Course Description: Study of quantitative and qualitative methods of building knowledge for social work and the ethical use of research in professional practice.

Course Learning Objectives: By the end of the term, students will be able to:
1. Understand social work research as an integral part of community-based preventive, developmental, supportive, and remedial social work practice.
2. Explain the research function in both micro and macro practice.
3. Understand social work research as a scientific approach.
4. Discuss the specific stages of the social work research process: (i.e., Formulation of practice questions and hypotheses, Sampling, Data Collection, Processing of data, Interpretation of statistical results and testing of hypotheses, and Report writing.
5. Develop data collection instruments for practice evaluation and need assessment.
6. Utilize the research designs for social work practice.
7. Use a computerized statistical program (SPSS) for data analysis.
8. Discuss beginning level statistical methods and their applications for social work research.
9. Conduct social research (quantitative/qualitative and descriptive/explanatory) related to community-based clinical practice.
10. Understand, critically evaluate and make use of the research findings of others.
11. Discuss the ethical and political issues, and sensitivity of studying the populations of diversity (women, racial and cultural minorities, gays and lesbians, handicapped, elderly, poor) incorporating the principles of the human subjects review process, and how it relates to social work research.

EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING:

GETTING YOUR WORK IN ON TIME:
1. All assignments are due on the scheduled date unless the student has EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES that prevent the student from meeting the deadline. In those cases the student MUST speak directly with the instructor and MUST make prior arrangements. Please note that documentation of the special circumstances must be presented to the instructor. Approval for late work must be obtained directly from the instructor. The student should call (407-823-6195) or email (leon@mail.ucf.edu) the instructor and not leave any notes in the School of Social Work office.
2. If prior approval for submitting a paper or an assignment has not been obtained, OR if the reason that the student has not met the paper deadline does not meet EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES, then one letter grade will be subtracted for each week that an assignment is late.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR READINGS:
1. Students are responsible for required and reserved readings. The instructor may include additional reserve readings throughout the semester. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING ALL OF THE ASSIGNED MATERIALS REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE MATERIAL IS COVERED IN CLASS.
2. ALL ASSIGNED READING MATERIAL MAY APPEAR IN A CLASS EXAMINATION WHETHER THE INSTRUCTOR HAS COVERED THIS MATERIAL OR NOT.

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIORS:
1. Students should arrive for class on time and avoid disrupting the class with late arrivals.
2. While it is not expected that students will resort to academic dishonesty, students must be aware that any evidence of dishonesty/cheating will result in a Failing grade for the course and will be subject to other consequences inherent in the School of Social Work.
3. Students are expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect for the instructor and for peers. Differences in points of view expressed constructively, as the basis of academic freedom are encouraged. Side conversations during class will not be tolerated.

SPECIAL TESTING/LEARNING NEEDS: Students that require special learning/testing arrangements are REQUIRED to register with the Office of Student Disabilities and to inform the instructor at least 3 weeks before an examination date. The instructor will make every effort to accommodate the student's special testing needs.

AUDIOTAPING OF LECTURES: Students are prohibited from audio taping any part of the course lectures, unless the student is registered with the university's Student Disability Office, has obtained permission directly from the instructor and requires such accommodation for learning purposes. Students with special needs that require this accommodation must discuss this personally with the instructor at the beginning of the course.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: It is expected that students attend all classes. Student’s who miss three (3) or more absences REGARDLESS OF THE REASON, will have their final grade lowered by one letter grade. The only exception to this is if the student has EXTENUATING circumstances (death in family, severe illness, etc.) and provides the instructor with appropriate documentation.

GRADING ASSIGNMENTS: Once papers and other assignments are returned to students, the instructor will not change any grades, unless there is a mathematical error. However, the instructor will be available to review how the assignment was graded and to review comments made on the paper or assignment.

GRADING CRITERIA: Students will be graded on the 4 assignments/tests indicated below AND the number of absences will also affect the final grade as per the attendance policy above.

INSTRUCTOR’S OFFICE HOURS: Students should make appointments with the instructor. If for some reason the student cannot make the designated office hours, the instructor will try whenever possible to accommodate the student's schedule. Please note that the instructor does not answer email messages during weekends.


Evaluation of Learning and Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>40 points</td>
<td>October 15, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Analysis and Critique</td>
<td>15 points</td>
<td>November 19, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS/PC Exercise</td>
<td>5 points</td>
<td>December 3, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40 points</td>
<td>Finals Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 Points</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading Scale:

- A = 95-100 (4.0)
- A- = 90-94 (3.75)
- B+ = 87-89 (3.25)
- B = 84-86 (3.00)
- B- = 80-83 (2.75)
- C+ = 77-79 (2.25)
- C = 74-76 (2.00)
- C- = 70-73 (1.75)
- D+ = 67-69 (1.25)
- D = 64-66 (1.00)
- D- = 60-63 (0.75)
- F = 59 or less (0.00)

1. **Examinations**: There will be a mid-term and final written examination. The exam questions will be taken from the materials both covered in the class and assigned for reading. The exam may have any combination of true/false, multiple choice, and matching.

2. **Research Paper**: To help achieve the course objectives, each student is required to write an analysis of a research-based article that is directly related to community-based clinical practice. The paper should not exceed 8-10 pages long and double-spaced. Type-written/word-processed. The guidelines and other specifics for the research assignment will be provided and discussed in the class. A letter grading system will be used to evaluate the paper.

3. **SPSS/PC Exercise**: Students are required to participate in and complete SPSS lab exercises and will be graded on the final exercise that will count for 5 points of the total course grade. STUDENTS MUST TAKE THE SPSS EXERCISE ON THE DESIGNATED DATE. NO MAKE UP EXERCISES WILL BE OFFERED.

4. **Class Attendance and Participation**: Students are expected to attend all classes and actively participate in learning activities. Please see Attendance Policy.


**RESERVE READINGS**:


**Example of Group Design**:


**Examples of Qualitative Designs**:


**Example of Survey Research**:


**Example of Program Evaluation**:


**Other readings will be required throughout the semester**.

Course Outline and Schedule

Sessions 1, & 2—August 27, 2004 & September 3, 2004

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Introduction to course, review of course syllabus and course expectations
2. Understanding human behavior and research
3. Conceptions of science
4. Positivist/quantitative approaches to science
5. Interpretive/qualitative approaches to science
6. The purpose of research, research roles and ethics in generalist social work practice

Content
1. Human inquiry
2. Motivations for social work research
3. Deductive & inductive theory construction
4. Foundations of social science
5. Conducting research using the steps to the Scientific Method

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapters 1 & 2


Session 3: September 10, 2004--The Ethics and Politics of Social Work Research

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Understand the issues of ethical controversies and cultural sensitivity in Social Work Research
2. Understand NASW Code of Ethics
3. Understand the Political issues of Social Work Research
4. Identify and discuss political and ethical issues in some of the researches on population at risk
5. Address the Human Subjects Review Process and protection for human subjects

Content
1. Human diversity and Social Work Research
2. Ethical issues and controversies in social work research
3. NASW Code of Ethics and the politics of social work research
4. The Guidelines for Human Subjects of School of Social Work and UCF Committee
5. Institutional Review Board compliance

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapters 2


Session 4: September 17, 2004- Problem Formulation & Deciding the Question

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Understand how research questions originate & evolve
2. Identify research questions related to practice, program evaluations and needs assessments
3. Identify agency factors/challenges that impact social work research
4. Identify human diversity issues in deciding on the question
5. Identify the various components of a research report: Introduction, Problem statement, Review of the literature, Study questions/hypotheses, Methodology, Results, Discussion, Conclusions, References, Appendices, and Abstracts
6. Identify research designs/strategies

Content
1. Formulating research questions
2. Researcher, agency and human subject factors that influence identification & selection of research questions
3. Writing the research report

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapters 3

Reserve Reading: To be assigned

Session 5: September 24, 2004 – Review of the Literature & Identifying the Variables
Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement

Unit Learning Objectives
Upon completion of this Unit, the student should be able to:
1. Identify the components necessary to conceptualize, research and write a literature review
2. Identify ethical issues in writing the literature review and identifying variables
3. Define “units of analysis”
4. Distinguish conceptualization from operationalization
5. Understand and use the four levels of measurement when defining and operationalizing variables

Content
1. Considerations when writing the review of the literature
2. Identifying, conceptualizing and operationalizing variables
3. Types of variables (dependent, independent, etc.) and Levels of Measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio)

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapter 4

Session 6, and 7: October 1, 2004 & October 8, 2004- Designing Needs Assessments

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Understand and identify the components of a needs assessment as one type of research question in social work
2. Identify types of designs for needs assessments and when to use specific designs
3. Define characteristics of cross sectional, longitudinal and trend studies
4. Identify human diversity issues in needs assessments

Content
1. Reasons for conducting needs assessments
2. Determining whose need is being assessed?
3. Using different designs in a needs assessment (cross sectional, longitudinal, etc.)
4. Ethical and diversity issues in designing needs assessments

Readings Requested:
1. Marlow Text, Chapter 5

Reserved Readings: To be assigned

Session 8: October 15, 2004—Midterm Exam

Session 9: October 22, 2004—Program Evaluations

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Understand and identify the components of a program evaluation
2. Identify different types of program evaluation designs
3. Understand the concepts of causality, validity and reliability as they pertain to program evaluations
4. Define the concept of “informed consent” in social work research

Content
1. Formative program evaluations
2. Summative program evaluations
3. Types of program evaluation designs
4. Agency factors/considerations that influence program evaluation design and implementation
5. Causality, validity and reliability in program evaluations and other research
6. Ethical and human diversity issues in program evaluations

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapter 6


Session 10: October 29, 2004- Designing the Evaluation of Practice

Unit Learning Objectives:
1. Identify descriptive designs used for practice evaluation
2. Understand the components of descriptive and explanatory designs in practice evaluation
3. Understand and utilize practice evaluation data
4. Ethical and human diversity issues in practice evaluations

Content
1. The importance of evaluating practice in social work
2. Using different designs to evaluate one’s practice
3. Using the data
4. Ethics in practice evaluations

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapter 7

Reserve Readings:

Session 11: November 5, 2004 - The Logic of Sampling/Selecting Participants

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Discuss sampling concepts and terminology
2. Explain probability sampling theory
3. Understand the types of probability sampling and non-probability sampling techniques
4. Discuss the problems of sampling

Content
1. Sampling concepts and terminology
2. Probability sampling theory
3. Types of probability sampling
4. Non-probability sampling
5. Determining sample size
6. Problems of sampling
7. Human diversity issues in sampling

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapter 8

Session 12: November 12, 2004—Data Collection

Unit Learning Objectives
1. Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative data
2. Identify the data collection process and methods
3. Identify the role and importance of Institutional Review Boards
4. Define key terms in data collection
5. Identify if a research instrument is reliable and valid
6. Be familiar with various types of outcome measures, scales and their various formats
7. Construct survey questions

Content
1. Methods for collecting data (interviews, questionnaires, observation, case records, etc.)
2. Understanding, developing and using scales
3. The role of secondary data in research
4. Assessing a measuring instrument’s reliability and validity
5. Key concepts in the data collection process: anonymity, confidentiality, and IRB
6. Human diversity issues in data collection

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapter 9 & 10

Reserve Reading:

Session 13- November 19, 2004– Organizing & Analyzing the Data

Unit Learning Objectives:
1. Identify considerations in organizing quantitative and qualitative data
2. Compare qualitative and quantitative data analysis
3. Learn to develop a code book
4. Identify the role of computers & SPSS in research
5. Understand the process of data entry
6. Identify agency factors that may influence data organization
7. Interpret basic data (quantitative & qualitative) analysis results
8. Develop a basic understand of descriptive and inferential statistics
9. Understand measures of association and explain statistical significance

Content
1. Codebooks, SPSS and data entry
2. Statistical significance (Probability, One-Tailed and Two-Tailed Tests, Type 1 and Type II Errors)
3. Measures of association and selecting a test of statistical significance
4. Qualitative and quantitative statistical tests
5. Writing the research reports

Analysis Paper Due today (November 19, 2004)

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapters 10, 11, 12 & 13

THANKSGIVING BREAK--NOVEMBER 25, 2004- November 27, 2004--NO CLASS

Session 14- December 3, 2004 – Continuation of Organizing & Analyzing the Data

See learning objectives and content for November 19, 2004

Readings Required: Marlow Text, Chapters 10, 11, 12 & 13

SPSS Exercise for credit today (12/3/04)

Session 15--FINAL EXAM given during Finals Week
Bibliography


September 2002-Revised/SFD