

University of North Dakota
Department of Social Work
COURSE SYLLABUS SWK 317
(Social Work Research)
Fall 2007
1-1:50, MWF, Gillette 303

Andrew Quinn, PhD
Gillette Hall 301C

andrewquinn@mail.und.edu
701-777-4568

I. Standard Syllabus Information

Course Description

SWK 317 Social Work Research Methods. 3 credits. Prerequisite or corequisite: SWK 255. Research methods for social work practice and evaluation of practice. F, S

Relationship Between This and Other Courses

SWK 317 builds on content from SWK 255 (Introduction to Social Work) regarding the social work profession and the role of research in social work. Content from SWK 255 related to social work values and ethics, social and economic justice, and diversity help prepare the student to conduct ethical and culturally sensitive research.

SWK 317 provides students with an understanding of basic qualitative and quantitative research methods. In SWK 317, students also gain and apply skills related to the critical evaluation of research.

SWK 317 provides students with foundational knowledge and skills necessary to understand and undertake practice evaluation in practice courses, field placements, and in entry-level practice settings.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of SWK 317, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to think critically when critiquing and summarizing research and the methods used to conduct and analyze research.
2. Understand the application of the ethical mandates of NASW for social work research and the social worker's responsibility to institutional review boards.
3. Understand issues related to undertaking culturally sensitive research; understand issues related to undertaking research with diverse populations.
4. Understand the role of research in both oppression and in the promotion of social and economic justice.
5. This objective number applies to other courses and to field.
6. Use research to inform generalist practice.

7. Understand the interaction between theory and research.
8. This objective number applies to other courses and to field.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of approaches to research and the manner in which they inform entry-level social work practice and evaluation.
10. Demonstrate an ability to use communication skills appropriately in technical writing and oral presentations.
11. This objective number applies to field.
12. This objective number applies to field.

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. <http://sos.und.edu/csl>

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://sos.und.edu/csl>

II. Course Outline

Required Text

Rubin and Babbie (2007). Essential methods for social work. Thompson/Brooks/Cole.

Assignments for the Course

Exams: There will be two 50 point exams in the semester. The exams can consist of multiple choice and essay questions. If you miss an exam for a documented medical condition or an engagement, you will be given until the next class time to make up the exam. If you do not make up the exam by then you will receive a zero. If your documented medical condition or engagement will not permit you to make up the exam in the allotted time period, you will need to contact the instructor. It will be up to the instructor's discretion to choose the time and schedule of the makeup exam. No make-up exams will be given past 5 days of the original exam. Finally, no exams will be given early.

Class Projects: There will be three projects due at various times through the semester. These projects will be developed as a class. The class, as a whole, will work together to define the parts of the projects. However, everyone needs to turn in individual projects.

Quantitative Proposal: (worth 50 points) The class will work as a whole to pick a topic in which to develop into a quantitative research proposal. Students are expected to use what they have learned through class discussions and write up their own proposal in 5-7 pages using APA style. The parts of the proposal will include

- I. Introduction (Introduction to the topic, the need to study this particular topic/the so what test) (5 points)
- II. Literature Review (Minimum of 5 articles) (A review of relevant literature to form a research question and hypotheses) (10 points)
- III. Research Question and Hypothesis (5 points)
- IV. Methods (25 points)
 - a. Variables (nominal and operational definitions, LOM)
 - b. Sampling
 - c. Measurement and collecting data (how do you plan on measuring your variables in order to test your hypothesis)
 - d. Design (what type of design did you use)
- V. What you hope that this will contribute to social work (or your major's) professional, practice, policy, administration, and education (5 points)
- VI. Grammar and Spelling and appropriate use of APA style (10 points)

Qualitative Project (60 points): The class will work as a whole to develop a qualitative research project. Students are expected to use what they have learned through class discussions and write up their own project in 5-7 pages using APA style. The parts will include

- I. Introduction (Introduction to the topic, the need to research the topic/the so what test) (5 points)
- II. Brief discussion on the topic using relevant literature (10 points)
- III. Discussion of Qualitative methodology (10 points)
- IV. Sampling (10 points)
- V. Instrumentation/data collection (10 points)
- VI. Plans for Data Analysis (10 points)
- VII. What you hope that this will contribute to social work (or your major's) professional, practice, policy, administration, and education (5 points)
- VIII. Grammar and Spelling and appropriate use of APA style (10 points)

Single Subject Design (50 points): The class will work as a whole to identify a problem area, operationally define the variables, and evaluate a mock intervention. Students are expected to use what they have learned through class discussions and write up their own project in 3-5 pages using APA style. The parts will include

- I. Description of the problem area and the proposed intervention using relevant literature (10 points)
- II. Discussion of subject and presenting problem (5 points)
- III. Methodology (20 points)
 - a. Description of variables (Nominal and operational definitions, LOM)
 - b. Discussion of design choice
 - c. Data Analysis
- IV. What you hope that this will contribute to social work (or your major's) professional, practice, policy, administration, and education (5 points)
- V. Grammar and Spelling and appropriate use of APA style (10 points)

Final exam (100 points): A comprehensive final exam will be given on the day of the scheduled final. You must take the final.

Class Participation: Personal Response Clickers will be used in this class. Students will be assigned a clicker and are expected to take it at the beginning of the class and return it at the end. Using the clicker response system you will be asked to respond to questions about the content. The clickers will allow for me (and only me) to keep track of who responds. By using the clickers, I will be able to gauge your understanding of the content. Clicker points will be included in the total points listed on blackboard.

Course Grading/Evaluation

Grades will be recorded on blackboard. Letter grades will be distributed based on the percentages of total points a student receives divided by the number of points available for the semester.

Grading

A= 90-100 percent

B= 80-89 percent

C= 70-79 percent

D= 60-69 percent

F= 59 percent or below

Percentage	Letter Grade
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 or below	F

III. Course Schedule

Course Schedule: The course schedule is subject to change with notice.

Day	Topics	Readings	Assignment due dates

1/9	Introduction/why research/what this class will be about	Chapter 1	
1/11	Ways of knowing	Chapter 2	
1/14	Ethics in research	Chapter 4	
1/16	Ethics in research	Chapter 4	
1/18	Introduction to Quantitative methods/The way Quantitative Methods proceed	Chapter 3	
1/21	No class		
1/23	Quantitative: Choosing a topic/Developing a lit review/developing a research question	Chapter 6	
1/25	Quantitative: Choosing a topic/Developing a lit review/developing a research question	Chapter 6	
1/28	Quantitative: Conceptualization/Variables/Hypotheses	Chapter 7	
1/30	Quantitative: Conceptualization/Variables/Hypotheses	Chapter 7	
2/1	Quantitative Sampling	Chapter 11	
2/4	Quantitative Sampling	Chapter 11	
2/6	Quantitative Measurement: Writing Questions	Chapter 9	
2/8	Quantitative Measurement: Reliability and Validity	Chapter 8	
2/11	Quantitative measurement: Putting it together/Surveys	Chapter 10	
2/13	Quantitative Threats to Validity	Chapter 12 (just read sections on internal and external validity)	
2/15	Quantitative Threats to Validity	Chapter 12 (just read sections on internal and external validity)	
2/18	No Class		
2/20	Group Designs	Chapter 12	
2/22	Group Designs	Chapter 12	
2/25	Possible guest lecture/Quantitative Data Analysis	Chapter 17	
2/27	Putting it all together	Appendix A	
2/29	Exam 1		
3/3	No Class		
3/5	No Class		
3/7	No Class		
3/10	Introduction to Qualitative methods/the way qualitative research proceeds/the role of literature in qualitative methods	Chapter 3 p 32	
3/12	The role of the Qualitative Researcher	Chapter 15 p 246-247	
3/14	Types of Qualitative Data		Quantitative Project Due
3/17	Types of Qualitative Approaches/Data Collection: Interviews/Ethnography/Case Studies/Life Histories/Focus Groups/Participatory Action Research/Grounded Theory	Chapter 9 p 121-124; Chapter 15	

3/19	Types of Qualitative Approaches/Data Collection: Interviews/Ethnography/Case Studies/Life Histories/Focus Groups/Participatory Action Research/Grounded Theory	Chapter 9 p 121-124; Chapter 15	
3/21	No Class		
3/24	No Class		
3/26	Types of Qualitative Approaches/Data Collection: Interviews/Ethnography/Case Studies/Life Histories/Focus Groups/Participatory Action Research/Grounded Theory	Chapter 9 p 121-124; Chapter 15	
3/28	Qualitative Sampling	Chapter 11 p164-169	
3/31	Qualitative Sampling	Chapter 11 p164-169	
4/2	Qualitative Sampling	Chapter 11 p164-169	
4/4	Methods for analyzing qualitative data	Chapter 18	
4/7	Methods for analyzing qualitative data	Chapter 18	
4/9	Methods for analyzing qualitative data	Chapter 18	
4/11	The role of literature/hypotheses/variables		
4/14	TBA/Guest lecture		
4/16	Exam 2		
4/21	Culturally Competent Research		
4/23	Single Subject Design		Qualitative Paper Due
4/25	Single Subject Design		
4/28	Single Subject Design		
4/30	Program Evaluation		Single Subject Design Project Due
5/2	Reading Review day		

IV. 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 reviewing research and in the design of quantitative research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz/final questions that focus on the ability to think critically about choosing methods such as sampling, research design, writing survey questions, and hypotheses • Clicker Response questions that focus on reviewing the parts of a research design • Work in groups to discuss parts of the research proposal • In class exercises on the different topics such as critiquing research questions, sampling designs, and choices of group designs, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading of quizzes • Class participation credit • Instructor feedback • Final exam score • Content area grade

	<p>single subject designs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class exercises where students need to identify types of sampling, designs, threats to internal validity • Final exam is cumulative covering the range of topics discuss in class • Content area summaries covering the range of topics discussed in class (see content area assignment above) • Royse Chapter 2 (The way research proceeds) With specific attention to the way research proceeds 	
<p>2. Understand the application of the ethical mandates of NASW for social work research and the social worker's responsibility to institutional review boards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area summary on ethical research • Lecture on ethical considerations • Quiz/final questions on ethics • Work in groups to discuss the ethics of certain research scenarios (Milgram study, Zimbardo Study, the restaurant letter study, the Tuskegee Study) • Royse chapter 3 (Ethical Thinking and Research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area grade • Quiz grade • Final exam • Clicker questions • Research proposal assignment
<p>3. Understand issues related to undertaking research with diverse populations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area summary on ethics • Content area summary on culturally competent research • Lecture on culturally competent research (focus on culturally specific language, consider population when collecting data) • Work in groups to develop research proposal outlines that focus on diverse populations • Quiz/final questions about ethics and the representation of diverse populations in research • Royse Chapter 6 (Understanding and using research instruments), Chapter 7 (Developing data collection instruments: Scales and Questionnaires), Chapter 8 (Survey Research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area grade • Quiz grade • Final exam • Clicker questions • Research proposal grade
<p>4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of bias and oppression in research, and demonstrate familiarity with methods and techniques to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area summary on designs • Lecture on social justice • Readings on the Tuskegee Syphilis study from IRB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content area grade • Quiz grades • Final exam • Clicker questions • Research proposal grade

<p>minimize those influences.</p>	<p>training on ethical issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on death of a normal volunteer from IRB training on ethical issues • Longres and Scanlon article “Social Justice and the Research Curriculum” • Content area summary on ethics • Content area summary on culturally competent research • Topic proposal part 3 (identifying research articles that relate to diverse populations and how those populations were represented) • Work in groups to develop research proposal outline where social and economic justice is reflected while working with different populations. 	
<p>5. This objective applies to other classes and field.</p>		
<p>6. Use research to inform generalist practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture on informing practice • Lecture on evidence based practice • Lecture on how research proceeds • Work in groups to discuss how research proposal is applicable to social work practice • Royse Chapter 3 (Ethical Thinking and Research) • Research proposal summary on conclusions for social work profession/practice 	<p>Quiz grades Content area grade Final exam Clicker questions Research proposal grade</p>
<p>7. Understand basic research design and the interaction between theory and research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture on the role theory plays in research • Content area summary on way research proceeds • Royse Chapter 1 (Introduction) Chapter 2 (The way research proceeds) 	<p>Quiz grade Content area grade Final exam Clicker questions</p>
<p>8. This objective number applies to other classes and to field.</p>		
<p>9. Demonstrate an understanding of approaches to quantitative research and the manner in which they inform entry level social work practice and evaluation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeates all lectures • Lectures on design, measurement, evaluation • Royse Chapter 1 (introduction), Chapter 2 (the way research proceeds), Chapter 4 (Single Systems Design), Chapter 5 (Research Design for Group comparison), Chapter 6 (Understanding and using 	<p>Content area summary grades Quiz grade Final exam Clicker question Research proposal assignment</p>

	research instruments), Chapter 8 (Survey Research), Chapter 12 (Data Analysis) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research proposal assignment 	
10. Demonstrate an ability to use communication in a professional manner to obtain and disseminate information throughout the research and evaluation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in groups to discuss parts of the research proposal • Content area summaries • Royse Chapter 2 (the way research proceed), Chapter 13 (Professional Writing: Proposals, Research Reports, and Journal Articles). 	Content area grades Class participation grades Research proposal grade
11. This objective number applies to other classes and to field.		
12. This objective applies to other classes and to field.		

V. Bibliography

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