

SOCF5103

Research Issues in Counselling Social Work

Term 1, 2022



Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

| Name | Email | Availability | Location | Phone |
|------------------|--|---|----------|-------|
| Jan Breckenridge | j.breckenridge@unsw.edu.au | Please note: The main contact for this course will be Dr Tim Wong who will provide advice on all course information and student consultation. | | |
| Tim Wong | tim.wong@unsw.edu.au | By appointment | | |

School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

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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 in the Master of Counselling Social Work (MCSW) program introduces you to research and the role of research in the development of knowledge and in relationship to clinical social work practice. You will gain an understanding of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and explore the values and political context of research activity, including evidence based social work practice. You will build on this knowledge to develop and apply skills in information literacy including locating, evaluating and using relevant information for the purpose of research. The interactive style of teaching in this course and the course assessment program will provide opportunities for you to further develop your understanding of core elements of research including the ability to assess and critique various styles of research and, design a research project relevant to your social work counselling practice setting.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Identify and critique various styles of research used to design and implement a study of counselling/therapeutic practice
2. Articulate the relationships between social work practice and research and evidence-based practice (EBP)
3. Locate, evaluate and use relevant information for the purpose of research in practice contexts
4. Apply the core elements of a research process in order to design your own practice informed research relevant to your workplace setting.

Teaching Strategies

The course will develop your skills in information literacy including locating, evaluating and using relevant information for the purpose of research in practice contexts. The weekly seminar, interactive style of teaching, and the course assessment program will provide opportunities for you to further develop your understanding of core elements of research including the ability to assess and critique various styles of research and, design a research project relevant to your social work counselling practice setting.

Assessment

| Assessment task | Weight | Due Date | Course Learning Outcomes Assessed |
|-----------------|--------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Assignment 1 | 40% | 18/03/2022 11:59 PM | 1, 4 |
| 2. Assignment 2 | 60% | 24/04/2022 11:59 PM | 2, 3, 4 |

Assessment 1: Assignment 1

Assessment length: 1500 words (max.)

Submission notes: to be submitted via email attachment

Due date: 18/03/2022 11:59 PM

Students will submit a research essay (max. 1500 words) on a topic relevant to the course material.

Students will receive written feedback and a numerical grade within ten working days of submission. The feedback sheet/rubric will be available to students at the start of the course so that they can work towards specified standards.

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Additional details

Assessment 1 is worth 40% and is due to be submitted *via email attachment* by **Friday 18 March 2022, 11:59pm**.

This assignment assesses Course Learning Outcomes 1 and 4:

- Identify and critique various styles of research used to design and implement a study of counselling/therapeutic practice.
- Apply the core elements of a research process in order to design your own practice informed research relevant to your workplace setting.

Assessment 2: Assignment 2

Assessment length: 2500 words (max.)

Submission notes: to be submitted via Turnitin and email attachment

Due date: 24/04/2022 11:59 PM

Students will submit a research essay (max. 2500 words) on a topic relevant to the course material.

Students will receive written feedback and a numerical grade within ten working days of submission. The feedback sheet/rubric will be available to students at the start of the course so that they can work towards specified standards.

This is the final assessment for this course for attendance purposes

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Assignment 2 is worth 60% and is to be submitted *via Turnitin and email attachment* by **Sunday 24 April 2022, 11:59pm**.

This assignment assesses Course Learning Outcomes 2, 3 and 4.

- Articulate the relationships between social work practice and research and evidence-based practice (EBP).
- Locate, evaluate and use relevant information for the purpose of research in practice contexts.
- Apply the core elements of a research process in order to design your own practice informed research relevant to your workplace setting.

Attendance Requirements

It is important to note that to meet the learning outcomes for Master of Counselling Social Work (MCSW) courses, *active participation and attendance in all learning tasks, activities and classes is required*. As per UNSW attendance advice "high attendance correlates with better engagement and success on a course. By punctually attending and actively participating in your classes you not only increase your own opportunities for success, but you also help build a learning community with other students." <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/attendance>

To meet the learning requirements while minimising the number of times you need to travel to the University, the teaching (as with all the courses in the MCSW) is planned as a combination of face-to-face intensives and online classes.

In SOCF5103, you must plan to attend all the scheduled classes (if there are unforeseen circumstances or one-off clashes, this can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the course convenor - see below).

Attendance at the face-to-face in person intensives is also required. If you have any COVID-19 related concerns and/or exceptional circumstances about attending in person at Intensives, you should contact the course convenors Professor Jan Breckenridge and Dr Tim Wong, and program convenor Dr Jane Mowll j.mowll@unsw.edu.au to discuss your concerns as soon as possible prior to the first Intensive and if necessary, may apply in writing to attend online. If remote attendance for Intensives is approved, a link will be provided to you. You must not share the link with other students.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

| Date | Type | Content |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Week 1: 14 February - 18 February | Intensive | In-Person Intensive – Friday 18 February (1pm-4pm) ▶ <i>Introduction to course and evidence-based practice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills Audit• Defining key terms – ‘evidence’, ‘evidence-based practice’• Evidence Collaborations – Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations and the hierarchy of evidence• 'Gold Standard' Evidence – is this a helpful concept for social work counselling practice? ▶ <i>From practice interest to research project – Finding your own research interest (Part 1)</i> |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing appropriate research questions • Finding and using evidence competently |
| Week 2: 21 February - 25 February | Seminar | <p>Online Seminar – Wednesday 23 February (3pm-5pm)</p> <p>► <i>From practice interest to research project – Finding your own research interest (Part 2)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The politics of evidence – determining what can we know • Ethical considerations for evidence-based practice <p>► <i>Ethics and research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical component of research • Ensuring participation of practitioners and service users is genuine |
| Week 3: 28 February - 4 March | Seminar | <p>Outreach Librarian – Wednesday 2 March (3pm-5pm)</p> |
| Week 4: 7 March - 11 March | Seminar | <p>Online Seminar – Wednesday 9 March (3pm-5pm)</p> <p>► <i>Reviewing the literature and available research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of review: Scoping, Rapid Evidence, and Systematic • Meta-Analysis and Meta-Evaluation • Making judgments about the quality of evidence and implementing different appraisal frameworks |
| Week 5: 14 March - 18 March | Seminar | <p>Online Seminar – Wednesday 16 March (3pm-5pm)</p> <p>► <i>Qualitative methodology and research methods – the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ of research inquiry</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The qualitative research process • Case studies • Grounded methodology • Phenomenology • Textual, and discourse analysis • Social media as a source of useful qualitative data • Examples of practice-informed research projects using these methods |
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|------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Week 6: 21 March - 25 March | Seminar | <p>Online Seminar – Wednesday 23 March (3pm-5pm)</p> <p>► <i>Collaborative/participatory approaches to research– action research and ethnography</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we mean by ‘Practice Informed Research’ • Ensuring participation of practitioners and service users is genuine <p>► <i>Stakeholder engagement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder engagement in research • Academic-practitioner research collaboration |
| Week 7: 28 March - 1 April | Seminar | <p>Online Seminar – Wednesday 30 March (3pm-5pm)</p> <p>► <i>Quantitative methodology – how many, how often, how much and under what circumstances</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The feasibility of the experimental method in practice settings • Experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental design • Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) in practice contexts • The quantitative research process |
| Week 8: 4 April - 8 April | Seminar | <p>Online Seminar – Wednesday 6 April (3pm-5pm)</p> <p>► <i>Mixed-methods and outcomes research – what does this tell us about practice?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding outcomes in practice • Monitoring and administration data – uses and limitations • Examples of mixed-methods research |
| Week 9: 11 April - 15 April | -- Select -- | No Class (Easter 15-18 April) |
| Week 10: 18 April - 22 April | Intensive | <p>In-Person Intensive – Friday 22 April (1pm-4pm)</p> <p>► <i>Evaluation for social work practice – how do we know an intervention is effective?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we assess worker and client’s perceptions of ‘what works’, ‘for whom’, and ‘under what circumstances’? |

- Examples of evaluation studies

► *Meaningful knowledge exchange*

- How do we make sure research is meaningfully translated into social work practice counselling contexts (e.g., conference presentations, Clearinghouses, repositories and research hubs)?

Evaluation/Wrap up

Resources

Prescribed Resources

The recommended text for this course is **Webber, M. (2015) *Applying Research Evidence in Social Work Practice*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.**

Copies of the text are available in the library.

The hard-copy text can be purchased at the UNSW Bookshop - <https://www.bookshop.unsw.edu.au/details.cgi?ITEMNO=9781137276100> (the text can also be purchased as an eBook).

Chapters from this text will be listed as compulsory reading but will also be supplemented by other resources uploaded in Moodle.

Recommended Resources

Additional readings

Students should not feel limited to the text and the literature provided in Moodle via Legantro.

There are numerous additional readings available for use in SOCF5103 assessment tasks in the UNSW library's journal collection.

Students should be familiar with the UNSW Library Website: <http://www.library.unsw.edu.au>.

If you have not used this previously, you will benefit from becoming familiar with GoogleScholar (<http://scholar.google.com>) as a key search engine for academic publications and reports. You can set up the preferences to link to the UNSW Library even when you are not on campus: *Go to Google Scholar > Settings > Library links, and enter 'University of New South Wales' in the box for "Show library access links for"*.

You can sign up for Table of Contents (TOC) Alerts from the homepages of relevant journals, to receive an email whenever new articles are published in that journal. Journal websites will often carry information on the most viewed and most cited articles; these are likely to be interesting and often influential contributions. Google Scholar will also point you to articles that have cited a particular article and hence will be related to the topic.

Alongside the text, there are other useful resources on social work research (available as ebooks in UNSW library):

- Hardwick, L., R. Smith and A. Worsley (eds) (2016) *Innovations in Social Work Research: Using Methods Creatively*, London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Joubert, L. and M. Webber (eds) (2020) *The Routledge Handbook of Social Work Practice Research*, Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Mauldin, R. L. (2020) *Foundations of Social Work Research*, Arlington: Mavs Open Press.
- McLaughlin, H. (2012) *Understanding Social Work Research (2nd edition)*, London: Sage.

Course Evaluation and Development

Student evaluative feedback is gathered regularly to inform and improve the structure of the course. The seminars have been designed to address the Course Learning Outcomes and specific aspects of the assignments, and to clarify aspects of the assignments to make them easy to understand.

In addition to the student feedback obtained through *myExperience*, informal feedback and class-generated feedback are also important to on-going course development. Student feedback is taken seriously and substantial improvements are made to all courses, including SOCF5103 based in part on such feedback.

Students will be able to provide feedback about the course through *myExperience* at the end of the term.

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CRICOS

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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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