable questions about practice and policy decisions through engagement with the client, a mutual understanding of expectations, and a careful assessment of service needs and availability, the client/client system's culture, context, and motivation. (*content: Client Oriented Practical Evidence Search" (COPES) questions; evaluation, prevention, assessment, description, and risk questions*).
3. Employ a scientific analytic approach using qualitative and/or quantitative methods to rigorously, critically and open-mindedly investigate, analyze, synthesize, and interpret available primary and secondary data and research findings, evaluation outcomes and other information toward formulation of professional judgments and conclusions (*content: steps in evidence based practice; utilizing electronic searches and information technology using methodological filters; quality of study rating forms and frameworks for evaluating research studies; meta-analysis*).
4. Analyze the influence and implications of cultural, geographic, community, gender-based, religious, political, ideological and other identities and orientations on thinking about social issues, concerns, ethics and values. (*content: identity formation; experiences of individuals in these contexts; formation of multiple identities; case studies of life experiences in identity formation and their relationships with the thoughts on contemporary social issues; critical analysis of self with respect to the above identity designations; history of cultural insensitivity in research; generalization of research findings to other groups; recruitment and retention of minority and oppressed populations in research studies; problematic issues in making research more culturally competent*).

REQUIRED BOOKS AND READINGS

Gibbs, L.E. (2003). *Evidenced-based practice for the helping professions: A practical guide with integrated multimedia*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thompson Learning.

Readings other than those from the required text for this class will either be placed on BlackBoard or can be found at Hodges through the electronic reserve.

ORGANIZATION OF COURSE AND BLACKBOARD

This course is largely about learning a fairly straight-forward methodology. The text, other readings, power points and handouts will be the primary basis for understanding the material, which will then be practiced through assignments that are due weekly. Please look over the course outline carefully. All of you work at different paces and I do not mind if you turn in assignments earlier than the due date.

All content and course materials for this course (with minor exceptions) are on BlackBoard. Content on BlackBoard is organized by week. This includes accompanying PowerPoint slides and handouts. ALL assignments are available on BlackBoard and are to be completed on BlackBoard.

Timed quizzes will be taken on line each week. Please note when the date and time these quizzes are due. Quizzes taken after the due date will not be counted.

A new string will be added to the discussion board each week for you to ask questions, get clarification and discuss issues as they arise throughout the week. You will need to check the discussion board frequently in order to take advantage of any information and to be helpful to your classmates. Answers and feedback are expected to evolve into scholarly discussions as the week progresses. Credit will be given based on the questions posed, the responses and weekly participation.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Grading Criteria

Assignments	60 points (6 at 10 points each)
Weekly on-line quizzes	20 points (4 at 5 points each)
Discussion Board Participation	10 points
Final Assignments	10 points

Final Grade

The University of Tennessee does not award minus grades at the graduate level. Therefore, the following grading scale is used for the final grade:

95 – 100	A Superior performance, exceeds expectations
90 – 94	B+ Better than satisfactory performance
85 – 89	B Satisfactory performance, meets expectations
80 – 84	C+ Less than satisfactory performance
73 – 79	C Performance well below the standard expected of graduate students
66 – 72	D
<66	F

SYLLABUS SUMMARY

Session	Content	Assignments	Dates/Due Dates
1	Course overview; EBP; Critical thinking	Class Begins	March 5
2	Answerable research question	Week 1 Assignments	3 PM, Mar. 12
	On-line timed quiz	Quiz 1	9 AM Mar. 13
		Spring Break	March 17
3	Track down evidence	Week 2 Assignments	3 PM, Mar. 26
		Quiz 2	9 AM, Mar 28
4	Evaluating evidence: Multiple study reviews	Week 3 Assignments	3 PM, April 2
		Quiz 3	9 AM, April 3
5	Evaluating evidence: Multiple study reviews	Week 4 Individual Assignments	3 PM, Apr. 9
		Quiz 4	9 AM, Apr. 10
6	Applying research evidence	Week 5 Individual Assignments	3 PM, Apr. 16
7	Pulling it all together	Week 6 Individual Assignments	3 PM, Apr. 23
		Final Assignments	3 PM, Apr. 25

Session 1: Course Overview; Critical Thinking

Define, articulate, and apply principles of critical thinking, by learning how to recognize, define, and avoid practice fallacies, to improve care given and care received with diverse clients/client systems. (*content: assertions and assumptions of practice; common logical fallacies when examining evidence; common errors in reasoning that violate principles of science called “practitioners’ fallacies”; steps in evidence based practice; controversies and misconceptions about evidence based practice*).

Content Course overview; overview of evidence-based practice (EBP); critical thinking; fallacies in thinking and reasoning; EBP and NASW Code of Ethics

Required Readings Gibbs, Chapter 1- Evidence-Based Practice: Definition and What it offers to You and to Your Clients (pp. 1-22); Chapter 2- Become Motivated to Apply the Current Best Evidence (pp. 25 - 52).
Gambrill, E.D. (2003). Evidence-based practice: Sea change or the Emperor’s new clothes? *Journal of Social Work Education*, 39, 3-23.

Gambrill, E. (1999). Evidence based practice: An alternative to authority-based practice. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 80, 341

PowerPoint Overview of evidence-based practice (EBP); fallacies in thinking and reasoning; critical thinking

Handouts PowerPoint slides
Module 1, Handouts 2 – 5, 7 – 8
Module 1, Glossary
Critical Thinking

Video Clip Gibbs CD: HITTT segment

Assignments,
Exercise 1 Exercise 1-1, pp. 19 – 21, from Gibbs text.
Exercise 2 Exercise 1-2, pp. 21 – 24, from Gibbs text.
Exercise 3 REACH, Module 1, Activity 3
Exercise 4 Exercise 2-1, pp. 27 – 32, 33.
Exercise 5 Exercise 2-2, pg. 32, 34 – 38 **OR** Exercise 2-3, pp. 32, 34 - 38 in Gibbs text.
Exercise 6 REACH, Module 1, Activity 1.
Recommended: Create a notebook .
Exercise 7

Session 2: Posing an Answerable Research Question

Formulate well-structured answerable questions about practice and policy decisions through engagement with the client, a mutual understanding of expectations, and a careful assessment of service needs and availability, the client/client system's culture, context, and motivation. (*content: Client Oriented Practical Evidence Search” (COPES) questions; evaluation, prevention, assessment, description, and risk questions*).

Content Posing an answerable research question

Required Readings Gibbs, Chapter 3- Pose a specific Question of Importance to Your Client’s Welfare

pp. 53-76.

Yeager, K.R. (2006). A practical approach to formulating evidence-based questions in social work. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 47-58). *Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

PowerPoint Posing an answerable research question

Handouts PowerPoint slides
REACH, Module 2, Handouts 1 – 2

Videos REACH Case Examples, Scene 1.

Assignments

Exercise 1 Exercise 3-1, pp. 74 – 77, from Gibbs text.

Exercise 2 Exercise 3-4, pg. 87, from Gibbs text.

Exercise 3 REACH, Module 2, Activity 1.

Exercise 4 Exercise 3-2, pp. 81 – 84, in Gibbs text.

Exercise 5 REACH, Module 2, Activity 1

Exercise 6 REACH, Module 2, Activity 2

Session 3: Tracking down evidence

Employ a scientific analytic approach using qualitative and/or quantitative methods to rigorously, critically and open-mindedly investigate, analyze, synthesize, and interpret available primary and secondary data and research findings, evaluation outcomes and other information toward formulation of professional judgments and conclusions (*content: steps in evidence based practice; utilizing electronic searches and information technology using methodological filters; quality of study rating forms and frameworks for evaluating research studies; meta-analysis*).

Content Strategies for locating the best external evidence

Required Readings Gibbs, Chapter 4- Locate the Best External Evidence to Answer Your Question pp. 88-137.

PowerPoint Strategies for locating the best external evidence

Handouts PowerPoint slides
REACH, Module 2, Handouts 3 – 6
REACH, Module 2, Glossary
EBP Annotated Bibliography

Videos REACH Case Examples, Scene 2.

Assignments

Exercise 1 Exercise 4-1, pp. 139 – 145, in Gibbs text.

Exercise 2 REACH, Module 2, Activities 3 – 7.

Session 4: Evaluating treatment effectiveness: Multiple study reviews

Employ a scientific analytic approach using qualitative and/or quantitative methods to rigorously, critically and open-mindedly investigate, analyze, synthesize, and interpret available primary and secondary data and research findings, evaluation outcomes and other information toward formulation of professional judgments and conclusions (*content: steps in evidence based practice; utilizing electronic searches and information technology using methodological filters; quality of study rating forms and frameworks for evaluating research studies; meta-analysis*).

Content	Evaluating treatment effectiveness research: multiple study reviews: systematic reviews; meta-analyses; practice guidelines
Required Readings	<p>Gibbs, Chapter 5, Treatment Effectiveness Research: Evaluating Study Quality and Applying Results to Practice pp. 147 – 155;</p> <p>Gibbs, Chapter 6 – Meta-Analysis: Evaluating Review Quality and Applying Findings to Practice pp. 185 – 187.</p> <p>After doing Exercise 1 (below), read the systematic review, meta-analysis, and practice guidelines you located. If you could not locate one of these, read the corresponding paper below.</p> <p>Systematic review: If you have not located a systematic review in your area, go to the following web site and choose one that appears related to your area: http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/SWCG/titles.asp</p> <p>Meta-analysis: Durlack, J.A. & Wells, A.M. (1997). Primary prevention mental health programs for children and adolescents: A meta-analytic review. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology (Special issue: Meta-analysis of primaryprevention programs)</i>, 25, 115-152.</p>
PowerPoint	Evaluating treatment effectiveness research (1)
Handouts	PowerPoint slides REACH, Module 3, Handouts 1 – 7 REACH, Module 3, Glossary
Assignments	
Exercise 1	Based upon the papers you located last week through your search, choose at least one from each of the following categories: meta-analysis, systematic review, and practice guidelines. If none was located, run another search using previous search criteria but adding in the study type as a keyword. The abstract of the paper will typically provide enough information to determine the type of research.
Exercise 2	REACH, Module 3, Exercises 1 – 5 for each of the three articles (systematic review, meta-analysis, practice guidelines)
Exercise 3	REACH, Module 3, Exercises 1 – 5 for systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and practice guidelines. Use the same client you used in the previous week. If none was located, run another search using previous search criteria but adding in the study type as a keyword. If you still cannot locate any of these, broaden your research question and rerun your search using your previous search strategy. If none of these steps work, discuss the implications of not having such papers available and how you will need to adjust for this as you review other available research.

Session 5: Evaluating treatment effectiveness: Single studies

Employ a scientific analytic approach using qualitative and/or quantitative methods to rigorously, critically and open-mindedly investigate, analyze, synthesize, and interpret available primary and secondary data and research findings, evaluation outcomes and other information toward formulation of professional judgments and conclusions (*content: steps in evidence based practice; utilizing electronic searches and information technology using methodological filters; quality of study rating forms and frameworks for evaluating research studies; meta-analysis*).

Content	Evaluating treatment effectiveness research: randomized controlled trials (RCT), quasi-experimental study; case control study; pre-experimental study
Required Readings	Using this week's Exercise 1, read the (RCT), quasi-experimental study, case control, and pre-experimental study you located. If you could not locate one of these, read the corresponding paper below. RCT: Cohen & Mannarino Quasi-experimental: Case control: Pre-experimental:
PowerPoint	Evaluating treatment effectiveness research (2)
Handouts	PowerPoint slides
Video Clips	REACH Case Examples, Scene 3. Watch the same scenario as you did earlier.
Assignments	
Exercise 1	Based upon the papers you located through your search, choose at least one from each of the following categories: RCT, quasi-experimental, case control, and pre-experimental. If none was located, run another search using previous search criteria but adding in the study type as a keyword.
Exercise 2	Do REACH, Module 3, Exercises 1 – 5 for RCTs and quasi-experimental, case control, and pre-experimental studies. If none was located in your initial search, run another search using previous search criteria but adding in the study type as a keyword. If you still cannot locate any of these, broaden your research question and rerun your search using your previous search strategy. If none of these steps work, discuss the implications of not having such papers available and consider other literature that may be helpful in making your decision.

Session 6: Applying research evidence; other types of research

Content	Applying evidence-based practice to your client population; Considering client characteristics and culture; Evaluating other types of research: surveys; qualitative studies.
Required Readings	Gibbs, Chapter 8, Descriptive and Qualitative Studies: Evaluating Study Quality and Applying Results to Practice pp. 218 – 219, 227 – 228. Okamoto, S.K. & LeCroy, C.W. (2006). Evidence-based practice and manualized treatment with children. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 204-213). <i>Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice</i> . New York, N.Y.:Oxford University Press.

Gone, J. P. & Alcantara, C. (2007). Identifying effective mental health interventions for American Indians and Alaska Natives: A review of the literature. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*, 356-363.

Using this week's Exercise 1, read the survey and qualitative study you located. If you could not locate one of these, read the corresponding paper below.

Survey: Mullen, E. J., & Bacon, W. (2006). Implementation of practice guidelines and evidence-based treatment: A survey of psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 81-92). *Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice*. New York, N.Y.:Oxford University Press.

Qualitative study:

At least one reading each from Exercise 3

PowerPoint	Evaluating other types of research; Applying evidence-based practice to your client population
Handouts	PowerPoint slides REACH, Module 3, Handout 8 REACH, Module 4, Handouts 1 – 6
Video Clips	REACH Case Examples, Scene 4. Watch the same scenario as you did earlier.
Assignments	
Exercise 1	Based upon the papers you located through your search, choose at least one from each of the following categories: survey, qualitative survey. If none was located, run another search using previous search criteria but adding in the study type as a keyword.
Exercise 2	REACH, Module 3, Exercises 1 – 5 for each of the articles (survey, qualitative survey). If you did not locate one of these, use the corresponding readings in the required readings list.
Exercise 3	Locate and read one or more articles related to working with persons with cultural identities (e.g., specific class, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) similar to those of your client/client system. Read the article(s) and answer the questions on BlackBoard related to unique issues when practicing with this cohort of clients.
Exercise 4	REACH, Module 4, Activities 3 – 4 for your case scenario
Exercise 5	REACH, Module 3, Exercises 1 – 5 for the qualitative study located in your search. If none was located in your initial search, run another search using previous search criteria but adding in the study type as a keyword. If none of these steps works, consider how/if these types of study could have helped make a practice decision.

Final Assignments: Research into Practice; Becoming a Life-long Learner

Content	Implementing the EBP; informed consent; becoming a life-long learner
Required Readings	Gibbs, Chapter 10, Teaching Others pp. 250 - 262.

Mullen, E. J. (2006). Facilitating practitioner use of evidence-based practice. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 152-159). *Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

Mullen, E. J., & Bacon, W. (2006). Implementation of practice guidelines and evidence-based treatment: A survey of psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 81-92). *Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice*. New York, N.Y.:Oxford University Press.

Gira, E. C., Kessler, M. L., & Poertner, J. (2004). Influencing social workers to use research evidence in practice: Lessons from medicine and the allied health professions. *Research on Social Work Practice, 14*(2), 68-79.

PowerPoint

Implementing the EBP; becoming a life-long learner

Handouts

PowerPoint slides
REACH, Module 4, Handouts 7 – 9
REACH, Module 4, Glossary

Assignments

Exercise 1

Choose one of the EBPs you read about and do REACH, Module 4, Activities 1 – 2, 5 – 6, and 9 – 10

Exercise 2

Given everything you have reviewed and considered, make a decision about which of the EBPs you will discuss with your client. Of those, choose the one you most prefer to implement. Write a brief paper (3 - 4 pages) discussing why you choose the group of EBPs to discuss with your client, why you prefer the one EBP for this particular client, and issues you need to consider in its implementation.

Exercise 3

Write 2 or 3 paragraphs about what it means to be a lifelong learner. Then list steps you will consider taking after graduation to become a lifelong learner.