

University of North Dakota
Department of Social Work
COURSE SYLLABUS SWK 331
MWF
101 Gillette Hall
1:00-1:50

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Office Hours: MWF 9:30-11; 2-3

I. Standard Syllabus Information

Course Description

SWK 331 Social Work Research Methods. 3 credits. Pre or co requisite: SWK 255. Research methods for social work practice and evaluation of practice.

Relationship Between This and Other Courses

SWK 331 builds on basic knowledge regarding social work gained in SWK 255 (Introduction to Social Work), including issues regarding social and economic justice, values and ethics, diversity, critical thinking, and social work fields of practice. It focuses on teaching social work students to think critically about their world and research as one way to better understand that world. SWK 331 provides students with basic research methods as a precursor to students' completion of SWK 441 (Qualitative Research Methods). The research methods allow students in practice courses and policy analysis to understand evaluation of practice.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of SWK 331, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to think critically when critiquing and summarizing research and in the design of research.
2. Understand the application of the ethical mandates of NASW for social work research and the responsibility of institutional review boards.
3. Understand and evaluate the representation of diversity in research.
4. Understand how social and economic justice is affected by and reflected in the design and publication of research.
5. NA
6. Use research to inform generalist practice.
7. Understand the interaction between theory and research..
8. Understand the interaction between research and social policy.
9. Critique research and evaluate entry level practice.
10. Use communication skills appropriately in technical writing and speaking.
11. Consult and seek supervision as needed.

12. NA

Classroom Policies

Important classroom policies are available in their entirety at web sites listed here.

Class Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to participate in all course learning opportunities. <http://www.und.edu/dept/registrar/catalogs/catalog/ugdept/more.htm>. Faculty will inform students of course expectations, including grading criteria, during the first week of class.

Non-Discrimination

There shall be no discrimination against persons because of race, religion, age, creed, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veteran's status or political belief or affiliation, and equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all. [code of student life web site](#)

Disability Statement

If you have emergency medical information to share with me, if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, or if you need accommodations in this course because of a disability, please make an appointment with me. My office location is 301C Gillette Hall and hours are by appointment. If you plan to request disability accommodations, you are expected to register with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office (190 McCannel Hall, 777-3425 v/tty).

<http://www.und.edu/dept/dss/>

Grievance

Student grievances are pursued through the [College of Education and Human Development Grievance Procedure](#) or <http://www.und.edu/dept/csl/appendix-ii.htm>

Scholastic Dishonesty

Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Student Life, including avoiding cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

<http://www.und.edu/dept/csl/section-3.htm>

Required Text/Readings

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2005). *Research methods for social work* (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson Learning.

II. Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	8/24	Introduction/What this course is about	R & B chapter 1,2
	8/26	Ways of Knowing/ Time Article	R & B chapter 1,2
2	8/29	Ethical Issues, Diversity, Social	R & B chapter 3

	8/31	And Economic Justice Ethics Continued: IRB	R & B chapter 3 pp. 90-96, code of ethics pp.84
	9/2	Culturally competent research	R & B chapter 16
3	9/5 9/7 9/9	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY Introduction to Library and on- line databases Writing the Research report:	MEET IN THE LIBRARY R & B chapter 22
4	9/12 9/14 9/16	Problem Formation Problem Formation: Writing the research question Conceptualization and Operationalization	Chapter 4 Chapter 5
5	9/19 9/21 9/23	Conceptualization and Operationalization: Operationalizing the parts Using the Internet to find content Measurement:	Chapter 5 MEET IN THE LAB IN THE BASEMENT Chapter 6
6	9/26 9/28 9/30 9/30	Measurement: Measurements: Instruments Measurement: Instruments Measurement: Instruments	Chapter 6 Chapter 7 Chapter 7 Chapter 7
7	10/3 10/5 10/7	Survey Research Survey Research Sampling	Chapter 9 Chapter 9 Chapter 8
8	10/10 10/12 10/15	Sampling Sampling: Identify the sample Introduction to Research Design/Experimental Design	Chapter 8 Chapter 8 Chapter 10
9	10/17 10/19 10/21	Experimental Design Experimental Design Quasi Experimental Design	Chapter 10 Chapter 10 Chapter 11
10	10/24 10/26 10/28	Quasi Experimental Design Single Subject Design Single Subject Design/Program Evaluation	Chapter 11 Chapter 12 Chapter 12, Chapter 13
11	10/31 11/2 11/4	Program Evaluation Group Time to work on projects Univariate Analysis: Frequencies and Measures of Central Tendencies	Chapter 13 Chapter 18
12	11/7 11/9 11/11	Bivariate Analysis: Chi Square, T-Test, Correlation, Effect Size Analyzing data in Excel NO CLASS	Chapter 19 pp 576-578; Chapter 20 MEET IN LAB
13	11/14 11/16 11/18	Analyzing Data in Excel Analyzing Data in Excel/Class time to work on data Class Time to work on data	MEET IN LAB MEET IN LAB
14	11/21 11/23 11/25	Summing it all up; drawing conclusions; answering your research questions Writing the report NO CLASS	 Chapter 22

15	11/28 11/30 12/2	Group Group Group	
16	12/5 12/7 12/9	Group Group Final Papers due	

III. Assignments for the Course

GRADING CRITERIA FOR EACH ASSIGNMENT WILL BE POSTED. I WILL INFORM THE CLASS WHEN THE CRITERIA ARE ON-LINE

Assignment Journal Critiques: Students will be asked to review three articles. A 1-2 page summary and critique of the article will be turned in. The review will need to include a summary of the premise, a summary of research questions, hypotheses, design, methodology, etc, an overall critique of the article (What did you think about the article/ was it easy or difficult to understand, did the authors prove their point) and how the material in the article advances thinking in the social work field. The articles have been placed on electronic reserve. The password to access them is **anqusoc**

Article #1 (Due 9/23): Frey, A., Yankelov, P., Faul, A. (2003). Student perception of web-assisted teaching strategies. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 39 (3), 443-457.

Article #2 (Due 10/28): Davis, S. (2003). Statistical anxiety among female African American graduate-level social work students. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 23(3/4) 143-158.

Article #3 (Due 12/2): Maki, W. S. and Maki, R. H. (2002). Multimedia comprehension skills predicts differential outcomes of web-based and lecture courses. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 8(2) 85-98.

Assignment Literature Review/Research Proposal: Each group will pick a research topic from the list and the individual members will conduct a literature review, develop research questions and hypotheses, and the design and methodology (address IRB issues) needed to test the hypotheses. **ALL GROUP MEMBERS WILL WRITE THEIR OWN PAPER.**

Topics:

- Elderly people in rural areas
- Declining of employment in rural farm areas
- Methamphetamines in North Dakota adolescents
- Binge drinking in North Dakota adolescents/young adults
- Providing social support to Native American youths in the school systems
- Child Protective Services treatment of Native American youth
- Emergency Services: New families and flooding
- Stress of taking research methods course in social work
- Mental health needs of farm families during recessions

Parts of the Paper

- I. Introduction/Literature Review (3-4 pages, Due 9/28/05 **5 points**)
 - a. Introduce the topic
 - b. What specifically is the research about
 - c. Why is this topic important (as it relates to the field of social work)
 - d. Literature Review (Use a minimum of 4 research articles)

- e. Research Question/Hypothesis
- II. Design/Methodology (2-3 written plus survey, due 11/4, **5 points**)
 - a. Operationalizing of key concepts (variables)
 - b. Design choice and justification
 - c. Data collection
 - i. Sampling
 - ii. Human subjects consideration
 - iii. Instrumentation
 - 1. Identification of instrument
 - 2. Outline the procedures for collecting data
 - a. Timeline
 - b. How to solicit subjects (do you need to protect confidentiality)
 - c. Administration of survey
 - iv. Feasibility
- III. Analyzing the data/Draw Conclusions/Relevance to social work practice (2-3 pages, due 11/23, **5 points**)
 - a. Plans for analyzing data (actual data entry)
 - b. Potential conclusions
 - i. Was the research question answered?
 - ii. Support for hypothesis
 - c. Application to social work
- IV. **FINAL PAPER: DUE AT THE TIME OF THE SCHEDULED FINAL.** The final paper will consist of corrected versions of the above parts. The final paper will need to be in APA style and must include an APA style reference list in addition to the other style formats required throughout the paper. **20 points**

Assignment Group Projects/Presentations: At the end of the semester each group will present their proposal in a professional talk. A PowerPoint slide show and handouts (if necessary) will need to accompany the presentation. In addition, each group member will be required to take equal time in presenting.

Assignment Quizzes: There will be three quizzes. Quizzes will be open book and open note and are designed to keep up with the readings and in class discussions. Quizzes will be distributed on-line 24 hours prior to a due date and are expected to be turned in at the start of class. Late quizzes will not be accepted. If you are late (or fail to take the quiz) you will need to request special permission to make up the quiz. The make up quiz will be essay format. I will drop the lowest quiz grade.

Quiz 1: 9/23

Quiz 2: 11/4

Quiz 3: 12/2

IV. Course Grading/Evaluation

Assignments	Points
Research Proposal	35
Group Presentation	30
Quizzes	15

Article Critiques	20
Total	100

V. Bibliography

- Altschuld, J. W., & Witkin, B. R. (2000). *From needs assessment to action: Transforming needs into solution strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cherry, A. L. (2000). *A research primer for the helping professions: Methods, statistics, and writing*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dunn, C. M., & Chadwick, G. (1999). *Protecting study volunteers in research: A manual for investigative sites*. Boston, MA: CenterWatch.
- Geever, J. C., & McNeill, P. (1997). *The foundation center's guide to proposal writing*. The Foundation Center.
- Henerson, M. E., Morris, L. L., & Fitz-Gibbon, C. T. (1987). *How to measure attitudes*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mohr, L. B. (1988). *Impact analysis for program evaluation*. Chicago, IL: Dorsey Press.
- Nixon, C. T., & Northrup, D. A. (Eds.). (1997). *Evaluating mental health services: How do programs for children "work" in the real world?* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nugent, W. R., Sieppert, J. D., & Hudson, W. W. (2001). *Practice evaluation for the 21st century*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Patton, M. Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Peterson, R. A. (2000). *Constructing effective questionnaires*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rodwell, M. K. (1998). *Social work constructivist research*. New York: Garland.
- Royce, D. (1999). *Research methods in social work*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers.
- Salahu-Din, S. (2003). *Social work research: An applied approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Sapsford, R. (1999). *Survey research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scales, T., & Streeter, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Rural social work: Building and sustaining community assets*. Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole.

Shadish, W., Cook, T. & Campbell, D. (2002) *Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Soriano, F. I. (1995). *Conducting needs assessments: A multidisciplinary approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Weiss, C. H. (1998). *Evaluation*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Welch, S., & Comer, J. (1988). *Quantitative methods for public administration*. Chicago, IL: Dorsey Press.

York, R. O. (1997). *Building basic competencies in social work research: An experiential approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

York, R. O. (1998). *Conducting social work research: An experiential approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Course Objectives, Tasks to Meet Objectives, and Method of Measurement

Course Objectives	Tasks to Meet Objectives	Method of Measurement
1. Demonstrate the ability to think critically when critiquing and summarizing research and in the design of research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Critique Assignment • Critiquing Peer's group presentations 	Grade sheets Peer review of group projects Numeric grade
2. Understand the application of the ethical mandates of NASW for social work research and the responsibility of institutional review boards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class lectures • Lecture from IRB Staff • Requiring students to discuss human subject considerations in research proposals and group projects 	Subjective Evaluation of students participation Numeric grade as a function of the discussion of IRB issues and ethics in research proposal
3. Understand and evaluate the representation of diversity in research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring students to develop research proposals based on predetermined topics related to diversity in the state of North Dakota 	Numeric grade of research proposal
4. Understand how social and economic justice is affected by and reflected in the design and publication of research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Critique Assignment 	Numeric grade of article critique
5. Use research to inform generalist practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Proposal Assignment • Group Presentations 	Numeric grade of proposal and presentations
6. Understand the interaction between theory and research. .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class discussions • Article Critique Assignment • Group presentations • Research Proposal 	Subjective evaluation of students participation Numeric grade of proposal and presentation

7. Understand the interaction between research and social policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class discussion • Article Critique Assignment • Research Proposal • Group presentations 	Subjective evaluation of student participation Numeric grade of proposal and presentation
8. Critique research and evaluate entry level practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Critique Assignments • Critique group projects 	Requiring students to fill out evaluations of peers projects Numeric grade of article critique
9. Use communication skills appropriately in technical writing and speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Critique • Research proposal • Group presentations 	Numeric grades
10. Consult and seek supervision as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor office hours • In class meeting times to work on research proposal 	Subjective evaluation of student participation

8/23/05