

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
SW 519 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite: None

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*, 2008).

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 Foundation course. This course is designed to help students gain an understanding of and appreciation for the use of research as a tool for professional evidence-based practice with and on behalf of at-risk populations and to evaluate programs and practices. Students are introduced to the concepts and skills underlying a systematic approach to social work research, including basic research terminology, the scientific method in social work, the value of research in social work, research ethics and the social work value base, problem formulation and conceptualization, measurement, research designs, sampling, alternative quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analytic techniques, and relevant information and computer technologies.

Course Rationale

Social workers must be critical consumers of research and possess the knowledge of research and its method in order to use research as a tool for competent and accountable evidence-based practice with and on behalf of at-risk populations. Toward that end, it is essential that social workers have the foundation knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to formulate questions about practice and policy, access and critically appraise the research literature available to answer such questions, and to prepare for more advanced methods used to evaluate programs and practices.

Course Competencies

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

1. Recognize and explain differences between an evidence-based helping professional and one guided by tradition, authority, dogma, and speculation (CT/EBP F.1, F.3,F.4; Practice F.6) [*Content: role, history, knowledge acquisition, and current status of research in social work; basic assumptions, concepts, foundations, and limitations of the traditional scientific approach and challenges to these foundations; principles, logic, limitations, and alternative conceptualizations of qualitative and quantitative research designs*];
2. Access relevant data bases for research evidence to support or refute social work practice, program and policy decisions (Research: F.1) [*Content: evidence based practice, purpose of a literature review, sources of literature, and assess the quality of available literature*]
3. Critically evaluate the methodological rigor of different kinds of qualitative and quantitative research and use this information to prioritize knowledge into a hierarchy of evidence from the most to the least rigorous (Research- F.2, F.3; CT/EBP- F.3) [*Content: research questions/hypotheses, practice problems (and transitions to research questions and hypotheses from these practice problems), principles and methods of sampling, measurement, design; descriptive and inferential statistics; and framework for evaluating research studies*]
4. Critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research in reference to race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, family structure, relational

- status, national origin, age, and religion (Diversity- F.1, F.3, F.5, F.6; Pops at- risk & SJ- F.2) [Content: principles and methods of sampling, measurement, and design; data interpretation; and culturally competent research]
5. Prepare, enter, and manipulated data using a spreadsheet or other software programs (Research- F.4) [Content: Level of measurement, hypothesis testing, compute and interpret basic descriptive and inferential statistics; and selecting statistical tests];
 6. Apply appropriate empirical techniques to evaluate process and outcomes with program evaluation and single client systems (Research- F.5) [Content: case level research designs; univariate and bivariate statistics]
 7. Articulate the core values and ethical standards of the social work profession (based on the NASW Code of Ethics and the International Federation of Social Work Code of Ethics) to research in settings with diverse constituencies across multiple systems (Values/Ethics- F.1, F.3, F.4) [Content: NASW code of ethics, historical overview of ethics in research, voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, and cultural competent research];
 8. Effectively communicate empirically-based knowledge (or lack thereof) (Research- F.6) [Content: writing a research report, APA style, research proposal components; framework for evaluation of research studies]
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University of Tennessee College of Social Work
SW-519 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH
Section 002 - Spring 2009 Monday & Wednesday 9:05 - 12:05
Room 206 Henson Hall

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THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE UNTIL THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Research Methods for Evidence-Based Practice, J.S. Wodarski, Sage, in press.
 2. Adolescent Substance Abuse, J.S. Wodarski & M.D. Feit, Haworth Press, 1995.
 3. Using Statistical Method in Social Work Practice: A Complete SPSS Guide, Soleman H. Abu-badre, Lyceum Books, 2006.
- Research Methods, text is available on the internet.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class session-will be used to clarify and expand on assigned readings. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Class participation is expected and the instructor reserves the right to give some weight, positive or negative, to classroom participation. Students are also expected to attend all classes. Except in the case of a medical or personal emergency, a student who wishes an extension of time for a written assignment should consult the instructor in advance. However, an extension is not automatic and there may be a grade penalty (except in the case of emergency).

1. Class attendance is mandatory.

2. Research paper: All students are required to complete a quantitative research proposal which includes: an introduction section, methods section (e.g. hypothesis, sample selection, research design, instruments, procedures, ethical considerations/procedures, etc.), data analysis plan, discussion section, and budget. Papers must be typed, double-spaced and conform to APA format, due February 11. (Course Competency 7, 8, &9)
3. Review chapter: Practice critical review of empirical research studies. Students review individual chapters for appropriate methodology. Students will incorporate references where relevant. Students will also present this review to the class. Student will update and put in final form a chapter from Handbook and receive authorship in edited text (first draft due fourth week of class; final draft due February 18). Double check all references for accuracy and inclusion in bibliography. Completed form must be submitted in two forms, as a hard copy and on floppy disk in MSWord format. (Course Competency 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, & 8)
4. Text Wodarski and Feit, 1995 critique: According to critique in Wodarski chapter 2 (5 page limit). Students will review paper according to criteria for choosing knowledge and assessing evidence-based intervention; Scientific criteria for the evaluation of research studies, test abilities, internal consistencies, subsumptive power, parsimony, communicability, stimulation value, rival factors and procedural clarity. Criteria for the evaluation of research studies for social work practice: Are procedures for relapse prevention addressed? What Procedures are specified to ensure the maintenance of generalization of changed behaviors? Have the change agents programmed the environment to maintain the change by substituting “naturally occurring” reinforces, training relatives or other individuals in the client’s environment, gradually using different schedules of reinforcement, and using delayed reinforcement and self-control procedures (Kazdin, 1975; Wodarski, 1980)? Such procedures will be employed in future sophisticated and effective social service deliver systems (Wodarski, in press)? Characteristics of the Efficacious Therapeutic Program: Conceptualization and operationalization of treatment, rational for service provided, duration, adequate specification of behaviors and baselines, measures of therapist and client behaviors. Specification of Criteria for Evaluation of Treatment Efficacy: treatment monitoring, reliable measures, designs, statistics, and follow-up. Book 1, January 28. (Course Competency 1, 3, 6, 7, & 8)
5. Using Statistical Methods in Social Work Practice. (5 page limit) February 25. (Course Competency 5)
 - A. How will I use the book?
 - B. How did it relate to my research paper?
 - C. Issues the book raises for Social Work.

EVALUATION

Attendance	10 Points
Research Paper	75 Points
Review Chapter	75 Points
Book Critique	50 Points (each book)
Research Exercise	100 Points
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>50 Points</u>
TOTAL	410 Points

CLASS READINGS

Wodarski, Hogan & Roberts

Topics

1. Empirical Practice: An introduction.....1
2. Criteria for Choosing Knowledge and Assessing Empirical Intervention.....29
3. Transforming Behavioral Science Knowledge into Practice Generalization39
4. Choice-of-Outcome Measures and Means of Assessment.....72
5. Designs for Daily Practice Evaluation.....107
6. Traditional Designs.....127
7. Application of Statistical Techniques in the Evaluation of Practice140
8. Advanced Statistical Techniques in Social Work Research
Eileen M. Lysaught and John Wodarski.....153
9. Preparing Research.....166
10. Competency-Based Agency Practice.....182
11. Development of Management Information Systems for Human Services: A Practical Guide...205
12. Developing and Formulating Quality Proposals.....225
13. The Research Practitioner: The Formulation of Process and Educational Objectives.....234
14. Emerging Trends and Issues246

RESEARCH LAB

Students will utilize the attached form for all of the research labs which will occur on Wednesdays. The student will gain competencies in what is the research question, the type of study, outcome used, experimental design, statistical analyses and outcome.

Session 1: Video Exercise (*Competencies: 1, 2, 3 & 7*)

Session 2: Video (*Competencies: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9*)

Session 3: Research Report 1:

Gerald T. Moote, Nancy J. Smyth and John S. Wodarski, "Social Skills Training with Youth in School Settings: A Review," Research in Social Work Practice, 1999, 9, (4), 427-465.

Book Report 1. (*Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4 &7*)

Session 4: Research Report 2:

Lisa A. Rapp, Catherine N. Dulmus, John S. Wodarski and Marvin Feit, "Screening of Substance Abuse in Public Welfare and Child Protective Service Clients: A

comparative Study of Rapid Assessment Instruments vs. The SASSI,” Journal of Addictive Diseases, 1999, 18, (2) 83-88. (Competencies: 3, 4 & 6)

Session 5: Report, Book Critique, Wodarski and Feit. (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

Session 6: Research Report 3:

Catherine Dulmus and John S. Wodarski, “Trauma-related Symptomatology Among Children of Parents Victimized by Urban Community Violence,” American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 2000, 70 (2), 272-277. (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

Session 7: Research Report 4:

Michael Sullivan and John S. Wodarski, “Rating College Students Substance Abuse: A Systematic Literature Review,” Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention, 2004, 4 (1), 71-91. (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

Session 8: Research Report 5:

Eileen M. Lysaught, John S. Wodarski and Heather Paris, “Normative Feed back: A Means to Reduce College Drinking,” Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 2003, 8 (4), 23-43. (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

Session 9: Research Report 6 & 7

John S. Wodarski, Lois A. Wodarski and Heather Paris, “Teams-Games-Tournaments: Four Decades of Research,” Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work: Advances in Practice, Programming, Research and Policy, 2004, 1 (1), 23-43. (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

Session 10: Research Report 7 (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

John S. Wodarski, Jeffery A. Giordano, Maurice Daniels and James A. Pippin, “Traditional MSW Students Compared with Extended MSW Degree Students: A Multi-Variable Analysis,” Innovative Higher Education, 1988, 13 (1), 66-78

Session 11: Research Report 8, Group Report, Research Report 9

Wodarski, J.S., MacMaster, S. & Miller, N.K. (in press). The use of computer technology to reduce and prevent college drinking. *Journal of Social Work in Public Health*. (Competencies: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8)

Session 12: Discussion of Research Paper.

Session 13: Discussion of Research Paper.

Session 14: Discussion of Research Paper.

RESEARCH WORK

1. Question. _____

2. Type of Study. _____

3. Outcome Used. _____

4. Experimental Designs. _____

5. Statistical Analysis. _____

6. Conclusions. _____

