SWK 6335 – Section DM1
Social Work Research for Practice
Summer Session 2021

Instructor:  Dr. Christopher M. Shar
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Office: HHS 224R
Office Hours: MWF 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and by appointment

Course Information

Course Times and Dates
Summer Session 2021 – June 7th through July 30th
Optional Online Synchronous Meetings – Tuesday evenings 6:00 p.m.

Course Description
This course introduces the statistical methods used in generalist social work practice and research accentuating research-guided social work practice and practice-guided social work research. The course consists of online lectures and lab activities that focus on learning and conducting basic statistical analyses and interpreting statistical output. Students will learn the rudimentary statistical methods used in scientific inquiry and program evaluation as a master’s level practitioner. Areas of emphasis throughout the course include the process in which statistical analysis informs social work practice and vice versa; the skills necessary for statistical analysis, interpretation, and application; and ethical, cultural, and professional value-related considerations. Lab activities include the introduction to the most recent version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and practice exercises relating to the variety of statistical methods introduced and reviewed. Throughout the course, the ability to read, evaluate, and apply social work research in a systematic and critical manner is underscored.

Course Credits
3

Prerequisites and Prerequisite Courses
All students must be enrolled in the traditional track of the MSW program.

Prerequisite Skills
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.).
Program Outcomes
Upon completion of the program of study for the master’s degree in Social Work, the graduate will be prepared to practice as an advanced generalist in the field of social work as well as become licensed as a master’s level social worker.

Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assignment(s) or activity(ies) validating outcome achievement:</th>
<th>Mapping to Program Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice</td>
<td>Statistics-related lab assignments; journal article critique; and research proposal</td>
<td>Application of critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings</td>
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Course Delivery
This section of SWK 6335: Social Work Research for Practice is an online course with learning resources and supplemental materials posted in Angelo State University’s Blackboard Learning Management System, which can be accessed at ASU’s Blackboard System. Optional synchronous online sessions will be held once each week for a review of important concepts and opportunities for student questions and concerns. These sessions will be recorded and posted to the Blackboard course site for those unable to virtually attend.

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* (7th ed.). If you do not already own the *Publication Manual*, this is a required text.
Required Materials

Technology Requirements
To successfully complete this course, students must have access to the following devices, software, and services:

- A computer capable of running Windows (7 or later), or Mac OSX (10.8 or later)
- The latest version of Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, or Mac Safari web browsers
- Microsoft Office Suite (or a compatible Open Office Suite)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (or similar PDF reader)
- High Speed Internet access and an Ethernet adapter cable required (wireless connections can drop during tests and Collaborate sessions)
- Webcam with microphone

Refer to Angelo State University’s Distance Education website for further technology requirements.

Topic Outline
The beginning of the course reviews the basic methodological issues related to evidence-based practice, the development of research questions and hypotheses, and the performance of the literature review. Subsequently, students are introduced to the execution of basic research practices, including sampling, measurement, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, and dissemination of research findings.

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. Emails received after 6:00 p.m. may not be addressed until the following morning.

Ask questions and participate in all opportunities for course 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 virtual office hours as needed. I am happy to make an appointment to speak via phone, or through Webex, Zoom, or Blackboard Collaborate at a time convenient to both of our schedules. I encourage all students to take advantage of access as a resource for any and all course-related questions and concerns.
Grading

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Article Critique</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excel Lab Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Grading System
Course grades will be dependent upon completing course requirements and meeting the student learning outcomes.

Grading Scale
A = 90 to 100  B = 80 to 89  C = 70 to 79  D = 60 to 69  F = 59 and below

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.

Assignment and Activity Descriptions
- Rubrics for all assignments are located on the Blackboard course website.
- All assignments MUST be submitted via Blackboard unless specifically approved by the instructor before submission.

Journal Article Critique
Students will locate and review three (3) peer-reviewed research articles on one (1) topic of their personal or professional interest. Next, students will identify an array of research concepts within the articles and write a critique of the three articles in a paper that compares and contrasts research elements from each article. Critiques should be comprised of 4 to 6 pages of body text (excludes title page and references page) and follow APA 7th edition style and formatting. An outline and more detailed instructions are located on the Blackboard course site.
Excel Lab Assignments 30%
Students will complete four (4) lab assignments that cover the statistical tests and research methods discussed in the course. Each lab assignment will be conducted using Microsoft Excel and the Real Statistics Excel add-in software package. Assignment requirements, data sets, and more detailed instructions are located on the Blackboard course site.

Research Proposal 40%
Students will write a research paper that proposes a social work research study. Proposals will follow the format of All papers must be supported by scholarly resources (e.g., journal articles, demographic data, think-tank research, government reports, etc.) and include data analysis, data interpretation, and a discussion of findings. An outline and more detailed instructions are located on the Blackboard course site.

Assignment Submission
All assignments MUST be submitted through the Assignments links on the Blackboard site. This is for grading, documenting, and archiving purposes. Emailed submissions will NOT be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Issues with technology use arise from time to time. If a technology issue does occur regarding an assignment submission, email me at my ASU email address (christopher.shar@angelo.edu) and attach a copy of what you are trying to submit. You must also contact the IT Service Center at (325) 942-2911 or go to your Technology Support tab in Blackboard to report the issue. This lets faculty know you completed the assignment on time and are just having problems with the online submission feature in Blackboard. If you do not contact the IT Service Center and receive an email that acknowledges the receipt of your report, your submission will not be accepted.

Once the problem is resolved, submit your assignment through the appropriate link. This process will document the problem and establish a timeline. Be sure to keep a backup of all work.

Note: All assignments, including the outline for the policy presentation, must be written in strict accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).

Late Work or Missed Assignments Policy
This course is organized as weekly learning modules, which begin on Mondays and end on Sundays. Tentative due dates are listed in the course outline of the syllabus and on the course Blackboard pages. Any course changes (including scheduling updates) will be posted in the learning modules on the course Blackboard pages. Late assignments will not be accepted without PRIOR approval of faculty.
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
- Angelo State University Catalog
- Angelo State University Honor Code
- Angelo State University Statement of Academic Integrity

Student Responsibility and Attendance
This section of SWK 6367: Advanced Research – Practice and Program Evaluation is taught online. There are readings which you will have to complete to be able to adequately complete assignments. In order to complete this course successfully, you must participate in all course activities. Students are expected to engage in course assignments and submit work on or before the assignment’s deadline. Students will be graded in part on their ability to make substantive contributions reflecting an integration of course-related material. Scholarly contribution is an expectation. Generally, you should expect to spend a minimum of six to nine hours of studying the assigned readings, completing course assignments, and consuming other course-related material.

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 ASU. The College of Health and Human Services adheres to the university’s Statement of Academic Integrity.

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered 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. It is the student’s responsibility to know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Students are encouraged to reach out to the instructor and ASU’s Writing Center for more information.

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. 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.

**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 for more information.

**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 for more information.

**Copyright Policy**

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

**Syllabus Changes**

The faculty member reserves the option to make changes as necessary to this syllabus and the course content. If changes become necessary during this course, the faculty will notify students of such changes by email, course announcements and/or via a discussion board announcement. It is the student’s responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a daily basis.

**Title IX at Angelo State University**

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](http://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](http://www.angelo.edu).

### Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Week/Dates</th>
<th>Required Readings and Assignments</th>
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| **Week 1** 6/7 to 6/11 | **Themes:** Getting Started with Research & Descriptive Statistics (Introduction, Central Tendency, and Variability)  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapters 3 and 4  
Using Statistics – Chapters 1, 2, and 3 |
| **Week 2** 6/14 to 6/18 | **Themes:** Beginning the Research Endeavor & Inferential Statistics (Normal Distribution, Z Distribution, and Research Design)  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapters 5 and 11  
Using Statistics – Chapter 4, 5, and 6 |
| **Week 3** 6/21 to 6/25 | **Themes:** Research for Practice and Evaluation and the t-Test (Single Sample, Independent, and Paired t-Tests)  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapters 7 and 8  
Using Statistics – Chapters 7, 8, and 15  
**Assignments:** Excel Lab Assignment # 1 Due 6/25 by 9:00 p.m. via Blackboard |
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| **Week 4** 6/28 to 7/2 | **Themes:** Collecting Data and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA and Factorial ANOVA)  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapter 9  
Using Statistics – Chapters 9 and 10  
**Assignments:** Journal Article Critique Due 7/2 by 9:00 p.m. via Blackboard |
| **Week 5** 7/5 to 7/9 | **Themes:** Analyzing Data and Correlation (Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient and Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation)  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapter 10  
Using Statistics – Chapter 11  
**Assignment:** Excel Lab Assignment # 2 Due 7/9 by 9:00 p.m. via Blackboard |
| **Week 6** 7/12 to 7/16 | **Themes:** Interpreting Data and the Chi-Square ($\chi^2$) Test  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapter 12  
Using Statistics – Chapter 14  
**Assignment:** Excel Lab Assignment # 3 Due 7/16 by 9:00 p.m. via Blackboard |
| **Week 7** 7/19 to 7/23 | **Themes:** Reporting Data and Regression (Bivariate and Multiple Linear)  
**Readings:** Research Methods for Social Workers – Chapter 13  
Using Statistics – Chapters 12 and 13  
**Assignment:** Excel Lab Assignment # 4 Due 7/23 by 9:00 p.m. via Blackboard |
| **Week 8** 7/26 to 7/30 | **Themes:** Conclusions  
**Assignment:** Research Proposal Due 7/28 by 9:00 p.m. via Blackboard |
Grading Rubrics
Rubrics for all assignments and activities are located on the Blackboard course website.

Student Evaluation of Faculty and Course
Students in all programs are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and the faculty who teach them. Evaluations are most helpful when they are honest, fair, constructive, and pertinent to the class, clinical experience, or course. Faculty value student evaluations, and use student suggestions in making modifications in courses, labs and clinical experiences. Angelo State University uses the IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) system administered through Kansas State University for all course evaluations. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment administers IDEA for the entire university, online and has established a policy whereby students can complete course evaluations free from coercion. The following points are the selected learning objectives for this course.

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
3. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field
4. Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth
5. Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information

Links Used in the Syllabus
ASU Blackboard LMS
https://blackboard.angelo.edu

ASU Catalogs
https://www.angelo.edu/academics/catalog/

ASU Honor Code
https://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf

ASU Operating Policy 10.19: Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day
https://www.angelo.edu/live/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of

ASU Statement of Academic Integrity

ASU Student Disability Services
https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/disability-services/

ASU Student Handbook
https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/student-handbook/

ASU Title IX Information
https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/title-ix/

ASU Writing Center’s Academic Honesty Information
https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/writing-center/academic_honesty.php

End of Syllabus