

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

SW 520 FOUNDATIONS OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

(1 credit hour)

Spring 2009

Session 1

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

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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 2222 Dunford (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

This is a required concentration 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. (CT/EBP-C.1, C.2, C.3, C.4; Values/ethics-C.1, C.2, C.3, C.4; Pops at-risk & SJ- C.1; Research-C.3; Practice-C.1). *(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. (CT/EBP-C.1, C.2, C.3, C.4; Diversity-C.3, C.4; Values/ethics-C.1, C.2, C.4) *(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 (CT/EBP-C.3, C.4; Practice-C. 2) *(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; using research to inform practice and practice to inform research).*
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. (CT/EBP-C.1, C.2, C.4; Diversity- C.3, C.4; Values/ethics- C.1, C.2, C.3). *(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 text:

Gibbs, L. E. (2003). *Evidenced-based practice for the helping professions: A practical guide with integrated multimedia*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thompson Learning. [Referred to as Gibbs text in this outline]

Other required readings (noted as ** below in this outline) may be found @ Hodges on-line library reserve for this course.

Blackboard

Several resources for the course are posted on our course Blackboard and noted below in this course outline.

Descriptions of assignments, quizzes, and grading policies can be found after the

Course sessions section below

Course session outline

Session 1

Topics:

Overview of course, assignments, quizzes, grading policies
Principles, overview
Steps of EBP
Principles of critical thinking
Logical and practice fallacies

Terms & concepts

Critical thinking Evidence-based assumptions Evidence-based principles
Evidence-based steps Logical fallacies

Required Readings

Course outline—print and bring that copy to class

Gibbs text – Chapter 1 “Evidence-based practice: Definition and what it offers to you and to your clients”

Chapter 2 “Become motivated to apply the current best evidence to practice.”

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

**Mullen, E.J. & Streiner, D. L. (2006). The evidence for and against evidenced-based practice. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 21-34). *Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Session 2

Topics:

Using research to inform practice

Posing a well-structured and answerable question

Terms and concepts:

Assessment Client Oriented Practical Evidence Search (COPES)

Evaluation Prevention Research informed practice

Exercise # 3-1 Gibbs' text:

Due: Read the instructions on page 77, select two of the situations provided on pages 77-80 & complete the questions asked for each Prior to our class session

Due: Weekly quiz #1 (by the time of our class session this week)

Required readings

Gibbs text – Chapter 3 “Pose a specific question of importance to your client’s welfare.”

** Shlonsky, A. & Gibbs, L. (2006). Will the real evidence-based practice please stand up? In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 103-121). *Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice*. New York, N.Y.:Oxford University Press.

**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.

Session 3

Topics:

Strategies for locating external evidence
Issues of generalizing research findings to other populations
Utilizing electronic searches/information technology
Cultural insensitivity in research
Culturally competent research

Terms and concepts

Assessment	Culture	Electronic searches	Evaluation	Description	
Mutual understanding		Practice evidence searches		Prevention	Risk

Due

Due: Weekly quiz #2 (by the time of our class session this week)

Due: Cultural influences paper

Due: COPES Assignment by the time of our class session this week

Required Readings

Gibbs text– Chapter 4 “Locate the best external evidence to answer your question”

**Directory of internet resources on evidence-based practice and research in health care and

human services. In A.R. Roberts & K. R. Yeager (Eds.) (pp. 349-360).

Foundations of Evidenced-Based Social Work Practice. New York: Oxford

University Press.

**Issacs, M. R., Huang, L. N., Hernandez, M., Echo-Hawk, H. (2005, December). The

road to evidence: The intersection of evidenced-based practices and cultural

competence in children’s mental health. National Alliance of Multi-Ethnic

Behavioral Health Associations.

http://www.nambha.org/Documents/RoadtoEvidence_93006.pdf

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2007). Evidence based-

practices: Shaping mental health services toward recovery. Statement on cultural

competence. United States Department of Health and Human Services.

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/communitysupport/toolkits/community/culturalcompetence/default.asp>.

Session 4

Topics: Treatment effectiveness research
Randomized controlled trials

Terms and concepts

Effectiveness Prevention Primary data Randomized controlled trials (RCT)
Rating forms Rating frameworks Secondary data
Synthesizing

Complete Exercise 5-2 in Gibbs' text Prior to class session

Due

Due: Weekly quiz #3 by the time of our class session this week

Due: MOLES assignment by the time of our class session this week

Required readings

Gibbs text – Chapter 5 “Treatment effectiveness research: Evaluate study quality and
apply results to practice.”

** Ahles, T., Wasson, J., Seville, J., Johnson, D., Cole, B., et al. A controlled trial of
methods for managing pain in primary care patients with or without co-occurring
psychosocial problems. *Annals of Family Medicine*, 4(4), 341-350.

**Cohen, J. A., Mannarino, A. P., Knudsen, K. (2005). Treating sexually abused
children: 1 year follow-up of a randomized controlled trial. *Child Abuse &
Neglect*, 29, 135-145.

**Silverman, W. K., Kurtines, W. M., Ginsburg, G. S., Weems, C. F., Lumpkin, P. W.,
Carmicheal, D. H. (1999). Treating anxiety disorders in children with group cognitive-
behavioral therapy: A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Counseling and Clinical
Psychology*, 67, 995-1003.

Session 5 & 6

Topics: Systematic reviews
Meta-analyses
Qualitative research

Terms and concepts

Meta-analyses Qualitative studies Systematic reviews

Complete Exercise 6-1 in Gibbs' text

Due

Due: Weekly quiz #4

Due: RCT assignment

Required readings

Gibbs text – Chapter 6 “Meta-analysis: Evaluating review quality and applying findings to practice.”

Chapter 8 “Descriptive and qualitative studies: Evaluating study quality and applying results to practice.”

**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.

**Durlack, J.A. & Wells, A.M. (1997). Primary prevention mental health programs for children and adolescents: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 25, 115-152.

Session 7

Topics: Applying evidence-based practice to your client population
Using practice to inform research

Terms and concepts:

Cultural influences Cultural identity Cultural insensitivity to minority/oppressed populations

Due

Due: Weekly quiz #5 by the time of our class session this week

Due: Meta-analysis assignment

Required readings

Gibbs text– Chapter 10 “Teaching others”

**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: 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.

Due Final Paper

Grading criteria, grading policies, course grade point distribution, & course assignment point distribution

COURSE EXPECTATIONS and GRADING POLICY

1. Students are expected to participate fully in all online activities and in all classroom sessions.
2. Students are expected to read all assigned readings thoroughly before a class session.
3. Students are expected to complete and submit assignments on time & in response to the questions of each assignment as provided and meet the following criteria:
 - a) Out of class written assignments are expected to be of graduate level quality.
 - (1) Errors in spelling and grammar in a paper written outside of the classroom will result in reductions of ½ point for each error in the overall score for an assignment
 - b) Out of class written assignments are expected to properly cite sources in accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edition)

Note: use APA standards for format, textual citations, reference list format, 12 fonts, double-spaced, minimum 1” margins all four sides, and inclusive language.

Total Point Distribution for Course; total points for course grades are <u>not</u> rounded—e.g., 81.999 = 81.0 (= C+)	Points for Course Assignments, & Quizzes	
100 – 95	A	Five Quizzes (4 points each) 20 points
94 – 88	B+	RCT paper 8 points
87 – 82	B	Meta-analysis paper 8 points
81 – 76	C+	COPEs paper 8 points
75 – 70	C	MOLES paper 8 points
69 & Below	F	Cultural influences paper 8 points
		Final paper 40 points
		Total points achievable 100 points

Quizzes:

Quiz #1: this is a multi-response/multiple choice 4 item quiz based on the terms and concepts for this week, such as articulating the principles of critical thinking, of evidence-based research, recognizing, defining & avoiding logical fallacies and practice

fallacies, formulating well-structured questions to improve practice & policy decisions and care. You may re-take the quiz during the week; your final attempt score is the score that will be recorded.

Quiz #2: this is a multi-response/multiple choice 4 item quiz based on the terms and concepts for this week, such as strategies for locating external evidence, issues of clients' cultural contexts, and cultural insensitivity in research, steps in EBP. You may re-take the quiz during the week; your final attempt score is the score that will be recorded.

Quiz #3: this is a multi-response/multiple choice 4 item quiz based on the terms and concepts for this week, such as analyzing effectiveness, primary data, randomized controlled trials, rating research findings, rating forms, secondary data, treatment effectiveness. You may re-take the quiz during the week; your final attempt score is the score that will be recorded.

Quiz #4: this is a multi-response/multiple choice 4 item quiz based on the terms and concepts for this week, such as systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and qualitative research, analyzing and synthesizing findings. You may re-take the quiz during the week; your final attempt score is the score that will be recorded.

Quiz #5: this is a multi-response/multiple choice 4 item quiz based on the terms and concepts for this week, such as considering the influence of culture, cultural identities on interpretation and utilization of findings, applying evidence of effectiveness to practice, recruitment, and retention of minority/oppressed populations in research. You may re-take the quiz during the week; your final attempt score is the score that will be recorded.

Assignments:

COPES assignment (8 points)

In this assignment, you are expected to formulate your search question through the COPES process, and the resources in the Gibbs' text, as well as other resources provided on our Blackboard site, further specificities are located on our Blackboard site. Maximum length is 1 and ½ pages, double spaced, 12 font.

MOLES assignment (8 points)

In this assignment you will plan in detail the search process you will use to locate the EB best practices for your client/client population and specific psychosocial concerns, including determining your search terms, and utilizing search engines/databases (e.g. Medline, PsycInfo, Social Work Abstracts, ERIC, Google Scholar), systematic review sites (Campbell and Corcoran Collaborations), and other databases; specific items to which you are to respond are located on our course Blackboard site. Maximum length is 1 and ½ pages, double spaced, 12 font; a reference list would be an additional page(s).

Cultural influences paper (8 points)

This assignment asks you to critically analyze the influences and implications of cultural, geographic, community, gender, religious, political, and other cultural identities and orientations on the client and issue/problem of your interest in and your critical evaluation of yourself in light of your own cultural background, cultural values and beliefs; further specific items to which you are to respond are located on our course Blackboard site. Maximum length is 1 to 2 pages, double spaced, 12 font. You are expected, as always, to use APA format for textual citations, and reference list.

RCT assignment (8 points)

This assignment asks you to critically examine a RCT study, to interpret findings in light of rigor, generalizability, and the potential influences of culture and cultural background, sensitivity of research to cultural diversity and to formulate professional judgment through the use of rating frameworks & forms, using the questions in Gibbs' Chapter 5 to rate the quality of the study. You may select either the Cohen et al. article, or the Silverman et al. article from the required readings from last week for this assignment. The specific items to which you are to respond are located on our course Blackboard site,

and include a plan for disseminating your analyses to practitioners and agencies who work with this population who work with this client population, and how to collaborate with other practitioners about evidence-based practice. Maximum length is 1 and ½ pages, double spaced, 12 font a reference list would be an additional page(s). You are expected, as always, to use APA format for textual citations, and reference list.

Meta-analysis assignment (8 points)

This assignment asks you to critically examine a meta-analysis, interpret findings in light of rigor, generalizability, and the potential influences of culture and cultural background, sensitivity of research to cultural diversity and to formulate professional judgment using the questions in Gibbs' Chapter 6 to rate the quality of the meta-analysis. You may select either the Cohen et al. article, or the Silverman et al. article from the required readings from last week for this assignment. Specific items to which you are to respond are located on our course Blackboard site, including a plan for disseminating your analyses to agencies who work with this client population, and what next steps you might take for collecting better evidence (if necessary). Maximum length is 1 and ½ pages, double spaced, 12 font; a reference list would be an additional page(s). You are expected, as always, to use APA format for textual citations, and reference list.

Final paper (40 points)

This assignment requires you to report the knowledge you achieved for best evidence through the papers who submitted for the COPES, MOLES, Cultural influences papers PLUS discuss the evidence-based intervention/program you located through database searches for the client you specify in the COPES paper and including what evidence-based intervention(s) you would use for best practice, whether there is a need for further

evidence, and how you would plan to inform practice with the findings & knowledge you obtained already, and how you would further use your practice to inform research.

Maximum total length is 6 pages, plus a reference list; double spaced, 12 font. You are expected, as always, to use APA format for textual citations, and reference list citations.