



University of Central Florida
School of Social Work

SOW 5404.0002 - Social Work Research

Professor:	Mary Ann Burg, Ph.D., MSW, LCSW	Term:	Fall 2011
Office:	HPA 1, Rm. 204C	Email:	m.burg@ucf.edu
Phone:	407-823-3112	Class Days:	Friday
Office Hours:	W: 4:30-6:00 PM; Friday 10:00 AM-11:30 AM	Hours:	10:30 – 1:30 PM
		Location:	HPA 1, Rm. 110

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course includes the study of quantitative and qualitative methods of building knowledge for social work and the ethical use of research in evidence based professional practice. Students will learn how to utilize community concepts for needs assessment and culturally sensitive research design.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate an understanding of research as integral to evidence-based social work practice and to the expansion of our professional knowledge base.
2. Explain the function of research in micro, mezzo, and macro contexts.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of social work research as a scientific approach.
4. Discuss the specific stages of the social work research process: formulation of practice questions and hypotheses, sampling, data collection, data processing, interpretation of statistical results, testing of hypotheses, and report writing.
5. Explore the social and economic justice implications of implementing and interpreting research.
6. Apply research designs appropriate to research aims.
7. Demonstrate beginning level skills in the use of a computerized statistical program (SPSS) for data analysis in social work research.
8. Discuss beginning level strategies for qualitative data analysis.
9. Design social research (quantitative/qualitative and descriptive/explanatory) related to community-based clinical practice.
10. Understand, critically evaluate, and make use of the research findings of others.
11. Discuss ethical and political issues and the need for sensitivity when studying the populations of diversity (women, racial and cultural minorities, gays and lesbians, persons with disabilities, older people, economically disadvantaged).
12. Understand and apply the principles of the human subjects' protection, the IRB review process and how it relates to social work research.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS

- 1) Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2010). *Essential research methods for social work* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (Available UCF Bookstore and the publisher's website) <http://www.bookstore.ucf.edu>
- 2) Rubin, A. (2010). *Statistics for evidence-based practice and evaluation* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (Available UCF Bookstore) <http://www.bookstore.ucf.edu>
- 3) American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. Washington, DC: Author. (Available UCF Bookstore) <http://www.bookstore.ucf.edu>

Journal Articles: Several journal articles are listed in the syllabus as required reading; in order to provide the best information possible as it becomes available, new journal articles may be included as required reading throughout the semester. Articles are available through the online electronic databases at <http://library.ucf.edu>

Other required readings:

Nuremberg Code: <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/guidelines/nuremberg.html>

NASW Code of Ethics: <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

Evaluation of Learning and Grading

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
In – Class Quiz	5	September 16 th
Midterm Exam	25	October 14 th
Human Participant Protections Education	5	November 4 th
Group Project Presentations	15	November 18 th
Research Proposal*	25	December 2 nd
Final Exam	<u>25</u>	December 9 th
Total Possible Grade Points	100	

Grading Scale	B+ = 87-89 (3.25)	C+ = 77-79 (2.25)	D+ = 67-69 (1.25)	F = 59 or less (0.00)
A = 95-100 (4.0)	B = 84-86 (3.00)	C = 74-76 (2.00)	D = 64-66 (1.00)	
A- = 90-94 (3.75)	B- = 80-83 (2.75)	C- = 70-73 (1.75)	D- = 60-63 (.75)	

1. **In-Class Quiz:** This will be an in-class 20 minute quiz including multiple choice and short answer questions to give students an early measure of how well they are integrating the course materials.
2. **Midterm Examination:** There will be a cumulative midterm examination. Exam questions will be taken from the materials covered in the class and assigned readings. The exam may have any combination of true/false, multiple choice, matching, or brief essay questions.
3. **Human Participant Protections Education for Research:** Students will complete the web-based tutorial; print out certification; make two copies—retain one for your files; provide one to the Instructor). Take the specific tutorial called **Social & Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel** found on the UCF Institutional Review Board website: <http://www.research.ucf.edu/Compliance/irb.html>
4. **Group Project/Presentation:** Students will be assigned to groups of 4-6. Each group will be assigned a published article on a practice-based research topic; the group will develop a power point presentation that includes a summary of the research article and a critical analysis of the research. Guidelines will be provided by the Instructor.
5. **Research Proposal:** Each student is required to write a research proposal that is directly related to community-based clinical practice. The paper should not exceed 8 pages and must be double spaced with 12-point font. APA style guidelines (6th Edition) must be followed. The guidelines and other specifics for this assignment will be provided and discussed in class.
6. **Final Examination:** This will be a cumulative final written examination. Exam questions will be taken from the materials covered in the class and assigned readings. The exam may have any combination of true/false, multiple choice, matching, or brief essay questions.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Session/Date	Topic	Important Dates	Required Readings
1. August 26	Introduction: Contexts of Research, Community Based Participatory Research, Evidence-Based Practice		Rubin & Babbie Chapters 1 & 2
2. September 2	Steps in Designing Research Projects/ Components of a Research Proposal		Rubin & Babbie Chapter 3 & 4, Appendix A, Hall et al., 2009
3. September 9	From Hypothesis to Data Specification		Rubin & Babbie Chapter 5 & 6
4. September 16	Survey of Research Designs for Evaluating Social Work Practice	In-Class Quiz	Rubin & Babbie Chapters 10, 11, 12
5. September 23	Critically Reviewing Published Research / Quantitative v. Qualitative Research	Group Project Planning	Rubin & Babbie Chapter 4, Sava et al., 2009
6. September 30	Research with Qualitative and Secondary Data and Methods		Rubin & Babbie Chapter 13 & 14
7. October 7	Survey & Interview Research Data and Methods		Rubin & Babbie Chapter 7 & 8
8. October 14		MIDTERM EXAM	
9. October 21	Data Analysis Approaches		Rubin & Babbie Chapter 17 & 18
10. October 28	Software for Data Analysis/ SPSS Demonstration		
11. November 4	Research Subjects and Sampling Concepts/ Research Ethics and Politics/	Due: Human Participant Protections Education	Rubin & Babbie Chapter 9, 15, 16
November 11		VETERAN'S DAY	
12. November 18		Group Projects	
November 25		THANKSGIVING	
13. December 2	Funding Research	Due: Research Proposal	
14. December 9		FINAL EXAM	

Course Policies:

In addition to the information below, the student should become familiar with School of Social Work Student Handbook and The Golden Rule Handbook for UCF Students. All policies included in these handbooks apply to this class.

Modification of Syllabus:

This syllabus may be modified at the discretion of the Instructor. Changes will be reported to students in class and/or via email. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that check their Knights email for updates.

Cell phones, pagers and recorders:

- Turn off cell phones and beepers during class sessions.
- Permission to audiotape a class meeting(s) must be obtained from the Instructor in advance.
- Use of laptop computers to take class notes is allowed; however, it is expected that students WILL NOT engage in other laptop activities. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to: surfing the web, reading or responding to emails, social networking, etc. If these activities occur, the Instructor reserves the right to request that the student not use a laptop during class.

Classroom Decorum:

- Side conversations are discouraged because they distract the class.
- The Instructor expects students to respect the culture, values, beliefs and rights of their classmates. During class sessions, alternate points of view are encouraged and should be received by others with respect. Students should feel free to express their opinions and to refer to relevant personal situations without fear of disapproval or disrespect.

Attendance and Participation:

Student attendance and participation are integral parts of this course. Students are expected to attend each class, arrive on time, and remain for the duration of the class. Students are also expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and to actively involve themselves in class discussions and group projects. Students must be prepared for class (i.e., complete readings and other assignments *prior* to class). Make-up exams are given **ONLY** in extreme circumstances. These circumstances include exceptional health EMERGENCIES (that require that the student bring in medical documentation). Out-of-town vacations, trips, mild illness (such as a cold), and other similar circumstances do not qualify as extreme.

Written Assignments:

Effective written communication skills are essential to professional social work practice. Thus, students are expected to present their ideas clearly and properly and to adhere to accepted standards of writing. **Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all written materials submitted. Points will be taken off for grammar and spelling errors.**

All written assignments must be typed in a 12-font print and all margins must be one inch. The cover page of a paper is not considered a page of text. Work not conforming to these standards or demonstrating serious deficiencies in common English usage may be returned without a grade. When references are required, they must be in the APA Manual (6th ed.) documentation style.

Students are encouraged to use the University Writing Center (UWC) for assistance in preparing written assignments. The UWC is located in MOD 608 (near the Communications Building). UWC staff may be reached at (407) 823-2197 or <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu/>

Late Assignments:

All assignments must be turned into Webcourses prior to the class period the assignment is due. Late assignments will lose a full letter grade for each day that they are late unless the student gained prior approval from the Instructor for late submission. No assignment will be accepted after the last day of class. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the Instructor regarding late assignments.

Incomplete Grades:

An "Incomplete" ("I") is only an option in exceptional circumstances and when in keeping with the School and University policies. Individual arrangements must be made with the Instructor for the completion of the course requirements, but in no case will the due date extend beyond the end of the following semester. Students who experience chronic medical or personal problems that prevent them from attending class regularly are encouraged to review policies relating to securing a leave of absence from their university studies.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result in an "F" for that assignment and may also lead to an "F" for the entire course. All incidents of suspected plagiarism and any other violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.) It is assumed that students will adhere to the academic creed of the University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Please do not ask for your grade to be changed without just cause or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

Turnitin.com:

The Instructor reserves the option to use Turnitin.com, an online system that can determine if work has been copied from another source. You will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. For a more detailed look at this process, please visit: <http://www.turnitin.com>

Disability Access Statement:

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the Instructor. ***Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the Instructor by the first class session to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the Instructor to request them.***

Library Methods:

Throughout the semester the instructor may choose to add additional readings that students will need to search out from the library databases. Students are also encouraged to do additional reading on their own. The following web sites which can help students find information, navigate through databases and learn how to use the library:

1. Library Instruction sessions - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction>
2. Library Research Tutorials - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/LIToursTutorials.asp>
3. Streaming videos - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>
4. Research Guides - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>
5. Ask a Librarian service - <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>
6. Consult with the librarian familiar with Social Work—Mr. Hal Mendelsohn

The UCF Libraries has a full array of paper and electronic resources available for students and their research needs.

In addition to paper copies of books and journals, UCF students have the ability to access a vast selection of journals and books in electronic format while on or off campus. The web address to the library's catalog is <http://library.ucf.edu/>. The Ask A Librarian service provides students the ability to contact a library professional either by phone, on-line chat or email, and ask for assistance on "how to" locate, research, and obtain library materials. The web address for Ask A Librarian is <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>. A series of streaming videos, showing students how to search for a book or journal article, has been developed and are available at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>. Research Guides for different majors, that list books, journals, databases, and web sites have been developed and are available in electronic format at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>. Another service to help students conduct library research is called Research Consultation. After a student has conducted his/her research and is in need of additional information, s/he can work with a librarian to locate material with the help of his/her expert searching capabilities. To set-up a Research Consultation, students can either come into the library and sign-up at the Reference Desk or call the library Reference Office at 407-823-5880. Finally, students are always encouraged to visit the library and ask a Reference Librarian how best to conduct one's research. If a student has a simple question on how to locate either a book or journal title, the UCF Reference Libraries are happy to provide this type of service too.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Session 1, August 26 – An Introduction to Inquiry

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify the motivations for doing Social Work Research
2. Understand the foundations of inquiry
3. Define and illustrate errors in human inquiry
4. Understand prejudice and stereotyping in human inquiry
5. Define the traditional Scientific Method
6. Identify the rational and steps for Evidence-based practice
7. Understand how to engage a community context in developing research to support evidence-based practice

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 1 & 2

Session 2, September 2 - Steps in Designing Research Projects

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the purposes for research (exploration, description, explanation, evaluation)
2. Explore research topics related to micro, mezzo and macro levels of practice
3. Define the initial steps of the research process (observation, theory, problem statement, research questions, specific aims and hypotheses).
4. Understand the attributes of good research questions (e.g., feasibility, cultural appropriateness, relevance).
5. Define research design concepts (operational definitions, types of relationships between variables, independent/dependent variables, mediating moderating variables)

**Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 3, 4, Appendix A;
Rubin, Chapter 2;
Hall et al., 2009**

Session 3, September 9 – From Hypothesis to Data Specification

Learning Objectives:

1. Understanding the process of developing a hypothesis and aims.
2. Explain the logic of conceptualization and its relationship to measurement
3. Define and give examples of the four levels of measurement
4. Understand reliability and validity and give examples of types of reliability and validity
5. Explain the logic of conceptualization and its relationship to measurement
6. Define and give examples of dimensions and indicators
7. Distinguish conceptualization from operationalization

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 5 & 6

Session 4, September 16th - Research Designs for Evaluating Social Work Practice

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the components and variations within experimental & quasi-experimental designs
2. Review factors that influence internal and external validity

3. Discuss "natural" experiments and its implications for research
4. Understand research designs for social work practice/ Single-case designs to evaluate clinical practice.
5. Review Program evaluation designs
6. Practical aspects of agency-based research
7. Discuss social work research and CPBR community-based methods

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 10, 11 & 12

9/16/11: IN CLASS QUIZ

Session 5, September 23 – Critically Reviewing Published Research / Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research

Learning Objectives:

1. Review use of library databases
2. Discuss publishing process and features of peer-review journals relevant to social work practice
3. Review steps of reviewing the literature
4. Discuss criteria for the critical review of a research article

**Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 4
Rubin, Appendix D**

9/23/11: GROUP PROJECT PLANNING SESSION

Session 6, September 30 - Research Using Qualitative and Secondary Data

Learning Objectives:

Identify topics appropriate to Qualitative research methods
Review types of qualitative research (e.g., case studies, ethnography, content analysis, focus group)
Describe and understand the various roles of the observer and sampling in qualitative research
Understand how to ask questions and how to record observations
Be able to analyze data and to draw conclusions
Be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research
Learn about the uses and limitations of secondary data

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 13 & 14

Session 7, October 7 – Survey and Interview Data and Methods

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the uses of survey and interview research
2. Learn how to use sampling frames for survey and interview research
3. Understand guidelines for asking survey questions
4. Discuss the pros and cons of using closed-ended and open-ended questions
5. Construct questionnaires, composite measures
6. Understand mail surveys and the building of self-administered questionnaires
7. Review the principles and problems that can occur with survey research
8. Cultural sensitivity issues in constructing questionnaires
9. Personal interviews and the role of the interviewer
10. Telephone surveys and electronic mail survey

11. Human diversity and ethical issues with survey research methods and sampling
12. Address the Human Subjects Review Process and protection for human subjects

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 7 & 8
Nuremberg Code: <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/guidelines/nuremberg.html>

Session 8, October 14: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Session 9, October 21: Data Analysis Approaches

Learning Objectives:

1. Frequency distributions
2. Graphs and charts
3. Measures of central tendency
4. Measures of dispersion
5. Understand measures of association and explain statistical significance
6. Discuss the relationship of these strategies to research questions and study hypotheses
7. Review data coding and data analysis planning

Text Reading: Rubin, Chapters 4, 5, 6, & 7, & Appendix E

Session 10, October 28 – Software for Data Analysis / SPSS Demonstration

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand how to utilize data entry software and SPSS for data entry
2. Learn how to format variables in a data set for analysis
3. Learn how to use SPSS for frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, cross-tabulations

Text Reading: Rubin, Appendix F

Session 11. November 4 – Research Subjects and Sampling Concepts

Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss sampling concepts and terminology
2. Explain probability sampling theory
3. Understand the types of probability sampling and non-probability sampling
4. Discuss the problems of sampling
5. Identify and discuss political and ethical issues in research on populations at risk

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 9
Rubin, Chapters 10 & 11

NOVEMBER 4th - HUMAN PARTICIPANT PROTECTIONS EDUCATION DUE

NOVEMBER 11th – VETERAN’S DAY HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

SESSION 12, NOVEMBER 18th – GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

NOVEMBER 25th – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

Session 13, December 2 – The Ethics and Politics of Social Work Research

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the issues of ethical controversies and cultural sensitivity in Social Work Research
2. Discuss the ethical and political issues, and sensitivity of studying the populations of diversity (women, racial and cultural minorities, gays and lesbians, handicapped, elderly, poor) incorporating the principles of the human subjects review process, related to SW work research.
3. Understand NASW Code of Ethics

Text Reading: Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 15 & 16

DECEMBER 2nd – RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

SESSION 14, DECEMBER 9th – FINAL EXAM

Note: The Final Exam for this Course will be held per the University Exam Schedule on: Friday, December 9th, from 10:30 - 1 PM, in HPA 1, Room 101.

The complete University Exam Schedule for Fall 2010 is located at:

<http://www.registrar.sdes.ucf.edu/calendar/exam/2011/fall/>

COURSE READINGS

- Ali, N.S., Ali, B.S., Azam, I. & Khuwaja, A.K. (2010). Effectiveness of counseling for anxiety and depression in mothers of children ages 0-30 months by community workers in Karachi, Pakistan: A quasi-experimental study. *BMC Psychiatry* 10(57); <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/10/57>.
- Apostolo, J.L.A. & Kolcaba, K. (2009). The effects of guided imagery on comfort, depression, anxiety, and stress of psychiatric inpatients with depressive disorders. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing* 23(6): 403-411.
- Burgess, D.J., Ding, Y., Hargreaves, M., van Ryn, M., & Phelan, S. (2008). The association between perceived discrimination and underutilization of needed medical and mental health care in a multi-ethnic community sample. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 19: 894-911.
- Fairburn, C.G., Cooper, Z., Doll, H.A., O'Connor, M.E., Bohn, K., Hawker, D.M., Wales, J.A., & Palmer, R. (2008). Transdiagnostic cognitive-behavioral therapy for patients with eating disorders: A two-site trial with 60-week followup. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, doi: 10.1176/appi.ajp.2008.08040608.
- Hall, S., Chochinov, H., Harding, R., Murray, S., Richardson, A. & Higginson, I.J. (2009). A Phase II randomized controlled trial assessing the feasibility, acceptability and potential effectiveness of Dignity Therapy for older people in care homes: Study protocol. *BMC Geriatrics*, doi:10.1186/1471-2318-9-9. Available from : <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2318/9/9>.
- Hutchings, J., Bywater, T., Daley, D. Gardner, , Whitaker, C., Jones, K., Earnes, C., & Edwards, R.T. (2007). Parenting intervention in Sure start services for children at risk of developing conduct disorder: pragmatic randomized controlled trial. *BMJ*, doi:10.11.1136/bmj.39126.620799.55.
- Sava, F.A., Yates, B.T., Lupu, V., Szentagotai, A., & David, D. (2009). Cost-effectiveness and cost-utility of cognitive therapy, rational emotive behavioral therapy, and fluoxetine (Prozac) in treating depression: A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 65(1): 36-52.
- Spiegel, D., Butler, L.D., Giese-Davis, J., Koopman, C., Miller, E., DiMiceli, S., Classen, C.C., Fobair, P., Carlson, R.W., & Kraemer, H.C. Effects of supportive-expressive group therapy on survival of patients with metastatic breast cancer: A randomized prospective trial. (2007). *Cancer* 110(5): 1130-1138.

This syllabus may be modified at the discretion of the instructor.

Changes will be discussed with students in class and/or via email. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her Ecommunity email address is correct.

The UCF Creed

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

Integrity	I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.
Scholarship	I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.
Community	I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.
Creativity	I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.
Excellence	I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.