

# SWK-S 623A Practice Evaluation: Introduction (1 cr.)

## Course Information

**Semester Year:** XXXXX  
**Section Number:** XXXXX  
**Location:** XXXXX  
**Day:** XXXXX  
**Time:** XXXXX

**Instructor:** XXXXX XXXXXXXXXX  
**Office:** XXXX  
**Email:** XXXX  
**Phone:** XXXX  
**Office Hours:** XXXX

## Course Description

This course is the first of two practice evaluation courses, and is designed to be taken concurrently with SWK-S 651. This course examines a number of single-system designs that can be used to evaluate practice or practice interventions with clients or service users. The designs, which are n=1 types of studies, can be used with any size system, e.g., individuals, couples, families, groups, or organizational (agency) units. Students in this course will develop an evaluation plan specifying problems, goals, and outcomes with a service user or other single system, identify valid and reliable measures of outcome for use with identified service users or system targets, and identify an appropriate single-system design to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed intervention on the observed outcome. This course furthers the knowledge, skills, and values students develop in the earlier practice and research courses. Students will apply their knowledge and skills in research to evaluate practice or program effectiveness in their concentrations, using methods that are sensitive to consumers' needs and clients' race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and additional aspects important to effective and ethical research.

## Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course.

### Primary

- 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice in Clinical and Community Practice
  - Evaluate relevant practice literature and research methods based on relevant knowledge and skills associated with age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
  - Define and select from a variety of evaluation research designs and apply them to a specific practice/program context.

### Secondary

- 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities in Clinical and Community Practice

## Course Objectives

- 623A-01** Apply critical thinking skills within the context of practice/program evaluation.

- 623A-02** Use ethical research standards and principles appropriate to practice/program evaluation within a practice milieu.
- 623A-03** Evaluate research methods based on relevant knowledge and skills associated with age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.
- 623A-04** Evaluate research studies relevant to the student's practice concentration.
- 623A-05** Apply research findings to enhance practice.
- 623A-06** Define the criteria for appropriate use of research designs for practice evaluation research.
- 623A-07** Select from a variety of evaluation research designs and apply them to the appropriate practice/program context.

## Required Texts

Bloom, M., Fischer, J., & Orme, J. G. (2009). *Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional*. Pearson.

## Course Content

Recognizing practice and evaluation as two sides of the same coin, SWK-S623 is a seminar focusing on the preliminary steps of the practice evaluation process. Included in the seminar are topics to assist in the preparation of a single system evaluation proposal: development of practice-informed evaluation questions, specifying evaluable problems and goals, constructing conceptual and operational definitions of outcomes, and valid and reliable measurements for direct practice. Also included in the first course are preliminary discussions of topics to be covered more fully the following semester, including evaluation design, reviewing practice literature, and introduction of practice-friendly software.

## Resources

Canvas email will also be used a way to communicate between instructor and students. You are expected to check the course announcements on Canvas before each class. Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and be posted on Canvas (Resource tab).

## Course Outline

### Module 1: Developing Evaluation Questions

Dates:

#### *Overview*

- A. Integrating evaluation and practice
- B. Authoritative and evidence-based practice
- C. Defining the single system
- D. Advantages and disadvantages of single system evaluation
- E. Examples of single system design
- F. Software

## Assignments

### Readings

1. Bloom, Fischer & Orme Ch. 1 (required text), Appendix: Contents of CD-ROM
2. Gambrill, E. (1999). Evidence-based practice: An alternative to authority-based practice. *Families in Society, 80*, 341-350.
3. Blythe, B.J. (2014). Evaluating the treatment of a sexually assaulted child. In C.W. LeCroy (Ed) *Case studies in social work practice* (3rd Edition, pp. 341-348) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole.

## Module 2: Defining Outcomes

Dates:

### Overview

- A. Specifying problems, goals, and intervention targets
- B. Conceptual and operational definitions
- C. Identity issues in SSD
- D. Difference between treatment as usual (TAU), baseline, and intervention

## Assignments

### Readings

1. Bloom, Fischer & Orme Chs. 2, 3, 4

## Module 3: Measurement

Dates:

### Overview

- A. Review of measurement principles
- B. Data collection: Behavioral observation and sampling; Logs
- C. Data collection: Individualized and standard scales
- D. Measurement proposals

## Assignment

### Readings

1. Bloom, Fischer & Orme Chs. 5, 6, 7, 8

## Module 4: The Evaluation Plan

Dates:

### Overview

- A. Preparing an evaluation proposal
- B. "Intervention to be determined"
- C. The basic A-B Design

## Assignments

### Readings

1. Bloom, Fischer & Orme Chs. 9, 10, 11

2. Byiers, B. J., Joe Reichle, J., & Symons, F.J. (2012). Single-subject experimental design for evidence-based practice. *American Journal of Speech and Language Pathology*, 21, 397–414. doi: 10.1044/1058-0360(2012/11-0036)

## Module 5: Evaluation Plan Presentations

Dates:

### Overview

- A. Classes will be devoted to individual student presentations of their draft Evaluation Plan

### Readings

- 1) No additional readings

### Assignment: Evaluation Plan

In the Evaluation Plan, students will: summarize a specific case, client, service user, or other single system; state an evaluation question in observable terms; identify reasons for selection of specific evaluation outcomes; conceptually and operationally define all evaluation outcome(s); discuss how the evaluation outcomes will be measured; Discuss reliability and validity issues for the proposed measure; Propose a research design.

## Assignments and Grading

### Assignments

1. Evaluation Plan (Signature Individual Assignment)
  - a. DUE: .....
  - b. Final Grade Percentage: .....100%

### Assignment Details

More specific instructions for the evaluation plan may be posted on Canvas. Instructor also will discuss details or answer any questions related to the assignment during the class and office hours.

#### *Evaluation Plan (Signature Assignment)*

The evaluation plan should be produced on a word processor (or typed), double spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides, carefully edited and proofed, using no smaller than a 12 point font, and conforming to APA style (6th ed.)

Describe your specific case/single system and how you came to choose the target(s) to be studied in your evaluation. In this paper you will:

- Summarize the case;
- State an evaluation question;
- Define the evaluation target(s) both conceptually and operationally;
- Discuss in detail how the evaluation target will be measured;
- Discuss issues of reliability and validity of the proposed measure;
- Propose and describe in detail your evaluation design.

## Grading Standards

Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

In the Indiana University School of Social Work MSW program, grades of B are the expected norm. Reflecting competency and proficiency, grades of B reflect good or high quality work typical of graduate students in professional schools. Indeed, professors typically evaluate students' work in such a way that B is the average grade. Grades in both the A and the C range are relatively uncommon and reflect work that is significantly superior to or significantly inferior, respectively, to the average, high quality, professional work conducted by most IU MSW students. Because of this approach to grading, students who routinely earned A grades in their undergraduate studies may conclude that a B grade reflects a decrease in their academic performance. Such is not the case. Grades of B in the IU MSW program reflect the average, highly competent, proficient quality of our students. In a sense, a B grade in graduate school is analogous to an A grade in undergraduate studies. MSW students must work extremely hard to achieve a B grade. If you are fortunate enough receive a B, prize it as evidence of the professional quality of your work.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the "good," "the high quality," "the competent," or the "satisfactory." They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few MSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious graduate student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most MSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite meet the standards of quality expected of a graduate student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of MSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a graduate student and a future MSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of MSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

### *Grading scale*

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below C are Unsatisfactory in the MSW Program]:

A	93%	Excellent, Exceptional Quality
A-	90%	Superior Quality
B+	87%	Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality

B	83%	Good, High Quality (expected of most MSW students)
B-	80%	Satisfactory Quality
C+	77%	Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C	73%	Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C-	70%	Unsatisfactory Quality

## Course Policies

### Assignment

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time. If you need to extend a deadline you MUST speak to me in advance of the due date to get an approval and an agreement will be reached. Late submission (except by prior agreement) will be marked down 5% per day late. IU has a subscription with the Turnitin plagiarism detection service, and faculty members have the right to submit student papers to the service to check for originality. Turnitin.com service will be used for all student papers in this course.

### Attendance and participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions. Students should complete readings and homework as assigned and come to class prepared for discussion and questions. Because of the nature of this course and group assignments, regular attendance is required and extremely important. Class attendance and active participation in class activities are considered essential for the satisfactory completion of the course objectives. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from other students regarding materials covered during your absence. If you are absent on the day when an assignment is due, you need to submit your assignment before the beginning of the class. Missing more than 2 of the scheduled classes will result in a letter-grade deduction for the course. Late arrivals and early departures will also lead to course point deductions. It's up to instructor's discretion to decide the deduction points. If you miss five or more classes you will fail the course.