Course Description

This course will explore research processes in order to provide a foundation for future student research. A wide range of topics related to social work research methodologies will be discussed, including: social work evidence-based practice, human research subject protections, problem formulation and conceptualization, sampling techniques, survey research design, and measurement.

Knowledge, Value, and Skill Learning Objectives of the Course

Students will:

Knowledge

• Gain knowledge of basic research methodology
• Understand research problem formulation and conceptualization
• Learn about different sampling techniques

Value

• Discuss ethical concerns related to research
• Recognize the value and importance of human research subject protections
• Explore implications of research design

Skills

• Utilize computer database searches to review the literature
• Critique existing research
• Construct a questionnaire utilizing best practices

Required Texts and Readings*


NOTE: Previous or newer editions for the class textbook are acceptable to use as long as students locate the appropriate readings that are identified in the syllabus for each class.

OR

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
3. Articles can be directly accessed by clicking on their citation in the syllabus. Please notify instructor if the link is broken and the student is unable to access the article.
4. ICSW IRB Manuel: /resources/irb.php

* Readings assigned for each class should be located and read through a critical lens prior to class. Students should immediately contact the instructor if they are unable to locate the class readings.

Respect for Diversity, Confidentiality, and Fellow Students
Discussing research participants, patients, clinical material, and patients’ impact on clinicians can be intense; students are expected to be sensitive to their colleagues’ during class discussions, and to protect confidentiality of clinicians, their patients, and research participants. In addition, students are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others while at the same time striving to support the values of clinical counseling and research ethics.

**Students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs or difficulties in learning and completing courses assignments are strongly encouraged to notify instructors as soon as possible so that appropriate resources and accommodations can be provided.

**Grading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades will be calculated as a total number of points earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B</strong></td>
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**Assignments Requirements**

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<tr>
<th>ICSW Style Manual &amp; APA</th>
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<tr>
<td>All papers submitted for class requirements are to conform to the style guide in the “Institute for Clinical Social Work Style Manual,” which is located on the ICSW website in the academic resources section:</td>
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<tr>
<td>/resources/ICSW%20Style%20Manual%2029%20Apr%202009.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insofar as is practicable, ICSW style follows the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition).</td>
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**Formatting**

Papers must include: APA style (6th edition) formatting, headings, a spell-checked narrative, double line spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1” margins, page numbers, cover page, and reference page (if applicable). No contractions, slang or idiomatic expressions, or biased language may be used in assignments.

Students are expected to review the OWL website regarding appropriate language:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/608/01/

Points will be deducted from assignments that are not formatted according to APA citation style and the stated specifications in this syllabus.

**Page Limits**

Students are responsible for fully discussing the required content for each assignment; however, there are no page number requirements for assignments in this class. The instructor will provide a range of pages that previous students have submitted for each assignment, but this does not mean students must submit their assignment within that range. Rather, students should review the grading criteria and aim to successfully achieve the criteria for the highest grade using their individual writing style (i.e. short and concise, long and multifaceted, etc.).

**Quoting and Paraphrasing**

Students should have no more than 3 to 5 quotes from other sources in their papers. More quotes tend to diminish the voice of the student in their written work.

Students are expected to review the OWL website regarding quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/563/01/

**Submitting Papers**

It is recommended students submit assignments electronically over email; however, assignments can be submitted in paper form at the beginning of the class held on the due date. Additionally, assignments can be submitted to the instructor up to one week after the due date without penalty. Students must inform the instructor they will be taking this extra week. The specific reason why is not necessary to provide. Late assignments will be dropped one letter grade every subsequent week after
the initial grace period.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Any student who engages in academic dishonesty, which includes giving or receiving unauthorized aid to any assignment, plagiarism or tampering with grades or irregularities shall be subject to disciplinary action. Such action may include a failing grade in the course, suspension, or dismissal from the program.

**Plagiarism Policy**

When plagiarism is suspected, students may be asked to submit their papers electronically to a third party plagiarism detection service. If a student is asked to submit the paper and refuses to do so, the student must provide proof that all work is correctly cited and/or original.

**Resources for Academic Writing**

Students may wish to learn more about how to write academic work. They may review the OWL website regarding this topic:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/2/

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**Assignment Timeline and Details**

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
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<td>Due Class 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>CITI Ethics Module</td>
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<td>Due Class 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation Overview &amp; Critique</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Due Class 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation Ideas Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Due Class 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Survey</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Due Class 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
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**Class attendance and participation** is defined by regularly and promptly attending class with a willingness to engage in a thoughtful discussion and ask questions about the assigned readings and class topics. Refraining from actively participating in class will negatively affect this grade. Students must obtain instructor approval prior to missing a class. Missing a class will negatively affect this grade. A missed class cannot be made up and may result in a lower grade. Students will periodically be randomly selected to answer instructor questions about class topics. Participation is considered achieved by the students’ attempt to answer questions or posing their own questions. Participation will not be graded based on correct answers; rather students should attempt to answer in a thoughtful manner using critical thinking.

The **CITI Ethics Module** assignment requires completion of ethics module located at:

http://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp?language=english. This assignment will introduce concepts related to the protection of human research subjects. Students should turn in an electronic or paper copy of their completion certification.

The **Dissertation Overview & Critique** assignment involves locating a dissertation completed by an ICSW student. Dissertations can be located at: /resources/library/dissertations.php.

Submit a paper that describes:

" Student’s Introduction to Dissertation Overview & Critique Paper
" Title & Author of ICSW Dissertation
" Research Problem & Justification for the Study
" Theoretical Framework
" Research Questions and/or Hypotheses
" Methodology (Sample, recruitment strategies, & data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, observation, etc)
" Brief Overview of Analysis Technique (Statistics if quantitative, qualitative analysis such as content analysis or coding strategies)
" Discussion of the Strengths and Limitations of the Study (The student’s opinion)
" Student’s Conclusion to Dissertation Overview & Critique Paper

The **Dissertation Ideas Paper** assignment requires students to submit an essay about their emerging ideas for their dissertation. This assignment is intended as a beginning step in clarifying the student’s research ideas and the student is not expected to have a highly developed dissertation proposal; rather, the student should consider this assignment as a thoughtful essay that explores the beginning of the research process.

Submit a paper that includes:

" Student’s Introduction to Dissertation Ideas Paper
"Identification of a Problem that is Important to the Field of Social Work
"Rationale for Selecting Research Problem
"Research Questions and/or Hypotheses
"Sampling Plan
"Potential Data Collection Method(s) (including specific details about a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods design)
"Student’s Conclusion to Dissertation Ideas Paper

The Short Survey assignment entails writing a short survey related to the student’s research problem or area of interest. The assignment requires precision and attention to detail and should follow the best practices discussed in the class lecture.

Submit an assignment that includes:
"Cover Page that Identifies Student Name and Credentials, Affiliation with ICSW, Title of Survey, and Non-Biasing Image representing Purpose of Survey
"Introduction (including Purpose of Survey)
"Instructions for Respondents and/or Interviewers to answer Questions
"Five Survey Questions (Including a Maximum of Two Demographic Questions that are related to the Student’s Research Problem)
"Formatting according to the survey best practices
"Thank You Message
"Instructions on Returning Survey

The Annotated Bibliography assignment involves selecting five research articles that are helpful in understanding the research problem.

Submit a paper that includes:
"APA citation of five research articles
"Summary of article below each citation
"Reason(s) for selecting each article (include discussion on how the article relates to the research problem and the student’s research process)
"Any concerns regarding the study (such as sampling plan, methodology, etc.) If there are no concerns, this should be stated explicitly.

Topical Outline and Required Readings

Class One: Introduction and Overview

- Introductions
- Class Overview
- Importance of Research
- Introduction to Inquiry
- Implications of Research Design

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 1


**Completion of CITI Ethics Module is due by Class Two**

Class Two: Evidence-Based Practice & Introduction to Research

- Scientific Method
- Theory
- Quantitative and Qualitative Methods
- Evaluating Practice
- Evidence-Based Practice
- Concerns about Evidence-Based Practice

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 2-3

prevalent social work practice models: A meta-analysis. Social Work, 43(3), 269-278.

**Dissertation Overview & Critique is due by Class Three**

Class Three: Ethics and Research
- Ethical Issues in Research
- Misconduct in Research
- Institutional Review Boards
- NASW Code of Ethics

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 4

Briefly review ICSW IRB Manuel


Class Four: Problem Formulation, Conceptualization, & Operationalization
- Identification of Problem & Formulation
- Hypothesis
- Units of Analysis
- Conceptualization & Operationalization
- Time

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, Chapters 5 & 6 (4th edition) or 6 & 7 (6th edition)


Class Five: Measurement
- Levels of Measurement
- Reliability & Validity: Quantitative & Qualitative Methods
- Measurement Error
- Scales & Measures

Required Readings:


**Dissertation Ideas Paper is due by Class Six**

Class Six: Questionnaire Design
- Basic Survey/Questionnaire Design
- Choosing Response Categories
- Demographic Questions
- Formatting & Coding

Required Readings:

**Short Survey is due by Class Seven**

Class Seven: Survey Research
- Survey Modes
- Asking about Sensitive Topics
- Quantifying Qualitative Data
- Cultural sensitivity
Required Readings:

** Annotated Bibliography Paper is due by Class Eight**

Class Eight: Sampling

- Sampling Frames
- Probability vs. Non-Probability Sampling
- Sampling Designs
- Generalizability & Representativeness

Required Readings:

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