

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK  
SW 506 Social Work Research  
Summer 2007**

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

Instructor: Cynthia Rocha, Ph.D.  
219 Henson Hall  
Office: 974-7513  
Home: 357-2577

**Required Text**

Rubin, Allen & Babbie, Earl.(2008).Research Methods for Social Work. 6th Edition. Pacific Grove, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.

**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**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Percent of Grade</b>
Exam I	June 18	25
Data Analysis Assignment	June 27	20
Exam II	July 2	25
Research Proposal (5:00 p.m.)	July 6	30

**Grading Scale**

A =	90-100
B+=	88-89
B=	80-87
C+=	78-79
C=	70-77
D+=	68-69
D=	60-67
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. 5 points will be deducted from your grade for each lab missed.

**Timetable**    **Major Topic**

June 4	Introduction into inquiry Ethical and Culturally Sensitive Research  Readings:     R&B Chapter 1, Why Study Research R&B Chapter 4, Ethics and Politics of Social Work Research R&B Chapter 5, Culturally Competent Research
June 6	Problem formulation; Lit Review Theories, Hypotheses, Formulating questions, Units of Analysis, Dependent and Independent Variables Taking demographics into account  Readings:     R&B Chapter 6, Problem Formulation R&B Chapter 7, Conceptualization and Operationalization <u>HANDOUT: Class Survey</u>
June 11	Research Designs: part 1 Experimental, Quasi Experimental and Pre experimental Designs  Readings:     R&B Chapter 10, Causal inference and Correlational Designs R&B Chapter 11, Experimental Designs
June 13	Research Designs: part 2 Single Subject Designs, Program Evaluation Qualitative Research  Readings:     R&B Chapter 12 Single Case Designs R&B Chapter 13 Program Evaluation R&B Chapter 17 Qualitative Research Methods
June 18	Data Collection Face to face interview, phone, mail surveys Unobtrusive Research, Existing Statistics  Readings:     R&B Chapter 15 Survey Research R&B Chapter 16 Analyzing Available Records <u>EXAM ONE TODAY</u>
June 20	Sampling

Readings: R&B Chapter 14 Sampling

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

June 25 Measurement:  
Reliability and Validity  
Measurement Instruments

Readings: R&B Chapter 8, Measurement  
R&B Chapter 9, Constructing Measurement Instruments

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

June 27 Data Analysis  
Selecting Appropriate Tests: chi square, t-tests, correlations  
*Computer Lab*: Data Analysis, Output

DATA ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY

July 2 EXAM TWO

July 6 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* (5<sup>th</sup> 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.