SOCW4011

Evidence and Practice Based Research

Term 1, 2022

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Abner Poon	w.poon@unsw.edu.au	Wednesday, 12-1230pm	Room 169, Morven Brown Building	93850685

Tutors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Prasheela Karan	p.karan@unsw.edu.au			
Margaret Mills	margaret.mills@unsw.edu.au			

School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

Room 159

Morven Brown C20

email: soss@unsw.edu.au

phone: 02 9385 1807

Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.

Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous UNSW's Indigenous strategy

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Summary of the Course

This course focuses on connections between social work practice and research by looking at evidence-based practice (EBP) and practice-based research. You will learn the process of conducting research, and various potentials and limitations of EBP in social work. This course also provides you with opportunities to extend your understanding of different research methodologies; obtain skills and knowledge related to the research process; learn the importance of conducting research well-grounded in practice; and to understand ethical and political issues related to social work research. These skills and knowledge will facilitate your learning in other courses, field practicum, and future professional practice.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the importance of research in social work and roles of social workers in evidence-based practice
2. Critically assess research manuscripts
3. Examine research methods that are appropriate to research questions
4. Demonstrate foundational skills required to undertake research

Teaching Strategies

In accordance with UNSW Learning and Teaching Guidelines, this course aims to engage you in an active learning environment. This course values class discussion as a critical learning method and you are expected to participate actively during lectures and tutorials. To learn about key concepts, issues and techniques of research, you are expected to contribute to fellow students by bringing your own experience, by relating them to social work values and knowledge, and by thinking critically.

Lectures

Lectures involve power-point presentations addressing the course text, other supplementary readings, and examples of social work research. Students will learn about key concepts, issues, and techniques of research. In order to maximize the benefit of lectures, students are encouraged to ask questions and participate in group discussions during lectures.

Tutorials

Tutorials involve small and large group discussions and skill-building activities. Group discussions and skill-building exercises are designed to enhance understanding of class materials and to practice skills covered in lectures and reading assignments. The group project assignment is also discussed during the tutorial sessions. It should be noted that participation is not the same as attendance. The crucial element to good tutorials is having all members of the class read the readings and attended the lectures.

Moodle

This course will use Moodle to assist teaching and learning activities.

Assessment

The specific requirements of each assessment task and their associated assessment criteria, expected performance standards and marking rubrics are provided in a separate document in Moodle. Assessments should be referenced in accordance with the *School of Social Sciences Referencing Guide*, available at https://socialsciences.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/.

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. Literature review protocol	40%	18/03/2022 11:59 PM	1, 4
2. Report	60%	22/04/2022 11:59 PM	1, 2, 3

Assessment 1: Literature review protocol

Assessment length: 1200
Due date: 18/03/2022 11:59 PM

Students will write a literature review protocol (1200 words) to inform their chosen area within the field of social work.

A feedback sheet/rubric will be available to students at the start of the course so that they can work towards specified standards.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Report

Assessment length: 1800
Due date: 22/04/2022 11:59 PM

Students will write a report (1800 words) demonstrating their understanding of evidence-based practice. Students are required to use appropriate quality appraisal frameworks to critique two research papers, propose revision of the research designs if students are to implement the designs in real-world social work practice, articulate the tangible applications to practice, and describe personal reflection on their learning journey.

The feedback sheet/rubric will be available to students at the start of the course so that they can work towards specified standards.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Partnerships and collaboration between students and educators are particularly important in social work learning. As well, to maintain our accreditation as a provider of social work education, it is important that each student finds themselves in an environment where they are able to experience all content to a high level of depth and engagement. For this reason, active participation and commitment to attendance is expected of all students. Compassion and concern for student welfare is what we strive for in our provision of social work education and this is enabled by two-way communication. Communication is especially important when a student is experiencing learning barriers, particularly those which affect class attendance and completion of independent learning tasks. To ensure that student learning and wellbeing is at the forefront of all decisions made, we encourage all students to communicate any barrier to attendance to your course convenor, lecturer or tutor as soon as possible, so a collaborative plan can be developed to work around these barriers. If your attendance is affected for a limited period of time, we will refer you to selected alternate tasks we have created to promote your access to vital content in this course. These alternative tasks can also be completed by students whose attendance is exemplary and who wish to extend their learning. We will expect you to take full responsibility and initiative for completing these alternate tasks and to ensure that in completing them you develop a good working knowledge of the content missed. Our aim is to foster an environment where students feel comfortable coming forward regarding concerns about their learning and attendance. Based on experience, if your attendance drops below a certain level it is unlikely you will have the skills and knowledge to effectively achieve the learning outcomes of this course; which is why we highly encourage active attendance and participation. With effective communication and planning we endeavour to avoid situations where students feel they have not adequately engaged with the course, and therefore strongly encourage students to communicate any concerns as early as possible. We want to again emphasise the importance of collaboration and communication, and acknowledge the unique circumstances students may find themselves experiencing. The discipline needs to be able to demonstrate that you experienced this course to a level of depth and engagement as part of the accreditation requirements for the BSW (Hons) program. Note that:

- Lectures in this course are designed to provide essential learning, this means that you must attend or listen to all lectures which are being offered asynchronously/synchronously in T1,
- Tutorials are designed to provide essential application of content, this means that you must attend 80% or more of the tutorials which are being offered face to face/asynchronously/synchronously in T1,
- If you are unable to attend a class, you must email your course tutor and the course convenor at your earliest convenience, and
- You are responsible for keeping track of your attendance and contacting your course convenor immediately if you are concerned about your attendance record and its impact on your ability to complete your course successfully.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 14 February - 18 February	Lecture	Introduction to SOCW4011: Understanding key concepts related to practice-based research and evidence-based practice in social work

		Honours Thesis and Honours Portfolio briefing
	Tutorial	Identifying practice-based research topics
Week 2: 21 February - 25 February	Lecture	Ethics in social work research, research with First Nation Peoples and research theories
	Tutorial	Understanding ethics in social work research
Week 3: 28 February - 4 March	Lecture	Literature review part 1: Developing appropriate research questions. Reviewing the literature and available research evidence. Understanding different literature review methods: scoping, rapid evidence, systematic reviews and meta-analysis. Understanding evidence collaborations (Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations), PRISMA and the hierarchy of evidence. Assessing quality of evidence.
	Tutorial	Literature review protocol part 1: Developing research questions
Week 4: 7 March - 11 March	Lecture	Literature review part 2: Developing appropriate research questions. Reviewing the literature and available research evidence. Understanding different literature review methods: scoping, rapid evidence, systematic reviews and meta-analysis. Understanding evidence collaborations (Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations), PRISMA and the hierarchy of evidence. Assessing quality of evidence.
	Tutorial	Literature review protocol part 2: Developing search strategy
Week 5: 14 March - 18 March	Lecture	Qualitative Methodology: Understanding the 'how' and the 'why' of research inquiry, the qualitative research process, case studies, grounded methodology, phenomenology, textual and discourse analysis, and social media as a source of useful qualitative data
	Tutorial	Qualitative research review. **Note:** Students are expected to read an article before attending their class. The article will be used for class discussion. It will be uploaded in Moodle.
Week 7: 28 March - 1 April	Lecture	Quantitative Methodology: Understanding the quantitative research process and feasibility of

		the experimental method in practice settings. Conducting and evaluating experimental (such as quasi and RCT) studies in practice
	Tutorial	Quantitative research review.

Note: Students are expected to read an article before attending their class. The article will be used for class discussion. It will be uploaded in Moodle. |
| Week 8: 4 April - 8 April | Lecture | Mixed methods: What is mixed methods research? How do we integrate different research methods?

Outcome evaluation for social work practice: How do we know if an intervention is effective? How do we assess worker and clients' perceptions of 'what works', 'for whom' and 'under what circumstances'? |
| | Tutorial | Mixed methods research review.

Note: Students are expected to read an article before attending their class. The article will be used for class discussion. It will be uploaded in Moodle. |
| Week 9: 11 April - 15 April | Lecture | Knowledge transfer: How do we make sure that research is meaningfully translated into practice contexts; conference presentations, clearinghouses, repositories and research hubs. |
| | Tutorial | Research review using a quality appraisal tool

Research design exercise

Note: Students are expected to read an article before attending their class. The article will be used for class discussion. It will be uploaded in Moodle. |
| Week 10: 18 April - 22 April | Lecture | Collaborative/participatory approaches to research: Action research and ethnography. Ensuring participation of practitioners and service users is genuine. |

	Tutorial	Research review using a quality appraisal tool
		Research design exercise
		Note: Students are expected to read an article before attending their class. The article will be used for class discussion. It will be uploaded in Moodle.

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Webber, M. (2015). *Applying Research Evidence in Social Work Practice*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Recommended Resources

See reading list in Moodle.

Course Evaluation and Development

The MyExperience responses form the basis of SOCW4011 ongoing course development. Based on the feedback from last year's cohort, SOCW4011 has reoriented the content to more directly address the ways in which practitioner wisdom, client preference and existing research combine together to inform evidence-informed practice. In addition, assessments have been changed to better suit the needs of students entering either of the Honours streams – SOCW4016 Social Work Honours Advanced Practice Portfolio and SOCW4015 Social Work Honours Research Thesis.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study. Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided.)

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines

Image Credit

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