

SW395S: Specialization Area Seminar (Doctoral Comprehensive Examination Course) | Spring 2025

"To write is human, to edit is divine." Stephen King

"Write without fear. Edit without mercy." Unknown

- Instructor: Diana DiNitto
- Course Unique Number: 61315
- Canvas course site: <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1416454>
- Meeting Time: Monday 11:30PM - 2:30PM
- Meeting Place: WWH 418



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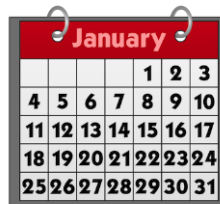
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I. Course Description

A major requirement of the social work doctoral program is that each student will write and successfully defend a comprehensive exam paper that demonstrates knowledge of the substantive issues, key research questions, theory, analytical methods, empirical evidence, and implications related to a specific area of interest. The comprehensive exam process is described in detail in the Doctoral Program Handbook of the Steve Hicks School of Social Work. The Specialization Area Seminar is designed to help students develop major portions of the comprehensive exam paper through writing assignments, class discussion, and individual feedback from the course instructor. Prior to registering for the course, students must identify a faculty member who will chair their comprehensive exam committee, and in conjunction with the chair, determine the topic that will be the focus of their comprehensive exam paper.

II. Course Objectives

1. Gain knowledge of the different types of literature reviews.
2. Determine the type of literature review that will be used to develop the comprehensive exam paper.
3. Prepare a complete draft of the introduction section of the comprehensive exam paper, including a description of the problem or topic and its significance and history, key concepts, and any other relevant background information necessary to introduce the reader to the specialized topic area.
4. Prepare a complete draft of either: a) the theory section of the paper including a description and critique of the most important/influential theories and conceptual frameworks that have been developed within or applied to the specialized topic area, or b) the empirical literature review section of the paper, including a report on the process used for completing the literature review in the specialized topic area and a synthesis and critical analysis of research findings.
5. Discuss progress on the comprehensive exam paper throughout the course including substantive and methodological knowledge gained about the topic, and engage in constructive discussion about each class member's work and progress.

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III. Teaching Methods

Most important is that this course is designed to provide a supportive environment to assist you in the process of producing a sound piece of scholarly work that we call the "comp paper." As a course focused on the development of each student's comprehensive exam paper, we will continue to work on honing critical thinking and writing skills. Students will also have opportunities to present their work during seminar sessions to gain experience in discussing their topic as they think about preparing for the comprehensive exam defense. In addition to brief presentations the course instructor may make, guest speakers may be invited to address topics class members identify as beneficial to the development of the comprehensive exam paper. The bulk of the course reading will be on the student's topic area and focus. Students should consider readings that present diverse perspectives on their topic. This may include work from various

disciplines and authors who bring critical perspectives to discussion of and research on the topic. The selection of these readings will be directed by the student and the comprehensive exam committee chair and others they may wish to consult. The course instructor has also suggested readings on topics of general interest to the class focused on conducting literature reviews and the writing process. The seminar provides opportunities to discuss and clarify ideas, including theoretical perspectives, think about how to synthesize and critique the literature, ask questions, seek guidance, and receive feedback. The course instructor will provide feedback on each student's work (in addition to any feedback/critiques the comprehensive exam committee chair and/or committee members provide during the semester). Class members will also share their work with each other. At various points in the semester, students will be asked to read a classmate's work and provide peer support and helpful comments.

Successful defense of the comprehensive exam paper is an important milestone in the doctoral program. As the course instructor, I enjoy working with each student in developing the paper. In many ways, I liken it to applying the problem-solving process in social work to writing, especially in the early stages of developing the paper. It is an intellectually challenging and stimulating process. I look forward to seeing the products that emerge at each stage and celebrating each class member's accomplishments.

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IV. Required and Suggested Readings

Much of the course reading will be articles and other materials each student identifies based on the comprehensive exam topic chosen. Required readings for all class members in addition to the text noted below, are noted on the course schedule (section VIII. of this syllabus). The suggested texts listed below are also ones that may be helpful in conducting the literature review and in synthesizing the literature, writing, and critical thinking processes should you wish to consult them.

Required text:

Galvan, J. L., & Galvan, M. C. (2017). *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences* (7th ed.). New York: Routledge. Available electronically at the UT Libraries website.

- This is a basic, practical guide. Section IX of this syllabus (Class Schedule) refers to chapters in this book.

Suggested texts:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

- This is the referencing style generally used by social workers and the one adopted for most work in the Steve Hicks School of Social Work. Other style manuals are available should students wish to consult them.

Cooper, H., Hedges, L. V., & Valentine, J. C. (Eds.). (2019). *Handbook of research synthesis and meta-analysis* (3rd ed.). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

- This edited volume contains considerable information specific to meta-analysis (e.g., analyzing effect sizes), but some chapters are particularly relevant to the comprehensive exam paper (e.g., research synthesis, searching databases, making judgments about study quality). The second edition is available electronically at the UT Libraries website.

Rudestan, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2015). *Surviving your dissertation* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

- There are many books on writing the dissertation and the dissertation process. This book also contains information helpful in writing the comprehensive exam paper such as conducting literature reviews, understanding research studies, etc. It may also help you start thinking ahead to the dissertation.

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2013). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

- This classic, relatively brief volume focuses on language usage, rules of grammar, and punctuation.

Williams, J. M., & Bizup, J. (2016). *Style: Lessons in clarity and grace* (12th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

- This book is designed to help improve writing.

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V. University and Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

Academic Policies

Attendance and Academic Behavior. At the University of Texas at Austin, regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. See more information at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/>.

Furthermore, students are expected to abide by the Standards for Social Work Education (available at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/student-resources/bsw/policies-and-procedures/>). The student shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements.

Religious Holy Days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Center for Access and Restorative Engagement at <https://community.utexas.edu/care/>. The University does

not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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.

Policy on Academic Integrity. Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at:
<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

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.

University Electronic Mail Student Notification. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address
at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

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.

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.

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 and Mental Health 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.

Resources, Prevention of Discrimination, and Safety

Disability Accommodation Statement. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have

a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <https://disability.utexas.edu/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

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 <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>.

students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

Covid-19 Related Information. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

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/>.

Title IX Accommodations for Those Pregnant, Nursing and Parenting. Pregnant, nursing and parenting students, faculty, and staff are eligible for accommodations through the Title IX Office that support equal access to education and work and prevent discrimination. Students may reach out to the Title IX Office for help with accommodations to make up missed classes, complete missed coursework, keep them safe in the classroom, apply for leaves of absence, receive priority registration and other related support. Faculty and staff, including undergraduate students who work on campus and graduate student employees, may reach out for assistance with job or schedule restructuring and obtaining modified or additional work equipment. Visit the [Title IX pregnancy and parenting resource page](#) for more information or contact the [Title IX Support and Resources team](#) connect with a Case Manager.

Campus Carry Policy. The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

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.

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.

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VI. Policies Specific to This Course

Class expectations, attendance, and participation: As a class, we will discuss expectations regarding attendance, participation, submission and return of assignments, etc. As a seminar, your attendance (including being present for the entire class session), attention, and active participation are critical to a successful course for everyone. Participation includes completing all required work prior to each class session and engaging in class discussions and exercises. As participants in a social work course, I know we are committed to principles of active listening, respectful communication, and classroom confidentiality as being essential to the learning environment. Please turn off cell phone ringers and refrain from reading email and other non-class activities unless you are dealing with an urgent situation. If online participation is necessary, please keep your camera on when your situation allows. While illnesses or emergencies may necessitate missing a class or two, additional absences may raise concerns about whether successful class completion is feasible.

Submitting assignments:

- Assignments should usually be double-spaced using 12-point font and reasonable margins.
- Assignment due dates are noted in sections VII. and VIII. of the syllabus. Please post your assignments on Canvas or email them to the instructor. If you wish to receive feedback at alternative or additional points in the semester, please coordinate this with the instructor.
- The current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) is the style manual to be used unless you and your comprehensive exam committee chair have agreed on another style.
- Please attend to appropriate referencing of citations (e.g., providing authors, titles, page numbers, etc.) and giving due credit to others when indirect quotes (paraphrasing) and direct (verbatim) quotes are used. For example, short direct quotes (of 5 to 39 words) should be placed in quotation marks, and long direct quotes (40 or more words) should be indented, and please attend to sufficient paraphrasing, i.e., not just changing a word or two in a sentence.

- As a reminder, scholastic dishonesty in any of its forms may result in a report to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and/or Dean of the Steve Hicks School of Social Work as well as UT Austin Student Judicial Services and may result in an “F” for the course and other sanctions in accordance with UT Austin policies. Also see information on UT policies on academic integrity at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>.
- **Course modifications:** Should any course modifications or changes need to be made (e.g., calendar, assignments), students will be notified in class and/or by email. Other course communications may also be done via email (also see UT’s policy on email in section V above). Please check your email frequently, and check with the instructor about announcements made in class if you miss a class. We will continuously review the course format and make modifications that are feasible and necessary to facilitate progress on preparing the comprehensive exam paper. Having worked with cohort members before, I know we will extend each other grace, maintain a sense of humor, and do our best throughout the semester should we face challenges or uncertainties.

Canvas: The Canvas course website will be used for some class functions such as posting the course syllabus and some readings.

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VII. Course Requirements and Grading

The class readings, writing assignments, discussions, and feedback are designed to facilitate continuous and timely development of the introductory chapter (section) and either the theory chapter or empirical review chapter of the comprehensive exam paper. The course instructor will provide feedback on substantive content (to the extent of her ability given the topic you have selected), writing style, and other elements of your work (e.g., conformity of the drafts to the purpose and outline of the relevant chapters/sections of your paper) to aid in preparing these parts of the comprehensive exam paper. (If you are also able or wish to work on a third chapter during the course, the instructor would be happy to assist you to the extent possible.)

The course instructor assigns a grade for this course, but the student’s comprehensive exam committee chair and committee members determine whether the work meets the comprehensive examination paper requirements. The 395S course is offered on a CREDIT/NO CREDIT basis. Receiving CREDIT means that the student has met all the requirements of written assignments including producing complete drafts of the introductory chapter and either the theory chapter or empirical review chapter, presentations, attendance, feedback to classmates, and participation in class discussions and exercises in a timely fashion and at the level of depth the comprehensive exam course requires. NO CREDIT means that one or more of these requirements was not met. Though we will review and discuss descriptions or rubrics that can serve as general information or guides for composing and assessing the chapters to be written, class members’ papers will differ according to the topic and focus selected.

Dates when the written course assignments are due are provided immediately below and are also noted on the course schedule. Dates for other course assignments (e.g., discussing your work, providing feedback to classmates) are included in section VIII. Course Schedule.

Due Dates for Written Assignments

(The course requirement is to complete drafts of two chapters by the end of the semester, but the incremental written assignment due dates noted below are modifiable, i.e., you can submit materials earlier, or if you need more time, speak with the instructor about a later submission date.) You may also submit additional drafts.

Due date	Assignment
Week 3, Jan. 27	A tentative title for your paper, a one paragraph description of the topic you have selected and its scope, a one paragraph description of the topic's importance, and a list of topics you plan to include in the Introductory chapter.
Week 4, Feb. 3	A detailed outline of your Introduction chapter. Include a draft of any materials you wish to have reviewed at this time.
Week 5, Feb. 10	A draft of as much of your Introductory chapter as possible (Draft 1). Also send it to your class writing partner for feedback.
Week 7, Feb. 24	A complete draft of your Introduction chapter for feedback and any needed modifications (Draft 2)
Week 8, Mar. 3	Material you have developed to date on your theory or empirical literature review chapter (Draft 1).
Week 11, Mar. 24	Updated draft of material you have developed to date on your theory or empirical literature review chapter (Draft 2). Also send to your writing partner for feedback.
Week 14 or 15, Apr. 14 or 21	A complete draft of your theory or empirical lit review chapter for feedback and any needed modifications (Draft 3).

Additional Course Features

To enhance the course and make participation a more meaningful experience, two other aspects of the course are included: (1) a writers' groups and (2) a comp's cajita.

Writing Group



Photo by David Iskander on Unsplash

Writing is a core aspect of academic life, but often we do not take time to share the experience of writing with each other. Although largely a solo activity, writing can also include interactive or social components, i.e., we can encourage each other in the writing process, provide feedback, problem solve, and otherwise help each other achieve our writing goals. We can also share information that is inspirational or practical, serious or humorous--perhaps some writing tips you found useful, a quote that motivated you to write, something humorous about writing that will give us a needed chuckle, or a particularly well written piece of work you wish to share. We will provide support in the writing process through instructor feedback and consultation, peer feedback, and a writing group. We will develop guidelines for our writing group together and utilize writing group sessions throughout the semester.

Comp's Cajita



Photo by Kelli McClintock on Unsplash

In Spanish, "cajita" means "small box." Completing the comprehensive exam paper is a major milestone in the SHSSW doctoral program. This cajita exercise, based on ideas from Laura Rendón's book *Sentipensante (Sensing/Thinking) Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice & Liberation* (Stylus, 2009, 2023), will help mark the journey. The course instructor will give everyone a cajita. During the semester you can place objects, notes, etc. that mark or commemorate your comps course/paper journey. Think creatively about what you would like to include. These items may not be directly related to the paper but about memorable things that happened during the semester. At the end of the semester, and perhaps at mid-term, we will take time to discuss items you would like to share with the class. In the spirit of course co-construction, let me and/or the class know if you have other thoughts about this exercise.

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VIII. Course Schedule

Date	Topics	For You To Do
Week 1 Jan 13	Getting started: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course welcome and overview 2. Guidance for the comp exam 3. Selecting the right size topic 4. Chapters for composing the comp paper with an emphasis this week on topics for the Introduction chapter (e.g., topic/problem [paper's purpose], key terms and definitions, data and/or other information regarding topic/extent of problem, history of topic/issue and current status, scope of the paper and what will be covered in future chapters) and consideration of page limits 5. Rubric for the comp paper 6. Identify writing partner matches 7. Receive and discuss cajita 	Before our first class, please review: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course syllabus at course Canvas site under Modules, Syllabus and bring any questions you have. 2. Pages 21-29 of the 2024-2025 SHSSW Doctoral Program Handbook for information about the comprehensive exam (available at doctoral student Canvas page). Have a copy handy in class. Bring any questions you have. 3. The comps exam rubric posted at the Canvas course site under Modules, Comps Rubric <p style="background-color: yellow;">Be prepared to briefly discuss the general topic of your comp paper and any concerns you have about proceeding at this time.</p> <p>We will discuss the following readings in class; read before our first class if you have time or after as we will come back to them in Week 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baker, J. D. (2016). The purpose, process, and methods of writing a literature review. <i>AORN Journal</i>, 103(3), 265-269 (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course Readings, Week 1). 2. Galvan & Galvan: Preface; Chapter 3, Selecting a Topic for Your Review (see p. 4 of this syllabus for the full reference). The book is available electronically at the UT Libraries website. 3. Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: An analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. <i>Health Information and Libraries Journal</i>, 26, 91-108 (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course Readings, Week 1).
Week 2 Jan 20	Dr. Martin Luther King holiday (no class meeting)	The following guides at the UT Libraries website may be helpful as you think ahead to the empirical section of your literature review: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Work Research https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/socialwork 2. Scoping Reviews https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/scopingreviews

		<p>3. Systematic Reviews and Evidence Synthesis Methods https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/systematicreviews.</p> <p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Galvan & Galvan: Part 1: Managing the Literature Search: Chapter 1, Writing Reviews of Academic Literature: An Overview; Chapter 11, Guidelines for Developing a Coherent Essay MacPhail, T. (2014). The art and science of finding your voice. <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, pp. 20-22 (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course readings, Week 2 in the packet of articles titled "Why Academic Writing Stinks and How to Fix It"). Materials specific to your comprehensive exam paper that you may have already identified. <p>Ensure that you and your committee chair have a plan for communicating about the comprehensive exam paper, submitting and obtaining feedback on draft materials, etc. as you develop your paper.</p> <p>See the work that is due next week to give yourself sufficient time to prepare.</p>
<p>Week 3 Jan 27</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue discussing the readings assigned in Week 1. Discuss the elements you may include in your Introductory chapter. Advice from the front: Former comps students discuss their experiences getting started and writing the comp paper and suggestions for accomplishing your goals Assess your writing strengths, areas for strengthening, and how you might become a more productive writer. 	<p>Prepare a one paragraph description of the topic you have selected and its scope, a one paragraph description of the topic's importance, a list of topics you plan to include in the Introductory chapter, and include a tentative title for your paper. Submit this material at the course Canvas site under Assignments, Initial paper description, and be prepared to present and discuss in class.</p> <p>Review the introductory chapter of two successfully defended comprehensive exam papers, identify the topics covered in each, compare the topics covered, your reactions to them in relation to your own paper, and be prepared to discuss these topics in class. See the Doctoral Program Canvas page for examples of comps papers or contact students who have completed the comps paper as they may be willing to share their paper with you. The course instructor, your committee chair, and/or Dr. Castro</p>

		<p>may be able to assist in identifying papers that may be most relevant to your work.</p> <p>Reflect on your writing and be prepared to mention some strengths and areas you might like to strengthen.</p> <p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials specific to your comp paper 2. Donovan, M. (2021, December 2). Eight characteristics of good writing. Writing Forward. https://www.writingforward.com/better-writing/characteristics-of-good-writing 3. Munger, M. C. (2014). 10 tips on how to write less badly. <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, pp. 10-12 (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course readings, Week 2, in the packet of articles titled "Why Academic Writing Stinks and How to Fix It"). 4. Toor, R. (2014, November 17). The habits of highly productive writers. <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i> (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course Readings, Week 3). <p>Look ahead to next week's outline assignment.</p>
<p>Week 4 Feb 3</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Librarian services and literature review tools: Hear from social work librarian Erin Anderson 2. What kind of review will it be? 3. Brief progress reports and writing goals for this class session. 4. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed). 	<p>Post to Canvas under Assignments, Intro Chapter Outline or email to the course instructor a detailed outline of your Introduction chapter. You may also include a draft of any materials you wish to have reviewed at this time.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss your writing goal for this session and to write for the second half of the class period.</p> <p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials specific to your comp paper 2. Galvan & Galvan, Chapter 2, How to Navigate the Electronic Resources in Your University's Library 3. Sword, H. (2014). Inoculating against jargonitis. <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i> (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course readings, Week 2, in the packet of articles titled "Why Academic Writing Stinks and How to Fix It").

<p>Week 5 Feb 10</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to discuss good academic writing and the comp paper development process. 2. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed). 	<p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials specific to your comprehensive exam paper 2. Galvan & Galvan, Chapter 4, Organizing Yourself to Begin the Selection of Relevant Titles 3. Toor, R. (2014). Becoming a 'stylish' writer, <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, pp. 17-19 (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course readings, Week 2, in the packet of articles titled "Why Academic Writing Stinks and How to Fix It"). <p>Complete as much of the draft of your Introductory chapter as possible and post it at the course Canvas site under Assignments, Intro Chapter Draft 1 or email it to the course instructor for feedback. Also send it to your class writing partner for feedback.</p>
<p>Week 6 Feb 17</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wrapping up the draft of the Introductory chapter 2. Getting started on the theory chapter or empirical evidence review chapter 	<p>Be prepared to discuss in some detail the substance of the material you have covered in your Introductory chapter and your plans for finalizing the chapter if you have not done so already (12-15 minutes per class member).</p> <p>Read</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials specific to your comprehensive exam paper 2. Bentley, K. J., Mancini, M., Jacob, A., & McLeod, D. A. (2019). Teaching social work research through the lens of social justice, human rights, and diversity. <i>Journal of Social Work Education</i>, 55(3), 433-448. 3. Witkin, S. L., & Gottschalk, S. (1988). Alternative criteria for theory evaluation. <i>Social Service Review</i>, 62(2). 4. Galvan & Galvan: Part II: Analyzing the Relevant Literature: Chapter 5, Conducting a Deep Analysis of the Articles. <p>Review the theory and/or empirical literature chapter of two comprehensive exam papers. Be prepared to discuss how these chapters were structured (e.g., the topic of the paper, how many theories were discussed, the rationale for selection of the theories, etc. or the scope of the empirical</p>

		review chapter, inclusion/exclusion criteria, use of tables to summarize the included studies, etc.). Based on the Witkin & Gottschalk article and Bentley et al. articles assigned for this week, assess how the theory chapter or the empirical review chapter of the comps papers you read reflect the principles noted in these articles.
Week 7 Feb 24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue discussion of “good” academic writing 2. Developing tables summarizing empirical literature 3. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>Post a complete draft of your Introduction chapter for the SW395S course at the course Canvas site under Assignments, Intro Chapter Draft 2, or email it to the course instructor for feedback and any modifications needed for meeting the goal of the course assignment. Although your draft may meet SW395K course requirements, remember that your comprehensive exam chair and committee members will determine whether your paper and oral defense meet the standards for successfully completing the comprehensive exam requirements.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss your writing goal for this session and to write for the second half of the class period.</p> <p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials specific to your comps paper 2. Galvan & Galvan: Part II: Chapter 6, Analyzing Quantitative Research Literature; Chapter 7, Analyzing Qualitative Research Literature; Chapter 8: Organizing Your Notes by Grouping the Results of Your Analysis 3. Steven Pinker (2014). Why academic writing stinks. <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, pp. 2-9 (at course Canvas site under Modules, Course readings, Week 2, in the packet of articles titled “Why Academic Writing Stinks and How to Fix It”). <p>At the course Canvas site see examples of tables under Modules, Resources for compiling tables and synthesizing literature</p>
Week 8 Mar 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress reports and discussion of substantive knowledge gained and issues to be addressed on theories or empirical literature. 	<p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials specific to your comprehensive exam paper.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Continue discussion of writing the theory or empirical evidence review chapter 3. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>2. Galvan & Galvan, Part III: Writing the First Draft of Your Literature Review, Chapter 9: Synthesizing Trends and Patterns: Preparing to Write; Chapter 10: Guidelines for Writing a First Draft</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss your writing goal for this session and to write for the second half of the class period.</p> <p>Submit drafts of material you have developed to date on your theory or empirical literature review chapter at the course Canvas site under Assignments, Theory or empirical lit review Draft 1.</p>
Week 9 Mar 10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress reports and discussion of substantive knowledge gained and issues to be addressed on theories or empirical literature. 2. Continued discussion of writing the theory and empirical results chapters 3. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>Read materials relevant to your comp paper and draft related material.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your progress on the theory or empirical literature review chapter of your paper, substantive knowledge gained, and any issues to be addressed (about 7 minutes per class member) 2. Your writing goal for this session and to write for the second half of the class period.
Week 10 Mar 17	Spring break	Take some time to refresh and relax
Week 11 Mar 24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress reports and discussion of substantive knowledge gained and issues to be addressed on theories or empirical literature chapter. 2. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>Read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Materials relevant to your comp paper. 2. Galvan & Galvan, Part IV: Editing and Preparing the Final Draft of your Review <p>Be prepared to discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your progress on the theory or empirical literature review chapter of your paper, substantive knowledge gained, and any issues to be addressed 2. Your writing goal for this class session. <p>Submit drafts of material you have developed to date on your theory or empirical literature review chapter at the course Canvas site under Assignments, Theory or empirical lit review Draft 2. Also provide the draft to your writing partner for feedback.</p>

Week 12 Mar 31	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress reports and discussion of substantive knowledge gained and issues to be addressed on theories or empirical literature chapter. 2. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>Be prepared to discuss new learning as you have continued work on the comp paper, your progress to date, your short-term plans for completing next sections of the paper, and your goal for our writing group.</p>
Week 13 Apr 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparing to write the final chapter(s) of the comp paper: Summary of findings, implications for social work education, research, and practice, and policy, conclusion 2. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>Bring questions about writing the final sections of the comps paper.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss your writing goal for this session.</p>
Week 14 Apr 14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advice from the front: Former comps students discuss preparation for the comp exam defense and the defense experience 2. Progress reports 	<p>Read materials relevant to your comp paper and continue to draft your paper.</p> <p>Bring questions about the comps defense</p> <p>Summarize your recent progress on the comps paper and the new knowledge you have gained.</p> <p>This week or next week, submit a complete draft of your theory or empirical lit review chapter for the SW395S course at the course Canvas site under Assignments, Theory or empirical lit review Draft 3, or email it to the course instructor for feedback and any modifications needed for meeting the goal of the course assignment.</p>
Week 15 Apr 21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress reports 2. Writing group and individual consultation (as needed) 	<p>Be prepared to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present a brief progress report on your work. 2. Discuss your writing goals for this session.
Week 16 Apr 28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course wrap-up and feedback 2. Presentation of cajitas 3. Celebration of accomplishments! 	<p>Be prepared to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess your overall progress on the comp paper to date and plans, including timeline, to complete the paper. 2. Reflect on the course and your experiences on this journey and present cajita.

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IX. Course Evaluation

In addition to the official UT Austin Course Evaluation System in which all students will be asked to participate at the end of the semester, the instructor will request feedback from students frequently as the semester progresses. Students' input is welcome throughout the term to co-construct and improve the course.

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X. Course Contact Information

- Instructor: Diana DiNitto
- Office Number: SSW 3.130B
- Cell Phone: Will be provided in class
- E mail: ddinitto@mail.utexas.edu
- Office Hours: At your convenience in person or on Zoom

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