

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

## STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW 313	<b>Instructor:</b>	Patricia Cody, PhD, MSW
<b>Unique Number:</b>	58865	<b>Email:</b>	triciacody@austin.utexas.edu
<b>Semester:</b>	Spring 2020	<b>Office:</b>	3.212A
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	Tuesday / Thursday 2:00pm – 3:30pm SSW 1.212	<b>Phone:</b>	512-413-6405 (cell)
		<b>Office Hours:</b>	Thursdays, 1:00pm – 2:00pm Other times by appointment

### Social Work Research Methods

#### I. STANDARDIZED 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.

Course credit or concurrent registration for SW318 or any approved SW318 substitution is a prerequisite for this course.

#### II. STANDARDIZED 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 quasi-experimental 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

The primary methods of instruction are interactive lectures (students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments), class discussions, group/class exercises, and reading assignments. Students are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor to review their progress in the course and to ask questions regarding the course content and the social work profession.

## IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Rubin & Babbie (2017). *Research Methods for Social Work, 9th Edition*. Cengage Learning.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignment	Points
Human Subjects Training Online training: <a href="https://utdirect.utexas.edu/citi/citi_login.WBX">https://utdirect.utexas.edu/citi/citi_login.WBX</a> Course to be completed: Social/Behavioral Researchers - Basic Course, Required and Elective Modules. Students may submit an electronic copy (PDF or screen shot of the completion) of their course completion certificate on Canvas.	5
Monday Weekly Reading Quiz Twelve short quizzes will be given on Tuesdays throughout the semester. Ten quizzes will be calculated for the full 30 points assigned. Students may elect to drop/not take up to two quizzes or students may elect to drop/not take one quiz and add the score from quiz into the total score as extra credit. <i>There will be no make quizzes offered.</i>	30

<p><b>Research Lecture Paper</b></p> <p>Students must attend one research lecture on campus in any department. Lecture must present original, empirical data and may be on any topic. In the event that there are not sufficient lectures available on campus, a class session during the second half of the semester will be dedicated to presentation of original data by the Professor for this assignment. Students must write a summary and assessment that includes the following: 1) topic of the lecture and research questions or hypotheses, 2) methodology used, 3) conclusions drawn by the researcher, 4) challenges faced by the researcher and 5) student's assessment of the research presented. Student assessment should be thorough and be backed up by examples. Paper will be 2-3 pages, double spaced.</p>	10
<p><b>Research Proposal Paper</b></p> <p>There are four sections of this project. Professor will provided written feedback within 1 week of due date for sections 1-3.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Topic choice and development of research question (6 points)</li> <li>2) Review of empirical literature. (12 points) This should include a minimum of 5 recent, empirical studies published in peer reviewed journals. The outcome of the literature review will either be a confirmation that the research question is still relevant or it will uncover a new area of inquiry where more research is needed requiring a modification of the research question.</li> <li>3) Methodology and Sampling. (12 points) Students will design a research project to answer the research question that was developed in part 1 or revised in part 2. Sections to be included: Research question, Methodology, Sampling Plan, and Anticipated Challenges. Each section should include a justification for decisions.</li> <li>4) Final paper. (10 points) The final submission will include sections 1-3 with all suggestions and feedback addressed.</li> </ol> <p><i>A more detailed assignment handout will be provided in class.</i></p>	40
<p><b>Presentation:</b> Give a five-minute presentation of the highlights and key findings of the Research Proposal.</p>	5
<p><b>Class Participation and Attendance</b></p> <p>Students are expected to attend class and participate in class activities and discussion. Two unexcused absences will be allowed without penalty.</p>	10

## VI. GRADES

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 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

## VII. CLASS POLICIES

Students are expected to come to all classes having carefully completed all reading assignments, to be prepared to discuss the reading material, and to be able to participate in the class activities by sharing your thoughts, views and questions. **Please expect to be called upon during each class to discuss your understanding of the reading material.**

Students are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor to review your progress in the course and to ask questions regarding the course content and social work profession. The instructor is available to meet by appointment and is responsive to emails.

The use of laptops/tablets is not allowed in class unless you have individual approval from the instructor. Please take notes on paper. The use of cell phones is not allowed in class. If you are a parent or caretakers (and need to be available for a possible emergency call) please turn your cell phone off and keep it stored in your bag.

Two unexcused absences are allowed without penalty but students are encouraged to attend all classes. After that, ½ point from the student's final grade will be deducted for each unexcused absence.

There will be no make-up opportunities for weekly quizzes. There are 2 "extra" quizzes already offered to accommodate for emergencies that may arise.

## 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 race, 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. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. 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 (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://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 on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on concealed firearms 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 have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. 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

Please note that the instructor may make modifications to the syllabus (i.e. readings or assignments) during the semester. Revised versions of the syllabus will be uploaded to Canvas.

*Readings for each week are to be completed before class on Tuesday of each week.*

Week	Day / Dates	Topics	Readings
1	Tuesday 1/21/2020	Tuesday: Introduction	Syllabus
	Thursday 1/22/2020	Thursday: Why Study Research? Conducting online literature reviews Deciding on a Research Proposal Paper topic	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 1
2	Tuesday 1/28/2020	Topic: Evidence-Based Practice Factors Influencing the Research Process	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 2, 3
	Thursday 1/30/2020	<b>Tuesday: Quiz #1 (in class, chapters 2, 3)</b> <b>Due Thursday 1/30/2020: Human Subjects Training (upload to Canvas before start of class)</b>	

3	Tuesday 2/4/2020  Thursday 2/6/2020	Topic: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods of Inquiry  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #2 (in class, chapters 4)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 4
4	Tuesday 2/11/2020  Thursday 2/13/2020	Topic: The Ethics and Politics of Social Work Research Culturally Competent Research  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #3 (in class, chapters 5, 6)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 5, 6
5	Tuesday 2/18/2020  Thursday 2/20/2020	Topic: Problem Formulation Conceptualization in Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #4 (in class, chapters 7, 8)</b>  <b>Due Thursday 2/20/2020: Research Project: Topic choice and development of research question. (upload to Canvas before start of class)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 7, 8
6	Tuesday 2/25/2017  Thursday 2/27/2017	Topic: Measurement Constructions Measurement Instruments  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #5 (in class, chapters 9, 10)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 9, 10
7	Tuesday 3/3/2020  Thursday 3/5/2020	Topic: Causal Inference and Experimental Design  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #6 (in class, chapter 11)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 11
8	Tuesday 3/10/2020  Thursday 3/12/2020	Topic: Quasi-Experimental Design  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #7 (in class, chapter 12)</b>  <b>Due Thursday: Research Project: Review of empirical literature. (upload to Canvas by midnight)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 12
9	Tuesday 3/17/2020  Thursday 3/19/2020	<b>Spring Break!!! ☺</b>	--
10	Tuesday 3/24/2020  Thursday 3/26/2020	Topic: <u>TUESDAY</u> : Research Paper Lecture In Class  <u>THURSDAY</u> : Single Case Design  <b><u>THURSDAY</u>: Quiz #8 (in class, chapter 13)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 13



11	Tuesday 3/31/2020  Thursday 4/2/2020	Topic: Program Evaluation Sampling  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #9 (in class, chapters 14, 15)</b>  <b>Due Thursday 4/2/2020: Research Lecture Paper. Upload to Canvas by midnight.</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 14, 15
12	Tuesday 4/7/2020  Thursday 4/9/2020	Topic: Survey Research Analyzing Existing Data: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #10 (in class, chapter 16, 17)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 16, 17
13	Tuesday 4/14/2020  Thursday 4/16/2020	Topic: Qualitative Research: General Principles Qualitative Research: Specific Methods Qualitative Data Analysis  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #11 (in class, chapter 18, 19, 20)</b>  <b>Due Thursday 4/16/2020: Research Project: Methodology and Sampling. (upload to Canvas by midnight)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 18, 19, 20
14	Tuesday 4/21/2020  Thursday 4/23/2020	Topic: Descriptive Data Analysis Inferential Data Analysis  <b>Tuesday: Quiz #12 (in class, chapters 21, 22)</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 21, 22
15	Tuesday 4/28/2020  Thursday 4/30/2020	Topic: Writing Research Proposal and Reports  <b>Thursday: Library Day to work on Presentations and Final Research Proposal Paper</b>	Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 23
16	Tuesday 5/5/2020  Thursday 5/7/2020	Topic: Research Proposal Presentations (Tuesday and Thursday) Wrap-Up and evaluations  <b>Due Thursday 5/7/2020: Final Research Project (uploaded to Canvas by midnight)</b>	--

## X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rubin & Babbie (2017). *Research Methods for Social Work, 9th Edition*. Cengage Learning.