THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW520. Foundations of Evidence-Based Practice
Section 301
1 credit hour
Summer, 2016

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Online Office Hours: 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.csw.utk.edu). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the Social Work Field Placement Code of Conduct.

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).

University Civility Statement
Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other’s well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: http://civility.utk.edu/

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

Dimensions of Diversity
The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the U.S. Council
on Social Work Education (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement), “the dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including” age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, regionality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. The College values intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, and academic freedom and integrity. “A person’s diverse life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim” (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement). The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.

**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 (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams) to:

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. (EBIP 4.1). *(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. (EBIP 9.1) *(content: PICO questions; evaluation, prevention, assessment, description, and risk questions).*

3. Employ a scientific analytic approach using qualitative and/or qualitative 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 (EBIP 4.1) *(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. (EBIP 2.1). (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).

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This class is an asynchronous online (purely online) course. The student is a co-creator of the learning experience and environment. It is the purpose of this class to provide knowledge and access to resources that will serve as a springboard for class collaboration and group projects.

I conceptualize this course site much like a workbook, with a series of steps you must work through to learn a process that should help you in your time at school and in your career. These tasks are more and less difficult and complex. Some have required readings or handouts associated with them. All have podcasts, or online lectures, associated with them.

The course is laid out in this format because you are being asked to learn a process that will help you access and critically evaluate evidence-based practices, or treatments. Therefore, evaluation of course members is based on how well they are capable of performing the steps, or tasks, within this process. Once you complete all tasks, you will have completed the course.

REQUIRED READINGS

There is no required text for this course. All readings are on the Blackboard site for this class and can be downloaded or read from there.

ORGANIZATION OF COURSE AND BLACKBOARD

This is an online only course. This course is largely about learning a fairly straight-forward methodology. As such, it can easily be self-directed and done online. Course content is divided by a series of tasks, for which podcasts (online lectures), required readings, and handouts are the primary basis for understanding the material. At the end of each task is an assignment, either individual or group.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

I try to make myself very available throughout this course. The easiest way to contact me initially is via email (rbolen@utk.edu), after which we can determine how to meet if necessary. We can “talk” or “meet” via email, have an online meeting where we can both view the same content, talk by telephone, or possibly meet in person if other mechanisms do not work. It is very important that you contact me if you are falling behind in this course so that we can problem solve to catch you back up. These mini-summer sessions are fast and unrelenting. Once behind on content, it is difficult to catch up.
I also have weekly online optional office hours from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM EDT on Thursday evenings through June 26. This time is not structured and is done to discuss student concerns or questions about content or assignments. Please come to these sessions with your questions and concerns.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Each of 11 tasks</th>
<th>9 points each</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
<td>99 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Grade

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

Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 - 99</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 - 92</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 - 87</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 - 82</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 – 77</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 – 72</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 - 87</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;63</td>
<td>F</td>
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</table>

Task assignments

All task assignments are completely online. To prepare for each assignment, please make sure you have listened to the podcasts and have read all required papers and handouts for that task. Most assignments are tasks that you must complete for the week. A few are tests that assess your understanding of the content for that week.

Please label all files you submit to Blackboard with your last name, first initial, and task number (e.g., “bolen_b_task_1.docx”, or “bolen b task 1.docx”), using whichever format your word processing program requires. All assignments are submitted via BlackBoard.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Suggested Due Dates</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Critical thinking; Logical fallacies</td>
<td>June 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Get with group and determine times to meet for tasks 4 &amp; 5; notify instructor of times (via email)</strong></td>
<td>June 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Answerable research questions</td>
<td>June 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Search terms</td>
<td>June 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tracking down evidence: Internet</td>
<td>June 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tracking down evidence: Library</td>
<td>June 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Evaluating evidence</td>
<td>June 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Multiple study reviews</td>
<td>June 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Experimental design studies</td>
<td>June 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Matching to client needs</td>
<td>June 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Implementing EBPs</td>
<td>June 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lifelong learning</td>
<td>July 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Last day assignments can be completed</strong></td>
<td>July 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Task 1: Introduction to EBP; Critical Thinking; Fallacies in Thinking

Podcast
Introduction to evidence-based practice (EBP); Critical thinking; Logical Fallacies

Required Readings


Optional Reading
The Writing Center. (downloaded 2014). Fallacies. University of North Carolina. (This reading may help clarify some of the fallacies in the required reading.)

Handouts
Definition of evidence-based practice (EBP) for social work; Evidence-based practices and evidence-based programs; Growth of EBP in health and mental health Factors contributing to the growth of EBP in social work

Assignment, Individual
Test on practice fallacies (CC1)

Assignment, group
You have been assigned randomly to a group for the completion of tasks 4 and 5. To complete the assignment for this week, your group needs to contact each other and schedule blocks of time to collaborate for tasks 4 and 5. Once you do so, please submit your agreed upon meeting times via Blackboard.

Task 2: Answerable Research Question

Podcast
Asking a Research Question

Required Readings

Handouts
Three Elements of Social Work Practice Situation; Frameworks for Research to Practice Questions

Assignment, Individual
Create an answerable research question (CC2)
Task 3: Developing a Search Strategy

Podcast: Developing a search strategy

Required Readings: None

Handouts: Search Strategy with Boolean Method

Tutorial (optional): Developing a Search Strategy

Assignment, Individual: Develop search strategy (CC3)

Task 4: Tracking Down Evidence on the Internet

Podcast: Tracking Down Evidence

Required Readings: None

Handouts: Directory of Internet Resources on EBP

Search Resources: Search Term Documentation Table

Tutorial (optional): Searching the Internet

Assignment, Group: Searching the internet (CC3)

Task 5: Tracking down Evidence at the UT Library

Podcast: Tracking Down Evidence

Required Readings: None

Assignment, Group: Tracking down evidence at the library (CC3)

Task 6: Evaluating Evidence

Podcast: Evaluating Evidence

Required Readings: None

Handouts: Practical Significance of Evidence

Source Credibility: Statistical Terms and Concepts

Assignment, Individual: Test on evaluating evidence (CC3)
Task 7: Multistudy Reviews

Podcast

Multistudy Reviews

Required Reading


Handouts

Glossary

Statistical Terms & Concepts for Evidence-Based Practice Framework for Assessment of Meta-analyses

Assignment, Individual

Tests: Meta-analyses and systematic analyses Davidson meta-analysis (CC3)

Task 8: Experimental Design Study

Podcast

Experimental Design Study

Required Reading


Handouts

None

Assignment, Individual

Test, Evaluating an RCT (CC3)

Task 9: Matching EBPs and Clients

Podcast

Client Considerations

Required Reading


Handouts

Assessing Fit

Assignment, Individual

Test, Matching Clients and EBPs (CC4)

Task 10: Implementing EBPs

Podcast

Implementation Part I

Implementation Part II
Required Readings


Handouts
Finding Implementation Resources & Assessing Quality
Assess Fit between Intervention, Client System, Practitioner, and Organization
Communication & Collaborative Decision-Making
Fidelity
Administrative Factors
Training
Evaluation
Evaluating the Effectiveness & Efficiency of EBP
Adaptation or Modification of Evidence-Based Interventions

Assignment, Individual
Test, Implementation (CC3)

Task 11: Becoming a Lifelong Learner

Podcast
None

Required Readings
None

Handouts
None

Assignment, Individual
Steps for being a Lifelong Learner (CC1, 2, 3, 4)
Test