Note from the professor: Please feel free to contact me. Email is usually the best way to connect with me. In addition, I encourage you to schedule individual meetings with me on Zoom to talk over your research ideas. Please note that the role of the instructor in this course is different than the Capstone courses, since I am not on most students’ Capstone committees. You will need to work closely with your Capstone II committee chair while you work on the course assignments toward putting together your projects. They are the Co-PIs of your studies. Also, time only allows for me to review each of your course assignments one time. I am not able to review your work and provide feedback before they are graded. Please note that you will not be allowed to redo them if you are not satisfied with a grade you earn. That said, I am committed to being helpful and responsive, and will give you feedback on your work so you can integrate it as you progress with your projects.

I. Course Description
This course is designed to guide DSW students through the process of developing a specific and feasible research project that evaluates and/or informs clinical practice. The course will focus on the research skills necessary for planning and managing a comprehensive research project, from the development of the idea, to the logistics involved in planning the project, to the appropriate analytic strategy that will be applied. Students will develop a rationale and purpose for their research and hone their specific research questions. They will conceptualize and plan the research methodology and design that optimally address their research questions. They will conceptualize and plan the research methodology and design that optimally address their research questions. Students will consider the ethical concerns specific to their projects and complete the necessary formal submission for gaining Institutional Review Board approval. A key aim of the course is for students to complete the course fully prepared to implement the research study that will be the basis for their Capstone II projects.

II. Course Rationale
Students completing a DSW must develop an appreciation and understanding of the scientific method so that they will be able to apply and extend the knowledge base of social work through applied research. This course facilitates the application of research method and design skills for social science research methods to understanding and improving social work practice at the individual, family, organization and community levels.

III. Course Competencies
By the completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:
1. Develop a coherent and compelling argument for conducting a research study based on review of relevant research;
2. Craft research questions that specifically target the identified need or research gap;
3. Identify the research methodological approach and explain why it best fits the research questions;
4. Define the specific design for the project and explain what the quality and limitations of the findings will be based on that design;
5. Design, plan, and manage, an ethical, feasible, and practical research study that has direct implications for practice;
6. Describe the potential implications the study might have to inform social work;
7. Secure access to specific sample and/or source of data and specify sampling strategies;
8. Develop specific tools to recruit participants and collect data;
9. Identify variables and how they will be measured;
10. Demonstrate transparency and acknowledgement of ethical concerns as well as limitations to reliability and validity;
11. Complete and submit necessary documentation for Institutional Review Board;
12. Demonstrate ability to identify and apply appropriate analytical strategies targeting research questions and using the data that will be gathered;
13. Work collaboratively with colleagues and provide critical feedback to peers regarding their research methodology;
14. Integrate recommendations and critical feedback from committee members, supervisors, peers, and instructor as they progress through research process.

IV. Student Learning Objectives
   Students will be able to:
   1. Demonstrate knowledge about research methods and how to apply them for practice evaluation and enhancement;
   2. Conceptualize and develop a research project that evaluates and/or informs clinical practice, harnessing available empirical knowledge and adhering to an evidence-based practice model;
   3. Recognize and address ethical and cultural competency concerns in conducting research with vulnerable populations and navigate human subjects procedures;
   4. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in the application of appropriate statistical methods for analysis of research outcomes.

V. Learning Environment
   This course involves both asynchronous and synchronous learning experiences in the online class environment. It is the purpose of this class to provide knowledge and access to resources that will serve as a springboard for independent and collaborative learning. The course may include lectures, PowerPoint, discussion blogs, reading assignments, small group work, assignments involving social media, and online activities.

VI. Text Required for Course
   Other assigned readings will be posted on Blackboard.

VII. University and College of Social Work Policies
   CODE OF CONDUCT: It is the responsibility of the student to read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct Code located in the College of Social Work MSSW
Handbook (www.utk.csw.edu).

HONOR STATEMENT: The University of Tennessee maintains a commitment to an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. Students of the University must pledge that they neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work (Please see *Hilltopics*).

UNIVERSITY CIVILITY STATEMENT: Civility is genuine respect and regard for others - politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other’s well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: [http://civility.utk.edu/](http://civility.utk.edu/).

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the U.S. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement), “the dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including” age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, regionality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. The College values intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, and academic freedom and integrity. “A person’s diverse life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim” (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement). The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY: For course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or to share emergency information, contact The University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 100 Dunford Hall (865) 974-6087 to ensure that you are properly registered for services.

VIII. **Information Literacy/Technological resources**

This course will be conducted online using Blackboard and Zoom. Students must have a working knowledge of all aspects of Blackboard, particularly accessing assignments and learning resources, viewing powerpoint presentations, submission of assignments, and utilizing Blackboard for communication with the instructor and students. In addition, students will need to open accounts on Zoom and become familiar with how to participate in and lead meetings online. This will be covered in greater detail in the first session of the course and on Blackboard.
IX. Course Requirements, Assignments, Assessment, and Evaluation Methods

Course Requirements

This is an online class. Course materials and tools will be used with Blackboard. Online synchronous sessions will be conducted via Zoom. In addition to attendance in all sessions for the course, students are expected to participate in discussions, classroom exercises, group work, and complete all assignments, both graded and not graded. Please note that the course is outlined in the syllabus, but the instructor might also assign readings and other tasks to support the course at it progresses over the semester.

An extension of time for an assignment due to medical or personal emergency are made at the discretion of the instructor. A student who wishes an extension should consult with the instructor in advance. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each calendar day past the due date unless alternative arrangements were made with the instructor prior to the due date.

Assignments

This list provides a description of the graded assignments for the course. Find the detailed expectations for each assignment on BB.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The main assignments for this course are sections of the research proposal for your Capstone II. This work will also serve as a comprehensive draft of your Capstone II manuscript through the Methods section. The assignments are broken down into sections of the proposal and corresponding course content will help you prepare the assignments.

1. **Background, Issue, & Solution (BIS) (Do not exceed 4 pages)**
   Follow the structure offered by Thomas (pp. 3-5) to include the background, issue, & solution (BIS) of your research investigation.

2. **Review of the literature, revised research question/s, and project title (Do not exceed 12 pages)**
   This assignment is about developing this section of your research paper to present what research evidence has been produced so far and develop a compelling argument for why there is a need for this research project. The section takes the reader from the issue and topic to your specific study.

3. **Research methodology and design section (Don not exceed 10 pages)**
   The methods section is a discussion of what specifically your research study entails and why it is the best way to answer the research question/s. Each sub-section is critically important for the methods section of your paper:
   - Procedures
   - Participants/Sample
   - Measures
   - Analytic Strategy
POWERPOINT PRESENTATION
This assignment will help you examine the overall organization and quality of your research projects, and present them in a way that you can receive constructive feedback from your group members. The slides will also serve as the basis for your Capstone II defense presentations. You will present and discuss the slides in your small groups. Decide as a group who will present each of the 2 weeks allotted. Your group should meet outside of the time allotted during class if there is a need for it. The expectation is that everyone will give focus to each other’s presentations and contribute by offering thoughtful and useful critique and feedback. You need be able to receive critique as well. You are encouraged to provide written comments on the slides for each other as well. Approach your group work with genuine intent to help and support each other. You are NOT competing with each other! Do not cut and paste large pieces of text from your papers or your IRB protocols into your slides.

Prepare no more than 20 PPT slides to include:
• Introduction and Rationale/Argument
• Research question/s.
• Type of design.
  1. Recruitment method
  2. Sampling methods
  3. Specific measurement
  4. Analytic Strategy
  5. What relationships do you think the variables have with each other?
  6. How will you test the relationships you hypothesized?

TIMELINE AND PROJECT PLAN
Conducting a research study and writing up the findings means managing a large project with a specific deadline. This assignment will assist you in thinking through all of the steps that you will take, the logistics in accomplishing them, and when and in what order they need to be done. Prepare a tool that you will use to identify the tasks involved in conducting your project, establish deadlines to accomplish them, and track your progress.
• The time it takes to write each section.
• Gaining Institutional Review Board approval.
• How and when you will access the participants and/or collect data.
• How will you manage the data?
• Meeting with your committee chair (and/or supervisor) to give approval, and offer revisions and guidance.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPLICATION
You cannot begin to conduct any research that involves human subjects without approval from the IRB. This requires thinking through every detail of how your project will be conducted, how the participants might be impacted, and what you are going to protect the rights and well-being of the participants to your best ability. For the course you will submit the same document you submit to the UTK IRB and all of the supplementary materials. You are evaluated mainly on navigating the process successfully and by the deadline.

CLASS AND GROUP PARTICIPATION
You are expected to participate in the class sessions and group work. This means completing
the tasks assigned to prepare for class, attending class sessions, engaging in the discussions
and activities, and submitting the worksheets to demonstrate your ongoing integration and
participation. Time has been designated during class sessions for you to complete the work
but you can complete and submit the class work up to a week following class. If you miss a
class you are expected to consult with a peer about what you missed and submit your work
regardless. Class sessions will not be recorded, but powerpoints will be made available.

Assessment and Evaluation
Each assignment will be reviewed by the instructor one time only. Feedback will be provided at
that time.

The course grade for students in SW622 will be calculated as follows:
1. Class and group attendance and participation 10%
2. BIS 10%  Due 2/4
3. Review of the literature and research question 20%  Due 2/25
4. Timeline and project plan 10%  Due 3/3
5. Powerpoint presentation 10%  Due 4/7
6. Research methodology and design 25%  Due 4/21
7. Institutional Review Board application 15%  Due 4/28

Grading Scale for SW622
A (93-100)
B+ (88-92)
B (83-87)
C+ (78-82)
C (73-77)
D+ (68-72)
D (63-67)
F (<63)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE OUTLINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Session topics:
Course overview
Problem formulation
Review of the literature

Preparation for session:
- Read Thomas Chapter 1
- Bring completed Problem Formulation worksheet to class.

Session plan:
1. Meet in course Zoom session.
2. Class will break into small groups to discuss Problem Formulation worksheets.
   - Take turns sharing worksheet on Zoom and discussing preliminary research ideas.
   - Help each other identify specific next steps that should be taken to start moving the
     project forward.
3. Each student submit worksheet on BB.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Session Type</th>
<th>Session Topics</th>
<th>Preparation for session</th>
<th>Session Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jan 28  | WEEK 3| SYNCHRONOUS SESSION  | Project management, Ethics and gaining IRB approval | - Read Thomas Chapter 2  
- Complete IRB CITI course if you have not already done so.  
- Read through the Form 1 Initial Application Step-by-Step instructions.  
- Log into the Imedris system and initiate an account. | 1. Meet in course Zoom session. |
| Feb 4   | WEEK 4| SYNCHRONOUS SESSION  | Research approach, Research paradigms               | - Read Thomas Chapter 5  
- Read Kraus (2005)  
- Read over competing paradigms handout.  
- Download Research Approach worksheet. | 1. Meet in course Zoom session.  
2. Discuss worksheet.  
3. Each student submit worksheet on BB. |
| Feb 11  | WEEK 5| SYNCHRONOUS SESSION  | Literature review, Research questions               | - Meet with committee chair by this date.  
- Read Thomas Chapter 3-4  
- Download and read the literature review of the article assigned to your group  
- Download Critiquing the Literature Review worksheet. | 1. Meet in course Zoom session.  
2. Break into small groups and complete the worksheet Critiquing the Literature Review as a group using the article assigned to your group:  
   Group 1: Agency data analysis –Wolf et al., 2014  
   Group 2: Large secondary data analysis –Humphreys & Rudeski, 2011  
   Group 3: Qualitative –Buchanan et al., 2015  
   Group 4: Single case evaluation –Brophy, 2000  
   Group 5: Mixed methods –Dubé et al., 2015  
3. Return to group at 7:45 to share with class.  
4. Submit groups’ worksheets on BB. |
Session topics:
The methods section
Research design
Timeline and project plan

Preparation for session:
- Read Thomas Chapter 6

Session plan:
1. Meet in course Zoom session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Session Type</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>WEEK 7</td>
<td>NO SESSION</td>
<td>Lit review due by 12:00 Midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>WEEK 8</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td>Timeline and project plan due before class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Session topics:
Participants and sampling
Procedures

Preparation for session:
- Download and read the methods section of the article assigned to your group.
- Download the *Presenting the Procedures, Sampling, and Measures worksheet*.

Session plan:
1. Meet in course Zoom session
2. Break out into small groups and complete the Presenting the Procedures, Sampling, and Measures worksheet using the article assigned to your group:
   - Group 3: Agency data analysis -Wolf et al., 2014
   - Group 4: Large secondary data analysis -Humphreys & Rudeski, 2011
   - Group 5: Qualitative -Buchanan et al., 2015
   - Group 1: Single case evaluation –Brophy, 2000
   - Group 2: Mixed methods –Dubé et al., 2015
3. Return to course session at 7:45 to share with class.
4. Submit groups’ work on BB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Session Type</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>WEEK 9</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Session topics:
Peer review of IRB protocols

Preparation for session:
- Prepare electronic draft IRB protocol from Imedris and exchange them with another peer before coming to class.
- Download the IRB committee checklist.

Session plan:
1. Meet in course Zoom session.
2. The session will involve applying the IRB checklist to critique each other’s protocols.
3. Provide feedback to peer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Session Type</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>WEEK 10</td>
<td>NO SESSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Session Type</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>WEEK 11</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td>Session topics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>WEEK 12</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td>Session topics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 7 &amp;</td>
<td>WEEK 13</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td>Session topics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>WEEK 14</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 21</td>
<td>WEEK 15</td>
<td>NO SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td>Research methodology and design due by 12:00 Midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>WEEK 16</td>
<td>SYNCHRONOUS SESSION</td>
<td>IRB protocol due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>