SW 932 Theory and Research on Behavior Change

Semester: Fall, 2012
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Office Hours: T 12:30 pm-1:30 pm and by appointment
Time/Location: Tuesdays, 9:30am-12:10 pm (END 1160)

Course Description
This 3-credit seminar is part of the 12-credit specialization content required in the Social Work Ph.D. program. It meets the specialization requirement for students in the Addictions and Behavioral Health concentration, and addresses topics of interest to students in other concentrations and disciplines. The course is designed to broaden and deepen student’s knowledge of theory and research concerning processes of individual change, occurring with or without planned intervention, in various fields of practice, including social work. The course surveys research literature related to a range of models, principles, and theories that form the basis for the development of individual change intervention approaches. This includes classic theories and recent health behavior models, as well as social work perspectives (i.e., bio-psycho-social, lifespan, person-in-environment, and systems principles). Entwined throughout these explorations is analysis of the research methods and findings pertaining to specific change promotion strategies. These include behavior modification, psychoeducation, cognitive behavioral therapies, motivational interviewing, social system interventions, and pharmacological/biological therapies. Means by which these principles and approaches are applied to diverse ethnic, social class, gender, age, and disability groups are also considered.

Pre-requisites
Social work doctoral-student status or permission of instructor.

Specific Course Goals and Objectives
The first goal of this course is to explore research literature detailing theories, models, and perspectives in the area of individual change processes—both naturally occurring and those arising from intervention efforts. The second goal is to enhance students’ abilities to analyze intervention strategies designed to promote positive change, arrest negative change, and produce necessary conditions for change at the individual level. The third goal is to assist students with designing individual change interventions in various fields of practice. Toward this end, the course objectives include:

1) To help students become familiar with and critically examine the research basis for theories, perspectives, and models of change at the individual level. The literature selected for review encompasses the etiology and natural course of behavioral and mental health problems, including addictions, which underlie specific intervention strategies. These include bio-psycho-social processes, individual developmental and systems principles, the approaches.
2) To explore the ways in which this research base informs the function, development, and evaluation of interventions at the individual level. Students will be expected to address issues related to their particular areas of specialization and fields/disciplines of practice.

3) To consider how individual change is contextualized and influenced by family, cultural, institutional, and societal contexts. This includes consideration of human diversity, oppression, discrimination, disparities, vulnerability, risk, and resilience factors.

4) To identify knowledge gaps and conceptualize ways to address them systematically.

5) To understand the transition between theory, design and testing of empirically based interventions.

6) On a topic of the student’s choosing, to prepare a review and critical analysis of research literature and practice the process of presenting it to professional and scholarly audiences.

7) To become knowledgeable about intervention content relevant for inclusion when teaching BSW and MSW level courses or intervention courses in other disciplines.

**Texts/Required Reading Sources**

Required texts:

Required articles on electronic reserve, accessible through D2L course link at http://www.uwm.edu/UWM/Student/elearning.html

**Learning Environment and Resources**

Many course materials are accessible online to registered students through D2L at http://www.uwm.edu/UWM/Student/elearning.html. In addition, all students have access to the Schools of Enderis computer lab located on the 10th floor of Enderis Hall and to computer labs located throughout campus (see https://www3.uwm.edu/IMT/services/campus/ccls/ for specific locations and hours). Campus policies regarding participation by students with disabilities, accommodations for religious observances, academic conduct/misconduct, incomplete grading policies, complaint procedures, grade appeal procedures, sexual harassment and safety policies, final exam date requirements, and other matters are available at: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf.

**Assignments/Grading**

This course is a seminar, which means that students will be expected to assume active roles in their own learning and to contribute to one another’s learning. This will be accomplished by students completing the required readings, participating appropriately and respectfully in class discussions, and sharing effectively in the collaborative learning activities. Responsible student participation, therefore, will be awarded 5% of the class grade.

The remainder of the course grade is determined by performance on the integrative project assignment (details attached). This assignment will be completed and graded in four stages. Each of the first three sections will constitute 20% of the grade (60% total), presentation and discussion of the project with the group will be 15% of course grade, and the final written project, combining an integrative conclusion section and any revisions to the first three sections will constitute 20% of the course grade. *Late assignments will be graded downward for every 24 hours past due (i.e., letter grade equivalents will be in 1/3 increments, such that an “A” becomes “A-,” “B+” becomes “B,” etc.).*
Class Schedule/Outline

Week 1 (9-4-12): Introduction to Course; Overview of Individual Change Research

Looking at how and why individual change happens
Research on mechanisms of change
Milestones in the study of individual change
Efficacy and Effectiveness Research
Sources of differences occurring in the research literature, including aspects of diversity in sampled populations

Required Readings:

Assignments Due:
- Student Information Sheets (in class)

Week 2 (9-11-12): Overview of Key Concepts and “Theory to Intervention” Processes

Bio-psycho-social perspective
Systems perspectives
Person-in-environment/Goodness-of-fit perspective
Lifespan perspective
Diversity and cultural competence concerns
Linking theory to assessment
Linking theory to intervention planning
Linking theory to prevention strategies

Required Readings:
- Resnicow, K., Braithwaite, R.L., Dilorio, C., & Glanz, K. (2008). Applying Theory to Culturally Diverse and Unique Populations (Ch. 21). In K. Glanz, B.K. Rimer, & F. M.

Either one of the following two:

OR

Assignments Due: None due

Week 3 (9-18-12): Research Related to Psychodynamic and Attachment Processes as a Basis for Individual Behavior Change
Animal models (imprinting, attachment, etc.)
Bowlby and successors (infant attachment to mothers, fathers, siblings)
Freud and successors
How change does/does not occur

Required Readings:
• Thombs, D. L. (2006) Psychoanalytic formulation (Ch. 5). In Introduction to addictive behaviors, 2nd edition (pp. 120-134). NY: Guilford Press. (reserve)

Assignments Due: None due

Week 4 (9-25-12): Overview of Research Related to Biological Bases for Individual Behavior Change
Issues in relating animal models to human behavior
Specific principles of biology/physiology relating to individual behavior (e.g., neurotransmitters, brain activation/fMRI studies, hormonal action, effects of stress and trauma, temperament, genetic models, developmental changes related to addiction, violence, sexual behavior)

Required Readings:

One each of the following:
OR

One each of the following:
OR

Assignments Due: None due

Week 5 (10-2-12): Biologically Based Individual Intervention Strategies: Mental Health Examples
Biofeedback/neurofeedback
Pharmacotherapies & Hormonal Adjustment
Genetic “Manipulation”
Meditation

Required Readings:

Assignments Due: Integrative Project Specialization topic successfully negotiated with the instructor by class time today.
Week 6 (10-9-12): Overview of Research Related to Social Context Bases for Individual Behavior Change

Social Support Systems
Social Referencing
Social Norms
Stress and Coping
Discrimination, Oppression Influences
Cultural Contexts

Required Readings:

Assignments Due: None due

Week 7 (10-16-12): Social Context Intervention Strategies

Family Therapy/Supportive Significant Other/12-Step Approaches
Peer Group/Community Norms Interventions & Media Campaigns
Structural Interventions
Community Resource/Policy Strategies
Contingency Management

Required Readings:
- Textbook: Glanz., K., & Schwartz, M. (2008). Stress, coping, and health behavior (Ch. 10). In K. Glanz, B. K., Rimer, & K. Viswanath, (Eds), Health Behavior and Health


One of the following three:

Assignments Due: First installment (1/3) of integrative project is due by class time today.

Week 8 (10-23-12): Overview of Research Related to Communication and Behavior Change

Levels/types of communication
Significant elements
Social power and tactics: Communication and context
Technology
Links to social context

Required Readings:

Assignments Due: None due

Week 9 (10-30-12): Overview of Research Related to Cognition and Learning Processes as a Basis for Individual Behavior Change

Rational Cognitive Models
Learning Models
Social Learning Principles

Expected Readings:


Assignments Due: None due

**Week 10 (11-6-12): Cognitive & Learning Based Intervention Strategies**

*Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (CBT)/Interventions (CBI)*

*Psycho-Education*

*Skills Based Training*

**Required Readings:**


**Assignments Due:** Second installment (1/3) of integrative assignment is due by class time today.

**Week 11 (11-13-12): Overview of Research Related to the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change**

*TMBC Principles*

*Stages of Change/Readiness to Change*

*Decisional Balance*

*Self-Efficacy for Change*

**Required Readings:**


**Assignments Due:** None due

**Week 12 (11-20-12): Motivational Intervention in the Change Process: Alcohol Use Disorders Examples**

*Motivational Interviewing*

*Motivational Enhancement Therapies*

**Required Readings:**


**Assignments Due:** None due
Week 13 (11-27-12): Catch up on Schedule Above

Required Readings:

Assignments Due: Third installment of integrative project due by class time today; some presentations today.

Week 14 (12-4-12): Group Presentation and Discussion of Students’ Integrative Projects; Final Course Wrap-Up

Required Readings: No new readings
Assignments Due: Finishing presentations for students today; feedback form for presenters due today. Course evaluations.

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Tuesday, December 18th, 2012, 10:00 am-12:00 noon
Final integrative projects due during scheduled final exam period (Can turn in early if desired)
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
HELEN BADER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WELFARE,
DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SOCIAL WORK

SW 932: Theory and Research on Behavior Change
Integrative Project Assignment

Semester: Fall, 2012

Project Overview
The purpose of this project is to provide students with an opportunity to explore individual change research with relevance to a particular area of interest or field of study. Students are expected to integrate assigned and outside literature in their projects and to demonstrate a significant degree of integrative thinking and advanced level of critical analysis by the project's conclusion. The integrative project will examine individual change research concerning theories, models, perspectives, and intervention approaches related to a particular topic of interest.

Project Details
The integrative project is designed to be completed and graded in stages. Students may work independently or in pairs, but not in larger groups—a pair may choose to split their work as the semester progresses, and two individuals may elect to team up, but only one change in configuration will be accepted. Students working together will share the same grade for any sections completed together.

Summary: This assignment will be completed and graded in four stages. Each of the first three sections will constitute 20% of the course grade (60% total), presentation and discussion of the project with the group will be 15% of course grade, and the final written project, combining an integrative conclusion section and any revisions to the first three sections will constitute 20% of the course grade. Late assignments will be graded downward for every 24 hours past due (i.e., letter grade equivalents will be in 1/3 increments, such that an “A” becomes “A-,” “B+” becomes “B,” etc.).

Step 1. Identify the particular specialization topic of interest and negotiate its approval by the instructors. Select a topic that lends itself to examining the linkages between theory and intervention design. Be sure that your topic is not overly general; be relatively specific, either as to specific populations (e.g., age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, region, diagnosis, etc.) and/or problem area (e.g., smoking prevention and smoking cessation would be different problems).

Some possible examples include, but are certainly not limited to:
Reducing HIV/STD sexual risk behavior among persons with severe mental illness
Preventing substance dependence/addiction among substance abusers
Intervening with eating disordered behaviors among athletes
Parenting versus child maltreatment behavior
Responding to PTSD among women with abuse histories
Reducing intimate partner violence recidivism among young men
Patient/provider communication as a mediator/moderator of therapeutic change

(This step is not graded, but should be completed by week 6)

Step 2 (Stages 1, 2 & 3 of grading). Relate theory and intervention from three frameworks to the specialization topic. There are two choices in determining which frameworks to apply:
(1) select three of the five addressed in the syllabus;
(2) select two of the five addressed in the syllabus and negotiate a reasonable third.
Each of the first three sections of your project will constitute 20% of the course grade (60% total) and each should be 4-6 single-spaced pages in length, using Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12
The five framework options are:
(a) psychodynamic and/or attachment frameworks and interventions;
(b) biological/physiological/pharmacological frameworks and interventions;
(c) social context and communication frameworks and interventions;
(d) cognitive and/or learning frameworks and interventions; and
(e) transtheoretical/motivational frameworks and interventions.

The first 1/3 is due at class time on week 7 (10/16/12)
The second 1/3 is due at class time on week 10 (11/06/12)
The third 1/3 is due at class time on week 13 (11/27/12)

**Step 3.** Presentation and discussion of the integrative project with the group will be 15% of course grade. Each student will have ½ of their points from leading discussion of their own project and ½ of their points from contributing meaningful discussion and written feedback to the other projects (feedback forms will be provided). These presentations and discussions form the basis for class sessions 14 & 15. Feedback from these class sessions may be integrated by presenters into the final product (step 4 below).

**Step 4.** The final written project (20% of the course grade) combines an integrative conclusion section and revisions to the first three sections, as well as an introduction. The integrative section should be no more than 5 pages in length. Integration questions to be discussed include, but are not limited to:
- Compare/contrast the different frameworks with respect to the specialization topic
- Of the approaches, where is there goodness of fit and where is fit lacking? What is your rationale for these assessments? **Please justify your argument.**
- Which approach appears to lend itself most readily to research on your specialization topic, and why?
- What are the intervention implications associated with the different theories, perspectives, and models?
- What issues arise in considering implementation and evaluation of possible intervention approaches based on these theories, perspectives, and models?

The final written projects are due during the final exam period. It is expected that the final product, with all sections (your re-worked three framework sections, introduction, and unified discussion section) will be from 17-23 pages in length before your reference list.