



SOW 5404.OW61 – Social Work Research

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Course Description:

This course provides a study of quantitative and qualitative methods of building knowledge for social work practice and the ethical use of research.

Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Understand social work research as an integral part of evidenced-based social work practice.
2. Explain the research function in micro, mezzo, and macro practice.
3. Understand social work research as a scientific approach.
4. Discuss the specific stages of the social work research process: (i.e., Formulation of practice questions and hypotheses, Sampling, Data Collection, Processing of data, Interpretation of statistical results and testing of hypotheses, and Report writing.
5. Explore the social and economic justice implications of implementing and interpreting research.
6. Utilize the research designs for social work practice.
7. Understand the uses of a computerized statistical program (SPSS) for data analysis in social work research.
8. Discuss beginning level strategies for qualitative data analysis.
9. Conduct 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 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, and how it relates to social work research.

Evaluation of Learning and Grading:

Activity	Grade Points
Human Subjects Tutorial (Module 3)	10
Evidence-Based Question/Literature Search	10
Web-based module quiz / reflections (12 @ 5 pts. ea.)	60
Mid-term Exam	30
SPSS Exercise	10
Literature Review	25
Research Analysis and Critique	25
Final Exam	30
Total	200

Grading Scale:

Grade Points Earned:

A	190 - 200	B-	160 - 167	D+	134 - 139
A-	180 - 189	C+	154 - 159	D	128 - 133
B+	174 - 179	C	148 - 153	D-	120 - 127
B	168 - 173	C-	140 - 147	F	119 or less

Assignments and Examinations:

1. *Examinations* (30 pts. each) There will be a mid-term and final examination. The exam questions will be taken from the materials covered in the class modules and assigned readings. The exams may include a combination of true/false, multiple choice, matching, or brief essay questions.
2. *Human Subjects Protection Web-based Tutorial* (10 pts.) Complete the Human participant protections education for research team web-based tutorial. (See Module 3 for details). Upload a copy of the certification of completion. Keep one copy for your files.
3. *Evidence-Based Question/Literature Search* (10 pts.): Students will develop a clinical practice effectiveness question and literature search strategy. This question and search strategy will form the basis for developing the research analysis and critique paper. Guidelines will be provided by the instructor.
4. *Research Analysis and Critique* (25 pts.) Write an analysis of a research-based article that is directly related to community-based clinical practice. The paper should not exceed 5 pages and must be double spaced type-written/word-processed with a minimum of 12 point font. APA style guidelines (5th Edition) must be followed. The guidelines and other specifics for the research assignment will be provided and discussed in class.
5. *Web-base Module Quiz / Reflections* (12 @ 5 points each) Students will be expected to respond to questions posed by the instructor in quizzes or discussion postings designed to engage classmates in a web-based discussion pertaining to the questions. The quiz or discussion questions will accompany each web-based module. The responses to the questions for a given module are due by no later than 11:59 p.m. on the day the module is scheduled. The discussion will take place within the discussion section of the UCF Webcourse.
6. *SPSS Exercise* (10 pts.) There will be an SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) exercise and students are expected to prepare for and complete it. Guidelines will be provided by the instructor.
7. *Literature Review* (25 pts.) Write a literature review that is directly related to community-based clinical practice. The paper should not exceed 5 pages and must be double-spaced type written and word-processed with a minimum of 12 point font. APA style guidelines (5th Edition) must be followed. The guidelines and other specifics for the research assignment will be provided and discussed in class.
8. **NOTE** – all assignments are **due by the Sunday of the week** in which they are assigned. No late assignments will be accepted without prior approval.

Overview of the Course Timeline:

Week	Module	Assignment	Questions / Quiz	Topic
8/22/2011	1		Introduction	
8/29/2011	2		Reflective questions (RQ)	Introduction to Inquiry
9/5/2011	3	Human Subjects		Ethics
9/12/2011	4		Reflective questions (RQ)	Problem Formation
9/19/2011	5		Reflective questions (RQ)	Measurement
9/26/2011	6	Literature Search	Reflective questions (RQ)	Evidence Based SW
10/3/2011	7		Quiz (Q)	Data Collection
10/10/2011	8	Mid-Term		Sampling
10/17/2011	9	Article Critique	Quiz (Q)	Group Designs
10/24/2011	10		Quiz (Q)	Measurement
10/31/2011	11		Quiz (Q)	Practice Evaluation
11/7/2011	12	Literature Review	Quiz (Q)	Validity and Reliability
11/14/2011	13		Quiz (Q)	Quantitative / SPSS
11/21/2011	14	SPSS Activity	Quiz (Q)	Quantitative
11/28/2011	15		Quiz (Q)	Qualitative
12/5/2011	16	Final Exam		Qualitative

REQUIRED READINGS:

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2007). Essential research methods for social work. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (Available UCF Bookstore and the publisher's website) <http://www.bookstore.ucf.edu>

Rubin, A. (2007). Statistics for evidence-based practice and evaluation. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (Available UCF Bookstore) <http://www.bookstore.ucf.edu>

Cournoyer, B.R. (2004). The evidence-based social work skills book. Boston: Pearson. (Available UCF Bookstore). <http://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 substituted on a one-to-one ratio. Articles are available through the online electronic databases at <http://library.ucf.edu>

Additional required readings available on the Web:

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

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

Additional readings and handouts may be provided throughout the semester.

UCF LIBRARY INSTRUCTION TUTORIALS AND RESOURCES:

<http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/ENC1102Tutorial>

<http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/SocialWork.asp>

The following web sites provide additional information about APA style:

<http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPA.html>

<http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html>

<http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/citing.htm>

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ssw/write/handouts.html>

POLICIES:

In addition to the information below, the student should become familiar with School of 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 discussed with students via Webcourses.

Participation & Make-up Exams:

Students are also expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and to actively involve themselves in class discussions and exercises. Students must be prepared for class (i.e., complete readings and other assignments *prior* to class). Furthermore, make-up exams will be given **ONLY** in extreme circumstances. These circumstances include exceptional health EMERGENCIES (that require that the student bring in medical documentation), and the make up exam will be an essay exam. Out-of-town vacations, trips, mild colds, and other similar circumstances do not qualify as extreme.

Attendance during Finals Week: It is university policy that all classes **MUST** meet for either a final exam or a class session.

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 and will be considered in grading written assignments.* 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 to be a page of text. Work not conforming to these standards or demonstrating serious deficiencies in common English usage will be returned ungraded. When required, references should be included in the APA 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/>.

The assignments will emphasize the integration of interviewing, verbal, conceptualization and writing skills in practice. All assignments will be evaluated and graded on the following criteria.

1. Appropriate use of APA writing style.
2. Adequate number of references cited.
3. Organization and clarity of ideas presented.
4. Ability to integrate theory and practice appropriately.
5. Ability to use analytical skills throughout the assignment.
6. Creative ways of responding to the instructions beyond the requirements.

Late Assignments:

All assignments must be turned in to the instructor via Webcourses *before the due date*. No assignments will be accepted by fax, email or dropped off in the office unless the instructor has given explicit prior approval. *Late assignments will lose a full letter grade for each week that they are late unless the student gained prior approval from the instructor.* 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 prior to the due date.

Incomplete Grades:

In exceptional circumstances, an incomplete grade may be given per 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 date set 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:

Social workers must demonstrate high standards of integrity. Every student is expected to do his or her own work and all of the work produced will be expected to be completed in its entirety by the student who turns it in. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any acts of plagiarism, *including not acknowledging sources of information appropriately and in accordance with APA guidelines*, may result in a failing grade in the course. School and University policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced. Students found to have cheated or plagiarized will receive no credit for the exam or assignment, receive a failing grade for the course and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.). Students who observe others violate this policy are expected to report this to the instructor.

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result in an "F" for that assignment, the student may also receive an "F" for the entire course and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.) It is assumed for this course that students will adhere to the academic creed of the University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. The instructor also adheres to the highest standards of academic integrity, so 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 which can determine if work has been copied from another source. The instructor will provide information on submitting assignments through this system at the beginning of the semester. 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 with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. 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 professor.

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.*

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