Needs Assessments and Social Programs  
SWK 501

Instructor: Debra Anderson, Ph.D.  
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Class Dates/Times: June 7th (6-9 pm), 8th (6-9 pm), 9th (9 am-5pm)  
Location: Creighton University, West Omaha Campus  
Class Size: 15  
Credit Hrs: 1

Course Description:  
The purpose of this course is to provide beginning skills in planning and conducting needs assessments to determine whether there is sufficient need to justify the funding of a new human service program. The course is designed to guide students step-by-step through the needs assessment process, from understanding the purpose and goals of the needs assessment to collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information so that decisions can be made about developing and/or funding programs.

Co-requisites/Pre-requisites  
Sophomore standing

Textbook Required:  

Course Objectives:  
Knowledge:  
Students will:  
1. understand the purpose of needs assessments for planning and decision making.  
2. develop awareness of primary and secondary data sources needed for decision making.  
3. develop an understanding of various methodologies for collecting information.

Values:  
Students will:  
1. gain appreciation for the ways in which personal, professional, agency, and community values and ethics influence data gathering, analysis, and interpretation.
Skills:
Students will:
1. identify an unmet need in their workplace or community
2. begin to plan the needs assessment process, including understanding its purpose and limits, i.e., budget, resources, and time.
3. select a needs assessment approach
4. design necessary needs assessment tools, i.e., questionnaires, surveys, etc..

Course Requirements:
Students are required to attend the entire 15-hour course. If you find you are unable to commit to the entire course, please consider taking it at another time.

There will be one project for this class. Each student will design a needs assessment, including 1) identifying an unmet need; 2) selecting the most appropriate approach; and 3) designing at least one data gathering tool.

Grading:
93-100% = A
87-92 = B+
83-86 = B
77-82 = C+
73-76 = C
66-72 = D

Course Schedule:
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| Thurs., June 7  6:00 – 9:00 p.m. | Understand reasons for conducting a needs assessment  
The steps of a needs assessment:  
1) understanding its purpose  
2) identify parameters (budget, resources, time)  
3) Identify info needed  
4) Determine if info exists or can be obtained  
5) Collect and review data  
6) Prepare report |
| Fri., June 8  6:00 – 9:00 p.m.     | Selecting and designing a needs assessment approach: secondary data approaches, impressionistic approaches, and community household surveys  
Begin working on your needs assessment. |
| Sat., June 9  9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Continue working on your needs assessment.  
Identify next steps in carrying out needs assessment  
*Needs assessment presentations.* |