

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

SW506 - Social Work Research

Course Outline
Summer 2006

SW 506 - Social Work
Research (3 credit hours)
Class: T/Th 3:30-6:30 p.m. , rm. 209
Office Hours: T/Th 2:30- 3:30
And by appointment

Instructor: Cynthia Rocha, Ph.D.
219 Henson Hall
Office: 974-7513
Home: 470-9174

Required Text

Rubin, Allen & Babbie, Earl.(2005).Research Methods for Social Work. 5th Edition. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Pub.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to:

1. attend all class sessions – lab sessions are mandatory
2. participate in class discussions and exercises, and
3. complete all assignments.

Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	Percent of Grade
Exam I	July 25	25
Data Analysis Assignment	August 3	20
Exam II	August 8	25
Research Proposal (due in class)	August 10	30

Grading Scale

A =	90-100
B+=	87-89
B=	80-86
C+=	77-79
C=	70-76
D+=	67-69
D=	60-66
F=	<60

Assignment Criteria

Research Proposal

The research proposal will develop as the semester progresses. Work in small groups with people who have similar interests to choose a problem. The proposal is limited only by your imagination. The group will work together throughout the semester and provide the appropriate methodology and analysis to analyze the chosen problem. The project is due the last day of class. The proposal will be graded as follows:

1. Research Problem (15 pts.)
Select a research problem which is of interest and concern to you. Describe the problem, using literature as necessary. Remember the problem informs your research questions, so be specific.
2. Justify the need to conduct this study with appropriate literature review. (20 pts.)
 - What has been done in the past?
 - What is known and not known?Use the literature review to guide you toward your research questions.
3. Develop a set of research questions or hypotheses which you will use to guide and/or test in your study. (10 pts.)
4. Methods (20 pts)
 - What type of sample would you use?
 - Units of analysis
 - Sample size
 - How representative would your sample be?
 - How would you collect your data?
 - Design
 - Type of design
 - What internal, external validity issues
 - What kind of ethical issues might you encounter, depending on the type of design you use?
5. Measurement (20 pts)
 - What variables will you use to measure your research question? What demographic variables will you need to control for? Diversity issues? Socioeconomic issues?
 - Do they have independent/experimental/treatment variables?
 - Is there a dependent/outcome variable?
 - How reliable and valid are your measures?
6. Data Analysis (10 pts.)
 - What would be an appropriate data analytic technique to answer your research questions?
7. Technical aspects of the paper (5 pts.)**
 - APA style
 - Headings, page numbers, spelling, grammar
 - group participation

**NOTE: The purpose of using groups is not to split up each section, but to use your synergy as a group and brainstorm the most appropriate methods to be used for your proposed research. If a group member does not participate fully, this should be discussed openly within your group (like healthy social workers). If this does not remedy the problem, the group should discuss the matter with the instructor.

Data Analysis Assignment

Throughout the semester the class will develop and fill out a survey. Each student will also administer the survey to one or two other students (depending on the size of the class). We will put all of the surveys together and create a “data set”. Data will be analyzed by the class during our computer lab time. Students will turn in their code books, SPSS output, along with their interpretation of their findings. Attendance in lab is mandatory.

Timetable

Week of	Major Topic
July 11	Introduction into inquiry Ethical and Culturally Sensitive Research Readings: R&B Chapter 1, Scientific Inquiry and Social Work R&B Chapter 3 and 15
July 13	Problem formulation; Lit Review Theories, Hypotheses, Formulating questions, Units of Analysis, Dependent and Independent Variables Taking demographics into account Readings: R&B Chapter 4 Problem Formulation R&B Chapter 5, Conceptualization and Operationalization <u>HANDOUT: Class Survey</u>
July 18	Research Designs: part 1 Experimental, Quasi Experimental and Pre experimental Designs Readings: R&B Chapter 10 Group Experiments R&B Quasi Experiments
July 20	Research Designs: part 2 Single Subject Designs Qualitative Research Readings: R&B Chapter 12 Single Case Designs R&B Chapter 14 Qualitative Research Methods
July 25	Data Collection Face to face interview, phone, mail surveys Unobtrusive Research, Existing Statistics Readings: R&B Chapter 9 Survey Research R&B Chapter 15 Analyzing Available Records <u>EXAM ONE TODAY</u>
July 24	Sampling Readings: R&B Chapter 8 Sampling

Data Analysis Assignment, part 1 Coding your Data, Creating a Code Book, assigning variable names

August 1 Measurement:
Reliability and Validity
Measurement Instruments

Readings: R&B Chapter 6, Measurement
R&B Chapter 7, Constructing Measurement Instruments

Data Analysis Assignment, part two Understanding Data Analysis: Univariate and Bivariate Analysis
Computer Lab: Data Entry, Data Analysis

August 3 Data Analysis
Selecting Appropriate Tests: chi square, t-tests, correlations
Computer Lab: Data Analysis, Output

DATA ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY

August 8 EXAM TWO

August 10 RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

Supplementary Bibliography

- Angelo, L. and March, J.. (1997). "Do Training Programs Help AFDC Recipients Leave the Welfare Roles? An Evaluation of New York City's BEGIN Program". *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*, Summer, 83-104.
- Babbie, E., Halley, F. & Zaino, J. (2003). *Adventures in social research: Data analysis using SPSS (5th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Campbell, D.T., and Stanley, J.C. (1963). Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Research. Chicago: Rand McNally,.
- Cherry, A. (2000). *A Research Primer for the Helping Professions*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Pub.
- Dudley, J.R. (2005). *Research Methods for Social Work: Becoming consumers and producers of research*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Friedman, B. (1998). *The Research Tool Kit*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Lee, L.J. and Sampson, J. (1990). "A Practical Approach to Program Evaluation," Evaluation and Program Planning, Vol. 13, pp. 157-164.
- Levin, J. & Fox, J. (2004). *Elementary statistics in social research: The essentials*. Allyn & Bacon Press.
- Neff, J. & W. Zule, W. (2000). "Development of a Measure of Treatment Readiness for Out of Treatment Drug Users: Psychometric Properties and Construct Validity". Substance Use and Misuse, 35: 585-599.
- Silverman, D. (1993). Interpreting Qualitative Data. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Pub.
- Stanley, B. & Sieber, J. (1992). Social Research on Children and Adolescents: Ethical Issues. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Steinberg, D.M. (2004). *The social work student's research handbook*. New York: Haworth Press.