Module leader: Dr Penny Sorensen (p.sorensen@uea.ac.uk)
Module teacher: Dr Penny Sorensen; Dr Pippa Belderson
Credit value: 40 Level 7 (M) credits, Spring Semester
Module fee: £1,377
Submission of summative assessed work: To be confirmed

This 40-credit module is normally the final stage of the MA in Advanced Social Work or the MA in Mental Health. Applications are open to social workers and other professionals who are already enrolled within the SWK CPD programmes.

INTRODUCTION
As an advanced level student you will be well supported during the Applied Dissertation, but in line with the ‘Advanced’ level of the Professional Capability Framework, you will also take responsibility for your own learning and work independently. You will also meet Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS). One of PCF and KSS linked goals of the dissertation is to provide practice/and or professional leadership through the development of theory and best evidence-informed practice. Social workers at this level make a difference by working either directly with people in highly complex situations, or by supporting and/or developing staff or knowledge, to provide better outcomes for people who use services.

The dissertation is expected to make a modest original contribution to knowledge in the your specialist area and within it you should demonstrate an understanding of the background research and literature in your field of study as well as a theoretical understanding of the approach taken to your own modest piece of research. Most students will have taken the Introduction to Research Methods: design and analysis (SWK-7031A) as preparation for the Applied Dissertation. The subject of the dissertation will be agreed by you, the module leader, and your individual dissertation supervisor. You will also be linked to an agency based mentor who will provide a sounding board and comment on the dissertation’s relevance and usefulness for the agency.
All students will be required to seek ethical approval from the School of Social Work Ethics Committee before beginning any data collection. You may also be required to seek clearance from your employing authority’s research governance processes.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS

- To facilitate a disciplined, modest and achievable exploration of a topic relevant to practice, service or staff development or management.
- To make a contribution to the understanding of knowledge in your specialist area and to help you to apply the understanding of the theoretical approach to the study undertaken.

MODULE OUTCOMES

Skills
The ability to carry out a modest and focused piece of exploratory research applying quantitative and or qualitative research methods.

Knowledge and understanding
The applied dissertation provides the opportunity for students to draw on their work experience and knowledge gained on any of the Masters pathways. These will be brought together through undertaking a modest piece of exploratory research in relation to a particular area of practice, service delivery, or service development. This work will enhance your own learning and contribute to the body of knowledge in your chosen area. The topic of the dissertation is likely to be an extension of the theme pursued in the Research Methods module but may need to be adapted to be achievable and meet the needs of your employing agency.

Students will be able to demonstrate:
- The level of academic performance appropriate to a Master’s degree.
- Leadership in their chosen field, based on their extensive knowledge and high level of interpersonal skills, explicit values and acknowledgement of the responsibilities of their role.
- The successful completion of a modest piece of original evaluation.

Students will present an applied dissertation that demonstrates their ability to:
- Plan and formulate proposals/hypotheses.
- Pursue a piece of well-designed and well-defined exploratory research.
- Critically evaluate relevant literature.
- Identify and collect relevant data.
- Analyse and interpret relevant information.
- Use coherent and logical arguments leading to conclusions for professional practice.
ASSESSMENT
The applied dissertation should be 12,000 words in total and should include an executive summary and a report from an agency based mentor. Guidance for structuring the dissertation will be supplied.

EXPECTED TIME SPENT BY STUDENTS
400 effort hours: 20 hours teaching, 100 hours independent study, 280 hours learning in practice.

TEACHING DATES
There will be up to three group dissertation classes to help you to plan and conduct the modest piece of research, explore relevant literature and research and present work in progress:
February 4, 2020
March 3, 2020
June 2, 2020
Venue: Elizabeth Fry Building, Room 1.20, 10:00am - 12:00pm

In addition, students will receive at least two sessions of one-to-one supervision from an allocated supervisor.

APPLICATIONS
Please contact your agency Workforce Development Department about the application process. You will need to enrol through the Postgraduate Learning and Teaching Hub (ZICER Building): 01603 592071; hub.pgt.swk@uea.ac.uk

Please wait until you have approval from your agency before you enrol. Once you are enrolled, please check you have access to Blackboard before the first teaching date.

Applications for 2019-20 should be submitted to UEA by 3rd January 2020.

Please be aware that teaching, assessment dates and venues, are subject to change. All up to date information will be available via your UEA Evision account once you are enrolled onto the module.