Instructor: Christopher M. Shar, Ph.D., MSW, M.S.
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Phone: 325.486.6426
Office: HHS 224R
Office Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays – 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and by appointment

Course Information

Course Description
This course is open to students who chose the thesis option. Independent, applied research that addresses a significant issue in social work supervised by a member of the social work graduate faculty. This course is designed to assist students in completing their thesis and consists of the completion of an empirical research study, including its design and implementation, the completion of the written thesis document, and defense of the thesis before the student’s thesis committee. (This course may be repeated once for credit.)

Prerequisite and Co-requisite Courses
Enrollment in the MSW program and permission of the department

Prerequisite Skills
This course requires students to have an existing familiarity with and understanding of social work theories as well as the foundational values, ethics, skills, and knowledge base of the profession and be able to apply these at the mezzo- and macro-levels of practice.

General skill-based requirements of this course include: basic computer proficiencies (e.g., accessing Internet websites, using online and on-campus library resources, and familiarity with Microsoft Office programs) and the ability to understand and apply the formatting and style guidelines of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).

Course Delivery
This course is delivered face-to-face with the student and members of the student’s thesis committee.
Required Texts and Materials


**Note:** All assignments submitted in this course are to be written in strict accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). If you do not already own the *Publication Manual*, this is a required text.

Communication
All communication (email or phone) **typically receives a response within 24 hours** at the latest. Messages sent on weekends and evenings may receive a longer wait for responses than during morning or afternoon hours during the week.

Ask questions and participate in all opportunities for discussion. Graduate learning is dependent upon your synthesis of the material with your existing knowledge base. **Active learning** improves student outcomes as demonstrated by a well-established evidence base.

Utilize office hours if you have questions or concerns about the material or any other matter that is course-related. I am an important resource to help facilitate your learning, but I can only help when I know that you have questions or concerns. If my office hours are not convenient, I am happy to make an appointment to speak in-person, via phone, or through Blackboard Collaborate at a more convenient time.

Grading
Evaluation and Grades
Course grades will be determined as indicated in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
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**Teaching Strategies**
Students are expected to be “active learners.” It is a basic assumption of the instructor that students will be involved (beyond the materials and lectures presented in the course) discovering, processing, and applying the course information using peer-review journal articles, researching additional information and examples on the Internet, and discussing course material and clinical experiences with their peers.

Spring 2020 – Dr. Shar
Assignment Description

Thesis 100%

The thesis requires substantive content and scholarly quality of writing. All drafts as well as the final product must conform to the standards and guidelines of the ASU Graduate School as presented in the latest version of the Thesis Handbook in addition to the APA Publication Manual (7th ed.). The thesis must demonstrate the cumulative knowledge which the student has gained throughout the MSW program and be demonstrated through the completion of the final paper. This includes understanding of scholarly writing and its conventions; substantive knowledge about a specific area of social work displayed through the literature review; familiarity with scholarly research demonstrated by conducting data collection and analysis; and ability to draw conclusions from empirical evidence and make recommendations for further research based on the thesis’ results.

General Policies Related to This Course

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:

- Angelo State University Student Handbook (https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/)
- Angelo State University Catalog (https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/26596-2019-2020-graduate-catalog-archive)
- Angelo State University Honor Code (https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty/php)
- Angelo State University Statement of Academic Integrity (https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/community-policies/academic-integrity.php)

Student Responsibility and Attendance

This result of this course is the completion of a thesis as part of the master’s in social work degree program. Student self-motivation and active engagement is necessary throughout the process. This includes, but is not limited to, collaborative discussions with committee members, conducting the necessary requirements of a scholarly research study, and production of a thesis in accordance with the requirements set forward by Angelo State University’s Graduate School. Failure to participate and successfully complete the course results in a failure to

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate
such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website (www.angelo.edu/ADA). The employee responsible for reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is Ms. Dallas Swafford, Director of Student Disability Services. Her office phone number is (325) 942-2047 and her University email address is dallas.swafford@angelo.edu.

Title IX
Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manners:

- **Online** – www.angelo.edu/incident-form
- **Face-to-Face** – Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
- **Phone** – (325) 942-2022
- **Email** – michelle.boone@angelo.edu

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171).

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State University’s policy, please visit ASU’s Title IX webpage (www.angelo.edu/TitleIX).

Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Days
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19: Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day (www.angelo.edu/content/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of) for more information.
Incomplete Grade Policy
It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11: Grading Procedures (www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures) for more information.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from Angelo State University. The Archer College of Health and Human Services adheres to the Statement of Academic Integrity (https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/community-policies/academic-integrity.php).

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s Academic Integrity Policy in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft. In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Turnitin. Please consult the ASU Writing Center’s Academic Honesty resources (https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php) for more information.

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