THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW313 Instructor's Name: Fiona Conway Ph.D.

Unique Number: 60520 Office Number: SSW 3.122B

Semester: Spring, 2019 Office Phone Number: 512-351-9548

Meeting Time: M/W 9:30 -11:00 Office Hours: by appointment Classroom: SSW 1.212 E-mail: fiona.conway@utexas.edu

Social Work Research Methods

I. STANDARIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is one of two research courses in the BSW curriculum. The course introduces students to the following topics: social work values, the research process, problem formulation and conceptualization, measurement, research design and inference, single subject design and practice evaluation, sampling, alternative data gathering techniques and analyses, and uses of research in social work. SW313 is a prerequisite for entry into the social work major. The goal of the course is to help students develop a basic understanding of the research process in order to engage with research for evidence-based practice.

II. STANDARIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

The goal of the course is to help students develop a basic understanding of the research process. Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

- 1. Describe the fundamental steps of scientific inquiry and how they parallel the basic steps of social work practice.
- 2. Demonstrate an understanding of the following basic social work research skills pertinent to the profession: a) formulation of research problems; b) formulation of research questions and hypotheses; c) use of various research methods (e.g., survey research, single subject design, experimental and quasiexperimental designs, field research, and use of secondary data); d) collection and analysis of research data; and e) interpretation of research results.
- 3. Critically analyze research findings and be effective consumers of, and contributors to, social work research.
- 4. Illustrate how gender bias or insensitivity to diverse populations can impede effective research and inference.
- 5. Identify research methods, sampling designs, and measurement techniques which are sensitive to diverse groups, including women, people of color, persons with disabilities, and members of the LGBT community.
- 6. Discuss the usefulness of social science theory and research methods in social work practice.
- 7. Explain ethical issues in conducting and using research, as well as the role of the social work values in research and evaluation.
- 8. Determine feasibility, practicability, and generalizability of research findings.

EPAS Competencies

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, the UT SHSSW engages in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

Using a common evaluation instrument, this course measures the implementation of knowledge, skills, values, and/or cognitive and affective processes to assess the following competencies:

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Outcome 4.1: Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research

Outcome 4.2: Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings

Outcome 4.3: Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

III. TEACHING METHODS

Teaching involves a partnership between the instructor and the student in a collaborative and passionate commitment to the mutual learning process. My philosophy of teaching is to provide students with relevant content in the form of lectures, reading assignments, and instructional activities that assist students in the integration of the material. Within the field of social work, content delivered without its applicability to micro and macro level practice is irrelevant to the student that gravitates to the profession to be an agent of social change. Essentially, as an instructor I see my role as 1) creating a safe learning environment that 2) allows for the sharing of ideas, in-depth critical analysis and integration of the material.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Required Text:

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2016). Essential Research Methods for Social Work (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

Texts can be purchased at University Co-op, 2246 Guadalupe, 476-7211, website: http://www.universitycoop.com.

Additional readings can be accessed on Canvas.

Problem Statement & Literature Review

The instructor reserves the right to provide and/or assign additional reading to supplement the texts and reader.

20 points

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments

Research Proposal Section:

Mid-Term Exam	20 points
Research Proposal Section:	
Research Design & Methods	20 points
Research Proposal	20 points
Research Proposal Presentation	10 points
Participation/Attendance	10 points

TOTAL 100 points

Research Proposal Problem Statement & Literature Review: 20 Points

Due week 6: February 27th

<u>Problem Statement</u> (2 to 3 pages): State the purpose of the paper and then provide an overview of the target problem/issue related to social work practice. Discuss the importance of the problem (why should we care about this?). Include some statistics regarding the prevalence of the problem.

<u>Literature Review (4 to 6 pages)</u>: A brief review of relevant literature related to the problem focusing on its etiology and effects. State the specific research question(s) that you will be examining.

Mid-Term Exam: 20 Points

Due week 8: March 13th

A multiple choice exam of 40 questions that covers all of the course material before week 8.

Research Proposal_Research Design & Methods: 20 Points

Due week 12: April 10th

Include the following information (2 to 3 pages):

- 1. Research question and hypotheses (should flow logically from your literature review)
- 2. Population, sampling method, sample size
- 3. Data collection methods and instruments
- 4. Data analyses

Research Proposal Presentation: 10 Points

Due week 14: April 24th

Give a five-minute presentation (5-10 slides) of the highlights and expected findings based on your Research Proposal.

Research Proposal: 20 Points

Due week 16: May 8th

Submit a 10-15 page paper (excluding title page, references, and appendices) of your research proposal. The research proposal is designed to help you deepen your understanding of the key research concepts covered in the course through practice and application.

- Formulate an answerable research question that will contribute to an evidence based social work practice;
- Literature review (in peer-reviewed journals) of the chosen problem and critical appraisal of the efficacy and effectiveness of the evidence-based practice/service/intervention;
- Research design (quasi-experimental or experimental design; description of the procedures of implementing evidence-based practice/service/intervention; sample inclusion/exclusion criteria, planned methods of subject identification, screening, recruitment, and retention; fidelity monitoring method;
- > Design and methods of data collection:
- Anticipated findings and their implication for social work practice, programs, and/or policies;
- Anticipated limitations of the study with respect to its research; and
- ➤ Identify gaps in the literature and suggest areas for additional research.

Participation: 10 Points

Last Class: May 8th

The richness of the learning process is enhanced by the participation of all members of the class. Participation will be assessed by attendance as well as oral comments and questions during class. Each absence will result in a reduction of one point for the participation grade. Three late arrivals or early departure equal one absence. Three or more absences will result in a five point grade reduction in your final grade. It is your responsibility to sign the weekly attendance sheet.

VI. GRADES

Grades will be assigned according to the cumulative number of points the student has Earned on the required assignments:

94.0 and above	Α
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	В
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+

74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

Grading of all written assignments will take into account **the quality of the writing, as well as the content**. The American Psychological Association (APA) 6th edition format must be used to format citations and references. **Written material should be carefully proof read and errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling) corrected.** Good writing requires an iterative process for quality to improve. It is strongly encouraged that you to read your paper several times and, if possible, have someone else proofread it. Graduate writing assistance is available

VII. CLASS POLICIES

- 1. Social work students adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their conduct. Scholastic honesty and integrity are consistent social work values.
- 2. The instructor will comply with University guidelines regarding scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism.
- 3. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.
- 4. Punctuality and timeliness are important for social work practitioners. Class attendance is expected. <u>Each absence will result in a reduction of one point for the participation grade. Three late arrivals or early departure equal one absence. Three or more absences will result in a five point grade reduction in your final grade. It is your responsibility to sign the weekly attendance sheet.</u>
- 5. The instructor should be notified in advance of any planned absence and as soon as possible in the case of an unforeseen, serious emergency.
- 6. Students are expected to be active in the learning process, to do the assigned readings and participate in the class activities and discussions.
- 7. Assignments should be turned in at the beginning of class on the date they are due, barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. Late assignments will not be accepted without penalty.
- 8. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Sixth Edition (APA) is the style manual to be used by all students. The manual is available at the library or for purchase at the Co-op.
- 9. Electronics in Class: Turn off and put away your cell phones before class begins. Students may use laptops and handheld computers in class for class-related purposes only. To engage in other types of computer use and/or electronics use (e.g., accepting or making phone calls, texting, surfing the net, etc.) is unprofessional and disruptive to the course. Incidents of electronic device usage other than for class-related purposes will result in reductions of your participation grade.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLASS. The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment, we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at https://cmhc.utexas.edu/.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sis/).

USE OF COURSE MATERIALS. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

TITLE IX REPORTING. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, instructors, agency-based field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Liaison for the SHSSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrgsexualharassment.pdf

CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here: https://campuscarry.utexas.edu. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at https://cio.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy.

SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Complete reading assignment for each date before coming to class.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Week 1 01/23	Why Study Research?	 Syllabus Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 1: Why Study Research?
Week 2 01/28 & 01/30	Evidence-Based Practice	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 2: Evidence-Based Practice McBeath, B., Briggs, H.E., Aisenberg, E. (2010). Examining the premises supporting the empirically supported intervention approach to social work practice. Social Work, 55(4), 347-357.
Week 3 02/04 & 02/06	Ethical and Cultural Issues	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 5: Ethical issues in social work research Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 6: Culturally Competent Research Baumann A., Rodriguez, M.D., & Parra-Cardona, J. R. (2011). Community-based applied research with Latino immigrant families: Informing practice and research according to ethical and social justice principles. <i>Family Process</i>, 50(2), p132-148.

Week 4 02/11 & 02/13	Problem Formulation	Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 7: Problem Formulation
Week 5 02/18 & 02/20	Research Methods: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 3: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 4: Factors Influencing the Research Process Green, C.A., Duan, N., Gibbons, R.D., Hoagwood, K.E., Palinkas, L.A., & Wisdom, J.P. (2015). Approaches to mixed methods dissemination and implementation research: Methods, strengths, caveats, and opportunities. Administration & Policy in Mental Health & Mental Health Services Research, 42(5), 508-523.
Week 6 02/25 & 02/27	Measurement	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 8: Measurement in Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 9: Quantitative and Qualitative Measurement Instruments Lee, J., Abell, N., & Holmes, J.L. (2015). Validation of measures of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in emerging adulthood. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>, 27(4), 1-12.
Week 7 03/04 & 03/06	Sampling	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 11: Sampling Pettus-Davis, C., Grady, M.D., Cuddeback, G.S., Scheyett, A. (2011). Practitioner's guide to sampling in the age of evidence-based practice: Translation of research into practice. <i>Clinical Social Work Journal</i>, 39, 379–389. Vervaeke, H., Korf, D., Benschop, A. & Brink, W. (2007). How to find future ecstacy-users: Targeted and snowball sampling in an ethically sensitive context. <i>Addictive Behaviors</i>, 32, 1705-1713.

Week 8 03/11 & 03/13	MIDTERM EXAM	 Study for Exam Complete Midterm exam in Canvas
Week 9 03/18 & 03/20	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
Week 10 03/25 & 03/27	Surveys	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 10: Surveys Siebert, D.C. (2006). Maximizing response rates in survey research: Issues and methods. <i>Advances in Social Work</i>, 7(2), 1-11. Alessi, E. J., & Martin, J. I. (2010). Conducting an Internet-based survey: Benefits, pitfalls, and lessons learned. <i>Social Work Research</i>, 34(2), 122-128.
Week 1 04/01 & 04/03	Experimental Research Design	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 12: Experiments and Quasi-Experiments Green, J. (2010). Points of intersection between randomized experiments and quasi-experiments. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 628(1), 97-111.
Week 12 04/08 & 04/10	Single-Case Evaluation Design	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 13: Single-Case Evaluation Lenz, S.A. (2015). Using Single-Case Research Designs to Demonstrate Evidence for Counseling Practices. <i>Journal of Counseling & Development</i>, 93(4), 387-393
Week 13 04/15 & 04/17	Qualitative Studies	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 15: Additional Methods in Qualitative Inquiry Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 18: Qualitative Data Analysis Floersch, J., Longhofer, J.L., Kranke, D., & Townsend, L. (2010). Integrating thematic, grounded theory, and narrative analysis: A case study of adolescent psychotropic treatment. <i>Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice</i>, 9(3), 407-425. Deglau, E., Ray, A., Conway, F., Carre-Lee, N.,

		Waldman, W., Cunningham, K., Harrison, T., Bales, H., & Powell, T. (2015). Practice change in child welfare: The interface of training and social work education, <i>Journal of Social Work Education</i> , <i>51</i> (sup2), S153-S172.
Week 14 04/22 & 04/24	Program Evaluation Formative	 Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 14: Program Evaluation Calheiros, M. & Patrício, J. (2014). Assessment of needs in residential care: Perspectives of youth and professionals. <i>Journal of Child & Family Studies, 23</i> (3), 461-474. Rowan, M.S., Mason, M., Robitaille, A., Labrecque, L., & Tocchi, C.L. (2013). An innovative medical and dental hygiene clinic for street youth: Results of a process evaluation. <i>Evaluation and Program Planning, 40</i>, 10–16.
Week 15 04/29 & 05/01	Program Evaluation Summative	 Kuklinski, M.R., Briney, J.S., Hawkins, J.D., & Catalano, R.F. (2012). Cost-benefit analysis of communities that care outcomes at eighth grade. Prevention Science, 13, 150–161. Fraser, M.W., & Wu, S. (2016). Measures of consumer satisfaction in social welfare and behavioral health: A systematic review. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>, 26(7), 762-776.
Week 16 05/06 & 05/08	Course Summary/ Wrap-up	

X. Bibliography

- Alessi, E. J., & Martin, J. I. (2010). Conducting an Internet-based survey: Benefits, pitfalls, and lessons learned. *Social Work Research*, *34*(2), 122-128.
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- Deglau, E., Ray, A., Conway, F., Carre-Lee, N., Waldman, W., Cunningham, K., Harrison, T., Bales, H., & Powell, T. (2015). Practice change in child welfare: The interface of training and social work education, *Journal of Social Work Education*, *51*(sup2), S153-S172.
- Floersch, J., Longhofer, J.L., Kranke, D., & Townsend, L. (2010). Integrating thematic, grounded theory, and narrative analysis: A case study of adolescent psychotropic treatment. *Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice*, *9*(3), 407-425.
- Fraser, M.W., & Wu, S. (2016). Measures of consumer satisfaction in social welfare and behavioral health: A systematic review. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 26(7), 762-776.
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- Kuklinski, M.R., Briney, J.S., Hawkins, J.D., & Catalano, R.F. (2012). Cost-benefit analysis of communities that care outcomes at eighth grade. *Prevention Science*, *13*, 150–161.
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- McBeath, B., Briggs, H.E., Aisenberg, E. (2010). Examining the premises supporting the empirically supported intervention approach to social work practice. *Social Work, 55*(4), 347-357.
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- Rowan, M.S., Mason, M., Robitaille, A., Labrecque, L., & Tocchi, C.L. (2013). An innovative medical and dental hygiene clinic for street youth: Results of a process evaluation. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 40*, 10–16.
- Siebert, D.C. (2006). Maximizing response rates in survey research: Issues and methods. *Advances in Social Work*, 7(2), 1-11.
- Vervaeke, H., Korf, D., Benschop, A. & Brink, W. (2007). How to find future ecstacy-users: Targeted and snowball sampling in an ethically sensitive context. *Addictive Behaviors*, *32*, 1705-1713.