Angelo State University
Department of Social Work
SWK 3355 D10: Social Work Research Methods I

Course Dates, Time, and Location

Fall Semester, 2019: August 26, 2019 to December 13, 2019
Online: Blackboard

Instructor Contact Information

Joel L. Carr, Ph.D., LCSW, BCD
Adjunct Instructor
ACHHS Building, Department of Social Work
Office Phone: (832) 942-3501
E-Mail: joel.carr@angelo.edu

Office Hours

By Telephone, E-Mail, Skype, or Blackboard: To be Scheduled as Needed

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. Prerequisites: SWK 2307 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

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice. Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities. Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities. Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making.

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities. Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration.

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Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities. Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Course Materials

Required Texts


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

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 and Discussion Board 10%

Relevant to attendance are engaging in class activities (including frequency and quality), professional presentations, class discussions, and so forth. Professional social workers are present in their practice setting. Students in a social work program are expected to be motivated to learn and to have a sense of dedication to their studies. Students will demonstrate their full presence in class, physical and intellectual. Refer to ASU class attendance policy for online courses.

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Peer Reviewed Journal Article Summaries 20%

Students will find a peer reviewed journal article (PRJA) to write a summary for each of the four sections in the research proposal below. Each student will be provided a PRJA from the university library and write a summary identify the introduction section, literature review section, the evaluation methods section, and the proposed data analysis section. This will be due as indicated in the syllabus.

Examinations 30%

There will be three (3) timed examinations: an online multiple-choice section. Each of these examinations is worth 10% of your total course grade.

Testing via Respondus™ Monitor

Access to quizzes will be through Respondus™ Lockdown Browser and will be video recorded via Respondus™ Monitor [See Other Required Materials for a list of needed equipment]. Use of another electronic device is prohibited.

There are two practice quizzes: a) one is a Webcam test and b) a short 10 question practice quiz over ASU trivia that is not graded. These tools will be available to the student to assure accessibility. Students are highly encouraged to go through these practice quizzes in advance of taking a graded quiz. This process will allow you to become familiar with the technology associated with testing and improve the testing environment. These quizzes, instructional videos, and more information regarding Respondus Monitor can be found under the Respondus Monitor Help tab in your Blackboard course.

Other Testing-Related Materials

- Access to a computer with either a Mac or Windows Operating System
- High speed Internet access
- Ethernet cable (It is highly recommended by IT that you plug into a router using an Ethernet cable when testing so that you don’t lose connection by Wi-Fi drop.)
- Webcam (A plug-in webcam allows the student to perform thorough environmental scans.)
- Refer to Angelo State University’s Distance Education website for further technology requirements: http://www.angelo.edu/distance_education

Technical Assistance

If you have any technical problems associated with the test (i.e. webcam problems, lock down browser problems) you should contact the IT Department. The IT Service Department is open M-F from 8-5 and the number is (325) 942-2911. If you call any time after 5 or on the weekend, most likely you will not be able to get assistance until the following weekday, so please plan accordingly.

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Other Notes

- Be sure to unmute your microphone; audio must be on during the testing process.
- Be sure to have a light source next to your computer monitor. If your image is dark and difficult to see during the “Student Photo” step, add lighting near the computer. Respondus Monitor is checking your image to verify identification.
- Be sure to frame your face and shoulders during the “Student Photo” step.
- Be sure to be seated in front of the webcam. When lying or reclining while trying to take the exam may prevent the webcam from continuously capturing your image.

Research Proposal 40%

This collection of assignments (i.e., the research proposal section installments, the final research proposal, and the research proposal presentation) fosters understanding of the basic information necessary for the consumption and utilization of research in generalist social work practice and the process of research used in practice and program evaluation (e.g., the analysis, monitoring, and evaluation of interventions in a program).

Students will produce a research proposal and a research proposal presentation by the end of the semester. The steps of the process will be detailed in my weekly video posts.

The proposal will include the following structure:

I. Introduction
   A. Description of the research problem/issue to be explored
   B. Purpose of the proposed research study and its rationale
   C. The context: theoretical/historical perspectives of the research problem

II. Relevant Literature Review
   A. A review of relevant literature
   B. Statement of the research question and the hypothesis (if hypothesis is necessary)

III. Methods
   A. Design
   B. Procedures
   C. Description of sample to be studied
   D. Sampling strategy
   E. Instrumentation

IV. Proposed Data Analysis (must include proposed method of analysis)

V. Expected Findings

VI. Discussion
   A. Contributions to existing knowledge
   B. Limitations of the proposed methodology

VII. References

VIII. Appendices (if required)

(The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus throughout the semester if necessary.)
Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's information as though it were your own. If you use the words or ideas of another person; or if you use material from any source—whether a book, journal, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, electronic media, or any other source—you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism on any assignment will result in the student not receiving credit for the assignment, among other consequences as determined by the severity of the offense.

Course Policies

- Please ask questions relevant to the course and 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: [https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/26599-2019-2020-undergraduate-catalog-editable](https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/26599-2019-2020-undergraduate-catalog-editable)

- 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](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.

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities warranting academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations PRIOR to their implementation. Students who think they may require accommodations are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made as soon as possible. Additional information can be found at: [http://www.angelo.edu/services/student_life/disability.html](http://www.angelo.edu/services/student_life/disability.html).

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## Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Dates</th>
<th>Lecture Topics/Readings/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 8/26-8/30</td>
<td><strong>Course Introduction</strong>&lt;br&gt;Reading: Chapter 1 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Toward Evidence-Based Practice</td>
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<td>Week 2 9/2-9/6</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 2 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Ethical Issues in Research&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Identify Topic of Research, Due 9/6</td>
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<td>9/2 Labor Day Holiday</td>
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<td>Week 3 9/9-9/13</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 14 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Writing the Research Report and Disseminating Research Findings&lt;br&gt;PRJA Section 1, Due 9/13</td>
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<td>Week 4 9/16-9/20</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 3 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Developing Research Problems and Research Questions&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Draft Section I of Research Proposal, Due 9/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 9/23-9/27</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 4 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Conducting the Literature Review and Developing Research Hypotheses</td>
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<td>Week 6 9/30-10/4</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 5 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Quantitative Research&lt;br&gt;PRJA Section 2, Due 10/4&lt;br&gt;Exam 1: Chapters 1-5 &amp; 14: Blackboard 10/4 to 10/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7 10/7-10/11</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 6 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Qualitative Research&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Draft Section II of Research Proposal, Due 10/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8 10/14-10/18</td>
<td>Reading: Chapter 7 (Yegidis, Weinbach, &amp; Myers)&lt;br&gt;Lecture Topic: Evaluating Programs</td>
</tr>
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| Week 9 10/21-10/25 | Reading: Chapter 8 (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Myers)  
Lecture Topic: Evaluating Individual Practice |
| Week 10 10/28-11/1 | Reading: Chapter 9 (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Myers)  
Lecture Topic: Sampling Issues and Options |
| Week 11 11/4-11/8 | Reading: Chapter 10 (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Myers)  
Lecture Topic: Measurement Concepts and Issues  
**PRJA Section 3 & 4, Due 11/8**  
Exam 2: Chapters 6-10: Blackboard 11/8 to 11/12 |
| Week 12 11/11-11/15 | Reading: Chapter 11 (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Myers)  
Lecture Topic: Methods for Acquiring Research Data  
**Assignment: Draft Section III-VI of Research Proposal, Due 11/15** |
| Week 13 11/18-11/22 | Reading: Chapter 12 (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Myers)  
Lecture Topic: Data Collection Instruments |
| Week 14 11/25-11/29 | Reading: Chapter 13 (Yegidis, Weinbach, & Myers)  
Lecture Topic: Analyzing Data  
**Thanksgiving: 11/27-11/29**  
**Assignment: Research Proposal Due, Due 11/29** |
| Week 15 12/2-12/6 | Research Proposal Presentations, Due 12/6 |
| Week 16 12/9-12/13 | Exam 3: Chapters 11-13: Blackboard 12/9-12/11 |

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