

**WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

SWK 8883: RESEARCH-BASED SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course closely examines the evidence-based process and looks at how it affects social work practice in a variety of settings. In the first portion of the course, students will learn how interventions become evidence-based and why some interventions are considered to be evidence-informed and/or best practices. Students will analyze research methodologies and emphasizes both the process and the value of building evidence. In the second portion of the course, we will cover issues related to implementing evidence-informed practices in practice settings.

This course will be problem-based; that is, students will be asked to define a problem they would like to consider for the semester and then will examine existing evidence to select an intervention that would address the problem.

WEEK	TOPIC
1	Course introduction; Introduction to evidence-based practice
2	The process of evidence-based practice
3	A review of social work research methods
4	Single-subject designs
5	Literature searches and literature management (in-person)
6	Correlational and cross-sectional research
7	Group quasi-experimental designs/cohort studies
8	Non-experimental group design presentations (in-person)
9	Experimental designs
10	Meta-analyses and systematic reviews
11	Experimental designs + Meta-analyses/systematic reviews (in-person)
12	Validity studies
13	Quantitative studies in the context of a dissertation
14	Validity study presentations (in-person)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, students will:

1. Be able to describe the relationship between evidence-based practice and the formulation of research questions.
2. Be able to describe the relationship between research questions and research designs.
3. Be familiar with statistical tests, including univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses.

4. Understand the rigor of various research designs including single-subject research, cohort studies, quasi-experimental designs, experimental designs, meta-analyses, and systematic reviews.

PLAGIARISM

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

HIPAA ALERT

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

Additional readings and resources will be stored in the Moodle folder.

READINGS

Week	Reading
1	Rubin & Belamy – Chapter 1; Thyer & Myers (2010)
2	Rubin & Belamy – Chapters 2 & 3
3	YOUR CHOICE
4	Rubin & Belamy – Chapter 7, plus readings in Moodle
5	PRESENTATIONS
6	Rubin & Belamy – Chapter 6
7	Rubin & Belamy – Chapter 9
8	PRESENTATIONS
9	Rubin & Belamy – Chapter 5
10	Rubin & Belamy – Chapter 8
11	PRESENTATIONS
12	Research Methods Knowledge base: Pages related to construct validity (Measurement Validity Types, Ideas of Construct Validity, Convergent & Discriminant Validity, Threats to Construct Validity) Begin here: http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/constval.php
13	Readings to be provided in Moodle

Class Design and Attendance: This course is a hybrid class; sessions 1, 5, 7, 10, and 14 will meet in person. The remaining sessions will be completed on-line. Regardless of whether the class is meeting in-person or work is to be completed on-line, each student is expected to actively participate in class discussions, contributing knowledge, experience and ideas. The policy of WSSW is that absences beyond two are cause for failure.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments and Grading: You will have two graded assignments for this course. The first will be a presentation you will make in one of our in-person meetings (the 5th, 7th or 10th meeting). The final will be a paper summarizing your own work for the semester.

Additionally, on weeks we do not meet, I will ask you to post responses to discussion questions that I pose. In addition to posting your own answers, I would like you to respond to two of your colleagues' posts. I will OCCASSIONALLY respond to postings, but I read them all.

Assignments will be due as follows:

Week 3 – ungraded – Write a one-page paper identifying the problem you would like to work on for the semester. Include a background on your experiences with either the problem or population, if any, or what your interest is in this.

Week 5, 7, 10 or 14 – You will do a presentation for the class based upon your project. Provide the following: Background and experience with the situation (similar to the Week 2 assignment) to provide context for your colleagues. Present one research article using one or more study designs that we have discussed in class that address your problem.

- What were the researcher(s) specifically trying to study?
- Why did they choose the design that they did?
- Who was included in the sample, and why was this appropriate for this design?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of using this design?
- What did they find? Were the researcher(s) hypotheses supported?
- What application does this research have to the field of social work?
- Pose questions: what questions do you have about the articles? This can include questions about methodology, statistics, etc.

Final – You will write a paper summarizing what you have learned over the course of the semester. Address each of the following:

- What research question were you trying to answer?
- Summarize the research articles you found to address your articles similar to the way you did for your presentation.
- Were you able to adequately answer your research question? Why or why not?

Grades will be based on the following:

Class participation (including posting in the discussion forum): 10%

Presentation: 30%

Final paper: 60%