

QUANTITATIVE SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR

SYLLABUS FOR QUANTITATIVE SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH (SWRK 260)	
Fall 2019	Department of Social Work Education California State University, Fresno
Course Name:	Instructor Name:
Units: 3	Office Location:
Time:	E-Mail:
Location:	Telephone:
Website:	Office Hours:

Catalog Statement: Foundation course on social work research and evaluation using quantitative methods that prepare students for the master's project/thesis. Covers the nature of inquiry, scientific methods, ethics, research designs, sampling strategies, and data analysis and presentation.

Course Description: Social work research is often directed at groups in society who are considered to be at risk of discrimination, economic hardship and oppression. Social Work 260 is a course in research methods with an emphasis on quantitative approaches. It is designed to introduce students to the basic ethics, concepts, procedures, benefits, and limitations of social work research and evaluation. Students will acquire knowledge about research and evaluation content and processes through lecture, discussion, review of research literature and quantitative data analysis applications. Emphasis will be placed on the systematic nature of inquiry as it relates to social work practice.

Prerequisites: Concurrent enrollment in SWRK 200, SWRK 212, SWRK 220, SWRK 280

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work (4th Ed.)*. Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning: Belmont, CA

To save you cost, it is recommended that you purchase electronic copy (eBook) of the book.

COURSE SPECIFICS

Course Goals

1. To prepare students to use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and research evidence to inform practice. (EPAS 4)

2. To prepare students for the utilization of theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literature in formulating and justifying their social work research and evaluation activities. (EPAS 4, 9)
3. To prepare students to engage in quantitative research, identifying research questions, choosing research methods, conducting a study analyzing the data, and reporting the results. (EPAS 4)
4. To prepare students for conducting ethical, legal and culturally-sensitive research and evaluation. (EPAS 1, 4, 9)

Student Learning Outcomes

- 1.1 Articulate how quantitative methods are typically used to produce research evidence in order to critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate practice interventions and service delivery.
- 1.2 Identify principles and strategies for conducting practice-informed research.
- 1.3 Articulate the principles and practices associated with evidence based social work practice.
- 1.4 Compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative research paradigms.
- 1.5 Describe the role of deductive processes and objectivity in quantitative research.
- 2.1 Use existing theory or conceptualization to identify and define a researchable topic, preferably directed at populations-at-risk, for conducting a quantitative study.
- 2.2 Use library resources and the Internet to find empirical studies that incorporate the quantitative approach in social work research and evaluation.
- 2.3 Conduct a critical review and examination of current literature that informs topics or issues studied.
- 3.1 Develop a research question and hypothesis (if appropriate) that can be used to guide a study that informs social work practice.
- 3.2 Differentiate among research designs (exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and evaluative) in order to identify a design that is appropriate for a formal study.
- 3.3 Compare and contrast probability and nonprobability sampling methods and understand the strengths and limitations of the various sampling approaches.
- 3.4 Distinguish and use different data analysis methods (descriptive and inferential statistics, s) that are suitable for a formal study.
- 3.5 Use data analysis software to code, and analyze quantitative data.

- 3.6 Apply appropriate methods to interpret and report the results of a quantitative study.
- 4.1 Identify culturally competent research and sensitivity to issues of social and economic justice, diversity, and the empowerment of diverse and disenfranchised and populations.
- 4.2 Identify how to conduct ethical research, including informed consent and protection of human subjects, using a quantitative approach.

Course requirements/assignments: There are several assignments in this course, including discussion questions, exams, quizzes, lab exercises, class participation, and a final paper.

CITI Training (5 points)

Students will complete the CITI human subjects training through CITI. After completion of the required modules, students will submit the certificate.

Discussion questions (4 at 5 points each) 20 points

Three (3) out-of-class assignments based on journal articles that are required reading for the course (Readings will be assigned in the course description below and as needed throughout the semester, Check Canvas.). The remaining two articles will be of your choice. You are strongly urged to select articles that you will use for your annotated bibliography. Discussion questions (DQs) will be posted on Canvas to guide you in completing this assignment. Students will be required to individually complete the discussion questions for these articles and bring their responses to class. (You may have them electronically to access in class.) Note that you will read the article and complete the discussion question in preparation for small group and class discussion on the assigned due date. You will submit DQs on Canvas prior to the class for credit. Discussion boards will close 10 minutes before class begins.

Literature critique (15 points total)

Quantitative critique: A quantitative article will be selected for critique regarding its methods. Questions for the critique will be provided by the professor.

Ethics Quiz (10 points)

A series of quizzes will be administered from the readings and class lectures on the assigned chapters. Students are expected to read the assigned book chapters and take the online quiz on Canvas. Quizzes will begin with an Ethics quiz and then will cover research methods in the second half of the course. Quizzes are open book, open note. Quizzes will close 10 minutes before classes begin.

Research Topic approval (5 points)

Each student will select a research topic for the Annotated Bibliography. The topic must be submitted and approved.

Annotated Bibliography-Final Semester Paper (25 points)

This is an individually written assignment designed to advance and strengthen student proficiency in locating and evaluating empirical research articles. Students will use an approved topic to collect 10 research-based articles. **At least half of the articles must contain quantitative research methods.** Students will create an annotated bibliography of their articles,

formatting all references in APA format and providing a 1-2 paragraph structured summary of the methods and findings of each article. The structure of the annotation will be discussed in class. The paper will end with a 2-3 paragraph conclusion of what is learned about the current

state of knowledge on the topic and need for additional research, looking at all of the articles together. *Annotated bibliographies should not contain direct quotations from the papers being assessed.*

Mid Term Exam (20 points)

This course has a mid-term and final exam (see course schedule). The exams consist primarily of multiple choice and true/false questions with some short answer questions possible. Exams will be given in class on the date scheduled.

Final Exams (40 points)

This course has a mid-term and final exam (see course schedule). The exams consist primarily of multiple choice and true/false questions with some short answer questions possible. Exams will be given in class on the date scheduled.

Class Project 65 points

The class project will be completed partially in class and partially out of class. Some aspects will be done as a group and some alone. The project is broken into 5 parts.

- 1. Survey Design (5 points):** A survey will be designed in class that seeks to explore attitudes about social workers. This short survey will ask questions designed to collect data at all 4 levels of measurement. Students will work in class in small groups to develop questions. The class will determine the final set of questions that will be used on the survey.
- 2. Informed Consent (5 points):** Each student will draft an Informed Consent form to use for the data collection. The Consent Form will be submitted on Canvas and must be approved before being used.
- 3. Data Collection (5 points):** Each student will administer the survey to collect data. Each student is responsible for at least 15 completed surveys. Surveys can be collected on paper or online and can be launched on social media.
- 4. Data Coding (20 points):** Students will code the data they collected according to the class lecture. The professor will collect the coded data and create a single data file for class use.
- 5. Data Analysis (30 points):** The class file will be used for data analysis according to the statistics as taught in class. The analysis will be completed in class and responses submitted on Canvas.

Class Attendance

Attendance in class is required. Students are expected to engage in class discussion and class activities throughout the semester by coming to class prepared. Readings should be completed before class and any discussion posts or quizzes must be completed before class. Many of the lab exercises will be done in class. Missing this will require the student to make up the lab on their own. You are accountable for any material covered in class even if you are not in attendance.

Grading policy:

Final grades will be based on accumulated points from each assignment. Grades will be based on the following point spread (conventional rounding applied):

180 + pts	90% or above	A
160 – 179 pts	80%-89%	B
140– 159 pts	70%-79%	C
120 – 139 pts	60%-69%	D
119 pts or less	<60%	F

Assignment and Examination Schedule

Assignments	Points	Due Date
Topic approval	5	Sept 2
Discussion Question Article 1	5	Sept 9
CITI training	5	Sept 9
Discussion Question Article 2	5	Sept 16
Discussion Question Article 3	5	Sept 23
Discussion Question Your Choice	5	Sept 30
Ethics quiz	5	Sept 30
Annotated Bibliography	25	Oct 28
Mid Term Exam	20	Nov 11
Article Critique	15	Nov 25
Final Exam	40	Dec 16
Class Project (65 points total)		
Survey Design	5	Sept 30
Consent form	5	Oct 7
Data collection	5	Oct 21
Data Coding	20	Nov 4
Data analysis	30	Dec 9
TOTAL	200	

COURSE POLICIES & SAFETY ISSUES

Flash Drive: I strongly recommend that you have a flash drive storage device for this course. If you do not have a flash drive storage device, they are available at the Kennel Bookstore on campus. For purposes of this course, 1 GB is more than satisfactory. Flash drives can also be purchased at many retail stores in Fresno and surrounding areas. You will be required to store data and assignments on your flash drive (not on university computers) and submit completed assignment to your instructor electronically throughout the semester. Also, the flash drive will also allow you to print assignments from various campus locations or from your home computer when necessary. **No assignment in the class will be submitted on paper to the instructor. Electronic submission must be through Canvas.**

Late Papers: All late assignments may be reduced by 5 points for every day that it is late and may not be accepted after the third day. Exceptions to this rule are at the discretion of the instructor and will be granted only for rare, extenuating circumstances that can be documented. An assignment or exam may be made up only if absence is due to extenuating circumstances and at the instructor's discretion. The student is responsible for notifying the instructor regarding an absence and making arrangements to turn in the assignment.

Attendance: University, School, and Departmental policies require all students to attend class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. The material in this course is difficult and often unfamiliar to students. We will discuss the material thoroughly in class. My experience in teaching this class is that students who attend regularly do much better in the course than those who do not attend regularly.

Use of electronic devices (pagers—who still has a pager?!?—, cell phones, etc.): Please do bring your laptop, tablet, or other electronic device to access the internet and your assignments while in class. To minimize class disruptions, please turn these devices on silent during the class. Please be respectful of others in the classroom by not engaging in personal conversation or disruptive behavior on your devices while in class. You are welcome to quietly exit the classroom if you need to take a phone call.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND SERVICES

Students with Disabilities: Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact Services to Students with Disabilities in the Henry Madden Library, Room 1202 (278-2811).

Honor Code: “Members of the Fresno State academic community adhere to principles of academic integrity and mutual respect while engaged in university work and related activities.” You should:

- a) understand or seek clarification about expectations for academic integrity in this course (including no cheating, plagiarism and inappropriate collaboration)
- b) neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on examinations or other course work that is used by the instructor as the basis of grading.
- c) take responsibility to monitor academic dishonesty in any form and to report it to the instructor or other appropriate official for action.

Instructors may require students to sign a statement at the end of all exams and assignments that “I have done my own work and have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this work.” If you are going to use this statement, include it here.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one's grade or obtaining course credit; such acts also include assisting another student to do so. Typically, such acts occur in relation to examinations. However, it is the intent of this definition that the term 'cheating' not be limited to examination situations only, but that it include any and all actions by a student that are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent or deceptive means. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of others by misrepresenting the material (i.e., their intellectual property) so used as one's own work. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from a 0 or F on a particular assignment, through an F for the course, to expulsion from the university. For more information on the University's policy regarding cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Class Schedule (Legal Notices on Cheating and Plagiarism) or the University Catalog (Policies and Regulations).

Computers: "At California State University, Fresno, computers and communications links to remote resources are recognized as being integral to the education and research experience. Every student is required to have his/her own computer or have other personal access to a

workstation (including a modem and a printer) with all the recommended software. In the curriculum and class assignments, students are presumed to have 24-hour access to a computer workstation and the necessary communication links to the University's information resources."

Disruptive Classroom Behavior: "The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class."

Copyright Policy: Copyright laws and fair use policies protect the rights of those who have produced the material. The copy in this course has been provided for private study, scholarship, or research. Other uses may require permission from the copyright holder. The user of this work is responsible for adhering to copyright law of the U.S. (Title 17, U.S. Code). To help you familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, the University encourages you to visit its Copyright Web Page <http://www.fresnostate.edu/home/about/copyright.html> Blackboard course web sites contain material protected by copyrights held by the instructor, other individuals or institutions. Such material is used for educational purposes in accord with copyright law and/or with permission given by the owners of the original material. You may download one copy of the materials on any single computer for non-commercial, personal, or educational purposes only, provided that you (1) do not modify it, (2) use it only for the duration of this course, and (3) include both this notice and any copyright notice originally included with the material. Beyond this use, no material from the course web site may be copied, reproduced, re-published, uploaded, posted, transmitted, or distributed in any way without the permission of the original copyright holder. The instructor assumes no responsibility for individuals who improperly use copyrighted material placed on the web site.

For free tutoring on campus, contact the Learning Center (<http://fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/lrc>) in the Collection Level (basement level) of the Henry Madden Library. You can reach them by phone at 559.278.3052.

Our campus has developed SupportNet (<http://fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/lrc/supportnet>) to connect students with specific campus resources promoting academic success. Students may be referred to it if you believe they need the services provided by SupportNet to succeed in your course.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Information on student rights, responsibilities, academic honesty, etc., can be found on the Fresno State Student Handbook web page. The web page is located at: <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/division/general/studenthandbook/>.

The following schedule is tentative and may change if needed.

Fall

	Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Due Dates & Lab Activities
1	Aug 26	<u>Course Overview</u> : Schedule & Assignments. Why do research?	Syllabus Chapter 1 Appendix A & B	
2	Sept 2	Labor Day NO CLASS		Topic Due
3	Sept 9	Evidence Based Practice Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods research	Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Article #1: Wooldredge, 2015	Discussion Board #1 CITI training
4	Sept 16	The Research Process Research questions and hypotheses	Chapter 4 Article: Mizel, 2016	Discussion Board #2
5	Sept 23	Problem formulation and levels of measurement	Chapter 7 Article 3: Valdez, 2008	Discussion Board #3
6	Sept 30	Ethics and cultural competence in research	Chapter 5 Chapter 6	Discussion Board #4 (Your choice) Class project: Survey questions
7	Oct 7	Quantitative and Qualitative measurement instruments Operationalization	Chapter 9	Class project: Informed consent Ethics Quiz
8	Oct 14	Measurement	Chapter 8	
9	Oct 21	Sampling	Chapter 11	Class project: Data collection
10	Oct 28	Experiments, Quasi experiments, and research design	Chapter 12	Annotated Bibliography
11	Nov 4	Quantitative data analysis	Chapter 17	Class project:

				Coding the data
12	Nov 11	Veteran's Day NO CLASS		Mid-term exam online
13	Nov 18	Stats workshop		
14	Nov 25	Stats workshop		Article critique
15	Dec 2	Stats workshop		
16	Dec 9	Stats workshop Review		Final Data Analysis
	Dec 16	Finals week		Final Exam

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