

Abilene Christian University
School of Social Work
Bachelors of Social Work Program

SOCW xxx: Capstone
Spring 2015

Instructor:	
Meeting Time	Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 - 2:50 PM (class will be online some Thursdays)
Location:	102 Hardin Administration Building
Office:	
Office Hours:	
Office Phone:	
Email:	

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

*The **Abilene Christian University School of Social Work** seeks, within the context of a **Christian higher education institution**, to: prepare graduates as effective and ethical professionals who incorporate best evidence in practice; promote social justice for vulnerable persons everywhere through service and leadership roles; and, advance social work knowledge through research and other scholarly activities.*

***School of Social Work Goals are to:** educate students for advanced evidence based practice; prepare graduates for leadership in the social work profession and in social welfare organizations; instill in students an appreciation of human diversity that inform their practice behaviors; and, contribute to the knowledge base for evidence-informed social welfare programs and social work practice*

The mission of the Abilene Christian University Bachelor of Social Work Program is to educate students for competent, entry-level, generalist social work practice which integrates Christian and personal faith to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession, and to play active leadership roles in effective service delivery systems.

*"Generalist practice is the application of an **eclectic knowledge base**, **professional values**, and a **wide range of skills to target any size system** for change within the context of three primary processes. First, generalist practice involves working effectively within an **organizational structure** and doing so **under supervision**. Second, it requires the assumption of a **wide range of professional roles**. Third, generalist practice involves the application of **critical thinking skills** to the **problem-solving process**"*

Kirst-Ashman, K.K., & Hull, G.H., Jr. (1997). *Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers.

Course Rationale

Social workers have a responsibility to evaluate the quality of services provided to clients. This responsibility includes evaluating practice effectiveness at the unit or agency level, examining the effectiveness of programmatic decisions on client outcomes, and assessing additional issues about the quality, benefits, and costs of service provision. The responsibility to evaluate program delivery systems stems from both the ethical standards as set forth by the 1996 National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and agency or reimbursement standards for accountability in professional practice. The purpose of this course is to expand students' knowledge and skills in conducting group evaluation research.

This course is designed to help you learn the logic of evaluation. Everything we do this semester will in some way, either broadly or narrowly, relate to improving your understanding of and thinking critically about principles, practice, and application of practice and program evaluation. The primary goal is for you to learn to think as an evaluator thinks.

Educational Standards

Social Work curriculum is guided by national standards set by the Council of Social Work Education in order to ensure all accredited schools of social work equip practitioners consistently. The governing document is called the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Each course has been intentionally designed (and in process of being intentionally designed) to meet these competencies. This course meets the following educational standards:

- **Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.**
- **Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**
- **Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**
- **Educational Policy 2.1.10(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Evaluation.**

Course Content

This course equips students to access and appraise social work programs and organizations for the purpose of enriching the lives of those benefiting from that organization's services. This course will give students a comprehensive overview and beginning knowledge of all aspects of evaluation, which will include questions, theory, organizational process, outcomes, and impact. Involved in the process of program evaluation are research skills such as sampling, measurement, data collection and analysis. In learning and understanding this content, students will be better equipped to use research better to aid programs and organizations.

Course Objectives

A student who completes this course will be able to:

1. Think critically about practice and program evaluation.
2. Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
3. Apply basic skills of research.
4. Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.
5. Use research evidence to inform practice.
6. Demonstrate ability to create knowledge in a group.
7. Use practice and program evaluation literature to design and evaluate programs.
8. Apply knowledge of social work ethics and values to the design of social intervention research.

Linkages to BSSW Curriculum

This course is linked vertically and horizontally to content in the BSSW curriculum.

- It is linked vertically to undergraduate courses by building on methods of problem solving and decision making-much of is gained in practice and research courses. Upwards, this course leads into proficiency in field and advanced practice.
- This course links horizontally to the practice, policy, and human behavior content as it shares concepts involved in practice questions, problems & intervention formation. It also enhances the field experience.

Class Format

Students will be actively engaged in the learning process through a variety of in and out of class activities and assignments. These activities and assignments may include lectures, class discussions, guest speakers, small group projects, media, and student presentations.

Course Expectations:

1. Students should prepare for and participate in class discussions. All assigned readings and activities should be completed **prior to class**. When reading class materials students should consider applicability, in terms of examples of the content, to other areas and policies affecting social work clients and practice.
2. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. On time arrival and remaining in class without interruption is courteous to your other classmates. You may lose one point from your grade for each class missed. **Over 4 absences could result in a reduced grade for the semester.** Please note that this includes 'excused' absences.

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- 3. The use of laptops, tablets and smart phones are encouraged as work involves use of the internet and collaboration. However facebook, texting, unrelated surfing, etc. is unacceptable and rude. The purpose of this time is evaluation!
- 4. Students are expected to submit assignments when they are due. **Late assignments will be accepted. 1 day late = 10% grade deduction 2 days= 20% grade deduction**
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- 5. Communication and Email: Be sure your emails are professional

Disability Policy

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please feel free to contact me. *The ACU Student Disability Services Office (a part of Alpha Academic Services) facilitates disability accommodations in cooperation with instructors.* In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Disability Services and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodations. Call extension 2750 for an appointment with the Director of Disability Services.

Statement of Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined in ACU's Academic Integrity Policy, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying and represent actions contrary to the behavioral norms that flow from the nature of God. Violations will be addressed as described in the Policy. While the university enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature in our lives. **Every member of the faculty, staff and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship and research.**

The full Policy is available for review at the Provost's office web site (<http://www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost>) and the following offices: provost, college deans, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residential life education and academic departments.

Texts:

Required:

Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A Systemic Approach*

Grading Scale:

Assignments:

Participation: Each week students will read a chapter in the Yegidis, Weinbach & Myers textbook; as well as any other assigned readings (accessible through files). It is also imperative that all students participate fully in discussions, searches and groupwork. Participation is 10% of the course grade.

Summary and Weights of Course Assignments:

Class Participation	40
Logic Model	55
Homework	130
PE plan poster presentation	80
Assessment Paper/ Research Proposal	100
Midterm & Final Exam	180
Total	600

Homework/Groupwork: Students will submit various homework assignments throughout the semester.

Logic Model: Each group will create logic model of the organization with which they will be working to develop a program evaluation plan. See Appendix A for a detailed explanation. (PB 2.1.3.1)

Program Evaluation Poster Presentation: Groups (of 2) will prepare and deliver poster presentation of their process assessment. Throughout the course of the semester, groups will submit different aspects of the evaluation, leading up to the final product. At the end of the semester, each group will present their assessment to the rest of the class. Details are found in Appendix B. (PB 2.1.6.1,3)

Assessment/ Research Proposal: See Appendix C

Midterm & Final Exams: Worth 90 points each

Course Outline (*this outline is subject to change. Changes can be made at the instructors' discretion for the benefit of the course*):

Week/Dates	Content		Notes/Due
1. Jan 14/16	Course Intro	Overview of ProgEval Rossi ch 1	
2. Jan 21/23	Evaluation Planning Rossi ch 2	Ch. 2	
3. Jan 28/30	Questions and Issues Rossi ch 3	w/partner: develop questions/issues	

4. Feb 4/6	Needs Assessing Rossi ch 4	Ch. 4	
5. Feb 11/13	Program Theory Rossi ch 5	w/partner create logic model	
6. Feb 18/20	Fidelity Rossi ch 6	Ch. 4	21 st Logic Model DUE
7. Feb 20/27	Outcomes Rossi ch 7	Midterm review	
8. Mar 4/6		<i>Midterm</i>	
Mar 11/13	Spring Break:		
9. Mar 18/20	Program Impact Rossi ch 8		
10. Mar 25/27	Ch. 9	Ch. 9	
11. Apr 1/3	Program Effects Rossi ch 10	tba	
12. Apr 8/11	Cost Analysis Rossi ch 11	w/partner develop cost- benefit analysis	
13. Apr 15/18	Social Context Rossi ch 12	Ch. 12	
14. Apr 22/25	Group Dissemination 3 groups	Group Dissemination 3 groups	23 rd poster presentation DUE
15. Apr 29/May 1	Group Dissemination 2 groups	Exam	
16. May 6/8	Group presentation		

Appendix A: Logic Model

With a partner, students will construct a logic model of the organization with which they will be working. A logic model, according to Rossi et al (2009), is a depiction of the organization's program theory. It is an illustration of how the organization's activities lead to goal attainment and the desired impact. Evaluators must be able to think critically about the workings of the organization and how activities in the organization are connected. A possible resource can be found at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

In order to appropriately construct a logic model, evaluators must engage at least two of the following sources of information: "(1) review program documents; (2) interviews with program stakeholders, and other selected informants; (3) site visits and observation of program functions and circumstances; and (4) the social science literature" (Rossi et al, 2009, p 149).

Please review information from Rossi chapter 5 to help create your logic model. The logic model should include inputs, activities, outputs, and initial, intermediate & long-term (impact) outcomes. Please submit the completed logic model into the files and be prepared to discuss in class.

Grade is based on:

Use of at least 2 sources of information	/5
Clarity in articulation of activities, goals, impact, etc.	/20
Thoroughness of activities, goals, impact, etc.	/20
Readability: writing, grammar, organization, etc.	/10
Total points	/55

Appendix B: Program Evaluation/Plan

Poster Presentation

With a partner, students will create a poster presentation of their evaluation and plan of a local program/organization. This poster will consist of an evaluation question, logic model, **methods, etc.** This poster will include a completed fidelity assessment. Your poster presentation should include (and will be graded on) the following:

- Purpose of the Report (including question)
- Background About Organization/Program that is being evaluated
 - o Organization Description/History
 - o Program Description
 - Problem Statement
 - Logic Model
- **Overall Process Evaluation Goals**
- Methodology for Process Evaluation
 - o Types of data/information that were collected
 - o How data/information were collected (what instruments were used, etc.)
 - o How data/information were analyzed
- Findings

Adopted from: <http://managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation>

(working) Presentation Grading criteria	Earned...
Group peer evaluations submitted	/5
Peer grade (a=10, b=5, c=0)	/5
Presentation covers question, program background, logic model, methodology, and findings	/25
Presentation demonstrates successful process evaluation	/25
Presentation is clear, concise and demonstrates effective collaboration	/20
Total	/80

Appendix C: Assessment Paper/ Research Proposal

Due: Various Sections will be due throughout the semester

Students will complete a research proposal. Some parts will be due as homework throughout the semester; however the finished product will be due at the end of the semester. This proposal should be based on a real social work issue.

The proposal must include the following:

Statement of Question

- State the question (what you would want to research if you were a researcher)
- Include 2 to 3 pages describing current knowledge of the problem; in your description, refer to relevant literature.
- Finally, include a paragraph or two on problem's relevance to social work practice. You should reference at least 5 journal articles to support your definitions and the relevance to social work practice. Websites, magazines, and newspapers do not count as journal articles.

Literature Review

- Students are to learn what is in the literature concerning certain areas of the field and appraise research for applicability and quality. At least 10 peer reviewed journal articles should be included.

Proposed Methodology Please include the information you provided in the "Problem Statement" assignment with any corrections you have made based on feedback provided. In your Design Summary, please answer the following questions:

- Qualitative, Quantitative? Both? What will be your sampling plan? How will you find participants?
- How will you gather data? Will you conduct a survey? Use secondary data? Evaluate an intervention? How will you measure?
- Assessment of Ethical Issues: What are the possible ethical you think you might encounter with your study?
- Assessment of Internal and External Validity: Discuss **EACH threat** and why you think it is or isn't present in your study.

Discussion and Implications

- Why was this method selected?
- Discussion of benefit of this method
- Any limitations?
- How this study might benefit practice
- How this study might benefit policy

Conclusion

Reference Materials

- American Evaluation Association (2009). Guiding principles for evaluators. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 30(3)
- Free Management Library (2013). *Basic Guide to Program Evaluation (Including Outcomes Evaluation)*. Retrieved on January 8, 2013 from <http://managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation>
- Hoefer, R. (1994). A good story, well told: Rules for evaluating human service programs. *Social Work*, 39(2)
- Holden, D. J. & Zimmerman, M. A. (2009). *A practical guide to program evaluation planning*. Los Angeles: Sage
- Holosko, M. J., Thyer, B. A., Danner, J. E. H. (2009). Ethical guidelines for designing and conducting evaluations of social work practice. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*, 6, 348-360. doi: 10.1080/15433710903126778
- Regeer, B. J., Hoes, A., van Amstel-van Saane, M., Caron-Flinterman, F. F., & Bunders, J. F. G. (2009). Six guiding principles for evaluating mode-2 strategies for

sustainable development. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 30(4). doi:
10.1177/1098214009344618

Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A Systemic Approach*
(7th ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage

Secret, M., Abell, M.L. & Berlin, T. (2011). The promise and challenge of practice
research collaborations: Guiding principles and strategies for initiating, designing,
and implementing program evaluation research. *Social Work*, 56(1).