SWRK4003: Social Work Intervention Skills

Course Outline

Course Coordinator: Professor Mel Gray
Room: W220
Ph: 4921 6302
Fax: 4921 6933
Email: Mel.Gray@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation hours: Friday: 12.00-2.00 or by appointment.

Teaching Staff
As above
Teaching staff consultation: By appointment

Semester: Semester 1: 2007
Unit Weighting: 20

Teaching Methods
Workshop

Brief Course Description
The course builds on learning from previous years with a specific focus on research skills

Contact Hours
Workshop for 3 hours per week for the full term

Learning Materials/Texts
See Blackboard

Course Objectives
A capacity to design and develop planned and purposeful practice-based research interventions using theoretical knowledge; conducting literature reviews; understanding methodology; identifying ethical concerns; and being aware of critical debates in social work research.

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 1 - 2007

CTS Download Date: 12/2/07
Course Content
Students will workshop research skills.

Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Items</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essays/Written Assignments</td>
<td>Two written assignments each worth 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/tutorial participation and contribution</td>
<td>Attendance and participation graded as satisfactory and unsatisfactory in accordance with course outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>Participation in a class research project which forms part of the written assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumed Knowledge
Completion of all third year social work courses

Callaghan Campus Timetable
SWRK4003: SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION SKILLS
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 - 2007
Lecture Friday 9:00 - 12:00 [W202]

Plagiarism
University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:
- Copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment.
- Using another's ideas without due acknowledgment.
- Working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.
Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, web sites and computer programs. Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty. For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link:

The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may:
- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University, and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking.

Written Assessment Items
Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for
submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after
the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised. Any student: 1. who is
applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of
medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or 2. whose
attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has
been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable
commitment must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the
appropriate officer following the instructions provided in the Special Circumstances
Affecting Assessment Procedure - Policy 000641. For further information, please note
the different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks, particularly for
information on the options available to you at

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

▪ **Requests for Special Consideration** must be lodged no later than 3 working days
  after the date of submission or examination.

▪ **Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items** must be lodged no later
  than the due date of the item.

▪ **Requests for Rescheduling Exams** must be lodged no later than 10 working days
  before the date of the examination.

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who
are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should
speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

**Changing your Enrolment**
The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS
Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2007
For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2007

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last
day of semester. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result
in a fail grade. Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of
semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a
course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form,
and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs. To change your enrolment
online, please refer to
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html

**Faculty Information**
The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and
are the first point of contact for students on campus. The four Student Hubs are located
at:

**Callaghan campus**
▪ Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Union Building
▪ Hunter Hub: Student Services Centre, Hunter side of campus

**City Precinct**
▪ City Hub & Information Common: University House, ground floor in combination
  with an Information Common for the City Precinct

**Ourimbah campus**
▪ Ourimbah Hub: Administration Building

**Faculty website: Faculty of Education and Arts**
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/
**Contact details**
Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie  
Phone: 02 4921 5000  
EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

**The Dean of Students**
Resolution Precinct  
Phone: 02 4921 5806  
Fax: 02 4921 7151  
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:  

**Alteration of this Course Outline**
No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

**Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards**

**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS**
The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator. Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au  
As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

**Studentmail and Blackboard:** www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/  
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

**Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details**
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

**Hard copy submission:**
- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length**: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed: 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University Assessment Item Coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet available at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentlinks/studentform.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/studentlinks/studentform.html)
- **By arrangement with the relevant lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at**:
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah
- **Date-stamping assignments**: All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be addressed to the relevant hub. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.
- **Do not fax or email assignments**: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments**: It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard copy formats.

**Online copy submission to Turnitin**
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:
- Current issues and debates in social work theory and ethics
- Video of interview - written assignment

Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing. Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the **reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark** for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted **more than ten days** after the due date will be awarded **zero marks**.

**Special Circumstances**
Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

**No Assignment Re-submission**
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.
Remarks
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/

Return of Assignments
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed during class which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the APA system for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure.

An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from: Infoskills: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html

Student Representatives
Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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SECTION B: DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

LEARNING GOALS

The learning goals for this course relate to the student’s ability to understand the important part research plays in social work practice. Hence areas of competency include:

1. The ability to conduct literature searches, to consult and network to identify and collect relevant background information to the research.
2. The ability to critically evaluate research reports and related literature, including research based papers on the chosen topic area.
3. Knowledge of research theory and ethical and political issues associated with social work research and of contemporary debates about measurement and evidence-based practice.
4. Knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research designs and their application.
5. Knowledge of data collection methods and an ability to apply appropriate methods to particular research designs.
6. Develop an understanding of the way in which research might enhance social work practice, and its role in client empowerment, social advocacy and organisational change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRI</th>
<th>RESEARCH (FRIDAY)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23/2</td>
<td>Introduction to research and its important role in building social work knowledge</td>
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<td>CHOOSE A TOPIC FOR RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND FINAL CONFERENCE PAPER</td>
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<td>2/3</td>
<td>Guided reading program – independent study</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Epistemology – ways of knowing in social work; how our conceptual schemes and</td>
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<td>worldviews influence what we focus on and the kinds of phenomena amenable to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>measurement; relationships to the type of research (qualitative, quantitative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and mixed methods) approach used</td>
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<tr>
<td>16/3</td>
<td>Evidence-based practice: Guided reading program – independent study</td>
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<tr>
<td>23/3</td>
<td>Research interviewing: Differences and similarities between therapeutic and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>research interviewing and ways in which practice lends itself to research</td>
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<tr>
<td>30/3</td>
<td>Collecting evidence of good practice – how to do a literature review</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Indigenous child protection literature for in class exercise)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>Easter Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>27/4</td>
<td>The research process and proposal writing: In class exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Ethnography</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/5</td>
<td>Methodology and research methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>18/5</td>
<td>In class time to work on research proposal assignment – choosing a methodology</td>
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<td>to research your area of interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>25/5</td>
<td>Compiling questionnaires: Develop pilot questionnaire relating to the way in</td>
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<td>which social workers make practice decisions and their use of theory, literature</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and codes of ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/6</td>
<td>Review of course learning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PROGRAM AND ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Assessment
This course, together with SWRK4001, provides the preparatory knowledge for SWRK 4002 in Semester 2 and the assignments for SWRK 4003 in Semester 1 constitute to the beginning work for the final conference paper as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWRK 4003: RESEARCH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ungraded</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guided Reading weekly reflections</td>
<td>Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graded</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 – Research proposal part 1: Literature review (due 27/4)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 – Literature review and proposal for researching topic (due 12/6)</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWRK 4002: RESEARCH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ungraded</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to conference organisation</td>
<td>Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graded</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 – Abstract/presentation for Student Conference on 18-19 October</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 4 - Conference paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Attendance
Attendance records are kept weekly. Students are expected to send in apologies/explanations of absences to the course coordinator prior to classes. Attendance will be considered unsatisfactory when there are unexplained absences from any class.

Guided Reading Program and weekly reflections
Participation in class discussions requires that students do the preparatory readings. Students need to bring copies of readings for each week to class. Each week students need to hand in a reflection on the week’s reading (half a page) with a list of items they have learnt from the readings (ten dot points). The weekly reflections on readings should be handed in each Friday.

| Value: | Ungraded |
| Due date: | Friday |
| Length: | One A4 page – typed, double spaced, dot points, 12 point font |
| Grading: | Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory |
| Criteria: | Evidence of reading and critical analysis and completion of task by due time and date |

Assignment 1: Research Proposal Part 1 – Literature Review
The two graded written assignments in this course collectively provide students with experience in developing a comprehensive research proposal for a topic area in which you have a special interest. Part 1 consists of a comprehensive literature review on your topic of choice and Part 2 incorporates this literature review into a full proposal. The literature review component of Part 2 will not be reassessed. Assignment 1 should minimally include the following:
1. Introduction to the topic
2. A table of all the literature consulted to date with information on author, date, the main theme of the article, and relevance to topic. Students should categorise the article as to whether it is a systematic literature review, research paper, general discussion of the topic, practice-based, commentary or opinion piece.
3. The methodology employed in conducting the literature search
4. Discussion of the themes, issues and debates emerging from this literature.
5. A conclusion with brief thoughts as to how the topic might be researched (one paragraph).
6. An accurately referenced list of all literature read

Due Date: Friday 27 April 2006 – 5.00pm (week 8)
Length: 2,500 words (10 pages double spaced Times Roman 12 pt font)
Value: 50%

Assessment Criteria
1. Comprehensive research of literature on chosen topic area (at least 20 articles located) and capacity to locate relevant material from the literature.
2. Evidence that the student is competent in conducting a literature review through explicit outline of methodology of review and summary table categorising relevant literature.
3. Demonstrated understanding of the format of a literature review.
4. Strong introduction which captures the attention of the reader.
5. Critical analysis of the literature.
6. Well written paper with issues, debates and themes clearly presented.
7. Accurate referencing.

Assignment 2: Research Proposal

Assignment 2 requires the preparation of a full research proposal incorporating the literature review undertaken in Assignment 1 and the following structure:

1. Title of the study
2. Introduction to the topic
3. Background and rationale for the study
4. Literature review
5. Methodology, including research design, research questions, sampling, data collection and data analysis methods, and ethical issues
6. Anticipated limitations of the study design
7. Timeframe for the study
8. Conclusion
9. References

The proposal should be written in present tense reporting style and should have a sample large enough for generalisation of findings or, for small-scale studies they must clearly indicate their exploratory nature and lack of generalisability. The research design must be appropriate to the research questions and sufficient detail must be provided for judgements to be made about the reliability and validity of the findings in the case of a quantitative study and trustworthiness in the case of a qualitative study.

Due Date: Tuesday 12 June, 2006 – 5.00pm (week 15)
Length: 5,000 words (including 2,500 words literature review) or 20 double spaced A4 pages in 12 point Times Roman font.
Value: 50%

Assessment Criteria
▪ Proposal follows the recommended structure, is well written, conceptually clear, with accurate referencing in APA format.
▪ Literature review is appropriately referred to as a backdrop for the study.
▪ Methodology is appropriate to the study topic and questions and clearly incorporates consideration of all relevant aspects including research design, research questions, sampling, data collection and data analysis methods, and ethical issues.

APPENDIX: GUIDELINES FOR LITERATURE REVIEWS

1. Refine your area so that you can target just what you are looking for. Consult the Library of Congress to ensure you are using appropriate terminology.
2. Literature must be current, i.e. preferably written in the last five years or at most in the last ten years. Thereafter the literature becomes dated and is considered mainly for its historical importance. If you have a choice, cite the most recent literature unless the older citations are useful for additional perspectives.
3. Some literature is seminal and enduring, like the writings of Marx and Freud. It is always best to read the original work of these people in addition to critiques and commentaries of their work. In other words, before using the latter consult the former.
4. Read as widely as possible.
5. Ensure that you include Social Work Abstracts and the Social Work Encyclopaedia in your search. They are good places to start.
6. Use bibliographies and reference lists to expand your search.
7. When taking notes, always write down the full reference and page numbers in case you should want to return to the original source. Remember always to include page numbers for direct quotations in your text.
8. Cite only research that you find specifically pertinent to your topic; be selective. Avoid referring to sections of articles or texts that are not related to your study. There is usually more information than you need.
9. Create a table in which you list the topic you are studying, the authors you have consulted, the main theme of the paper/article and whether it is a research or review article. Develop a system for rating its importance to your study.
10. Discuss and evaluate/critique the literature you have selected.
11. Identify controversial issues or differences between the literature and your study
12. Write the literature review in the past tense (reporting style).
13. Refer to published studies for examples of literature reviews.
14. Do not rely exclusively on computer databases or the Internet as these are still not reliable sources for social work literature.

There are many ways to conduct literature reviews. The following questions serve as an additional guide you may like to follow:

1. What is known about my subject? How much has been written by social workers about this area? How much is social work informed by writing from other disciplines or professions about the area?
2. Is the literature descriptive or research-based?
3. Have there been any systematic reviews of the literature in this area?
4. What is the history of the development of knowledge about my subject?
5. Is there a consensus on relevant issues or is there significant debate on issues and, if so, what are the various positions?

6. Are there any gaps in knowledge of my subject? Which openings for research have other researchers identified? How will my planned project interface with identified gaps?

7. What is the most fruitful direction I can see for my study as a result of my literature review? What directions are indicated by the work of other researchers and writers?¹

¹ See also http://www.tui.edu/Resources/ResearchHelp/LitReviewLgPg.html