Course Description: PR: SOW 3401, SOW 3300. The study and application of systematic data collection and measurement of change in individuals, families, groups, programs, and communities.

Course Learning Objectives: By the end of the semester, students will be able to:
1. Advocate for planned evaluation as a basic function of effective, accountable generalist social work practice aimed at improving: (1) client outcomes, and (2) intervention impact on community problems and social-economic justice.
2. Compare the scientific approach, evaluation processes and problem-solving phases of social work intervention.
3. Discuss the nature and value of single case research in the context of generalist (micro and macro) practice.
4. Address considerations of client values, professional ethics and the protection of human subjects in any type of practice or policy evaluation.
5. Demonstrate objectivity and sensitivity in relation to diversity, populations at-risk, culture and to avoid prejudice in the evaluation process.
6. Describe selected documentation and measurement methods for use in evaluations of various sized systems (individuals, families, groups, programs, and communities), in terms of procedures to be followed and the advantages and disadvantages of each method.
7. Use appropriate recording and measurement instruments in given situations.
8. Measure the effects of intervention on consumer quality of life.
9. Integrate evaluation processes into generalist practice activities utilizing strength-focused assessments that employ baseline measurements when appropriate; to obtain and provide services and resources while systematically monitoring for change in selected outcome measures; and, to develop and practice evaluation methods toward the improvement of resources and service delivery based on the evaluation of evidenced-based practice.
10. To use evaluation to enhance critical thinking in relation to client concerns and community issues and to improve generalist social work practice outcomes and efficiency.

Assignments and Grading:
1. Exam 1 0 - 40 points
2. Exam 2 0 - 40 points
3. Analysis and Applications Paper 0 - 20 points

Analysis and Applications Paper: Each student will be expected to take the information presented in this class and write an evaluation plan at either the micro or macro practice level that clearly identifies outcomes and measurement for change. The course instructor will provide further instructions on this assignment.

A final course grade will be based upon the total number of points accumulated by a student on the above evaluations:
A = 95-100 (4.0)  B- = 80-83 (2.75)  D+ = 67-69 (1.25)
A- = 90-94 (3.75)  C+ = 77-79 (2.25)  D = 64-66 (1.00)
B+ = 87-89 (3.25)  C = 74-76 (2.00)  D- = 60-63 (0.75)
B = 84-86 (3.00)  C- = 70-73 (1.75)  F = 59 or less (0.00)

Required TEXT:
2. Library readings, as indicated in the Course Outline and Schedule, are required.

Course Policies
1. Student class participation and attendance. Social work students are required to attend ALL class sessions. Professional functioning typically involves collegial sharing and peer support. By being present in class, students develop a commitment to, and a skill in, mutual problem solving. For this reason, class attendance is mandatory. Three or more absences, regardless of reason, will result in a letter grade of "F" being assigned. In addition, a student's grade may be lowered because of lack of participation, tardiness, and absences.
2. Academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is the violation of classroom rules of honesty with respect to examinations and assignments. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade of "F" for the course. Plagiarism is the undocumented use of another individual=s professional work without proper citation. Any student found guilty of plagiarism in course assignments will receive a failing grade of "F" for the course. Students guilty of either academic dishonesty or plagiarism will be told to stop attending classes in this course.
3. Student papers. Effective written expression is essential for professional practitioners whose records often decide a client's fate, as in court and medical cases. Thus, students are expected to always present their ideas clearly and properly. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all papers submitted. Papers are to be typed, double spaced, and conform to professional standards of style and papers demonstrating serious deficiencies in this area will be returned without a grade. The required writing style is that of the American Psychological Association (APA).
4. Missed Test/Assignment Dates. Students are expected to take the test and submit the papers when the assignments on the identified due date. For papers, one letter grade will be deducted from any assignment submitted late unless arrangements have been made with the instructor for a late paper. Extenuating circumstances will be granted for serious situations such as illness, death in the family, etc., but arrangements must be made in advance of the due date.
5. Incomplete grades. When students are unable to complete all requirements for a course due to extenuating circumstances by the end of the term, the instructor may assign them an incomplete grade (I). An instructor gives an incomplete grade when the remaining requirements can be completed in a short time frame after the course term has ended. Students sign an incomplete grade agreement form (See Handbook Forms Section), describing the course requirements that need to be completed for a final grade. Students should see the instructor to request an incomplete grade and to make arrangements for completing course requirements by the deadline set by the instructor. Students who do not complete required assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a failing grade (F) for the course.
6. Course changes. The instructor reserves the right to make announced changes in course requirements, schedule, and assignments.
Course Outline and Schedule


Unit Learning Objectives: Students will be able to:
1. Identify the concepts and importance of social work accountability based upon systematic evaluations of programs and practices.
2. Compare the stages of problem solving in practice to the steps to be taken in research and evaluation.
3. Identify aspects relative to commitment to professionalism, shared responsibility and empowerment in evaluation activities.
4. Review and continue to refine the knowledge of basic research concepts, such as reliability, validity, hypothesis, operationalization, measurement, and sampling, as learned in prior research courses.
6. Write interventive hypotheses useful in evaluations.
7. Name the basic ingredients of all single system designs.
8. Value and ethical considerations and issues in evaluating social work and consider the social and economic implications of evaluation.

Specific Content
1. Accountability in research and evaluation.
2. Evaluation as a shared responsibility in generalist practice.
3. Research and evaluation as tools to accomplish strength-focused generalist social work functions which include: assessments that employ appropriate baseline measurements; obtaining and providing services and resources while systematically monitoring for change in selected indicator levels; improvement of resources and service delivery based on analyses that compare baseline and interim and final measurements of results of practice.
4. Social work problem solving, research, and evaluation: a comparison.
5. Review of some basic research concepts: theory, hypothesis, variables, research designs, sampling, representativeness, reliability, validity, operationalize, quantification, unit of measurement, satisfaction, effectiveness, outcome, process, scales, bias, measurement errors, significance, correlation, generalization.
6. Types (causal, relational, interventive) and components of hypotheses.
7. Considerations in evaluation designs, observations, and interpretations: values, ethics, objectivity, diversity, cultural sensitivity, implications for social and economic justice.
8. Outcome evaluation: measuring the effects of intervention on consumer quality of life.
9. Definition of measurement: process of assigning labels (e.g., numbers) to things (such as characteristics of people) according to explicit and consistent rules.
10. Basic ingredients of evidenced-based practice and single-system designs: target problem or objective; indicators to measure change; a baseline; an evaluation design with distinct phases; repeated measures to monitor progress; and analysis of data for purposes of modifying future actions.
11. Differences between single-system evaluation and classical experimental group research.
12. Ethical standards for evaluation: clear and disclosed purpose; informed consent; confidentiality; non-detrimental designs; avoiding unrealistic deadlines if substandard work results; disseminating results to participants.
13. Power in information generated: can empower clients and can be used to improve resources for the under served.

Required Readings:
2. Students are to review basic concepts in research as used in prior research courses.
3.  http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsw/  Familiarize yourself with this website. Go to Social Work, then Research, then Measurement.

**CLASSES 4 & 5:**

**Measuring Results And Effort: Outcome Goals, Indicators, Objectives And Action Steps.**

**Unit Learning Objectives: Students will be able to:**
1. Differentiate between goals and objectives and between concepts and indicators
2. Differentiate between outcomes (final consumer results) and action plans (processes, activities, steps, or effort)
3. Differentiate between outcome and interim goals and objectives and specify indicators (i.e., units of measurement) for a given concept
4. Write program and client outcome objectives that are measurable and are focused on relevant and realistic target system solutions

**Content**
1. In outcome evaluation, goals and objectives must focus on desired consumer results and must be relevant to target problem and to target system's culture
2. Goals and objectives typically result from a contracting process involving shared responsibility and stated in measurable terms.
3. Indicator: a unit of measurement; a concept/idea translated into an observable, measurable behavior or activity, a verifiable occurrence
4. Objectives: desired results from intervention, always stated in measurable terms
5. "Outcome" versus "interim" objectives
6. Outcome objectives (desired consumer well being) versus action plans (agency/worker/client tasks, activities, effort, processes
7. Writing program and client outcome objectives (i.e., relevant, feasible, measurable (i.e., 5 components): who will accomplish what, to which level, where, and by when?)

**Readings:** Bloom, M., Fischer, J., and Orme, J., Chaps. 3 and 4

Class Project writing Measurable Treatment Objectives

**CLASS 6: FIRST EXAM**

**CLASS 7 & 8:**

**Micro Level: Recording/Monitoring: Documentation Methods And Instruments**

**Unit Learning Objectives: Students will be able to:**
1. Provide a rationale and describe steps for the development of a recording plan
2. Plot and interpret data on graphs or charts
3. Discuss guidelines for behavioral observations and describe instruments for recording behavior
4. Record frequencies, duration and intervals using the problem-oriented recording system

**Content**
1. Purposes and guidelines of record keeping and monitoring
2. Cultural sensitivity of recording methods and tools
3. Behavioral observation guidelines
4. Types of records and recording instruments (e.g., Narratives, Process, Critical incident recording, Logs, Problem-oriented record keeping (POR).
5. Types of charting (e.g., Behavior charts (frequency, duration, intensity, and intervals) and protocol and interpreting charts (e.g., slope, drift, carry-over).
7. Recognizing and using reactivity.
Readings
1. Bloom, M., et al., text: Chapters 8, 9 and 10

CLASS 9: Measuring Success With Individual Clients
Unit Learning Objectives:
Students will be able to:
1. Describe selected methods of measuring case movement in individual clients.
2. Identify strengths and weaknesses of selected case measurement tools.
3. Use given outcome measure tools in simulated case situations.

Content
1. Behavioral measures: frequency; duration; intensity; intervals; spot checks
2. Direct observations of behavior: obtrusive and unobtrusive
3. Client self-reports and the use of standardized measures and global assessment or social functioning scales
4. Adjustment or clinical measurement scales (e.g., general contentment, homophobia, self esteem)
5. Difference between assessment and evaluation measures in terms of their nature and their potential for assessing personal needs and strengths
6. Self-developed scales, Semi-structured, such as a Goal Attainment Scale, Self anchored rating scales, such as for stress and involving clients in evaluation; emphasis on shared responsibility and empowerment
7. Evaluating results: client achievement and satisfaction; need for change in interventions in a case; implications for improving practice, program, mission (e.g., social and economic justice, societal support, etc.)

Readings  Bloom, M., et al. Text: Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15

CLASS 10, & 11:
Group, Family And Macro Evaluation: Evaluating Success In Family Social Work
Unit Learning Objectives: Students will be able to:
1. Discuss the application of single system designs to families and for measuring case progress in work with families and groups.
2. Use selected evaluation instruments in given family and group situations.

Content
1. Family and groups as the subject of single system evaluation.
2. Some instruments for family or group evaluation (e.g., Hudson's scales: family relations, marital discord, etc.).
3. Cultural sensitivity in evaluation of families and/or groups.

Readings: Review selected scales for application
Class exercise: "Sociograms"
Class exercise: "Group Evaluation"
CLASSES 12, 13 & 14  Program Evaluation

Unit Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:
1. Define basic terms and identify factors affecting program evaluation.
3. Discuss the relationship of program evaluation to the design and improvement of social work programs.
4. Describe steps to be taken in program evaluation.
5. Compare alternative approaches (decision models; goal model; pre- and post-test method; and control group design) for evaluating programs.
6. Critique a given program evaluation.
7. Plan an evaluation for a program described in a given record.

Content

1. Definition of program and program evaluation in different service systems (concrete services, crisis and short term intervention, case management and referral services, long-term treatment)
2. Attitudinal influences on program evaluations
3. Cultural sensitivity in program evaluation
4. Program evaluation approaches (e.g., pre-test/post-test, control group, goal model, and qualitative)
5. Measurement of effort, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact
6. Measurement of satisfaction, relevance, accessibility, duplication, etc.
7. Steps in program evaluation

Readings


PAPERS DUE

Finals Week: Final Exam

SOW 4431 Evaluating Social Work Practice And Service Programs
Updated SFD/3/10/2003
5.02 Evaluation and Research

- Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.
- Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.
- Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.
- Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.
- Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' well-being, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.
- When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.
- Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.
- Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.
- Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.
- Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.
- Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.
- Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.
- Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.
- Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.
- Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.
- Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.