



**Angelo State University
Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work
SWK 3355: Social Work Research I**

Course Dates, Time, and Location

Fall Semester, 2011: August 22, 2011 to December 9, 2011
Tuesday, Thursday: 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm
Academic Building, Room 219

Instructor Contact Information

Thomas W. Starkey, Ph.D., LCSW
Assistant Professor
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Office Hours: MTWRF 8:00 am - 10:00 am

Course Description

Presentation of the methods used in scientific inquiry and program evaluation; knowledge of how scientific evidence informs social work practice and how social work practice informs scientific inquiry is of primary concern. Focuses on the skills related to conducting research and practice evaluation. Ethical, cultural, and professional value considerations in the research process are emphasized. Prerequisite: SWK 2307, SWK 2317, and Admission to the B.S.W. degree program

Course Introduction

This course will present an introduction to research methods used in generalist social work practice and social work research. This course consists of classroom lectures, discussions, and requires the creation of a program evaluation proposal. Students will learn to apply social work ethics to the research enterprise, and will learn the relationship that research has with generalist social work practice that is evidence-based. Lastly, but not least in importance for this course, students begin to develop skills necessary to find, read, evaluate, and apply social work research in a systematic and critical manner. The importance of research guided social work practice and practice guided social work research holds primacy status in this course.

(The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus throughout the semester if necessary.)

Student Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies: Social Work Knowledge, Values, and Skills

EP 2.1.1 -- Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Students will continue to develop their knowledge of professional social work and what it means to be a professional social worker in relationship to social work roles, functions, ethical standards, professional demeanor, the importance of life-long learning, the use of supervision and consultation, self-correction, and professional development. Students will gain knowledge of the professional values of the social work profession and gain skill using social work values and ethics to guide professional activities including research and data analysis. Students will build upon their existing skills necessary to identify as professional social workers and conduct themselves accordingly in their behavior, appearance, and communication (written and oral).

EP 2.1.2 -- Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Students will build upon their existing knowledge of the *NASW Code of Ethics* (and other appropriate social work codes of ethics) and their importance in social work practice; for example, to research and data analysis in this course. Students will recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice. Students will begin to learn the skills of applying their professional values to generalist social work practice.

EP 2.1.3 -- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Students will gain knowledge of what critical thinking is and how it can be applied. Students will learn the value of critical thinking as it relates to scientific inquiry, reasoned discernment, and its importance to competent social work practice. Students will practice their critical thinking skills in written class assignments and discussion.

EP 2.1.6 -- Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Students will gain knowledge of the social work literature (i.e., research) that can be used to inform generalist social work practice. Students will learn skills to apply practice experience in scientific inquiry. Students will incorporate social work values and ethics in their discussion of research informed practice and practice informed research.

EP 2.1.10 -- Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Students will gain the knowledge necessary to evaluate generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students will apply professional values to generalist practice activities (i.e., evaluation of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities). Students will discuss and learn skills necessary to evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

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Course Materials

Required Texts:

Yegidis, B. L., Weinbach, R. W., & Meyers, L. L. (2012). *Research methods for social workers* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN: 978-0-205-82011-5

Vogt, W. P., & Johnson, R. B. (2011). *Dictionary of statistics & methodology: A nontechnical guide for the social sciences* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. ISBN: 978-1-4129-7109-6

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5

NOTE: All assignments submitted in this course are to be written in strict accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.).

Grading Information

Grading Scale:

- 90 – 100 = A
- 80 – 89 = B
- 70 – 79 = C
- 60 – 69 = D
- 59 or Below = F

Point Values, Description of Assignments and Examinations, and Associated Practice Behaviors:

Professional Performance 10%

This is relevant to attendance; engaging in class activities, including frequency and quality; professional presentation; and so forth.

- PB2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
- PB3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
- PB4 Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
- PB7 Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
- PB10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
- PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
- PB12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.

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Examinations

60%

There will be two (2) online, open book, multiple attempt (no more than three attempts), timed, examinations in this course. Each of these examinations is worth 20% of your total course grade. You will take each of these examinations via Blackboard using the Respondus LockDown browser. Short weekly chapter quizzes will constitute 20% of your examination grade.

- PB8 Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles.
- PB10 Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.
- PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.
- PB12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.
- PB21 Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.
- PB22 Use research evidence to inform practice.
- PB41 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Program Evaluation Proposal

30%

This assignment is designed to foster student understanding of program evaluation strategies that may be used in generalist social work practice (e.g., the analysis, monitoring, and evaluation of interventions in a particular program). Consequently, each student will write a program evaluation proposal that must contain the following elements (taken and modified from Royse, Thyer, Padgett, & Logan, 2006):

I. Introduction

- A. Description of the program
- B. Questions about the program to be explored
- C. Purpose of the evaluation and its rationale

II. Relevant Literature Review

- A. The context: theoretical/historical perspectives for understanding the program
- B. A review of relevant literature

III. Evaluation Methods

- A. Design
- B. Procedures
- C. Description of clients in the program
- D. Sampling strategy
- E. Instrumentation
- F. Proposed data analysis

IV. Proposed Time Line and Budget

V. References

VI. Appendices

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- PB12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.
- PB21 Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry.
- PB22 Use research evidence to inform practice.
- PB41 Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

Course Policies

- Please do ask questions that are relevant to the course and feel free to utilize my office hours. I am here to help you and I want you to succeed.
- Classroom attendance and participation is necessary and expected. Students are responsible for understanding Angelo State University's Class Attendance Regulations, which is available on the web at: http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/2010-2011_Undergraduate_Catalog.pdf
- All students are expected to follow the National Association of Social Workers [*Code of Ethics*](#).
- Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at: http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf
- Make-up examinations will be considered on a case by case basis and will only be allowed for university approved absences.
- Late assignments are not accepted for any reason unless the reason is approved by the course instructor.
- Electronic devices, including cell phones, Blackberries, laptops, and so forth, are not to be turned on or used in class. If the use of these devices is detected by the course instructor, the particular student using the device will be asked to leave the class for that day.

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Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to their being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Additional information can be found at:

http://www.angelo.edu/services/student_life/disability.html

Course Schedule

Week/Dates	Lecture Topics/Readings/Assignments
Week 1 1/17-1/20	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Reading: Chapter 1 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Social Work Research and Evidence-Based Practice</p>
Week 2 1/23-1/27	<p>Reading: Chapter 2 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Social Work Research and Ethics</p> <p>Assignment: Locate Program for Evaluation</p>
Week 3 1/30-2/3	<p>Reading: Chapter 3 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Research Problems and Questions</p>
Week 4 2/6-2/10	<p>Reading: Chapter 4 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Finding and Using Existing Knowledge</p> <p>Assignment: Draft Section I of Program Evaluation Proposal</p>
Week 5 2/13-2/17	<p>Reading: Chapter 5 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Research Questions and Hypotheses</p>
Week 6 2/20-2/24	<p>Reading: Chapter 6 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Group Research (and Evaluation) Designs</p> <p>Assignment: Draft Section II of Program Evaluation Proposal</p>
Week 7 2/27-3/2	<p>Reading: Chapter 7 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers)</p> <p>Lecture Topic: Single-System Evaluation Designs</p>
Week 8 3/5-3/9	<p>Exam 1: Chapters 1-7, 3/5/2011 to 3/9/2011</p>
	<i>Course Schedule Continued on the Next Page</i>

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Week 9 3/19-3/23 3/12-3/16 is Spring Break	Reading: Chapter 8 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: Qualitative Research Methods
Week 10 3/26-3/30	Reading: Chapter 9 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: Sampling Strategies and Issues
Week 11 4/2-4/6	Reading: Chapter 10 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: Measurement Concepts and Issues
Week 12 4/9-4/13	Reading: Chapter 11 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: Methods for Acquiring Research Data
Week 13 4/16-4/30	Reading: Chapter 12 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: Data Collection Instruments
Week 14 4/23-4/27	Reading: Chapter 13 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: An Introduction to Data Analysis Assignment: Draft Section III-VI of Program Evaluation Proposal
Week 15 4/30-5/4	Reading: Chapter 14 (Yegidis, Weinbach & Meyers) Lecture Topic: Disseminating Research Findings Assignment: Program Evaluation Proposal Due
Week 16 5/7-5/11	Exam 2: Chapters 8-14, 5/5/2011 to 5/9/2011