



Course title:	Basic Social Work Research
Course #/term:	522-010, Winter 2021
Time and place:	Tuesday 6pm-9pm, Online
Credit hours:	3
Prerequisites:	None
Instructor:	Katie Schultz
Pronouns:	She/Her/Hers
Contact info:	Email: katieasc@umich.edu Please include SW522 in email subject line
Office hours:	Tuesdays 12-2pm and Fridays 4-5pm; Please schedule meeting times using this link: Schultz Office Hours

In the spirit of healing and health, I acknowledge and honor that the University of Michigan, resides on the traditional territories of the Niswi Ishkodewan Anishinaabeg: The Three Fires People who are the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi along with their neighbors the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot nations.

1. Course Statement

a. Course Description

This course will provide content on the logic of inquiry and the necessity for an empirical approach to practice. The process of formulating appropriate research questions and hypotheses, techniques for testing relationships and patterns among variables, methods of data collection, methods to assess and improve the validity and reliability of data and measures, and the ethics of scientific inquiry will be addressed. This course will help students understand practice through the critical examination of methods associated with decision-making, critical thinking, and ethical judgment. The course content will integrate the core themes related to multiculturalism and diversity; social justice and social change; promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation; and behavioral and social science research.

b. Course Objectives

- Competency 2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
 - 2.1 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.

2.4 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

Competency 3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

3.1 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.

3.2 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.

Competency 4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.

4.1 Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.

4.3 Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.

Competency 6: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

6.1 Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.

6.2 Use research evidence to inform practice.

Competency 7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

7.2 Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

Competency 10: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

10b.4 Assessment – Select appropriate intervention strategies.

10d.1 Evaluation – Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

Act as a critical consumer and contributor of the design, methodology, and conclusions of social work and social and behavioral science research publications.

- a. understand research concepts to permit a critical analysis of research and evaluation studies with respect to quality, bias, ethics, and potential applications.
- b. assess the strengths and weaknesses of selected research designs and methodology, and of selected measures and measurement strategies.
- c. assess the cultural sensitivity of measures and measurement strategies.
- d. assess the biases and implications of conclusions drawn in the research studies.

(Practice Behaviors 3.1, 3.2, 6.1)

Locate, assess and critique research studies so as to draw appropriate inference, particularly as it affects diverse populations at risk (dimension: ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender [including gender identity and gender expression], marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation).

- a. frame research questions and develop problem statements that reflect the issues under consideration.
- b. apply research concepts and principles in the development and use of selected qualitative and quantitative methodologies and analytical approaches.
- c. choose appropriate research designs and methodology given a particular research question.
- d. demonstrate the ability to select culturally appropriate measures and measurement strategies given specific populations.

- e. construct simple indices, questionnaires, and measures relevant to the evaluation of practice.
- f. conduct selected analytic and statistical procedures and demonstrate the ability to interpret and draw conclusions from selected analytic and statistical procedures. (Practice Behaviors 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.3, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 10.b.4, 10.d.1)

Know the NASW Code of Ethics and appropriately apply it in the conduct of social work research.

- a. understand ethical issues in the conduct of research and evaluation.
- b. understand the relevance and applicability of research in working with disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and diverse populations at risk: (dimension: ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender [including gender identity and gender expression]) marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation).
- c. examine the processes by which research and evaluation findings can be used to enhance social justice, social change, promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. (Practice Behaviors 2.1, 2.4, 7.2, 10.d.1)

c. Course Design

Many different methods will be used for acquiring knowledge and skills including: discussion, lectures, projects, exercises, and lab work. This course is designed to increase students' comfort level with research methods and statistical analyses and to increase their appreciation of the relevance of research and evaluation for social work practice.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

There is no required book for the course. Assigned readings and other materials will be posted on Canvas under Modules → Week #. Please let me know if any materials are inaccessible (e.g., articles are not compatible with a screen reader or videos do not include closed captions).

b. Class schedule

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is a working document. Changes to the schedule, materials, or course will be announced via Canvas. Be sure that you **have Canvas Announcements enabled** (Account → Notifications → Announcement).

Readings, videos, and other class content for each week can be found under the Modules in Canvas.

Week 1: 1/19

Topics: Introductions to the course and each other

Week 2: 1/26

Topics: Why social work research?
Evidence Based Practice
Qualitative & Quantitative Research
Due: Engagement Part I (Plan)

Week 3: 2/2

Topics: Role of Theory in Research
Ethics in social work research
Human subjects protection

Week 4: 2/9

Topics: Research Questions
Measurement & Sampling
Due: PEERRS Certification

Week 5: 2/16

Topics: Finding, reviewing, and summarizing the literature
What is peer review?
Community-based participatory research

Week 6: 2/23

Topics: Causation
Experimental designs

Week 7: 3/2

Topics: Quantitative Data Analysis

Week 8: 3/9

Topics: Overview of qualitative methods and design
Qualitative data collection

Week 9: 3/16

Topics: Qualitative analysis
Assessing quality in qualitative methods
Due: Quiz

Week 10: 3/23 – NO Class, “Wellbeing Break”

Week 11: 3/30

Topics: Designing and writing questions
Survey designs

Week 12: 4/6

Topics: Mixed methods research

Week 13: 4/13

Topics: Review & Recap
DUE: Engagement Part II (Self-Assessment)

Week 14: 4/20

Topics: Indigenous methodologies and other approaches
Due: Final Assignment

c. Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via Canvas before the start of class on their due date unless otherwise specified.

Assignment	Percent	Due
Engagement	25	Week 2 & Week 13 (Ongoing)
PEERRS Certification	5	Week 4
Group Teach Back	25	TBD: Vary
Quiz	10	Week 9
Final Assignment	35	Week 14

Engagement: Includes engaging with the content during class and on Canvas, completing discussions, assignments, ungraded quizzes, etc. In addition to attending class, you are expected to arrive having reviewed assigned materials and be prepared to actively participate in the learning process. There will be a series of ungraded activities, discussion prompts, and in class group work to help you take in the content; these will be factored into the engagement grade. You will also outline personal goals for engagement in the course and assess yourself on those at the end of the semester.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training: Complete the online Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship (PEERRS) certification (<http://my.research.umich.edu/peerrs/>).

Teach Backs: Working together in groups, you will be asked to guide an in-class discussion of a topic related to the course and assess the methodologies, ethics, and rigor of a research project presented in a peer-reviewed journal article.

Quiz: Complete a brief, open book quiz on various aspects of qualitative and quantitative research, including, but not limited to ethics, types of studies, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, validity and reliability, and research designs.

Final Assignment, choose one option:

Article Review & Reflection: Choose from among a selection of articles provided by the instructor and critically assess the methodologies, ethics, and rigor of the chosen study. Write a short paper summarizing what you have learned in this course and describing the importance of research in social work practice.

Annotated Bibliography: Develop a research question related to your field placement or an area in which you intend to practice and review the literature to identify sources, describe and critique research methods, and summarize the state of the field and gaps in the literature.

Research Proposal: Develop a brief research proposal based on a research question related to your practicum placement or an area in which you intend to practice.

d. Attendance

If you need to miss class, please contact me in advance *at least 24 hours before an expected absence, or within 24 hours of an unexpected absence/emergency*. Routine tardiness that disrupts the class will be considered in your class engagement grade. Note: If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for any assignments due that day. Please review the [Policy on Class Attendance](#) found in the MSW Student Guide.

e. Grading

Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the following scale:

100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+
94-99 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C
90-93 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-

Late Assignment Policy: Please communicate with me as soon as possible if you anticipate problems with a due date. Unless this is due to an unexpected event/emergency, requests for an extension on an assignment must be made at least 48 hours in advance. Without advance arrangements, assignments turned in after the due date/time will receive a 3% deduction from for each day past due and not accepted after one week.

I will do my best to assess and provide feedback on your work. If you believe you have been graded inaccurately or unfairly on an assignment, please submit the mistake you believe has been made and the alternate grade you suggest. Challenges to a grade must be in writing,

specific, and based on substantive arguments (or mathematical errors). I reserve the right to re-grade the work. This may result in a higher or lower grade and that grade will be final.

See also: [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#); [Student Grievance Process](#); and [Grades for Special Circumstances](#) in the MSW Student Guide.

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

Course content may be audio/video recorded and made available to other students in this course. As part of your participation, you may be recorded. If you do not wish to be recorded, please contact me to discuss alternative arrangements. Students may not record or distribute class activity without written permission from me, except as part of accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings, please share that with me in advance of any recording. Recordings may only be used for your private use. Additional information on class recordings can be found here: [Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ](#)

g. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#). Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#). If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

h. Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required.

Mental health and well-being

If you or someone you know is in need of support, services are available.

- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) located at the Tappan Street Auxiliary Building on 609 Tappan Street across from the Ross Business School; (734) 764-8312
- We have an embedded CAPS Counselor at SSW, Alejandro Rojas, LMSW, who is dedicated to supporting the well-being of social work students and the SSW community. All services are free and confidential. Email aroja@umich.edu to set up a consultation.
- [University Health Service](#) (UHS) at (734) 764-8320
- [Additional campus health and wellness resources](#)

The Office of Student Services' Health and Wellness Program provides supportive services to MSW students which promote wellness, self-care and maintenance of a healthy academic and mental health balance, as well as to increase disability awareness. Contact the Health and Wellness Program at ssw.wellness@umich.edu

Accommodations for students with disabilities

If you are in need of any accommodations, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. Please present the appropriate paperwork at least two weeks prior to the need for the accommodation (test, project, etc.).

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact:

Services for Students with Disabilities
G-664 Haven Hall
505 South State St.
Phone: (734) 763-3000
Email: ssdoffice@umich.edu

Writing skills and expectations

Strong writing and communication skills are essential to your academic success and professional career. The School has a Writing/Study Skills Coordinator, Betsy Williams, who can help with writing, presentations, and other tasks. For resources on writing, references (including APA style), study tips, or to set up an appointment with Betsy, visit ssw.umich.edu/writing-help.

Other UM resources include the [English Language Institute](#) and the [Sweetland Writing Center](#). Sweetland offers one-to-one, online writing assistance at any stage of writing. You can get help with understanding assignments, generating ideas, developing arguments, organizing and structuring, using evidence and sources, and clarifying your expression.

Unless noted, all assignments should utilize APA formatting. Review the [MLibrary APA Citation Guide](#) as needed. The [Purdue Owl website](#) is very helpful resource for assistance with APA formatting.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Do not plagiarize. Information on academic integrity policies can be found in the [MSW Student Guide](#). Test your knowledge on plagiarism [here](#).

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources> and include, among others:

- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns, how to change those in Wolverine Access, and a map of gender inclusive bathrooms

Inclusive Language

The words we use can make the difference between positive connections or creating distance in our personal and professional lives. Particularly in writing, impact is more important than intent. Increasing the inclusiveness of our language means striving to understand the ways that language often unconsciously makes assumptions about people and unintentionally reinforces dominant norms and inequitable systems. Please pay close attention to your language when speaking about cultural communities that you do not identify with. In doing so, please do your very best to:

- Respect and use contemporary and relevant language around social identities;
- Use language that recognizes varying abilities and is not ableist;
- Use language inclusive of diverse global contexts; and
- Provide developmental and educational support of others who may be unfamiliar with inclusive language practices.

It is expected that we all commit to using the correct name and pronouns of each other and our guests. Names and pronouns may change over time. Should someone accidentally use the wrong name or pronoun, acknowledge the mistake, apologize, and move on with the correct version. Example: "As he was saying. I'm sorry; I meant to say, as they were saying, that was a very interesting article."

I invite you to bring it to my attention if I use language about a social identity or community that is harmful, dated, disrespectful, or otherwise problematic.