

UBC Rehabilitation Science Online Programs

RHSC 501: EVIDENCE FOR PRACTICE

Course Outline

Welcome to the course

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to RHSC 501, Evidence for Practice. This course will assist you to effectively build on the knowledge and skills you have acquired in practice and encourage you to develop new knowledge. While current practice in health care is expected to reflect the best available evidence many practitioners recognize that new knowledge and skills are needed to meet this expectation. The learning activities and assignments in this course are designed to help you to access, develop and implement evidence in your practice. The e-search skills you develop or hone in this course will be extremely valuable for other courses as well as your daily practice. We look forward to the opportunity to meet all of you (virtually at least!) and the chance to explore evidence-based practice with you.

Course Scope, Objectives and Topic Outline

Course Scope

This is a graduate course for health professionals who have met the entry-level education requirements in their discipline. At this level, we expect you to be able to seek out, analyze, and evaluate information for yourself, and think critically about how the ideas explored in this course relate to your own experience and practice.

Learning is enhanced through discussion, therefore we also expect you to share your findings, your perspectives and your experiences with one another through collaborative work and online discussions.

Many of you may have taken undergraduate courses in which the instructor or professor was a subject expert who provided the knowledge you were expected to learn. In graduate courses your instructor has expertise in the subject, but assumes the role of a coach and resource person and offers guidance and support to learners. We recognize that you bring valuable knowledge of your work to the course, as well as observations and experiences of evidence-based practice.

We may recommend sources of information and resources and introduce perspectives you may not have considered, but you will need to decide what is most relevant to your situation. The course is designed to equip you with the knowledge and skills to find evidence, to analyze and interpret it, to apply it in your practice and to contribute to the ongoing development of new knowledge (evidence).

We do this by:

- introducing you to some basic principles and ideas about evidence-based practice;

- helping you to find relevant evidence and judge its value to your practice, and to rehabilitation in general;
- designing learning activities and assignments that will help you to analyze and evaluate what you have learned;
- asking you to reflect on the course content, readings, and your ideas and experiences about evidence-based practice, and to examine different views about evidence-based practice; and
- having you work collaboratively with other learners in the discussions, in order to gain a broader perspective on issues related to evidence-based practice in rehabilitation.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course learners should be able to:

1. Distinguish different forms of evidence for practice,
2. Construct answerable clinical questions,
3. Create search plans to locate evidence relevant to rehabilitation practice,
4. Appraise evidence from different sources,
5. Integrate evidence to inform decision-making,
6. Develop strategies for using evidence to inform policy and practice, and
7. Disseminate findings from a systematic search of research evidence.

Topic Outline

Module	Theme	Main Topics	Timing
1	Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining evidence-based practice • Criticisms surrounding evidence-based practice • Process of evidence-based practice. 	Week 1
2	Characteristics and Processes for Evidence-Based Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulating clinical research questions • Conducting systematic searches for evidence. 	Weeks 2-4
3	Evaluating and Building Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraising quantitative research • Appraising qualitative research • Appraising and interpreting systematic reviews and meta-analyses. • Methods for organizing evidence 	Weeks 5-10
4	Communicating and Transferring Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting and reporting findings. • Clinical practice guidelines • Disseminating evidence • Transferring research into practice. 	Weeks 11-13

How to Proceed

1. Learning Online

Learning online is a rewarding experience although it may be initially challenging for new learners as they develop online learning work habits. It is exciting and different from most other distance learning modes of instruction in that you become part of a virtual community of learners in a particular subject. Unlike the traditional 'independent study' course format, you login to your course website with fellow learners and your instructor, participate in asynchronous online discussions (all learners do not participate at the same time), and collaborate with other learners in some small group learning activities.

If you have not taken an online course yet, you will find a number of the learning activities in the Introductory Module helpful. They are included to help familiarize you with the Canvas course delivery system, the UBC library and course-specific and other resources. With the exception of 'Learning Activity 4: 'Course Resources', they are similar or identical to the learning activities in the learner orientation workshop you completed before this course on the ROLS website. If you could not attend the workshop you can still review the content, and complete or extend this learning within the course.

2. Course Sequence

The course structure allows you to choose how you will work, and also to a large extent, when you want to study. Even so, you may still find it helpful to follow the sequence identified in the course modules.

All learners need to complete three assignments in sequence and participate in the scheduled discussions. Marks for assignments and participation in discussions contribute to your course grade. Being visible in online discussions is analogous to attending a face-to-face class.

3. The Website

The website serves two rather different purposes. Its main purpose is to contain information, tools, activities and readings to guide you through this course, and to provide virtual space for communication and collaborative activities such as discussions. Secondly, it opens a world of additional resources to you through the imbedded links.

In similar courses, some learners print out all of the Website content at the beginning of the course. This has some advantages and disadvantages in an online course. Because this is a Web-based course, it is designed to exploit the dynamic features of this medium, so some items, such as URL's (website addresses) may be updated or added by your instructor or other learners during the course.

4. Discussions

As noted earlier, the discussions enable you to explore how the course concepts can be applied in rehabilitation. For this reason the discussion forums are directly related to the themes in the modules and the assignments.

Discussions occur in all modules; for exact dates please review the 'Schedule' section in this course outline on the course calendar.

Readings

In this course, there are three types of readings:

1. Your course **textbook**
2. **Open Source Resources** that are accessed freely online.
3. **Readings available through the UBC eLibrary.** If a Library Link is not available on the Canvas course system, journals and articles can be obtained through the Library website <http://www.library.ubc.ca/>.

Research is universal and evidence-based practice is expected of all health care practitioners. Some references may have been written in a discipline different from your own. The variety of perspectives is included to help you master the concepts in this course.

Some additional optional readings are available in the 'Article Review Resource' section of this course outline as resources for understanding and critiquing different types of research. They may be helpful to draw on when reviewing some of the research you find for your assignments. For example, if you locate a single-subject research study you may find the article by Logan, Hickman, Harris & Heriza (2008) is helpful in guiding your review of the article.

Required Course Textbook

Hoffman, T., Bennett, S., & Del Mar, C. (2013). *Evidence-based practice across the health professions* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Churchill Livingstone.