Science of Social Work

SOWK 546

Section # 60628

3 Units

Fall 2016

SYLLABUS

Instructor:	**Devon Brooks**
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Office Location:	**Room 117 OCAC**
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Course Location:	**Classroom F**
Course Day & Time:	**Thursday 1:00 – 3:50 pm**

NOTE: It is School of Social Work Policy that instructors and students use their @usc.edu email address for school-related email communications.

I.   COURSE PREREQUISITES

None

II.   CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the role of scientific inquiry in advancing social work goals. Inspires students to include science in their social work identity and professional decision-making.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students taking part in this course develop an appreciation for and come to value the historical and contemporary role that scientific thinking and research have played in advancing the goals of the social work profession. Students also develop a strong understanding of and intuition for how data, science, and research inform professional social work today.

The course is designed to provide students with inspiration for harnessing their own scientific thinking and for thinking about how different kinds of data and research evidence can contribute to efforts to improve social wellbeing and reduce inequities. Particular emphasis is placed in the middle of the course on the process of thinking about social work practice problems that can be informed by data and science.

Students learn how to locate, interpret, appraise, and integrate available data and research. They evaluate the strengths and limits of existing research for informing specific practice problems and confront the challenge of how to combine such evidence with other critical information sources, including client values and one's practice knowledge and experience. Students learn to carefully consider the role that diversity and difference play in the generation, interpretation, and utilization of various forms of data and information.

By the end of the course students are well-versed in how to conceptualize questions in the areas of practice and policy and the application of data, scientific thinking, and research to informing those questions. They are prepared to enter a course that will deepen understanding of specific research skills and that will allow them to apply their own scientific thinking, creativity, and problem-solving fluidly in field practice settings.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Support students in developing a clear sense for how data, science, and research serve as part of their own professional identity and resource toolkit, with clear ideas about capabilities that they would like to develop further in themselves.

2. Orient students to the logic and interpretation of different types of empirical evidence and strategies so that students are comfortable reading and communicating with diverse clients and constituencies about the meaning of research evidence.

3. Clearly and consistently demonstrate and practice how to incorporate existing empirical evidence into the process of addressing well-formed practice and policy questions. Emphasize the centrality of considering context, diversity and difference, and ethical and political considerations in how empirical evidence is developed and integrated with other sources of information.

4. Familiarize students with the logic and basic interpretation of statistical information to enable meaningful understanding of numeric results encountered through a variety of information sources.

5. Prepare students to enter into more advanced courses that provide training in and utilize more specific empirical methods to accomplish a variety of goals relevant to social work professionals and the clients and constituencies they serve.

V. COURSE FORMAT / INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Delivery of this course assumes that student interests and active participation are fundamental to a dynamic, high-functioning learning environment that promotes discussion, questions, self-reflection, and critical thinking. Operating from this basic assumption, this course will utilize multiple formats, including:

(a) short periods of information presentation;

(b) active small and large group discussion;

(c) student-led presentations and discussions;

(d) hands-on learning opportunities; and

(e) short in-class activities that promote developing student knowledge and competencies.

Overall, students will have substantial involvement in the shared identification of focal materials for discussion in the course as instructor and students work together to address meaningful practice and policy questions. A number of course experiences ask students to select focal issues or questions of interest to them. In many cases, students will be encouraged to combine interests and work in small groups organized around a similar paper, issue, or topic. For activities or assignments organized around a common focus, group members are encouraged to work together and discuss issues as appropriate both inside and outside of the course environment. However, unless noted otherwise, each student retains individual responsibility for completing their/her/his own assignments. Through task-centered, small group activities, students will assume responsibilities for learning and for creating an invigorating learning environment that responds to student interests and expertise, and actively addresses some of the challenging issues surrounding the integration of science and research with the values and ethics of the social work profession.

The online teaching and learning environment provided by the University's Blackboard Academic Suite (OTG) or the Virtual Academic Center (VAC) will support and facilitate student learning, communication and interaction, as well as access to instructor support.

Please note that it may be necessary for the instructor to adjust the syllabus and/or course during the semester.

Instructor's Oath

"As your instructor, to each of you, I pledge the following:

- *To appreciate you, your time and your effort;*
- *To be available and responsible;*
- *To be encouraging and supportive;*

- *To be objective and fair;*
- *To be prompt and timely;*
- *To be respectful, professional and appropriate;*
- *To accommodate when appropriate and within reason;*
- *To try to be an engaging and effective instructor; and*
- *To strive for excellence in carrying out my responsibilities as an instructor as described in the USC Faculty Handbook, Section 3-B (2) (see http://policies.usc.edu/p4acad_stud/facultyhandbook.pdf).*

If at any time you feel I have not honored this oath, please contact me so that I am aware of your concerns and have an opportunity to address them."

VI. STUDENT COMPETENCIES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student learning for this course relates to one or more of the following foundation-year social work competencies. Further, competencies relate to one or more course objective, as presented in the following table.

	Competencies	SoWk 546	Course Objective
1	**Ethical and Professional Behavior**	*	**1 & 3**
2	Diversity and Difference in Practice		
3	Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice		
4	**Practice-informed Research and Research Informed Practice**	*	**2, 4 & 5**
5	Policy Practice		
6	Engagement		
7	Assessment		
8	Intervention		
9	Evaluation		

  * Indicates core competencies highlighted in this course

The table on the next page presents the competencies for the course, along with the values, knowledge and/or skills that comprise the competencies. The table also presents corresponding learning outcomes and methods for assessing whether the outcomes have been achieved.

Competencies: Knowledge, Values and/or Skills	Student Learning Outcomes	Methods of Assessment
Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior	1. Understand the role of science in the profession's value base, mission and history.	– Assignment 1 – Participation
	2. Clearly articulate multiple ways in which Social Work professionals make use of research knowledge and scientific thinking in their work and find inspiration for ways they can use or contribute to Science in Social Work.	– Journal – Participation – Final Exam
	3. Understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks.	– Participation
Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice	4. Know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and ethical approaches to building knowledge [for diverse populations and settings].	– Journal – Assignment 2 – Final Exam
	5. Formulate meaningful questions that can be informed by existing research or the use of scientific reasoning.	– Journal – Assignment 2 – Participation
	6. Appropriately and efficiently locate existing data sources, data, and research evidence from multi-disciplinary sources.	– Assignment 1 – Participation
	7. Engage in critical analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.	– Journal – Assignment 2 – Participation
	8. Recognize and grapple with the need to integrate multiple types of information, including research, practice experience, and client values in the face of ambiguity.	– Journal – Assignment 2 – Participation
	9. Use and translate research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.	– Journal – Assignment 2 – Participation

10.Interpret the meaning of foundation-level statistical information presented in a wide range of information sources.	– Final Exam

VII. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES & PERCENT OF FINAL GRADE

Assignments

Assignments for the course include (a) a critical appraisal journal, (b) 2 written assignments, (c) 1 final exam, and (d) class participation. All assignments are designed to relate to and build on one another. As such, it is imperative that you complete the assignments by their due dates. **Journal and written assignments should be submitted by midnight on the specified due date.**

The table below presents all course assignments, due dates, and the percent of the final grade comprised of by each assignment. Maximum points for each assignment correspond with the percent of the final grade for that assignment. For example, a maximum of 10 points can be earned for an assignment comprising 10% of the final grade.

Assignment	Unit Due	% of Final Grade
Critical Appraisal Journal *5 Short Reflective Entries*	Units 5, 6, 10, 12, & 13	25%
Assignment 1 *Location & Synopsis of Data and Scientific Knowledge*	Unit 7	20%
Assignment 2 *Evidence-based Practice/Policy Problem*	Unit 15	25%
Final Exam	Finals Week	20%
Active and Proactive Learning, & Meaningful Class Participation	Units 1 - 15	10%

Critical Appraisal Journal – 5 Short Reflective Entries (25 points of course grade)

Students will create and maintain a critical appraisal journal, with entries centered on social work research identity and methodological reflections. There will be five entries, each worth 5 points.

Location & Synopsis of Data and Scientific Knowledge (20 points of course grade)

Students will locate existing knowledge relevant to their identified practice based question. Students will produce a list of selected references, representing a broad range of multidisciplinary sources and types of data and science.

Evidence-based Practice/Policy Problem (25 points of course grade)

Throughout the semester, students have reflected on a meaningful practice-based question that can be informed by existing data or science. For this assignment, students will utilize the data they located, their reflective journals, and class activities to produce a creative product that summarizes and interprets the evidence and evaluates the meaning of the evidence for the particular practice problem selected.

Final Exam (20 points of course grade)

Throughout the course students will learn a core set of scientific and research related concepts and terminology that they will be expected to understand and apply within an examination format.

Students will complete a final, comprehensive exam designed to measure their ability to apply the knowledge acquired during the course. The exam will be administered in class at our regular class time during exam week.

Active and Proactive Learning, & Meaningful Class Participation (10 points of course grade)

Students are expected to be active participants in their learning and proactive. This will require mental, physical and perhaps emotional effort from students, both inside and outside the formal classroom. **Active learning** involves assuming responsibility for learning; completing required readings and assignments prior to class; and coming to class with thoughtful comments, reflections or questions about concepts, readings and assignments**. Proactive learning** involves anticipating workload and challenges, and taking the initiative to reach out to the instructor when concerned about possible challenges in the class. It also involves regular communication with the instructor about the course and my performance as the instructor.

Along with active and proactive learning, students are expected to participate meaningfully in class and to contribute to the development of a positive learning environment. **Meaningful participation** consists of thoughtful and respectful participation based on having completed required readings and assignments prior to class. For our purposes, "contributing to the development of a positive learning environment" refers to the extent to which students participate in or help create an environment that is open, professional, engaging, fun, challenging, supportive, and effective. "Environment" refers to our physical classroom, small group settings, other settings in which learning or teaching might occur, and the overall climate and culture of our class.

Please refer to the rubric below for the criteria that will be used to determine your participation grade. For each of five criteria, 0 to 2 points can be earned, for a maximum of 10 points.

Criteria	Never or Rarely	Somewhat Regularly	Often or Always
• Student demonstrates active and proactive learning.	0	1	2
• Student communicates with the instructor about (a) the course, (b) her or his performance in the course, and (c) the instructor's performance in the course.	0	1	2
• Student's communication, behavior, and participation are respectful, professional, and appropriate (this includes appropriate use of laptops and mobile devices during class).	0	1	2
• Student participates in class in a meaningful way and helps to maintain a positive learning environment.	0	1	2
• Student helps to create a positive learning environment.	0	1	2

Additional details and guidelines for each of the portfolio assignments will be provided by the instructor and discussed in class.

Grading

Class grades will be based on the following:

Grade Point Average / Letter Grade		Corresponding Numeric Grade / Letter Grade	
3.85 – 4.00	A	93 – 100	A
3.60 – 3.84	A-	90 – 92	A-
3.25 – 3.59	B+	87 – 89	B+
2.90 – 3.24	B	83 – 86	B
2.60 – 2.87	B-	80 – 82	B-
2.25 – 2.50	C+	77 – 79	C+
1.90 – 2.24	C	73 – 76	C
1.89 & below	C- **(Failing Grade)**	70 – 72	C- **(Failing Grade)**

Within the School of Social Work, grades are determined in each class based on the following standards which have been established by the faculty of the School:

Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates very good mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have demonstrated by the student.

A grade of B+ is given to work which is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment.

A grade of B is given to student work which meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done adequate work on the assignment and meets basic course expectations.

A grade of B- denotes that a student's performance was less than adequate on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations.

A grade of C reflects a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement.

Grades between C- and F denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student's performance on the assignment.*

VIII. REQUIRED AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & RESOURCES

Required Textbook & Course Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Other required and recommended course readings are presented in the detailed course schedule. These readings are available in Blackboard and on electronic reserve through ARES.

To access ARES, go to https://reserves.usc.edu and log in using your USC NetID and email password. When logged in, search the reserves by instructor name. Select: NAIR, Murali and then add the course. NOTE: All sections of SoWk 546 should select NAIR, Murali.

Throughout the semester, additional readings may be assigned as needed.

Recommended Supplements

Best, J. (2001). *Damned lies and statistics.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2013). *Evidence-based practice in clinical social work.* New York: NY: Springer.

Kirk, S, & Reid, W. J. (2012). *Science and social work: a critical appraisal.* Columbia University Press.

Pyrczak, F. (2012). *Evaluating research in academic journals: a practical guide to realistic evaluation.* Pyrczak Publishing.

Soydan, H., & Palinkas, L. A. (2014). *Evidence-based practice in social work: development of a new professional culture.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Wheelan, C. (2013). *Naked statistics: stripping the dread from the data,* New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Guides for Academic Integrity, APA Style Formatting, Writing & Research

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

APA formatting and style guide. (1995-2015). The OWL at Purdue. Retrieved from https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/08/

USC guide to avoiding plagiarism: http://www.usc.edu/libraries/about/reference/tutorials/avoiding-plagiarism/story.html

USC Libguides

Sample papers using APA style: http://libguides.usc.edu/ld.php?content_id=9235241

APA citation guide: http://libguides.usc.edu/APA-citation-style

Evidence-based practice resources: http://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/socialworkEBP

Tests and measures: http://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/measurements

Writing guide: http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide

Recommended Social Work Organizations

National Associate of Social Workers. Available at http://www.naswdc.org

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research. Available at http://www.iaswresearch.org

Society for Social Work Research. Available at http://www.sswr.org

American Evaluation Association. Available at http://www.eval.org

Note: Additional required and recommended readings may be assigned by the instructor throughout the course.

Course Overview

Unit	Topic	Due
PART I – SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY		
1 Aug 27	▪ Introduction	
2 Sep 3	▪ The History of Science in Social Work	
3 Sep 10	▪ Science in Contemporary Social Work	
4 Sep 17	▪ The Ethical, Political & Cultural Context of the Science of Social Work	
5 Sep 24	▪ Evidence-based Practice & the Framing of Practice-relevant Questions	**Journal Entry #1**
PART II – LOCATION AND USE OF EXISTING KNOWLEDGE TO INFORM PRACTICE, POLICY & SERVICE DELIVERY		
6 Oct 1	▪ Efficient Location and Review of Existing Knowledge & Data	**Journal Entry #2**
7 Oct 8	▪ Use of Existing Knowledge: Studies using Experimental Designs	**Assignment 1**
8 Oct 15	▪ Use of Existing Knowledge: Studies using Non-equivalent Comparison Groups Designs	
9 Oct 22	▪ Use of Existing Knowledge: Studies using Time-series & Single-Case Designs	
10 Oct 29	▪ Use of Existing Knowledge: Systematic Literature Reviews & Meta-analyses	**Journal Entry #3**
11 Nov 5	▪ Use of Existing Knowledge: Quantitative Studies using Non-experimental Designs	
12 Nov 12	▪ Use of Existing Knowledge: Qualitative Studies	**Journal Entry #4**
PART III – RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE & PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH		
13 Nov 19	▪ Support of Independent Problem Formulation & Evidence-Informed Practice	**Journal Entry #5**
14 Nov 26	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY!	
15 Dec 3	▪ Planning for Practice Evaluation & Practice-informed Research	**Assignment 2**
Dec 5 – 8	NO CLASS – STUDY DAYS	
Dec 10		**FINAL EXAM**

Detailed Course Schedule

PART I – SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY

Introduction	UNIT 1 AUGUST 27

Objectives

1) To deepen students' understanding of the mission of the social work profession and to enhance their identification with the profession, including the profession's emphasis on social work knowledge and science.
2) To establish the value of science and scientific training in the USC MSW program.
3) To provide an overview of the course.

Topics

- Welcome and Introductions
- Course Overview
- Social Work Values and Identity: The Role of Social Work Knowledge and Science

Required Readings

Review Course Syllabus

Other**

The Science Attitudes Scale: http://tinyurl.com/fall15-sowk546 **(please complete)**

The History of Science in Social Work	UNIT 2 SEPTEMBER 3

Objectives

1) To demonstrate how data and science have advanced the mission of social work.
2) To stimulate students' enthusiasm about the science of social work

Topics

- The Science of Social work
- Outstanding Historical Examples and Role Models

Required Readings

Dunlap, K. M. (1993). A history of research in social work education: 1915-1991. *Journal of Social Work Education, 29*(3), 293-301. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/57449034

Greenwood, E. (1955). Social science and social work: a theory of their relationship. *Social Service Review, 29*(1), 20. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/1290898229?accountid=14749

Sherraden, M., Stuart, P., Barth, R. P., Kemp, S., Lubben, J., Hawkins, J.D., Coulton, C., McRoy, R., Walters, K., Healy, L., Angell, B., Mahoney, K., Brekke, J., Padilla, Y., DiNitto, D., Padgett, D., Schroepfer, T., & Catalano, R., (2014). Grand Accomplishments in Social Work. (Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative, Working Paper No. 2). Baltimore, MD: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. Retrieved from

http://aaswsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/FINAL-Grand-Accomplishments-4-2-2015-formatted-final.pdf

Science in Contemporary Social Work	UNIT 3 SEPTEMBER 10

Objectives

1) To illustrate the diverse ways in which social work knowledge and science are integral to contemporary social work practice.
2) To encourage students to identify ways to enhance their competence by enhancing their ability to effectively use social work knowledge and science.

Topics

- Improving Practice, Policy and Service Delivery with Social Work Knowledge and Science
- Outstanding Contemporary Examples and Role Models
- Critically Appraising and Selecting Instruments

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

　　Chapter 1. Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice.

Recommended Readings

Anastas, J. W. (2012). From scientism to science: How contemporary epistemology can inform practice research. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 40*(2), 157-165. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org.libproxy1.usc.edu/10.1007/s10615-012-0388-z

Heineman-Pieper, J., Tyson, K., & Martha, H. P. (2002). Doing good science without sacrificing good values: Why the heuristic paradigm is the best choice for social work. *Families in Society, 83*(1), 15-28. Retrieved from **http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/230202707**

Shaw, I. (2007). Is social work research distinctive? *Social Work Education, 26*(7), 659–669. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ssf&AN=26461093&site=ehost-live

Other

Additional resources this week include 3 - 6 short videos (about 20 minutes each) of current professionals discussing diverse ways in which data, science, and research inform their work and professional goals/initiatives. To access the video, click on the following link: https://ondemand.usc.edu/SSW/Catalog/Full/8a08b3b367c146b48a9c829f5502c27521

The Ethical, Political & Cultural Context of the Science of Social Work	UNIT 4 SEPTEMBER 17

Objectives

1) To enhance students' capacity to think critically about ethical issues related to the science of social work and the use/misuse of data.
2) To deepen students' awareness of how political, cultural, and historical experiences and factors influence beliefs about and trust in the role of science in improving human lives, particularly for vulnerable and disenfranchised groups.

Topics
- The roles of culture and diversity in understanding social phenomena
- Biases in human understanding and research methods
- Science, research and use of data in a respect and trust-based social context

Required Readings

Brekke, J. S. (2012). Shaping a Science of Social Work. *Research on Social Work Practice, 22*(5), 455-464. Retrieved from
http://rsw.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/04/03/1049731512441263

McBeath, B., Briggs, H. E., & Aisenberg, E. (2010). Examining the premises supporting the empirically supported intervention approach to social work practice. *Social Work, 55*(4), 347-57. Retrieved from
http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/759964743

Longhofer, J., & Floersch, J. (2014). Values in a science of social work: values-informed research and research-informed values. *Research on Social Work Practice, 24*(5), 527-534. Retrieved from
http://rsw.sagepub.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/content/24/5/527.full.pdf+html

Recommended Readings

Gehlert, S. (2015). Social work and science. *Research on Social Work Practice, February 2015, 1-6.* doi:10.1177/1049731515570138.

Horner, J., & Minifie, F. D. (2011). Research ethics I: Responsible conduct of research (RCR) - historical and contemporary issues pertaining to human and animal experimentation. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research (Online), 54*(1), S303-S329A. Retrieved from
http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/858020215

Sundararajan, L. (2014). Indigenous psychology: grounding science in culture, why and how? *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, 45*(1), 64-81.

Recommended Resources

Websites
a. National Association of Social Workers
http://www.socialworkers.org/nasw/ethics/default.asp
b. University of Southern California Office for the Protection of Research Subjects
http://oprs.usc.edu/about/human-subjects-protection-program/

Videos
a. Human Subjects Research training: 'Protecting Human Subjects' – Module 2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Up09dioFdEU
b. Presidential Apology – USPHS Syphilis Study at Tuskegee
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1A-YP24QwA

Evidence-based Practice & the Framing of Practice-relevant Questions	UNIT 5 SEPTEMBER 24

Objectives

1) To introduce the idea of a *process* of using existing knowledge relevant to practice and policy questions.
2) To strengthen students' ability to frame meaningful questions that can guide a search for empirical evidence to inform practice and policy questions.

Topics

- Evidence-based practice
- Framing of practice relevant questions
- Monitoring client progress

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

  Chapter 2. Steps in the EBP Process.

  Chapter 3. Research Hierarchies.

Recommended Readings

Adams, K. B., Matto, H. C., & LeCroy, C. W. (2009). Limitations of evidence-based practice for social work education: unpacking the complexity. *Journal of Social Work Education, 45*(2), 165-186. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/209795926

Rosen, A. (2003). Evidence-based social work practice: Challenges and promise. *Social Work Research, 27,* 197-208. Retrieved from http://swr.oxfordjournals.org.libproxy1.usc.edu/content/27/4/197.full.pdf+html

Shlonsky, A., & Gibbs, L. (2004). Will the real evidence-based practice please stand up? Teaching the process of evidence-based practice to the helping professions. *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention, 4*(2), 137-153. Retrieved from http://btci.stanford.clockss.org/cgi/reprint/4/2/137

DUE

Journal Entry #1

PART II – LOCATION AND USE OF EXISTING KNOWLEDGE & DATA TO INFORM PRACTICE, POLICY & SERVICE DELIVERY

Efficient Location and Review of Existing Knowledge & Data	UNIT 6 OCTOBER 1

Objectives

1) To help students conceptualize types of data and science that can inform their practice and policy-relevant questions (using vignettes from Unit 5).
2) To train students to use technological resources to locate data and scientific information efficiently and effectively.

Topics

- Locating Existing Social Work Knowledge, Evidence and Resources from Multidisciplinary Sources
- Internet and Technology Literacy

- **Guest Speaker: Callie Wiygul, MLIS**
  Social Work Librarian
  University of Southern California Libraries
  Montgomery Ross Fisher building, 104A
  669 W. 34th Street
  Los Angeles, CA 90089
  wiygul@usc.edu

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Chapter 4. Criteria for Inferring Effectiveness.

Chapter 11. Critically Appraising and Selecting Assessment Instruments.

Other

Additional resources this week include 3 - 6 short videos (about 20 minutes each) of current professionals discussing diverse ways in which data, science, and research inform their work and professional goals/initiatives. To access the video, click on the following link:
https://ondemand.usc.edu/SSW/Catalog/Full/8a08b3b367c146b48a9c829f5502c27521

DUE
Journal Entry #2

Use of Existing Knowledge:	UNIT 7
Studies using Experimental Designs	**OCTOBER 8**

Objectives

1) In terms of its relevance to specific practice and policy questions, strengthen students' ability to interpret and appraise data and evidence from studies using experimental designs.
2) To improve students' ability to summarize scientific approaches, results, and knowledge so that it is understandable, meaningful, and engaging to clients and constituencies.

Topics

- Experiments
  - Critical interpretation and appraisal of data and evidence
  - Synthesis of existing knowledge
  - Application, translation, and adaptation of evidence and knowledge to particular cultural, social, and professional contexts

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2ⁿᵈ ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Chapter 5. Critically Appraising Experiments.

Appendix B. What You Do and Don't Need to Know About Statistics When Critically Appraising Studies.

Recommended Readings

Alexopoulos, G. S., Raue, P., & Areán, P. (2003). Problem-solving therapy versus supportive therapy in geriatric major depression with executive dysfunction. *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, *11*(1), 46-52. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedirect.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/science/article/pii/S1064748112612391

Choi, N. G., Hegel, M. T., Marti, C. N., Marinucci, M. L., Sirrianni, L., & Bruce, M. L. (2014). Telehealth problem-solving therapy for depressed low-income homebound older adults. *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, *22*(3), 263-271. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedirect.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/science/article/pii/S1064748113000420

Gertler, P. (2004). Do conditional cash transfers improve child health? Evidence from PROGRESA's control randomized experiment. *American Economic Review*, 336-341. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org.libproxy1.usc.edu/stable/3592906?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

DUE
Assignment 1

Use of Existing Knowledge: Studies using Non-equivalent Comparison Group Designs	UNIT 8 OCTOBER 15

Objectives

1) In terms of its relevance to specific practice and policy questions, strengthen students' ability to interpret and appraise data and evidence from studies using non-equivalent comparison group designs.
2) To improve students' ability to summarize scientific approaches, results, and knowledge so that it is understandable, meaningful, and engaging to clients and constituencies.

Topics

- Non-equivalent comparison group designs
  o Critical interpretation and appraisal of data and evidence
  o Synthesis of existing knowledge
  o Application, translation, and adaptation of evidence and knowledge to particular cultural, social, and professional contexts

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2ⁿᵈ ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Chapter 6. Critically Appraising Quasi-Experiments: Nonequivalent Comparison Group Designs.

Arean, P., Hegel, M., Vannoy, S., Fan, M., & Unutzer, J. (2008). Effectiveness of problem-solving therapy for older, primary care patients with depression: Results from the IMPACT project. *The Gerontologist, 48, 311-323.*
http://gerontologist.oxfordjournals.org.libproxy1.usc.edu/content/48/3/311.full.pdf+html

Mourão, L., Ferreira, M. C., & Jesus, A. M. D. (2012). Evaluation of the Brazilian Family Grant Program: a quasi-experimental study in the State of Rio de Janeiro. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*, *25*(4), 719-729.
http://www.scielo.br.libproxy1.usc.edu/pdf/prc/v25n4/11.pdf

Use of Existing Knowledge: Studies using Time-Series & Single-Case Designs	UNIT 9 OCTOBER 22

Objectives

1) In terms of its relevance to specific practice and policy questions, strengthen students' ability to interpret and appraise data and evidence from studies using time-series and single-case designs.
2) To improve students' ability to summarize scientific approaches, results, and knowledge so that it is understandable, meaningful, and engaging to clients and constituencies.

Topics

- Time-series and single-case designs
  - Critical interpretation and appraisal of data and evidence
  - Synthesis of existing knowledge
  - Application, translation, and adaptation of evidence and knowledge to particular cultural, social, and professional contexts

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Chapter 7. Critically Appraising Quasi-Experiments: Time-Series Designs and Single Case Designs.

Chapter 12. Monitoring Client Program.

Recommended Readings

Jacobson, N. S. (1977). Problem solving and contingency contracting in the treatment of marital discord. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *45*(1), 92. Retrieved from
http://dx.doi.org.libproxy1.usc.edu/10.1037/0022-006X.45.1.92

Rubin, A., & Knox, K. S. (1996). Data analysis problems in single-case evaluation: Issues for research on social work practice. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *6*(1), 40-65. Retrieved from
http://rsw.sagepub.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/content/6/1/40.full.pdf+html

Use of Existing Knowledge:	UNIT 10
Systematic Literature Reviews & Meta-analyses	**OCTOBER 29**

Objectives

1) In terms of its relevance to specific practice and policy questions, strengthen students' ability to interpret and appraise data and evidence from systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses.
2) To improve students' ability to summarize scientific approaches, results, and knowledge so that it is understandable, meaningful, and engaging to clients and constituencies.

Topics

- Systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses
  - Critical interpretation and appraisal of data and evidence
  - Synthesis of existing knowledge
  - Application, translation, and adaptation of evidence and knowledge to particular cultural, social, and professional contexts

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

  Chapter 8. Critically Appraising Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses.

Cary, C., & McMillen, C. J. (2012). The data behind the dissemination. A systematic review of trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy for use with children. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*, 748-757.
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0041237/

Kowalik, J., Weller, J., Venter, J., & Drachman, D. (2011). Cognitive behavioral therapy for the treatment of pediatric posttraumatic stress disorder: a review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, *42*(3), 405-413.
http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/pdfs/ptsd_review12.pdf

DUE
Journal Entry #3

Use of Existing Knowledge:	UNIT 11
Quantitative Studies using Non-experimental Designs	**NOVEMBER 5**

Objectives

1) In terms of its relevance to specific practice and policy questions, strengthen students' ability to interpret and appraise data and evidence from quantitative studies using non-experimental designs.
2) To improve students' ability to summarize scientific approaches, results, and knowledge so that it is understandable, meaningful, and engaging to clients and constituencies.

Topics

- ▪ Non-experimental quantitative studies
  - o Critical interpretation and appraisal of data and evidence
  - o Synthesis of existing knowledge
  - o Application, translation, and adaptation of evidence and knowledge to particular cultural, social, and professional contexts

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

    Chapter 9. Critically Appraising Non-experimental Quantitative Studies.

Putnam-Hornstein, E., & Needell, B. (2011). Predictors of child protective service contact between birth and age five: An examination of California's 2002 birth cohort. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *33*(8), 1337-1344. **http://www.sciencedirect.com.libproxy2.usc.edu/science/article/pii/S0190740911 001289**

Recommended Readings

Brown, J., Cohen, P., Johnson, J. G., & Salzinger, S. (1998). A longitudinal analysis of risk factors for child maltreatment: Findings of a 17-year prospective study of officially recorded and self-reported child abuse and neglect. *Child abuse & neglect*, *22*(11), 1065-1078. http://ac.els-cdn.com.libproxy2.usc.edu/S0145213498000878/1-s2.0-S0145213498000878-main.pdf?_tid=0fbf6636-4860-11e5-a543-00000aab0f6c&acdnat=1440201492_58803a21d00e66493e7373a25f1f32b8

Use of Existing Knowledge: Qualitative Studies	UNIT 12 NOVEMBER 12

Objectives

1) In terms of its relevance to specific practice and policy questions, strengthen students' ability to interpret and appraise data and evidence from experiments.
2) To improve students' ability to summarize scientific approaches, results, and knowledge so that it is understandable, meaningful, and engaging to clients and constituencies.

Topics

- ▪ Qualitative Studies
  - o Critical interpretation and appraisal of data and evidence
  - o Synthesis of existing knowledge
  - o Application, translation, and adaptation of evidence and knowledge to particular cultural, social, and professional contexts

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

    Chapter 10. Critically Appraising Qualitative Studies.

Murray, L. K, Skavonski, S., Michalopoulos, L. M., Bolton, P. A., Bass, J. K., Familiar, I., Imasiku, M., & Cohen, J. (2015). Counselor and client perspectives of trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy for children in Zambia: A qualitative study. *Journal of*

Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology.
http://www.tandfonline.com.libproxy2.usc.edu/doi/pdf/10.1080/15374416.2013.859079

Recommended Readings

Cohen, J. A*.,* Mannrino, A., Perel, J. M., & Staron, V. (2007). A pilot randomized controlled trial of combined trauma-focused CBT and Sertraline for Childhood PTSD symptoms. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 46*,* 811-819*.* http://www.jaacap.com/article/S0890-8567(09)62169-9/pdf

Padgett, D. K. (2009). Qualitative and mixed methods in social work knowledge development. *Social Work, 54*(2), 101-5. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.libproxy1.usc.edu/docview/215268019

DUE
Journal Entry #4

PART III – RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE & PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH

Support of Independent Problem Formulation & Evidence-Informed Practice	UNIT 13 NOVEMBER 19

Objectives
1) To support integration of all elements of the process of driving toward improved practice in which empirical evidence plays an important role.
2) To facilitate ongoing independent work of students around addressing an evidence-based practice question.

Topics
- Instructor support for independent student projects (i.e., Assignment 2)

DUE
Journal Entry #5

NO CLASS THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	UNIT 14 NOVEMBER 26

Objectives
1) To have a happy and safe Thanksgiving!

Planning for Practice Evaluation & Practice-Informed Research	UNIT 15 DECEMBER 3

Objectives
1) To critically reflect on the EBP process, including its strengths and limitations, with an emphasis on understanding how to use evidence in complex, real-world contexts.
2) To consider situations in which social workers may need to think beyond the limits of existing evidence and how they may contribute to enhancement of social work knowledge.
3) To address the evidence-based practice process from the perspective of life-long learning.

Topics
- Challenges to Evidence-based Practice
- Social Justice and Evidence-based Practice
- Using and Translating Research Findings & Evidence in Diverse, Dynamic and Ambiguous Practice Contexts

Recommended Readings

Brekke, J. S. (2014). A science of social work, and social work as an integrative discipline: have we gone too far, or not far enough? *Research on Social Work Practice, 24(5), 517-523.*

Soydan, H. & Palinkas, L.A. (2014). Development of a new professional culture (pp. 81-95). In *Evidence-based practice in social work.* NY: Routledge.

DUE
Assignment 2

School of Social Work & USC Policies and Guidelines

IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend every real time virtual class and to remain for the duration of the class. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email (devon.brooks@usc.edu) of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students' observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements *in advance* to complete class work that will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to *Scampus* and to the USC School of Social Work Student Handbook for additional information on attendance policies.

X. STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus,* the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

Additionally, it should be noted that violations of academic integrity are not only violations of USC principles and policies, but also violations of the values of the social work profession.

XI. STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. *Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible*. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Students from all academic centers (including the Virtual Academic Center) may contact the DSP office at 213-740-0776 or ability@usc.edu.

XII. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

Note: The following Emergency Response Information pertains to students on campus, but please note its importance should you be on campus for a temporary or extended period. When not on campus: Call the 911 listing in your local community for any emergency.

To receive information, call the main number (213) 740-2711, press #2. "For recorded announcements, events, emergency communications or critical incident information."

To leave a message, call (213) 740-8311

For additional university information, please call (213) 740-9233

Or visit university website: http://emergency.usc.edu

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, please go to the following locations carefully and using stairwells only.

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS		ACADEMIC CENTERS	
City Center	Front of Building (12th & Olive)	**Orange County**	Faculty Parking Lot
MRF	Lot B	**San Diego**	Building Parking Lot
SWC	Lot B	**Skirball**	Front of Building
VKC	McCarthy Quad		
WPH	McCarthy Quad		

Never use elevators in an emergency evacuation. Do not re-enter the building until given the "all clear" by emergency personnel.

Students may also sign up for a USC Trojans Alert account to receive alerts and emergency notifications on their cell phone, pager, PDA, or e-mail account. Register at https://trojansalert.usc.edu.

XIII. STATEMENT ABOUT INCOMPLETES

The Grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if there is work not completed because of a documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to be the instructor and reported on the official "Incomplete Completion Form."

XIV. POLICY ON LATE OR MAKE-UP WORK

Assignments are due on the day and time specified. Late assignments may be accepted by the instructor for review and feedback at the instructor's discretion, but they will not be graded.

XV. POLICY ON CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS AND/OR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

It may be necessary to make some adjustments in the syllabus and/or course during the semester in order to respond to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Any such adjustments would be made for the express purpose of accommodating students and with input from students. Adjustments that are made will be communicated to students both verbally and in writing.

XVI. CODE OF ETHICS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly [http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/Code/code.asp]

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the wellbeing of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

XVII. COMPLAINTS

If you have a complaint or concern about the course or the instructor, please discuss it first with the instructor. If you feel you cannot discuss it with the instructor, contact the SOWK 546 Chair, Dr. John Brekke at brekke@usc.edu. If you do not receive a satisfactory response or solution, contact your academic advisor for further guidance.

XVIII. TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THIS COURSE

- ✓ Be proactive! TOGETHER, let's do everything we can to make this an educational and enjoyable experience for you. Try to anticipate issues that could present challenges and PLEASE REACH OUT TO ME so that we can problem-solve before rather than after the fact.
- ✓ Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep!
- ✓ Complete required readings and assignments before coming to class.
- ✓ Keep up with the assigned readings and assignments. Don't procrastinate!!
- ✓ Come to class and participate in an active, respectful and meaningful way.
- ✓ Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have. If you don't understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
- ✓ Stay offline while in class.
- ✓ Form study groups with other students in the class.
- ✓ Take advantage of office hours. Contact me if you are concerned about or struggling in class. You will be given priority during office hours if you schedule an appointment ahead of time.
- ✓ If necessary to receive support from a tutor, please inform or involve me. I want to be able to help and support you in any way possible, but I need to know that you want/need support!! I am also happy to meet with you and your tutor.