Texas A&M-Commerce
Department of Social Work

SWK 531: Research for Practice
Tuesdays 7:10 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Mesquite Campus

FALL 2012

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR          Rebecca G. Judd Ph.D., LMSW-IPR
OFFICE LOCATION     Henderson 307
OFFICE HOURS:       Wednesday 8:00 a.m. - 12 noon
                     Thursday 8: 00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
                     In Mesquite by Appointment

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS in eCollege
Any questions entered into the virtual office on e-College will be answered by 5:00 p.m. the day following your initial post. Questions posted on Friday will be answered by 5:00 p.m. the following Monday. Virtual office is the preferred method of contact regarding questions related to class. If you have a personal issue, please email me and I will respond directly to you.

CONTACT INFORMATION
EMAIL: rebecca.judd@tamuc.edu
Office Number: 903-468-8190

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  SWK 531. Research for Practice (3 hrs)

This course provides students with the theory, knowledge, and skills for research in evaluating the effect of practice techniques in relation to individuals, families (or households), small groups, organizations, and communities. Students are taught basic descriptive statistics such as univariate and bivariate analysis as well as basic inferential statistics such as Chi Square and t-tests as well as the use of SPSS statistical package. Additionally students are taught single system designs and multiple base line designs both of which may be used to critically evaluate the outcome of individual practice techniques and program effectiveness. Prerequisites: Students are required to have knowledge and skills in the use of computers to complete data analysis and college algebra competency.
PROGRAM GOALS & COMPETENCIES:

1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions.

With successful completion of foundation courses students will be able to:

  F1.1 Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)

  F1.2 Demonstrate skills in research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)

  F1.4 Engage in change strategies with individuals, families, groups and organizations & communities (2.1.10)

2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change.

With successful completion of foundation courses students will be able to:

  F 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of professional social work ethical values & principles.

  F 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge reflective of diversity in practice.

3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life.

With successful completion of foundation courses students will be able to:

  F 3.1 Engage as professional social workers (2.1.1)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to equip students to meet the increasing demands for practice accountability. The course prepares students to identify, access and understand empirical studies that inform evidence based practice. Students will gain knowledge in program and practice evaluative methods; the process for developing an evidence-based evaluative project and basic statistical analysis for data.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Communicate the connection between empirical research and evidence based practice.

- Locate, understand and describe evidence based research to support practice interventions (including comparative differences in quantitative and qualitative research approaches).

- Communicate the necessary steps for developing and carrying out program/practice evaluation.

- Communicate basic statistical procedures and when to use a specific statistical test.

Master Syllabus as of Fall 2011
RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

This course stresses the importance of evidence based theory and practice methods. Consequently, it supports the practice courses that emphasize the importance of demonstrating effectiveness in professional interventions. This course draws on materials from practice and HBSE to illustrate social work research principles, and it develops a professional model that utilizes practice evaluation to formulate a continuous improvement cycle in professional practice.

TEXTS


ADDITIONAL READINGS RECOMMENDED


You will be expected to start to develop your own resource list in your research area. You should also include articles and resources that include ethical issues concerning research with your population/question under study. The reference list at the end of this syllabus may also provide some resources for your study.
OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

Article Critiques
Four separate journal articles reporting findings from empirically based studies will be obtained and critiqued based on the critique outlines provided. An outline for completing the critique can be found on e-college, along with due dates.

STATISTICAL EXERCISES (3 @ 25 pts each)
Each student will complete a statistical assignment using Microsoft Excel. These will be assigned homework.

WEEKLY QUIZZES (100 POINTS)
Each week will also have a quiz posted on line, which will be based on the assigned readings, this helps keep us all up to date with the readings, something easily postponed during a busy semester. In addition, there will be practice questions from the comprehensive exam that reflect licensure questions. These questions will not be graded, but are designed to prepare you for upcoming high stakes exams. Quizzes cannot be made up

COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM (125 PTS)
There will be a comprehensive exam covering information presented in class and on weekly quizzes. The instructor reserves the right to make this exam computer based or administered in the classroom as deemed appropriate.

EXPERIENTIAL OBSERVATIONAL ACTIVITY (100 PTS)

GRADING SCALE
You can access your grades in eCollege to see your grade (keep in mind that the grade only reflects work I have graded). Because this course is evaluated primarily through written assignments, there will be a lag time between when the assignment is posted and I grade it. In addition, the online quizzes require grading by me. You will receive an email from me each time the grade book has been update to reflect the most recent status.

90% of possible points = A
80% of possible points = B
70% of possible points = C
Below 70% of points must repeat the class

POLICY ON DUE DATES:
All assignments are due on the day and at the time specified as stated in the Course Schedule. Late assignments will automatically have 10 points deducted from the grade per day beginning with the due date and each day thereafter. ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER ONE WEEK past the due date. (Assignments due at the beginning of class on Monday will not be accepted after class begins the following Monday). DO NOT email an assignment to me unless you have received prior permission. It is easy to “lose” an email or have trouble opening attachments.

Master Syllabus as of Fall 2011
POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:
Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literacy composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In") to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:
This course was developed as a web-enhanced course and will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. Assignments are to be submitted in E-College via the correct weekly drop box. Do not email an assignment to me unless you have received prior permission. It is easy to “lose” an email among the many I receive on a daily basis.

Please note there is a 24/7 technical help available for eCollege. If you run into any technical problems, you are responsible for getting the help you need. You may certainly notify me if the problem is affecting your performance in the class, but I cannot help you solve technology problems (which may be in the eCollege system but also may be related to your ISP or your hardware).
If you run into problems accessing eCollege through the standard online class link, try this alternate College web address is: http://online.tamu.org

Email correspondence for *all* courses delivered through eCollege will be automatically directed through your Leo Email account available through the MyLeo portal. This includes e-mail from me and e-mail you send to me. Texas A&M University-Commerce and eCollege cannot guarantee delivery and /or receipt of e-mail outside your Leo Email portal.

The university does not send out hard copy mailings of anything these days: email is the official system, and the Leo accounts are the default setting in eCollege

Master Syllabus as of Fall 2011
ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:
“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student's Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS:
The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics to guide social workers’ conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department's Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University's commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).