Evidence-Based Practice: A Tutorial for Union College Students*

What is it?
How do I locate and identify the best information for making decisions?

*At Union College, EBP is emphasized in Nursing/Allied Health and Social Work.
What is evidence-based practice (EBP)*?

- “general term for an approach to clinical problem solving”
- “emphasis...is on finding and basing clinical decisions on best research evidence coordinated with clinical expertise and patient[/client] values and preferences”

*Nuances may vary depending on discipline and course of study. Check with faculty re: their interpretation and application of EBP.

Steps include...

- crafting answerable questions;
- locating best evidence with maximum efficiency;
- critically appraising evidence for its validity, importance, and usefulness;
- integrating this appraisal with clinical expertise and patient [client] values.

To identify EBP resources, consider the following keywords and phrases in combination w/topics of interest when searching…

**NOTE:** What follows are examples only; other terms are also valid, for example, terms provided by faculty or terms identified during research.

For more focused searching,

-- surround phrases with quotation marks (“control group”) to search phrases as phrases and not individual words
-- use an * at the end of words to simultaneously search for words w/common beginnings, e.g., stud* searches for study as well as studies
-- use Boolean operators (AND, OR, and NOT) to limit or expand results.
(Not familiar with use of Boolean terms? Watch this video.)

Frequently, these qualifiers are applied in a single search entry, for example, “non-experimental descriptive stud*” AND <topic of interest>. 
Suggested keywords for identifying EBP research results...

- Nursing
  - “randomized controlled trial*”
  - RCTs
  - “controlled stud*”
  - “quasi-experimental stud*”
  - “non-experimental descriptive stud*”
  - “case-control stud*”
  - “clinical guideline*”
  - “clinical experience”

Suggested keywords for identifying EBP research results...

- **Social Work**
  - random*
  - “controlled clinical trial”
  - “control group”
  - “predictive validity”
  - “risk assessment”
  - “meta-anal***”

Keywords are taken from MOLES (Methodology Oriented Locators for Evidence Searching) — linked w/each COPES (Client Oriented Practical Evidence Search) question type.

Both MOLES and COPES are studied in upper-level SWRK courses.

Try an EBP **database search**…

Off campus? Obtain access via username/password available through [MyUnion](#).

- **Nursing**
  - Topic of interest: emergency medicine
  - *Combine with phrase “controlled stud*”
    - **NOTE:** Use Boolean operator AND since *both* phrases are needed in the results.

  **Task:**
  Pause and conduct your own search using the **Social Work** example below.

- **Social Work**
  - Topic of interest: geriatrics
  - *Combine with phrase “controlled clinical trial”*
    - **NOTE:** Use Boolean operator AND since *both* phrases are needed in the results.

**NOTE:** “evidence-based practice” (with and without the hyphen) may also be used w/topics of interest when searching.
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An fyi...

- This tutorial and PowerPoint are available as resource guides for Nursing and Social Work via the Library and Information Resources page.