

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
NASHVILLE CAMPUS**

**SW 506 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH
SUMMER 2003**

Instructor:	Brian E. Bride, Ph.D.	Class location:	Room 234
Phone:	(615) 256-1885 x136	Class time:	Tuesday/Thursday, 12:30-4:30
Office:	Room 262	Office Hours:	Tues/Thurs, 12:00-12:30;
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Code of Conduct

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook (www.csw.utk.edu)

The Honor Statement:

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics, 2002*).

Disability

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 865-974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

This course focuses on knowledge and practice of social scientific research philosophies and methodologies with respect to their evolution and application to the field of social work. It covers the history and philosophies of science; ethics of research practice; and the research process including problem formulation, research design, instrument use and construction; data collection, analysis and reporting, and evaluation and utilization of research.

Rationale

Social workers must be provided with the knowledge of research and its methods in order to conduct research for informed, effective, and accountable practice within the framework of research ethics. Toward that end, it is essential that social workers have the foundation knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to conduct research as well as retrieve and critically evaluate the existing research literature. It is also important that such a preparation for research practice be reinforced with the use of appropriate statistical procedures and computer technology. This course trains students to meet the increasing demands to develop knowledge and to demonstrate practice

effectiveness with the help of such procedures and technology, in a responsible and ethical manner. It further aims to prepare students for more advanced research methods for clinical as well as management, community, and policy practice.

Objectives

By completion of this course, students are expected to be able to demonstrate(through course activities, assignments and/or exams):

1. Understand of the role, history, and current status of research in social work theory and practice;
2. Understanding of how to conduct research within the ethical guidelines of the profession
3. Understand and know how to avoid potential biases in research with minority and disadvantaged groups;
4. Understand and be able to apply the major stages of the research process;
5. Understand the basic assumptions, concepts, foundations, and limitations of the traditional scientific approach and challenges to these foundations;
6. Know how to gain access to substantive and methodological research literature;
7. Understand the principles, logic, limitations, and alternative conceptualizations of qualitative and quantitative research designs;
8. Understand basic evaluation designs for clinical as well as program management, community, and policy practice;
9. Understand and be able to apply basic principles and methods of sampling;
10. Understand basic principles and limitations of measurement;
11. Select and use basic measurement methods for clinical as well as program management, community, and policy practice;
12. Prepare, enter, and manipulate data using a microcomputer;
13. Interpret and compute basic descriptive statistics using a microcomputer;
14. Understand basic principles of inferential statistics;
15. Compute basic inferential statistics using a microcomputer;
16. Critically formulate and interpret research conclusions;

17. Write a research report using proper form and style.

Required Text:

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2001). *Research methods for social work* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Course Requirements

Exams (60% of final grade) – Two exams will be given during the course of the semester, on July 22, 2003 and August 7, 2003. Each exam is worth 30% of the final grade for the course.

Research Article Critique (30% of final grade) – Students will critique a published research article that is relevant to social work practice. The critique must address the strengths and limitations of the research article, paying particular attention to the following: introduction, literature review, statement of the problem, sampling plan, research design, data analysis plan, and limitations. Additional guidelines for this assignment will be distributed in class.

Participation (10% of final grade) – Factors considered in the assignment of a participation grade include, attendance, completion of readings, participation in class discussions, and completion of in and out of class assignments.

Grading Scale

A	93-100
B+	88-92.9
B	80-87.9
C+	77-79.9
C	70-76.9
D	60-69.9
F	< 60

Class schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics and Readings</i>
7/8/03	Introduction and review of syllabus Social Work and Research Ethical Issues in Research <i>Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 1: Scientific Inquiry and Social Work</i> <i>Chapter 4: The Ethics and Politics of Social Work Research</i>
7/10/03	The Philosophy of Science Role of Theory in Social Work Research Problem Formulation

Conducting a Literature Review

*Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 2: Philosophical Issues in Science and Research
Chapter 3: Theory and Research
Chapter 5: Problem Formulation
Chapter 6: Conceptualization and Operationalization*

7/15/03

Sampling

Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 9: The Logic of Sampling

7/17/03

Measurement

*Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 7: Measurement
Chapter 8: Constructing Measurement Instruments*

7/22/03

MIDTERM EXAM

7/24/03

NO CLASS

7/29/03

Research Design

*Rubin and Babbie, Chapter10: Causal Inference and Group Designs
Chapter11: Single-Case Evaluation Designs
Chapter12: Survey Research*

7/31/03

Qualitative Research
Unobtrusive Research
Program Evaluation

*Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 13: Qualitative Research Methods
Chapter 14: Unobtrusive Research: Quantitative and Qualitative
Methods
Chapter 19: Program Evaluation*

8/5/03

Data Analysis

*Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 15: Processing Data
Chapter 16: Interpreting Descriptive Statistics and Tables
Chapter 17: Inferential Data Analysis, Part I
Chapter 18: Inferential Data Analysis, Part II*

8/7/03 **FINAL EXAM**

Supplemental Bibliography

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