THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW 385R   **Instructor: Rosalie Ambrosino, PhD**
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Unique Number: 61405   **Office: SSW Room 3.104A**

Semester: **Spring 2018**   **Phone: 210-241-0391**

Meeting Time/Place: Wednesdays   **Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-4 pm,**
                      5:30-8:30 pm   **Wednesdays 3:30-5 pm and by appointment**
                      SSW Room 2.122

SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH METHODS

I.   STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This foundation course is designed to help students gain an understanding of and appreciation for the use of research as a tool for professional evidence-based practice. Students are introduced to the concepts and skills underlying a systematic approach to social work research, including basic research terminology, the scientific method in social work, the value of research in social work, research ethics and the social work value base, problem formulation and conceptualization, measurement, research designs to evaluate programs and practice, sampling, alternative quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analytic techniques, and preparation and use of research reports. The emphasis in the course is on equipping students with the research knowledge and skills they'll need to engage in the evidence-based practice process at all levels of social work practice. As part of that process, they will learn how to critically appraise sources of scientific evidence and how the criteria for that appraisal will vary depending upon the purpose of the research.

II.   STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Formulate answerable evidence-based practice research questions;
2. Efficiently conduct advanced searches of electronic bibliographic databases and other sources to find evidence bearing on evidence-based practice research questions;
3. Critically appraise sources of scientific evidence and explain how the criteria for that appraisal will vary depending upon the purpose of the research;
4. Discuss why research evidence needs to be integrated with practice expertise and idiosyncratic client preferences, circumstances and values in the evidence-based practice process;
5. Design evaluations as part of evidence-based practice;
6. Explain how both qualitative and quantitative research processes apply in evidence-based practice;
7. Define basic qualitative and quantitative research concepts and describe the basic principles of causal inference, and their relationship to the various types of research designs;

8. Describe key concepts in measurement bearing on evidence-based practice, such as sources of measurement error, reliability and validity, and measurement equivalence across cultures;
9. Find measurement instruments applicable to evidence-based practice, sources of evidence bearing on the suitability of those instruments for specific practice scenarios, and critically appraise those sources from the standpoint of measurement principles and cultural sensitivity;
10. Describe the logic of probability sampling procedures, issues in the use of non-probability sampling procedures, how sampling issues bear on conducting evidence-based practice research at mezzo and macro levels of practice, and the implications of sampling for appraising and integrating sources of evidence in guiding practice decisions;
11. Describe how particular values and sensitivity to ethical issues influence the conducting of research;
12. Give examples of the issues that diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity, culture, age, sexual orientation, race, class, and physical or mental ability) raises in the conduct of research and in appraising and utilizing research to guide practice decisions;
13. Critically appraise how social work commitment to equity and social justice influences and differentiates the social work research process.

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

This course is designed to provide the student with a meaningful learning environment that will facilitate mastery of research skills, with a focus on evidence-based practice. Teaching methods include a combination of group discussions, individual and group critique, audiovisual presentations, case study analyses, readings, experiential exercises, guest and student presentations, and dyadic lectures. Student participation is essential to ensure that reflective dialogue takes place. Students are expected to be open to learning, to be actively engaged in class discussion and activities, and to demonstrate both critical thinking and self-reflection throughout the course.

IV.   REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Required Text
Rubin, A. & Babbie, E.R. (2017). ePack: Empowerment Series: *Research methods for social work* (9th ed., Loose-leaf version). Boston: Cengage Learning. (Note: Students should get the bundled version available at the UT Coop and on-line from Cengage, which includes a loose leaf copy of the text, e-access to the book for 6 months, and access to supplemental materials through MindTap. The hard copy of this text is $259 and the bundled version is $119.95. IBSN 10: 1-305-93580-2.)

Other Required Readings
Assigned readings from journals and books other than the text are noted on the syllabus course schedule and are available on UT Canvas. Full citations for all assigned readings are listed in AP format in the syllabus under "Bibliography."

Additional Sources
Other suggested sources to assist students in accessing research databases and statistical support are listed in the syllabus under "Bibliography."

V.   COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for this course will be based on the following requirements (further guidance for class participation and assignments is included in the syllabus appendix):

1. Student Participation (10% of final grade)
Attendance and active participation are critical to the teaching and learning in this class. Students are expected to be in class, or, in extenuating circumstances, to notify the instructor if they cannot attend. Preparation includes completing readings and assignments by due dates and coming to class prepared to discuss them; and "being present" and involved in experiential activities and discussions. Throughout the semester, students will complete in-class small group assignments and critiques of readings. There will be no opportunities to make up in-class quizzes and assignments, so failure to attend class regularly will lower your participation grade and jeopardize your overall course grade. To receive a passing grade, ALL assignments need to be completed and expectations for class participation met.

2. Protection of Human Subjects Training and Quizzes (10% of final grade)
As part of the course, students will complete a training module on the protection of human subjects when conducting research. There will also be several short in-class quizzes which will be announced in advance. Some of the quiz questions will be administered to students in all sections of this course and will be used to assess whether students in the program are mastering course objectives.

3. Critique of Research Article (individual assignment; 10% of final grade)
Each student will choose one of the research articles discussed in class during the semester and available on Canvas (see list of assigned readings in course schedule) and develop a critical

written appraisal of the article, demonstrating an understanding of the research process in relation to evidence-based practice. (See appendix for additional guidelines.)

4. Research Proposal (70% of final grade)
This is a five-part assignment that will be completed in research teams of 4-5 members. Each team will develop a research proposal that will evaluate a program or intervention. (See appendix for additional guidelines.) Each team will follow the steps below in planning and presenting its proposal:

1) Literature matrix and review - 10% of final grade; individual assignment
2) Research proposal Installment I (introduction/background, literature review, theoretical framework, research questions/hypotheses) - team assignment; 15% of final grade
3) Research proposal Installment II (research design and methods) - team assignment; 15% of final grade
4) Research proposal Installment III (data analysis, expected findings, and implications; will be submitted with revised Installments I and II in final proposal) - team assignment; 20% of final grade (5% of grade will be based on revisions of Installments I and II)
5) Presentation of research proposal at end of semester (team assignment; 10% of final grade)

Summary of Assignments	**Individual/Team**	**Date Due**	**% of Grade**
Human subjects training and quizzes	Individual	Human subjects training 2/9, other dates to be determined	10
Research article critique	Individual	April 13	10
Research Project Stage 1 - Literature matrix and evidence-based practice	Individual	February 16	10
Research Project – Stage 2 - Installment one of research proposal (introduction/ background, literature review, theoretical framework, and research questions/hypotheses)	Team	March 2	15
Research Project – Stage 3 - Installment two of research proposal (research (design and methods)	Team	March 30	15

Research Project – Stage 4 - Installment three of research proposal (data analysis, expected findings, and implications) and revisions of other sections submitted as one formal final document	Team	May 4	20
Research Project – Stage 5 – Presentation of proposal	Team	April 25 and May 2	10
Class participation	Individual	May 2	10

VI.   GRADES

Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments
Your written work should be well-conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. It also should show evidence of your own creative and thoughtful analysis. Papers must follow APA style formatting. Additional criteria and evaluation guidelines are provided at the end of the syllabus for all assignments. Please note that you will not earn credit for MSSW courses if your final grade falls below a 'C' (cannot be a C-). You must earn a grade of 74 or above for credit to be given for the course.

GRADING SCALE
94. 0 and above	A
90 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
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

A = Superior work: The assignment significantly exceeds expectations listed in the syllabus. Student does more than is required in the assignment and demonstrates a high level of in-depth critical thinking and analysis (i.e., writing coherent, ideas synthesized, discussion well developed).

B = Good Work: The assignment meets all the requirements and demonstrates evidence of in-depth critical thinking and analysis.

C = Average Work: The assignment meets the requirements or has minor gaps but lacks evidence of in-depth critical thinking and analysis. Remember, a C- (73 points) or lower will require re-taking the course.

D - Failing = Poor/failing Work: The assignment has important gaps, both in terms of not meeting the requirements and lacking in-depth critical thinking and analysis.

VII.   CLASS POLICIES

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT. If you wish to make an appointment to see me, cannot attend class, have a question, or want to meet for any reason, please call or text me at 210-241-0391 (cell) or come to my office hours. You can also send an email to me through Canvas or at

rosalie.ambrosino@gmail.com. I check my e-mail and phone messages regularly and will respond as quickly as possible.

ATTENDANCE. This course is interactive in nature, with students learning from each other as well as from readings and other course assignments. It also is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is submitting assignments on time. Those who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing two or more classes without a valid excuse, e.g., medical documentation) will receive one or more course grades lower than their final grade when points are totaled.

SUBMISSION OF PAPERS AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS. Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class or electronically on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. the day that an assignment is due depending on instructions in the syllabus. All assignments must be turned in on the due date unless you have a legitimate reason for an extension. Changes in work schedules, personal celebrations, transportation problems, computer/ printing problems, etc. are not considered legitimate reasons for missing an assignment deadline. Late assignments will result in a deduction of **5%** for each day it is late. Any legitimate adjustments in due dates must be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled due date unless there is a valid documented reason for not being able to meet this requirement.

APA & REFERENCES. The School of Social Work uniformly requires APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Information on APA style and format can be found at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) in the School of Social Work and on the UT library website. Another excellent source is Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL). Appropriate referencing is required. Failure to use quotation marks for direct quotes or citation for indirect quotations and/or others' ideas constitutes plagiarism and may result in receiving no credit for the assignment.

COURSE FEEDBACK. Students will have two formal opportunities to evaluate the quality of the course and instruction. About midway into the course students will be asked to provide an anonymous evaluation about the course and any suggestions for improving content, delivery, or discussion. The second evaluation will occur at the end of the course, using the format provided by the University. At any time during the course, students should feel free to comment on the quality of the course and instruction and suggest changes that will increase their learning. These comments can either be made in class, by making an appointment to meet with the instructor, or via any other means selected by the student.

COURSE MODIFICATIONS. Any modifications, amendments, or changes to the syllabus and or assignments are at the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of the student to inquire about any changes that might have been made in her/his absence; all changes will be published on Canvas.

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 AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM. The professor expects students to act as 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. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, 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 (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) 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://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/.

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). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or 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 Deputy for the SSW, 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/qrg-sexualharassment.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 http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

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 between 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 in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering 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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
1/17	• Course overview • Establishment of guidelines for class discussion • What is social work research?		Syllabus

1/24	• Ways of knowing
	• Evidence-based practice
	• The process of social work research
	  o Identifying social work research questions
	  o Connecting research and theory
	• Exploring the literature
		Be ready to discuss one Campbell or Cochrane review of interest to you	• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 1 and 2; Appendix A, Using the library
			• On Canvas:
			  o Fels Smyth and Schorr (2009), A lot to lose…
			  o Messac et al. (2013), The good-enough science…
			  o Maynard et al. (2018). Intro to special issue on Campbell…
			• Read descriptions of websites www.campbellcollaboration.org (social/behavioral science, education) and www.cochrane.org (health/ mental health); skim at least one review of interest to you

1/31	• The process of social work research
	  o Factors influencing the research process
	  o Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods of inquiry
	• Writing research reports
			• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 3, 4 and 23
			• On Canvas:
			  o Fraser and Galinsky (2010) Steps in intervention research…
			  o Izquierdo et al. (2014) Older depressed Latinos…
			  o Alaggia et al. (2012) Eco analysis of intimate partner violence…
			  o Zayas et al. (2015) The distress of citizen-children with detained…

2/7	• Ethical issues in social work research
	  o Film on research ethics
	• Institutional review boards
	• Culturally sensitive research
		Document completion of CITI human subjects training for social and behavioral science by 11:59 pm on 2/9 (this	• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 5 and 6
			• On Canvas:
			  o Freedman (2010) Lies, damn lies…
			  o Jackson (2010) Ethical considerations in social work research with multiracial…
			  o Burnette et al. (2014). A toolkit for ethically and culturally…
			  o Casado et al. (2012). Culturally

		training takes about 3 hours)	competent social work research… • Human subjects training for social and behavioral science, available at https://research.utexas.edu/ors/human-subjects/training/)

2/14	• Problem formulation
	• Conceptualization in qualitative and quantitative inquiry
		Literature matrix and summary due 2/16 by 11:59 pm	• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 7 and 8
			• On Canvas:
			  ○ Bowleg et al. (2004). "The ball was always in his court" …
			  ○ Neblett, E.W. (2010). Underlying mechanisms in the relationship…
			  ○ Freeman (2006), *There goes the 'hood,* Introduction, Appendix: Methodology…

2/21	• Measurement
	• Qualitative and quantitative measurement instruments
	• Lab to work on team projects
			• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 9 and 10
			• On Canvas:
			  ○ Tyson and Glisson (2005), A cross-ethnic validity study…
			  ○ O'Hare and Sherrer (2005). Assessment of youthful problem...
			  ○ Ingersoll-Dayton (2011). The development of culturally…
			  ○ Cook et al. (2016). Measuring geographic "hot spots"…

2/28	• Research designs for evaluating programs and practice
	  ○ Causal inference, experimental and quasi-experimental
		Installment one of research project due 3/2 at 11:59 pm	• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 11 and 12
			• On Canvas:
			  ○ Martsch (2005). A comparison of two group interventions for..
			  ○ Mogro-Wilson et al. (2015). Utilizing mutual aid in…
			  ○ Choi et al. (2014). Six-month post-intervention depression…
			  ○ Yuma-Guerrero et al. (2012), Screening, brief intervention…

3/7	• Research designs for evaluating programs and practice
	  ○ Single case evaluation design
	  ○ Program evaluation
			• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 13 and 14
			• On Canvas
			  ○ Bisani and Angus (2012), Doll therapy
			  ○ Bradshaw and Roseborough (2004), Evaluating the …
			  ○ Kalichman et al. (2009), Integrated gender-based violence and HIV-risk...
			  ○ Esbensen et al. (2011), Results from a multi-site evaluation…

3/14	SPRING BREAK		

3/21	• Sampling
	• Lab to work on team projects
			• Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 15
			• On Canvas
			  o Maynard et al. (2014), Effects of Check and Connect on attendance…
			  o Floyd et al. (2006). Preventing alcohol-exposed pregnancies….
			  o Armour and Umbreit (2012). Homicide survivors: Factors…
			  o Mustanski (2015), Feasibility…the queer sex ed intervention

3/28	• Data collection with large sources of data
	  o Survey research
	• Analyzing existing data: Quantitative and qualitative methods
		Installment two of research project due 3/30 at 11:59 pm	• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 16 and 17
			• On Canvas
			  o Felix et al. (2015), Why do patients…
			  o Golub et al. (2013). Unmet need for treatment of …
			  o De Luca et al. (2016). Mental health care utilization: How race, ethnicity and veteran…
			  o Franklin et al. (2007). The effectiveness of a solution…

4/4	• Qualitative research methods and data analysis		• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 18 and 19
			• On Canvas
			  o Liebow (1993), *Tell them who I am*, Preface and chapter 3
			  o Sanders et al. (2008), Mental health services for older adults…

4/11	• Qualitative research methods and data analysis	**Article critique due 4/13 at 11:59 pm**	• Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 20
			  o Ayon (2016). Talking to Latino children about race…
			  o Pager and Western (2012). Identifying discrimination at work

4/18	• Quantitative data analysis
	• Lab to work on team projects
			• Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 21 and 22
			• On Canvas
			  o Padgett et al., (2006) Housing First …
			  o Hofman and Smits (2008), Cognitive-behavioral therapy for adult anxiety…
			  o Wood and Mayo-Wilson (2012), School-based mentoring…

4/25	• Research project team presentations		
5/2	• Research project team presentations • Celebration and closure	**Team research project proposals & team member evaluations due Friday, May 4 at 11:59 pm**	

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Journal Articles
Alaggia, R., Regehr, C., & Jenney, A. (2012). Risky business: An ecological analysis of intimate partner violence disclosure. *Research on Social Work Practice* 22(3), 301-312.

Armour, M. & Umbreit, M. (2012). Homicide survivors: Factors that influence their well-being. *Journal of Forensic Social Work*, 2, 74-93.

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Bisiani, L. & Angus, J. (2013). Doll therapy: A therapeutic means to meet past attachment needs and diminish behaviours of concern in person a person living with dementia—a case study approach. *Dementia* 12(4), 447-462.

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Brewer, J., & Hunter, A. (2006). *Foundations of multimethod research: Synthesizing styles.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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Casado, B., Negi, N. & Hong, M. (2012). Culturally competent social work research: Methodological considerations for research with language minorities. *Social Work* 57 (1), 1-10.

Chambliss, D. & Schutt, R. (2016). *Making sense of the social world: Methods of investigation.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Choi, N., Marti, C.N., Bruce, M., Hegel, M., Wilson, N., & Kunik, M. (2014). Six-month post-intervention depression and disability outcomes of in-home telehealth problem-solving therapy for depressed, low-income homebound older adults. *Focus on Treatment* (31), 653-661.

Cook, L.B., Kim, G., Morgan, K., Chen, C., Nillni, A., et al. (2016). Measuring geographic "hot spots" of racial-ethnic disparities: An application to mental health care. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 27 (2), 663-684.

Cooper, H.M. (2001). *Synthesizing research: A guide for literature reviews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Corcoran, K. & Fischer, J. (2000). *Measures for clinical practice (Vols I and II)*. NY: Free Press.

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Websites

http://www.campbellcollaboration.org (meta analysis of the effects of interventions in the social, behavioral, crime and justice, and educational areas)

http://www.cochrane.org (meta analysis of the effects of health and mental health interventions)

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http://www.samhsa.gov/nrepp (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration national registry of evidence-based practices and programs)

http://evidencebasedprograms.org (social programs that work)

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APPENDIX

ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

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I.   Expectations of Team Members

Most research projects are team rather than individual efforts. Thus, learning how to be a member of a collaborative team is an important part of the MSW experience. It is expected that teams will identify and draw on members' strengths and will divide the workload equitably, and that all team members will be involved in conceptualizing and critiquing every step of the research proposal process. Since all team members will receive the same points based on the grade earned for each group assignment, it is very important that members work together. Each team must attach a paragraph as an appendix at the end of its research proposal that describes the work each person did to produce the proposal. Additionally, after the team has given its presentation at the end of the semester, each team member must submit an evaluation form for each person on the team, including her/himself (the form is available and can be submitted to the instructor on Canvas). If the work load is unbalanced, the instructor may assign a higher or a lower grade to individual team members. However, it is expected that if a severe imbalance of work occurs, the instructor will be made aware of this prior to completion of the assignment in order to work with the team to address the concerns.

II.   Class Participation (10% of final grade)

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be prepared to discuss readings and class assignments. Students who miss more than one class session without documentation for a serious issue (i.e., hospitalization) will receive a lower grade in the course. Students who come to class unprepared and don't engage in class discussions will also lose participation points.

III.   Protection of Human Subjects Training and Quizzes (10% of final grade)

Protection of Human Subjects Training: Because social work research is most often conducted with client populations and is related to sensitive issues, protection of human subjects is especially critical to the profession. Thus, it is important that practitioners who will engage in evidence-based research are aware of ethical issues and policies related to protection of human subjects. As part of the course, each student must complete a training module on the protection of human subjects when conducting research. This online training takes approximately three hours to complete (you don't need to complete it all at once.) There are quizzes that are given at certain points in the training; once you receive a score of 80 or more, you can access a certificate showing completion of the training. This certification is good for three years; if you have completed this training and can provide documentation that you have already done so, you don't need to do it again. You can access the training at the following website: https://research.utexas.edu/ors/human-subjects/training/. Be sure that you complete the human subjects training and not the one on conflicts of interest and that you complete the modules on social and behavioral sciences. You will need your UT EID and password to access the CITI website, a national collaborative effort that many universities and research entities use for certification of their researchers that is sanctioned by many federal research programs. This training is free to all UT students, staff and faculty. **Students must complete the training no later than February 9** and provide documentation showing completion; this is a course requirement that must be completed to pass the course.

Quizzes: The Steve Hicks School of Social Work is required to provide documentation that its students are mastering social work competencies and practice behaviors as part of its Council on

Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation. One way that the School is providing documentation is by giving the same exam questions to all students who complete SW 385R. Thus, we will be having several announced-in-advance quizzes during the semester, with these exam questions embedded in the quizzes.

Graded quizzes will count 8% of the grade; completion of the CITI training and facilitation of the research article attendance count the remaining 2%. There will be no opportunities to make up in-class quizzes.

IV.   Critique of Research Article (individual assignment; 10% of final grade)

Each student will choose one of the research articles discussed in class during the semester and available on Canvas (see list of assigned readings in the course schedule) and develop a critical appraisal of the article, demonstrating an understanding of the research process in relation to evidence-based practice. Your critique should be 4-6 pages, double-spaced. **This assignment is due 11:59 pm on April 13.**

Your critique should include the following information using the bolded headings below (subheadings may also be used):

Introduction
- Citation of the article you are critiquing using APA format
- Brief (one to two paragraphs) summary of the article

Rationale and Purpose
- What is the rationale for the study?
- Why is there interest in the subject (e.g., is there a gap/need the study addresses)?
- What are the stated or implied research question(s) and/or hypotheses?
- What did the researchers intend to accomplish?
- Why is the study important to social work?

Method and General Procedures
- Design – what type of research design was used?
- Sample – what type of sampling procedure was used (i.e., sample size, recruitment and selection of subjects, assignment of subjects to groups)?
- Procedures - what was the overall process of the study, including what study participants were required to do?
- Dependent variable(s) – name the dependent variable(s) and describe how they were operationalized/measured
- Independent variable(s) – name the independent variable(s) and describe how they were operationalized/measured

Results
- Findings – what were the key results of the study?
- Statistics used - Name the statistical tests used.

Conclusions
- Briefly describe the author's conclusions.

Critical Analysis/Discussion (this is YOUR critique of the study and is the most important section)
- Assess the merits of the justification for the study.
- Assess the relevance of the research questions and theoretical framework and quality of the literature review.

- Describe the implications of the study.
- Assess the strengths and limitations of the study with respect to its research design; sampling procedures; size of the sample; measures; reliability and validity of the measurement; data collection methods; method of analysis; and implications.
- Identify any threats to validity of study results as well as how each of these threats was addressed/ not addressed. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 =lowest and 10 = highest/none, how much faith can be put in the findings?
- How well did the study address cultural factors such as race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ability? What cultural factors are most salient for the use of study results by social workers?
- Offer at least two suggestions for improvements to the study.
- How can the results of the study be used to support evidence-based practice?
- Conclude with a brief summary of what YOU see as the strengths and limitations of this study.

V.   Research Proposal

The purpose of this assignment is to give students the opportunity to apply their learning about research methods and evidence-based practice to a small-scale evaluation of a program/service/ intervention for a chosen problem/issue they are likely to encounter as social workers in practice settings. Students will work in teams of four to five students each to formulate research questions that will contribute to promoting evidence-based social work practice; conduct a literature review of the chosen problem, including a critical appraisal of the efficacy and effectiveness of evidence-based programs/services/interventions; develop specific research questions/hypotheses; determine an appropriate research design and methods/ procedures for implementing the proposed study and collecting and analyzing data; determine anticipated findings and their implications for social work practice; and identify anticipated limitations of the study with respect to design and data collection.

Examples of problems/issues on which students may wish to focus include veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD); youth gangs; depression in older adults; food insecurity; supportive services for youth aging out of foster care; substance use disorders; post-adoption adjustment; problems with parenting skills; teen pregnancy; interpersonal violence; and access to affordable housing (students are free to identify other areas of emphasis for their proposed study). Students should consider testing the efficacy or effectiveness of existing interventions for a critical or underserved population (e.g., older adults who are LGBT, female veterans who have experienced trauma, members of gangs in rural areas). Note that the problem faced by members of the population and suggested intervention strategies should be derived from a review of the literature and not from an a priori assumption.   This literature review may result in narrowing the population to a specific sub-group based on age, race, or ethnicity.   The literature review should also be used to justify why your chosen intervention will be the focus of your research study.

 Students will be divided into teams no later than the second week of class and given an opportunity during class to identify chosen problems and targeted populations on which to focus their research projects. This proposal will be developed in stages, with the first stage of the work completed individually and the remaining stages as a team (see below).

Steps in Developing Your Proposal

Stage 1 - Literature Matrix and Evidence-based Practice Review – Once teams have identified their chosen problem and targeted population, *each* student will develop an *individual* "literature review matrix" summarizing five to ten peer-reviewed articles that focus on effective intervention strategies to address the problem faced by the identified target population.   **This part of the proposed research study assignment will be conducted on an individual basis and count 10% toward the student's grade for the course. The literature matrix is due on or before 11:59 pm on February 16.**

Format and Content:
The following columns should be included in the literature review matrix (using APA format):
- **Author(s):** Provide the name of the author(s) of the study.
- **Title:** Provide the full title of the article.
- **Year:** Provide the year the article was published (all articles should be no longer than ten years old, unless they represent seminal studies that are of historical importance).
- **Journal:** Provide the name of the journal in which the article was published.
- **Sample:** Describe the sampling procedure used in the study.
- **Study Design:** Describe the research design used in the study.
- **Outcomes:** List the outcomes relevant to your study topic in this study.
- **Measurements:** List the measurement tools/instruments that were used to collect study data.
- **Results:** Briefly summarize the key findings or results of the study (e.g., participants who received CBT had a significant decrease in depression after the intervention compared to those who did not participate, participation in the support group resulted in a higher graduation rate when compared to youth who did not participate, knowledge about sexually transmitted infections was significantly higher for participants in the intervention group (75% correct on knowledge test) compared to the control group (15% correct on knowledge test).
- **Comments:** Identify strengths and limitations of the article including those that relate to the conceptual framework used for the study, research procedures used, research design, instrumentation, discussion of findings and generalizability of results.

Summary of Review: Prepare an overall summary of the results of your review, drawing from information in your matrix. The literature review summary should be 1-3 pages in length, excluding the matrix. Based on your review, conclude with a recommendation regarding the most appropriate/effective intervention for the population/problem your team is studying.

At the same time that you post the completed literature review matrix on Canvas, submit copies to all members of your research project team.

Stage 2 - Selection by Team of Most Appropriate/Effective Intervention
After members have reviewed each other's matrices and summaries, each team will meet, assess team members' findings, and identify the most appropriate/ effective intervention to address their research question, with a rationale as to why this intervention was chosen. This intervention will be the one used in the team's proposed research study. (You will be given class time on February 21.)

Stage 3 - Development of Research Proposal
Each team will then develop a research proposal to evaluate the intervention chosen by the team. (Typically, proposals average 12-15 double-spaced pages, not counting the reference list and optional appendices). The research proposal will be a *team* effort that will be submitted in *three* installments as follows:

- **Installment One (15% of final grade)** - introduction, background, research question(s), literature review, and theoretical framework. **(Each team will submit one document due at 11:59 pm on March 2.)**

   Installment Two (15% of final grade) - research design and methods. **(Each team will submit one document due at 11:59 p.m. on March 30.)**

- **Installment Three (20% of final grade)** - data analysis, expected findings, and implications) and final research study submission. Teams will receive feedback on Installments I and II of the team's proposed research study and incorporate this feedback into the team's final research proposal submission. **(Each team will submit one document due at 11:59 pm May 4.)**

Stage 4 - Class Presentation (10% of final grade)
Each team will present its research proposal in class on either **April 25 or May 2.**

Format and Content of Research Proposal – What to Include in Each Installment
Teams should organize their research proposal according to the headings below and include the following information (pages listed below are suggested only and may vary according to your study):

I. Introduction (1 page) (Submitted in Installment One)
- Description of Target Problem (Provide a clear statement of the problem addressed by the proposed research study - be sure to include relevant literature citations here).
- Purpose of Study (Include the purpose of the research - what do you hope to find out? - and the significance of the study to social work).

II. Review of Literature, Theoretical Framework and Research Questions/Hypotheses (3 pages) (Submitted in Installment One)
- Literature Review (The literature review should be a description of relevant research concerning the chosen intervention. This section should incorporate relevant content from the literature review matrix developed by each team member, though you will most likely need to add additional sources. Literature should be synthesized, pointing out agreements and conflicts. Critically evaluate existing knowledge, and identify the gaps your proposed research is intended to fill. Explain why the literature about your research leads you to think this topic needs study. State how scientific knowledge or practice will be advanced if the goals of your research are achieved. Only include research relevant to the proposed study research question(s). Conclude this section with a brief summary of the intervention you will use in your proposed research study and the basis upon which this particular intervention was chosen.)
- Theoretical Framework (Identify the theoretical framework on which you study is based, giving a brief explanation of the framework with appropriate citations; show how this framework connects to your topic so the reader can understand how your research

questions/hypotheses fit with this framework.)
- Research Question(s) and Hypotheses (This section must conclude with the research question(s) that have been formulated for the proposed research study using the guidelines for writing research questions presented and discussed in class.)

III. Research Design and Methods (6 pages) (Submitted in Installment Two)
This section will describe how you plan to carry out your research. The methodology for the study you design should contain a high degree of scientific rigor. If your study is attempting to examine a causal relationship, you will need to address threats to internal validity. Reasonable efforts should be made to minimize identified threats to internal validity including measurement bias. Note that this section of the research proposal should provide a concise enough description on how the study is to be conducted so that readers would be able to replicate the study on their own. Remember to write the proposal using future tense, i.e. "will do."
- Design (Identify and describe the specific research design using the nomenclature contained in the course text and class materials. Don't forget to describe each part of the design: i.e., whether random assignment will be used, when measures will be taken, how long the intervention will last, and which intervention is experimental and which is control or comparison.)
- Sample (Describe the subject pool and sampling procedure - what type of sampling – probability or nonprobability type {name it}, how selection of participants will occur, and specify your inclusion and exclusion criteria; provide a projected number of recruited subjects as well as a back-up pool to be used in situations involving subject mortality. Describe how you plan to recruit study subjects and how this will be done in an ethical manner. Describe any specific difficulties you anticipate that might occur in recruiting participants. Describe the informed consent process and content of informed consent/assent {you don't have to create a consent form, just describe how and when it would be done, and what would be included in the consent/assent}. Where appropriate, describe how study subjects will be compensated for their participation in the study including how much, when it will be given, and for what activities they are compensated.)
- Description of Program/Service/Intervention (Explain the program/service/intervention you are evaluating - what would those who participate in the program you are evaluating be expected to do – number of sessions over what time period, length of sessions, curriculum used, etc. Note that this is NOT a description of how you are evaluating the program, but of the program itself. (Write this section wearing a "social work practitioner" hat.) If it has been determined to be an evidence-based program by an entity such as SAMHSA, explain this as well.)
- Procedures (Describe the process of implementing your study – start this section with what happens AFTER the participants have agreed to be in the study and signed informed consent forms. (Write this section wearing a "social work researcher" hat.) Identify the study site {where the actual study intervention will take place}. You do not need to identify a specific location here, i.e., you can say "a large urban high school in the southwest" as opposed to "Bowie High School in Austin, Texas." Describe when measures will be conducted – pretest, posttest, any follow-ups. Describe how the intervention will be delivered {e.g., number of sessions, content of sessions, and focus of intervention strategies}. Describe how you will keep track of participants after they have completed their participation in the research project. This is the largest part of this section and requires that you include as much detail as possible in terms of what the social

worker or others involved do in the context of an intervention and what the researchers do in the context of collecting data. Again, your procedures should be so clearly stated that they can be replicated by others.)

- <u>Human Subjects and Ethical Considerations</u> (Describe the unique procedures that must be taken to protect your specific participants. Do not discuss the consent form or how you will get consent, but identify areas of potential harm to your population and specific measures that you would have to carry out to ameliorate them. What unique issues must be dealt with in working with the specific population of your study? Again, address the SPECIFIC human subjects' issues that are unique to the participants of your study, not just general human subjects' issues that should have been discussed in the sampling section.)

- <u>Measurement</u> (Identify your independent and dependent variable(s), how they have been operationally defined, and their level of measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio). Identify the measures you will use in the proposed research study as well as the psychometric properties (validity and reliability) of each measure. Use standardized measures with known psychometric properties such as the Beck Depression Inventory to the fullest extent possible. Be sure to describe how you will address issues of validity and reliability related to non-standardized measures such as custom designed surveys. Provide a rationale for the inclusion of each measure. Note that a table is a good way to display this information in addition to text.)

IV. Data Analysis, Expected Findings, and Implications (2-3 pages) (Submitted in Installment Three)

- <u>Data Analysis</u> (Describe how you will analyze data once it is gathered. For purposes of this assignment you can restrict the statistic(s) you use to answer research question(s) and/or research hypotheses to simple descriptive statistics (frequencies and percent) and measures of central distribution) mean, median, and mode). Identify one statistical procedure such as a t-test that could be used to assess the level of statistical significance represented by your research findings.)

- <u>Expected Findings</u> (Describe expected findings of your proposed research study for "best case", "worst case" and equivocal results, including what factors associated with the study might have contributed to each scenario.)

- <u>Limitations</u> (Discuss the limitations of the proposed research study as well as recommendations for addressing them in future studies.)

V. Conclusions and Recommendations (1-2 paragraphs) (Submitted in Installment Three)

This section should briefly summarize the entire study and what next steps might be, implications for future research, and suggestions for how findings might impact practice. Don't pretend that you have completed the study; suggest only what you think might be useful if this study were actually conducted and how it might help social workers.

VI. References (Submitted with Each Installment and Updated as Additional Sources are Cited)

Include a separate section citing all in-text citations following APA format.

VII. Appendix - Division of Labor and Other Optional Appendices (Submitted in Installment Three)

Summarize in a BRIEF paragraph the work each person on your team contributed to the study proposal. Make it clear what the role of each was in developing the ideas, searching literature, and writing the proposal. Note that students will also complete individual evaluations of all members after their in-class presentation on the proposal (forms are available and may be submitted on Canvas).

Each team will submit a final professional document with a title page, table of contents, abstract, and the full proposal, incorporating changes in the first two installments, required sections in installment three, a finalized reference page, and appropriate appendices no later than **May 4 at 11:59 pm.**

Stage 5 - Presentation of Research Proposal (Teams will present proposals either April 25 or May 2 during class time)
At the end of the semester, teams will assume that they are presenting their research proposal to UTs Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. Each team will give a 20 minute presentation with accompanying slides and a one-page handout summarizing its proposal (problem and population, research question and its importance, summary of literature and theoretical framework, summary of research design and methods, and data analysis and limitations.)

As part of the presentation, each team will discuss hypothetical findings if 1) everything in the proposal goes exactly as planned, 2) very little in the proposal goes as planned, with discussion of what happens, why, and how results are impacted; and 3) if mixed outcomes occur – some things go well and some don't, with discussion of what happens, why, and limitations of outcomes as a result. Presentations should conclude with content on how the proposed study will contribute to evidence-based practice and the social work profession. Following each presentation, colleagues in the course will serve as a mock IRB and ask questions and give comments regarding the presentation and proposal.