

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

SW-506 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH
Course Outline
Spring 2007

Section 002- Monday 9:05 - 12:05

Henson Hall Rm. - 206

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Rm. 224 Henson Hall

974-3351 or 974-7511

Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons or by appointment

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THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE UNTIL THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

REQUIRED TEXTS

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2005) Research methods for social work (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Patterson, D. A. (2006) Data Analysis with Spreadsheets. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to:

1. Arrive on time and attend all class sessions,
2. Participate in class discussion and exercises,
3. Complete all assignments on time,
4. Complete all examinations.

EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENT PERCENT OF GRADE DUE DATE

Research Paper		
Draft (Optional)		April 16th
Final	16.67	April 30th
Computer Assignments(4)	16.67	See Course Outline
Four Exams	<u>16.67</u>	
Total	100	

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

GROUP RESEARCH PAPER

For this assignment, you will form a research team with two or three of your classmates. Research teams should be no larger than four people. As a team you will design, carry out, and report on your research project. Data for the study can be drawn from a team member's field placement or from a survey conducted with classmates. If you elect to use data from a field placement, you must have written permission from your field supervisor and use no patient identifying information. Class surveys must have an attached research consent form and must not request any participant identifying information.

LENGTH: 15-20 pages typed and double-spaced, excluding references. There should 12-15 references, a significant majority of which will be from peer reviewed journals.

TOPIC: Choose a research question related to social work practice which is narrow in focus; one which the literature indicates is in need of further study.

GRADING: The research team paper will be graded on the basis of clarity, specificity, quality of writing, and the demonstration and integration of sound research knowledge.

ORGANIZATION: The paper should include at least six sections.

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduce the reader to the research topic assuming he/she knows nothing about the topic. Explain what you hope to accomplish in this paper and why. Finally, state why this endeavor is an important contribution to the literature of social work practice.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Briefly summarize the findings and the implications of relevant research found in the literature.

3. STATEMENT PROBLEM

Discuss how this research relates to the literature. State the research question(s). List all relevant hypotheses.

4. METHODOLOGY

Introduce the methodology used to investigate this research question and statistical techniques the team selected to analyze the data. Include: research design, sampling technique, population characteristics, data collection methods, validity, reliability, etc.

5. RESULTS

Present the results of the team's statistical analysis of the research findings.

6. DISCUSSION

Discuss the findings as they relate to the social work literature, social work practice/education, and the field placement setting from which the data were drawn.

7. LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

Discuss the limitations of the study that result from the limitations of the research design and the restrictions associated with social work research.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Include a discussion of the implications for practice and further research. Discussion the direction for future research in this area.

EXTRA CREDIT

Group Research Projects will be awarded an extra 5 percent credit if the major points of the paper are presented in class as a PowerPoint presentation and published on the course Blackboard site.

COMPUTER ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be required to complete four small computer assignments to demonstrate proficiency in the use of spreadsheets for data analysis. These assignments will be graded as satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Assignment number one requires the creation of a data set within a spreadsheet.

Assignment number two requires using the spreadsheet to compute descriptive statistics and frequency distributions on variables in the data set created in the first assignment.

Assignment number three requires using of a spreadsheet to conduct an analysis of the relationship between two variables in your data set through use of the Chi-square statistic and the Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Assignment number four requires use of a spreadsheet to conduct an analysis of the relationship between variables in your data set using the t-statistic (independent and dependent) and an ANOVA.

Your course instructor will give specific details on these assignments as they come due.

COURSE TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC ASSIGNED	READINGS
01/22/07	Course Introduction, Scientific Inquiry and Social Work	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 1, Appendix A Patterson & Basham, Chap 1.
01/29/07	Philosophical Issues in Science and Research	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 2
02/05/07	Ethics and Politics of Social Work Research - Theory and research	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 3
02/12/07	Problem Formulation - Conceptualization and Operationalization	Rubin & Babbie, Chaps. 4 & 5
1st Test 02/19/07	Measurement, Constructing Measurement Instruments, Data Collection Ways and Means	Rubin & Babbie, Chaps. 6 & 7 Patterson & Basham, Chap. 2

02/26/07		
1st Assignment due	The Logic of sampling - Selecting Samples	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 8 Patterson Chap. 3
03/05/07	Causal Inference – Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 10 & 11
03/12/07	Spring Break!	
03/19/07	Single-case Evaluation Designs – Issues in Program Evaluation	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 12 & 13 Patterson & Basham, Chap. 10
2nd Test 3/26/07	Survey Research – Qualitative, Unobtrusive, and “Culturally Competent” Research Methods	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 9, & 14
4/2/07		
2nd Assignment due	Quantitative Data Analysis - Data Cleaning -Interpretation and computation of basic descriptive statistics with spreadsheets	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 18 Patterson & Basham, Chap. 4, 5, 6, 8
04/09/07	Analyzing Available Records – “Culturally Competent Research”	Rubin and Babbie, Chap. 15 &16
3rd Test 4/16/07	Constructing and Interpreting Bivariate and Multivariate Tables	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 19
3rd Assignment due	Bivariate Data Analysis -Tabular and Graphic	Patterson & Basham, Chap. 8 & 9
4/23/07		
4th Assignment due	Inferential Data Analysis - Presentation of Data	Rubin & Babbie, Chap. 20 & 21 Patterson & Basham, Chap. 11 & 12
4/30/07		
Group Research Projects due	Groups Present Their Research Findings	
5/7/07		
4th Test	Final Exam	