Administrative Unit: Criminal Justice Administration and Social Work Department

Course Prefix and Number: SOWK 345

Course Title: Social Work Research

Number of Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Focuses on the relationship between generalist social work practice and research including how research can help promote social and economic justice. In this practice oriented course students will become familiar with the application of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies for building knowledge as well as how to become effective consumers of research findings. Students will learn methods of implementation and evaluation of research with systems of all sizes including single subject design and program evaluation. Prerequisites: Acceptance into the Social Work program; MATH 250 or PSYC 324. Offered Fall.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Acceptance into the Social Work program; MATH 250 or PSYC 324.


CSWE Policy Statement: Qualitative and quantitative research content provides understanding of a scientific, analytic, and ethical approach to develop, use, and effectively communicate empirically based knowledge, including evidence-based interventions. Research knowledge is used by students to provide high-quality services; to initiate change; to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery; and to evaluate their own practice.

Course Objectives:

• To demonstrate how to ethically apply research skills to improve services, inform policy, and evaluate individual practice.

• To demonstrate understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

• To find, evaluate, analyze and communicate appropriate empirically based findings for Social work practice.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

• Science and social work

• Conceptions of science and approaches to understanding

• Qualitative and quantitative approaches to research
• The purpose of research in generalist social work practice
• Research roles in generalist practice
• Research and generalist practice processes
• Values and ethics in social work research
• Research and human diversity
• Sources of research questions
• Research strategies
• Practice evaluation
• Program evaluation
• Issues of ethics and diversity in posing a research question
• The literature review
• Units of analysis
• Levels of measurement
• Naming variables and values
• Relationship of variables
• Defining and operationalizing variables
• Needs assessments
• Program evaluation
• Evaluation of practice
• Single subject design
• Sampling
• Data collection for quantitative and qualitative data
• Organization of data
• Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data
• Research writing
• Using research in practice and evaluation
• Social workers responsibilities to the profession

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 25

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Michael Perkins
Name __________________________________________________________ Signature ________________________

Date: January 27, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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