COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SOWK 4901 provides students with the opportunity to conduct an evaluation project. Its prerequisite is SOWK 4900.

COURSE RATIONALE

Social work’s accountability to its constituents rests in large measure on the knowledge base that informs social work practice. As a profession, social work has an obligation to assess the effectiveness of methods used in practice. This requires social workers to have the skills necessary to evaluate a variety of clinical and macro interventions and programs. Such skills have become increasingly important with growing emphasis on assessing client outcomes by private and public funding sources and government agencies. It is essential that social workers have the ability to evaluate their own interventions with clients and to evaluate social service programs. It is also important that social workers are able to effectively read, interpret, and disseminate research.

SOWK 4900 and 4901 is a required concentration year sequence that focuses on the development of skills needed to evaluate social work practice and programs. The two courses, taught during the Fall and Winter Quarters, require students to design, conduct, and report on a field-based evaluation project conducted in their practicum agencies or other applied settings.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through class attendance, readings and assignments students will be able to:

Knowledge:
1. Identify the essential components of logic models and discuss how logic models can be used in program evaluation.
2. Summarize the basic tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics, DU IRB requirements, and HIPPA requirements concerning the protection of human subjects in research.
3. Understand different evaluation designs, including: formative, process, needs assessment, and outcome evaluations.
4. Describe qualitative and quantitative research designs, including group designs and single system designs, which can be used in evaluating practice and programs.
5. Identify different methods for analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, the computer packages that can assist in analysis of data, and the conditions under which various analyses strategies are appropriately used.

Skills:
6. Construct and evaluate logic models for programs and interventions.
7. Frame appropriate evaluation questions based on logic models.
8. Identify evaluation designs that fit the needs of a particular intervention or program.
9. Create a feasible evaluation plan that attends to sampling, identification or creation of instruments for collecting data, and collection of data.
10. Complete an IRB application.
11. Select and use appropriate approaches for analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data and meaningfully interpret the results of the analyses.
12. Report results of research both in writing and orally.

Values/ Ethics:
13. Articulate the ethical principles of research and discuss the relationship between these principles and social work values, the protection of human subjects in research, and concerns related to research concerning people who have suffered disadvantage and oppression.
14. Demonstrate understanding of differences in terms of race, ethnicity, age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and culture in the design and conduct of research.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS (EPAS)

The following Social Work Core Competencies are addressed in this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPAS #</th>
<th>Core Competency</th>
<th>Educational Objective #</th>
<th>Assignment # Or Learning Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td>Professional Identity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.2</td>
<td>Ethical Practice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.3</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.1.4</strong></td>
<td>Diversity in Practice</td>
<td>13, 14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5</td>
<td>Human Rights &amp; Social Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6</td>
<td>Research Based Practice</td>
<td>1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.7</td>
<td>Human Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.8</td>
<td>Policy Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.9</td>
<td>Practice Contexts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## ASSESSMENT

This course will facilitate the assessment of the following Advanced Practice Behavior(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPAS #</th>
<th>Practice Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4a</td>
<td>Demonstrate the ability for independent investigation of diversity and difference and apply this knowledge to building relationships with and responsiveness to clients/constituents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6a</td>
<td>Critically evaluate and contextualize evidence-based interventions, best practices, and the evidence-based research process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.10d</td>
<td>Contribute to the ongoing development of knowledge in the social work profession through practice-based research and program evaluation.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## CONTENT ON DIVERSE POPULATIONS

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim.

## INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

Social and economic justice is one of the key themes promoted throughout the curriculum at GSSW. As a community we encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. These issues; therefore, are integrated into each classroom experience at GSSW. As a result, there will be class discussions that may be difficult or challenging. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive space in which each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions and interactions. It is important that we listen to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another and the learning environment. We share the task of negotiating the dual priorities of authentic free speech and active regard for one another being open to diverse perspectives and ideas. We recognize that microaggressions happen; however, overt slurs in relation to race, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion/world view, immigration status, size, nationality, dis/ability, marital status,
political affiliation, or any other identities, will be addressed directly. Throughout the course, we will negotiate other guidelines about class discussions.

TEXT


Additional Readings:

Listed in the week-by-week topics below and provided in Canvas. The full reference list is located in the bibliography document.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION LITERACY GUIDANCE

The following research guides and/or databases within the University of Denver Libraries [http://library.du.edu/site/](http://library.du.edu/site/) are most relevant to course assignments: Google Scholar, PsychInfo, Social Work Abstracts. The GSSW Academic Support Portfolio includes resources for APA stylistic expectations, information literacy and writing. Please visit [http://portfolio.du.edu/gsswacademicsupport](http://portfolio.du.edu/gsswacademicsupport).

REQUIRED USE OF THE PUBLICATION MANUAL of the AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, 6TH EDITION

Adherence to in text citations and reference list guidelines of the 6th edition of the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association must be used.

COURSE OUTLINE – SOWK 4901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class #</th>
<th>Topics Covered, Readings, and Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 1       | **Lab: Statistical Techniques 1 – Meet in Sturm Hall 354**  
|         | • Review syllabus and course expectations  
|         | • Review descriptive statistics  
|         | • Introduction to SPSS  
|         | • Entering Data  
|         | • Creating a Data File  
|         | • Generating Descriptive Statistics  
|         | • Presenting Your Data in Graphic Form  
| 1/4/16  | Required Reading:  
|         | Royse, et al. (2010). Data Analysis (pp. 341-351) POSTED ON CANVAS  
| 2       | **Lab: Statistical Techniques 2 – Sturm Hall 354**  
|         | • Measures of association  
|         | • Tests of significance  
| 1/11/16 |                                                     |
- Conducting statistical tests
  - Crosstabulation
  - Correlation
  - T test
  - ANOVA

**Required Reading:**
Royse, et al. (2010). Data Analysis (pp. 351-370) POSTED ON CANVAS

**Qualitative Data Analyses**
- Analyzing qualitative interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/18/16</td>
<td>No class - Martin Luther King, Jr, Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25/16</td>
<td>Individual Consultations / Open Lab - Sturm Hall 354</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/1/16</td>
<td>Individual Consultations / Open Lab - Sturm Hall 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/8/16</td>
<td>Individual Consultations / Open Lab - Sturm Hall 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Midterm Assignment Due 2/12/2016 by 11:59 pm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Individual Consultations / Open Lab - Sturm Hall 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/22/16</td>
<td>Individual Consultations / Open Lab - Sturm Hall 354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29/16</td>
<td>Project Presentations – Craig Hall 448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/7/16</td>
<td>Project Presentations – Craig Hall 448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Report Due 3/11/16 by 11:59 pm</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Individual Consultations with instructor**

Weeks 3-8 of this course are dedicated to data collection, analysis, and project write up. As you are working on these aspects of your evaluation you can sign up for individual consultations with me. Please plan to attend more meetings and then cancel or conduct brief check-ins if work is going smoothly rather than working completely independently and then seeking help at the very end of the quarter or when challenges arise. The available consultation times will be during regular class time on Mondays; however, if you cannot make one of these times or they are all full, I will be happy to schedule another time with you individually. Some weeks you will have more questions than others, so you are not required to sign up for a meeting every week. However, if you do not come in for a one-on-one consultation, please send me an email with an update of your progress at least every other week.
Assignment #1 MIDTERM (35 points), due 2/12/16 by 11:59 pm by Email (eboyce1205@gmail.com)

NOTE: if your data collection is delayed for some reason, and you are not able to submit this assignment on time, please email me or talk to me in class prior to the due date about the possibility of turning in part of this assignment (PART I) on time and the remainder (PART II and III) late.

PART I (10 points): Data Analysis Plan

Please provide a narrative that outlines the approach you are taking to analyze your data in your evaluation. The analysis plan should include a detailed account of the approach to be taken to conducting descriptive and inferential statistical analyses for quantitative studies, such as how data were entered, cleaned, coded, described, and tested for associations. Analysis plans for qualitative studies should include methods of audio recording, transcribing, first-cycle coding and second-cycle coding, as well as presentation of data to be used in compiling results. Use references from the text or assigned readings (and outside sources as appropriate).

Note: This section of your assignment is important in demonstrating your ability to evaluate a program and contribute to knowledge in your social work agency (practice behavior 10d).

PART II (10 points): Sample Characteristics

1. Using SPSS and descriptive statistics, describe your sample’s demographics and characteristics on key variables. Use examples from Statistics Lab 1 as a guide. Copy all relevant statistics into a Word file and enter your descriptions there. For nominal level variables, identify the frequencies and percentages of participants who fit into each category. For continuous variables, identify the mean and standard deviation for each variable. Enter these results into a table, labeled “sample characteristics”. Then in 1 paragraph, describe key findings from this table (age, gender, ethnicity, and key outcome variables).

2. Use the graphics tool in SPSS, Excel, or Word to present your sample and measures in various graphic forms. You must graphically display at least 3 variables, but can display more if useful.

3. When submitting your assignment please send your SPSS data file (.sav extension) and your Word file.

PART III (15 points): Preliminary findings

Note: This section below is important in demonstrating your ability to evaluate a program and contribute to knowledge in your social work agency (practice behavior 10d).

For quantitative studies:
1. Using SPSS tools, analyze at least 2 relationships between your variables of interest. You may need to analyze many more relationships to answer your research questions in your final report, but for this assignment, a minimum of 2 relationships should be analyzed and reported. Inferential statistical tests may include: independent samples t-test, paired samples t-test, correlation, Chi-square test of independence, ANOVA or regressions. Be sure to follow the analysis plan described in part 1 of this assignment. Enter your results into a table.

2. For each statistical test create a corresponding graph in SPSS, Excel or Word. Label each graph with a number (ex. Figure 1) and a title (ex. Mean depression score at pretest and at posttest).

3. Interpret the results. Make any observations about the results of these tests that you think are appropriate. Use examples from Statistics Lab 2 as a guide. Refer to your figures and your table in your interpretation of the findings. Be sure to clarify whether you found a statistically significant relationship between variables and what this means “in English”.

4. When submitting your assignment please send your SPSS data file (.sav extension) and your Word file.

For qualitative studies:

1. Using transcripts from your interviews or focus group sessions, conduct first-cycle and second-cycle coding. For coding, use high-lighting or track change comments to annotate select key words, phrases, and ideas from the interview.

2. Explain your coding scheme (first-cycle codes and second-cycle codes) in a table of codes with explanation of what each means.

3. Identify and describe at least one theme from the transcripts. Discuss the theme, what it looked like in your data, and use quotes from interviews to illustrate it.

4. The document should be typewritten and you should present your findings as though you were providing a portion of a results section in a qualitative report or paper. Please attach the transcript that you used to identify meaning units and attach codes.

Assignment #2 FINAL EVALUATION REPORT (50 points), due 3/11/16 by 11:59pm, by Email (eboyce1205@gmail.com)

Building on the evaluation proposal completed at the end of the winter quarter, students are expected to complete a final evaluation report. This report should include:

EVALUATION REPORT OUTLINE
A good evaluation proposal will lay the groundwork for a good evaluation report. Remember, however, an evaluation report discusses what you have done rather than what you intend to do. Any feedback provided at the proposal stage must be incorporated into the final report.

Abstract
- Briefly describe the rationale for, methods, findings, and conclusions of your study

Introduction
• Background information about the extent of the social problem addressed by the program you intend to evaluate (should be supported by demographic data from the literature on prevalence of the social problem. If available, also include information about problem prevalence rates at the local level.)
• Brief background information about the program, including: population served, number of clients, types of programming offered, staff characteristics, theoretical orientation of the agency/program if discernible. Discuss to what extent agency/program uses approaches supported by the literature, the extent to which clients are involved in program management/evaluation, etc.
• Goals and objectives of the program you will evaluate.
• Research questions: The focus of your program evaluation

Literature Review
• Please be sure that this is not an annotated bibliography.
• Use this review to further explore what you know about the problem and intervention, as well as to help you better understand how to carry out your evaluation project.
• Include thorough discussions of peer-reviewed literature about both types of theories – problem theory and theory of change.
  • **Problem theory**: What is known about the nature of the problem the program is trying to solve? What are the underlying causes of the problem?
  • **Change theory**: What is known about how the problem can be ameliorated or assets developed, in other words how does change occur?
• How does the program you are evaluating address the problem and change theories? What other evaluations have been done on programs like this? What outcome measures have been used or what research designs were used to examine the effectiveness of the intervention? Has the intervention been found effective with some populations and not others? What problems were encountered? How did other evaluators address those problems?
• Assess the quality of the evidence relative to your program.
• **Note**: This section is primary in demonstrating your ability to contextualize the evidence-based practices available in your area, identifying both the strengths and limitations of this evidence on effective or promising practices as well as appraising the extent of evidence supporting the practices at your agency (practice behavior: 6a).

Evaluation Methodology
• Evaluation procedures how was the evaluation carried out?
• Sample:
  • Discuss the actual sample, including descriptive information about participants.
  • In both papers, discuss the extent to which your sample is representative of a broader population and the implications of this for your findings. Many samples will be convenience samples and not representative of larger populations.
• Data collection methods (interviews, existing data, surveys, focus groups, etc.)
• Measures
  • Discuss the validity and reliability of instruments/questionnaires used.
• Have they been used with populations similar to yours? Note: this section is primary in demonstrating your understanding how your measurement is sensitive and responsive to your diverse client group (practice behavior: 4a).

• In your evaluation report it would be appropriate to discuss evaluation plans that did not go as planned, for example, sample size intended, items on questionnaire that were not completed as planned, etc.

Data Analyses
• Describe how you analyzed the data. How did you determine whether or not there had been significant change in the outcomes or otherwise determine if the intervention was effective?

Results
• Results of descriptive statistics (might be helpful to put in table form when lots of descriptive statistics are included)
• Results of statistical tests (it may be helpful to include tables and/or graphs based on SPSS output in the body of your text; however, do not include SPSS output for statistical tests, instead report results in text and/or table format).
• Results of qualitative data (consider providing excerpts of quotes from study participants). It is customary in qualitative studies to present some sort of organization of findings, illustrated with quotes from the data, as well as include a discussion of these findings all together. Note: This section of your proposal is primary in demonstrating your ability to evaluate a program and contribute to knowledge in your social work agency (practice behavior 10d).

Discussion & Conclusions
• Interpretation of results: What do your results mean?
• How do your findings fit within the broader literature?
• Strengths and weakness of your study; limitations of your study and its results; how could the study have been improved?
• Implications of your findings for the agency’s practice and policies.
• Directions for future research: what do we still need to know? Note: This section of your proposal is primary in demonstrating your ability to evaluate a program and contribute to knowledge in your social work agency (practice behavior 10d).

References

Appendices
• Questionnaires, instruments, interview guides, etc. used for data collection
• Logic model
• Transcriptions of qualitative data
• SPSS output of quantitative analyses

Assignment #3 PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION & FEEDBACK (15 points), due 2/29/16 or 3/7/16

Each student is required to deliver a presentation of her/his evaluation findings appropriate for a professional setting. The presentation should be about 10 minutes long and include topics covered in the evaluation report: brief background, research questions, methods, findings and
implications. **Primary focus is on your results and discussion.** Note: *This section of your presentation is primary in demonstrating your ability to evaluate a program and contribute to knowledge in your social work agency (practice behavior 10d).*

It is expected that the presentation will be of professional quality comparable to a presentation at a conference, public meeting, or agency board meeting. A portion of the grade assigned for your oral presentation will include your participation in other students’ presentations. All students are expected to be active in discussions about projects by being attentive, asking thoughtful questions and participating in group discussion. Please provide a handout and/or use PowerPoint slides as a visual aid.

**Final grades for 4901 Quarter will be based on:**
Midterm Assignment 35%
Final Research Report 50%
Presentation of Research Findings 15%

**EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

**Participation:**

Participation is broadly defined. At a minimum, it means that assigned readings and written assignments are completed on their assigned due date. Participation also includes asking questions, applying course concepts to class discussion, contributing to the learning of others, participating in role playing, providing accurate and respectful feedback to others, identifying any unique learning needs or problems to the instructor, and utilizing office hours when necessary to ask for clarification or assistance in fulfilling course expectations and assignments. Classroom contributions should focus on relevant course concepts and professional practice experiences.

**Submission of Assignments**

The assignments are due on the date specified in the course syllabus. Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances arise (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency) which may make it difficult for a student to complete the assignment by its designated due date time. Should this happen, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor. At the instructor’s discretion, a student’s request for an extension of an assignment past its due date may be granted, usually for no longer than one week past the due date. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points for late assignments.

**Attendance**

**GSSW Attendance Policy:**

Attendance is a matter of professional behavior. Students are expected to attend *all meetings of a class*, including the scheduled hours for field instruction, for which they are registered. Instructors are expected to establish attendance requirements for their classes and may, at their discretion, use class attendance as one factor in assigning a grade for a class. Participation in official University activities, personal emergencies, and major religious observances are all considered valid reasons for absence. Students who
miss more than two class sessions may not be allowed to pass that course. *It is the responsibility of the student to check with the instructor regarding any absence from class and to make arrangements regarding the work missed.* The responsibility for completing all work in the course rests with the student.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Classification</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent Work</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(above course expectations)</td>
<td>91-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Work</td>
<td>88-90</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(meets course expectations)</td>
<td>84-87</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Work</td>
<td>78-80</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(meets minimal course expectations)</td>
<td>74-77</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing Work</td>
<td>70-0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incomplete (I)</td>
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</table>

91-100 = A/A-  
**Excellent Work**

Students display excellent work (*beyond course expectations*) in several ways: evidence that additional readings, beyond what is assigned, have been completed and integrated into written or in class presentations/participation; superior written work; evidence of critical thinking; demonstration of advanced practice skills applied to practice; and creativity and innovation in conceptual as well as practice-related thinking are frequently seen in the student’s work.

81-90 = B+/B/B-  
**Good Work: Meets Course Expectations**

Students display good work in several ways: basic mastery of course material is evident in written or in class presentations/participation; solid development of practice skills fitting with concentration-year expertise is evident; and creativity and innovation are noted but to a lesser degree and less frequently than that in the “excellent” category.

71-80 = C+/C/C-  
**Work Minimally Meets Course Expectations**

Students display marginal work in several ways: through evidence that course readings have not been covered, as observed in written or in class presentations/participation; conceptual confusion and difficulty with critical thinking are evident in written and verbal work; and through work that lacks an integration of theory and practice.

70 and below = F  
**Failure to Meet Course Expectations**

Student demonstrates poor or unacceptable work during the course in several ways: inadequate understanding of course content, poor quality written work, plagiarism, and poor or unethical demonstration of practice skills.

In general, grades of A and A- reflect outstanding work, significantly above the basic expectations of the course. B+ denotes very good work that, in part, exceeds adequate performance. A mark of B represents solidly adequate work, whereas a B- represents a level of performance that is, in part, uneven or unsteady in its level of meeting the basic expectations of the course. It is important to keep in mind that **you are not your grade!** Students come to graduate school with a wide range of academic experiences and
preparedness. Thinking and writing about complex issues and abstract concepts can be very challenging for many students. If you are satisfied with the level of effort you have invested in the course, and you earn a grade of B or better, I hope you will feel very good about your performance.

GENERAL GSSW AND DU POLICIES

Policy Concerning Students with Disabilities

Students who have disabilities or medical conditions and who want to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Program (DSP); 303.871.2372/2278; 1999 E. Evans Ave.; 4th floor of Ruffatto Hall. Information is also available online at www.du.edu/disability/dsp; see Handbook for Students with Disabilities. Please note that academic accommodations cannot be applied retroactively, so it is important for you to register with DSP as soon as possible if you think you may need accommodations at some point while at GSSW. You are also encouraged to contact the Director of Student and Career Development for GSSW students.

Please review Student Handbook materials for the following policies:

Policy Concerning Religious Accommodations

Policies Concerning Academic Integrity and Ethical Conduct

Name and Pronoun Use in the Classroom

Use of Technology

The Student Handbook can be found at:


It is located on the GSSW website, within the “current students” tab, on the “Quick Links” box on the right hand side.

Bibliography

Research Methods
Program Evaluation

Ethics, Culture

Evaluability Assessment

Qualitative Methods

Quantitative Data Analysis