

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number:	SW388R2	Instructor's name:	Allen Rubin
Unique Number:	62810	Office Number:	SSW 3.130E
Semester:	Spring 2012	Office Phone:	471-9218
Meeting Time/Place:	Room 3.202 Tues, 12:00-3:00	Office Hours:	M, 2:30-3:30 Tues, 3:00-3:30 Also by appointment

Research II: Quantitative Methods

I. Standardized Course Description

This research seminar attempts to equip students with the knowledge and competence in quantitative research methods that they will need in order to conduct future independent research activities aimed at increasing the social work knowledge base. The course is designed to pick up where the first doctoral research seminar leaves off. In line with the research production thrust of the course, it involves a heavy experiential component, in which much class time will be devoted to critiquing student projects. The expectation is that you will learn primarily "by doing," by receiving critical feedback on what you've done and by attempting to improve your performance in light of that feedback.

II. Course Objectives

By the end of the semester students will be able to:

1. Conduct independent research;
2. Write methodologically sound research proposals on important research topics;
3. Write publishable research articles;
4. Develop methodologically sound measurement instruments based on empirical item analyses, and test their reliability and validity;
5. Provide and incorporate constructive critical feedback to and from colleagues regarding their colleagues' or their own research activities.

III. Teaching Methods

Instruction methods will primarily involve experientially learning via in-class critiquing of individualized student research projects. In addition, lectures and class discussions will cover several areas not covered in the first research seminar.

IV. Texts

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2011). *Research Methods for Social Work*, 7th Edition. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A. (2012). *Statistics for Evidence-Based Practice and Evaluation*, 3rd edition. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

V. Class Policies

Drops: May be approved by instructor up to April 7. Incompletes should be approved in advance by instructor and will be considered only in the case of compelling circumstances.

Exams will not be rescheduled unless an emergency occurs or previous arrangements have been made with the instructor for compelling reasons. Assignments must be submitted on time. No excuses for late submissions. If not submitted on time, 10% of the points will be deducted. Students are expected to attend all classes and to be prepared to participate orally and in a thoughtful manner that demonstrates that the assigned readings have been read carefully.

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.

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/sjs/>).

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 fourteen 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.

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 to keep the university informed about changes to their 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 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.

VI. Course Requirements and Grading

The final grade for the course will be based on seven team assignments, one exam, and individual class participation.

Grading : All assignments and the final course grade will be graded as follows:

Accumulated Points and Grading Scale:

100 -94 = A
93 -90 = A
89 -87 = B+
86 -84 = B
83 -80 = B
79 -77 = C+
76 -74 = C
73 -70 = C
69 -67 = D+
66 -64 = D
63 -60 = D
59 & below = F

The final grade will be computed according to the following weighting:

10	Team Assignment 1
10	Team Assignment 2
10	Team Assignment 3
10	Team Assignment 4
10	Team Assignment 5
10	Team Assignment 6
10	Team Assignment 7
15	Exam
<u>15</u>	Amount and quality of participation in critical appraisals
100	

VII. Assignments

Each of the 7 assignments is to be done by a team of 2-3 students, typed in double space, and submitted with enough copies for each student in your class and the instructor to have a copy. No excuses for late submissions. If not submitted on time by E-mail at least 45 hours prior to class, 10% of the points will be deducted. All members of the same team will receive the same grade on each of the 7 assignments. Each grade will depend upon the extent to which the assignment reflects the major methodological principles discussed in the text and in class. An excellent grade will not require perfection, just a reflection that – despite glitches that are understandable in light of your inexperience in research – the relevant text and class emphases were in large part understood and guided your work.

No.	Points	Due By	Assignment
1	10	February 5, 5:30 PM	<p>Submit a partial proposal for a survey. (The proposal need not include a literature review or other components that are not listed below. It just needs to supply enough information to assess the value and rigor of the survey.) The survey should test a hypothesis in which the summated score on a scale that your team will construct is the dependent variable. It also should include a brief questionnaire containing a few background variables, a variable that can correlate with scale scores to assess the scale's criterion validity, an independent variable for the hypothesis, and a moderating variable for that hypothesis. The proposal should include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research question and its importance (something that would merit publication in a professional journal) • Variables and their rationales • Sampling method • Data collection method, including steps to maximize response rate • Data analysis plan
2	10	February 26, 5:30 PM	<p>Construct a quantitative, summated scale of <i>approximately</i> 10-15 items to measure a social work construct, the score on which will comprise the dependent variable in your survey. The rationale and underlying concept for each scale item should be included on a separate sheet(s).</p>
3	10	March 4, 5:30 PM	<p>Submit the questionnaire that will accompany your scale in your survey. Show how the scale will be incorporated as part of the questionnaire. Include a cover letter that will motivate individuals to participate in the survey. <i>Be sure to read Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 9 to guide your questionnaire construction.</i></p>

4	10	April 1, 5:30 PM	Submit the results of an item analysis, reliability analysis, and criterion validity analysis of your scale based on the mock data that the instructor will provide for a computer analysis. Also included in this assignment should be an identification of items that will and will not be retained in your scale, as well as any wording modifications of questionnaire or scale items based on feedback previously received in class and in writing from instructor.
5	10	April 15, 5:30 PM	Submit a draft of the results and discussion sections for your article based on the mock data that the instructor will provide regarding your questionnaire items as well as the scale data for the items retained on your scale. The results should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample characteristics • Reliability and criterion validity of your final scale • Multivariate test of your hypothesis (controlling for the moderating variable)
6	10	April 29, 5:30 PM	Submit an article as if for publication based on the foregoing 5 assignments.
7	10	May 8, 5:30 PM	Submit a revision of your article based on feedback received in class and in writing from instructor.

VIII. Course Schedule

Date	Description	Text / Readings
1/17	Course overview; discuss project assignments; The hardest part of social work research: Feasibility	Rubin & Babbie, pp. 111-118; 140-142; 263-267; 284-289; 323-328
1/24	Sampling; Surveys	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 14-15
1/31	In-class team work on Assignment 1, with instructor consultation	
2/7	Critical appraisals/feedback re Assignment 1	

2/14	Constructing measurement instruments; reliability and validity, item analyses, factor analysis; cross-cultural measurement equivalence.	Rubin & Babbie, Chs. 8-9, and Measurement Equivalence Section of Ch. 5 Rubin, <i>Statistics for Evidence-Based Practice and Evaluation</i> , 3 rd edition, Appendix C
2/21	In-class team work on Assignment 2 & 3, with instructor consultation	
2/28	Class critical appraisals/feedback re Assignment 2	
3/6	Class critical appraisals/feedback re Assignment 3	
3/13	Spring Break	
3/20	Writing research articles; Reporting statistical findings; Constructing tables for publishable articles.	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 23 and 514-520 Rubin, <i>Statistics for Evidence-Based Practice and Evaluation</i> , 3 rd edition, Appendix J
3/27	Effect size; clinical or substantive significance; meta-analysis; statistical power; common misuses and misinterpretations of inferential statistics	Rubin, <i>Statistics for Evidence-Based Practice and Evaluation</i> , 3rd edition: Ch. 13. Rubin & Babbie, pp. 540-570 Maxfield & Hyer, (2002) "The Relationship Between Efficacy and Methodology in Studies Investigating EMDR Treatment of PTSD," <i>Journal of Clinical Psychology</i> , 58, 23-41. Rubin, "Some Unanswered Questions..." Maxfield et al. (2004) "Some answers to..." Rubin (2004) "Fallacies and deflections..." Just skim the following protocol to get an appreciation of the rigor of systematic reviews of the Campbell Collaboration: Albright, D.L., Thyer, B., Becker, B. & Rubin, A. (2011). Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Combat Veterans: Protocol. http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/library.php

4/3	Critical appraisals/feedback re Assignment 4	
4/10	Single-case designs	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 12
4/17	Class critical appraisals/feedback re Assignment 5	
4/24	Exam	
5/1	Class critical appraisals/feedback re Assignment 6 Course evaluation	