

SEMINAR IN THESIS/PROJECT (SWRK 292)

Catalog Statement

Seminar for developing and implementing thesis or project research that adds to social work practice and knowledge.

SYLLABUS FOR SEMINAR IN THESIS/PROJECT (SWRK 292)	
Semester: Fall 2019	Department of Social Work Education, California State University, Fresno
Course Name: SWRK 292	Instructor Name:
Units: 2	Office Number
Date and Times:	E-Mail:
Location:	Telephone:
Website:	Office Hours:

Course Description

This seminar is the first of two semesters students are required to complete in fulfilling their Social Work 298/299 Project/Thesis course requirements for the MSW degree. It is expected that training for advanced, autonomous social work practice will culminate in the independent completion of a research study or research-informed project that will evidence originality, appropriate organization, clarity of purpose, critical analysis, and accuracy and completeness of documentation. It is expected that a student's project or thesis will include critical analysis of the social work knowledge base in a selected area of social work practice. This expected course outcome will add to the student's preparation for using research tools to inform and evaluate their social work practice.

This one-semester required course will provide students with guided instruction and consultation for ensuring the successful completion of an approved 298/299 prospectus, which will include the formulation of a social work problem, the development of the methodology for solving a problem, and a plan for convening a chair, and implementing and completing the thesis/project by the end of the second semester of thesis/project enrollment.

Students will enroll in the second semester of Social Work 298/299 with a chairperson for independent instruction in completing the research project or thesis developed by them in the SWRK 292 seminar. It is expected that the sequencing and format of the two courses will afford all students to complete their SWRK 298/299 requirements within two consecutive semesters

and within the framework of a two-year full time or six semester part time enrollment graduation plan.

Prerequisites

SWRK 203, 213, 221, 260, 261, and 281. Concurrent enrollment in SWRK 224, 225, 246, and 282.

Required Textbooks and Materials

None. Readings as assigned.

Other texts that you should review throughout the course are:

Szuchman, L., & Thomlison, B. (2011). *Writing with style: APA style for social work*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D. C.: Author.

Baker, A. (2008). *Research methods in child welfare*. New York: Columbia University Press.
[Fresno State Madden Library Resource] **Download from:**
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/csufresno/docDetail.action?docID=10433300>

Creswell, J. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rubin, A. & Babbie E. (2010). *Research methods in social work* (7th ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Examinations and Major Assignments

Human Subjects (5 points):

This is required for your department human subject clearance and is extremely important if you are planning to conduct research on a population group that is classified at-risk by the University Human Subjects Committee and Federal government guidelines. The training program can be found at:

<http://cme.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learning/humanparticipant-protections.asp>

- This was likely completed in your Quant or Qual Methods class. You can use the certificate from that if it will not be more than 4 years old before you finish collecting data. Turn in copy of certificate of completion; attach a copy of the certificate to your human subjects review request.

The graded written assignments: Initial chapter drafts and final submission of chapters listed below) must be submitted on time. Most projects and theses go through several drafts. Please note that you want those chapters to be in good shape so that you can start your data collection or project implementation before the beginning of Spring semester.

Thesis and Five Chapter Projects

1. Mini proposal:
Describe the topic that you are interested in examining and your analysis of at least one professional research article that describes this topic. (Please note that some of this material will be repeated in Chapter 1).
2. Draft of Chapter 2 (Lit Review)
This chapter will contain a theoretical and empirical literature review on your topic. Also, in this chapter, you will identify any gaps in the literature and describe why it is important that you conduct research on this topic.
3. Draft of Chapter 3 (Methods)
This chapter will contain a description of the research study that you will conduct.
4. Draft of Chapter 1
When you've completed Chapter 3 and are fairly sure what you intend to do, you will complete the introductory chapter for your project that describes your topic and how you will address it.
5. Final Drafts of Chapters 1-3
Introduction, Literature Review, and Methods
6. Human Subjects proposal submission

Three Chapter Projects

1. Mini-proposal
Describe the topic that you are interested in examining and your analysis of at least one professional research article that describes this topic. (Please note that some of this material will be repeated in Chapter 1).
2. Draft of Chapter 2 (Lit Review)
This chapter will contain a theoretical and empirical literature review on your topic. Also, in this chapter, you will identify ways that existing research knowledge will be used to inform your proposed action plan.
3. Draft of Chapter 1 (Intro and plan)
You will complete the introductory chapter for your project that describes your topic and how you will address it. You must describe the activity or product you plan to produce (such as curriculum development, a program design, or coordination of a conference) and how you will carry out this activity in this chapter.
4. Final Drafts
Introduction/Methods and Literature Review.
5. Human subjects proposal submission

Additional Notes: All proposals (even exempt projects using, for example, secondary analysis of

public data), will undergo a human subjects review by the 292 instructor and the student's chair and be reviewed and signed off by 2 DSWE faculty (not including your chair). The university requires university level review of all proposals involving vulnerable populations; specific groups defined by the university are minors, incarcerated persons, and pregnant women. (See university and department guidelines; available in department office and links on Blackboard.)

Course expectations are rigorous. It is anticipated that some aspects of project development can be subject to unanticipated delays beyond student's control, e.g., receiving Human Subjects Approvals from agencies or university. Consult with instructor for consideration of these delays in final evaluation of your work; you are expected to state your rationale and intentions with respect to all aspects of the proposal.

Presentations

Students will present their chapters to the class for discussion and feedback. Details of presentation requirements will be discussed in class.

Participation

Active participation in this course is necessary for success. Twenty percent of the course grade is tied to participation. Each student is responsible for ensuring at least weekly communication and contact with the faculty assigned. This may be in class, through email, by phone, or scheduled meetings in person or online. Regular in person and/or online meetings are the expectation. Participation includes attending other students' presentations.

Grading

Grades are will based on demonstrated critical thinking, conceptual integrity in applying research knowledge, adherence to departmental standards for SWRK 298 or SWRK 299, written communication, and writing style.

Final grades will be based on accumulated points from each assignment. Grades will be based on the following point spread:

92-100	A
80-92	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

Course Goal and Primary Learning Outcomes

Course Goal: The student will be able to formulate a research or practice problem that contributes to social work knowledge and practice and complete a formal written proposal that meets Departmental standards and is approved by an identified faculty chair and committee.

(Competencies 1 & 4)

Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to:

- 1 Understand and adhere to the Department's published requirements for acceptable/unacceptable SWRK 298 project or SWRK 299 thesis.
- 2 Develop legal and ethical protocols for the protection of human subjects.
- 3 Adhere to the Department's published Minimum Requirements for SWRK 298 and SWRK 299.
- 4 Identify a social work problem and explain how the proposed research or project will add to social work practice, policy, and knowledge.
5. Identify and apply an appropriate research design and methodology for answering the proposed research questions or research–informed practice needs.
- 6 Produce a project/thesis proposal, containing the required components for SWRK 298 or SWRK 299, including approved writing style and formatting.
- 7 Obtain a signed agreement with a faculty person of the student's choosing that the faculty person will chair the student's thesis/project during the student's second semester enrollment in SWRK 298/299.
8. Submit draft copies of SWRK 298 or SWRK 299 proposals to faculty chair and written comments by faculty chair for revisions in SWRK 292.
9. Receive proposal approval from the student's faculty chair for SWRK 298 (project) or SWRK 299 (thesis) by mid-semester of SWRK 292.
10. Enroll with a project/thesis chairperson through Department policy and procedures for the second semester of SWRK 298 or SWRK 299.
11. Complete the protection of human subjects document and have it signed by two (2) department faculty (Follow department policy; may NOT be signed off by your chair).
12. Identify and/or create data collection instruments or information sources.
13. Complete a draft copy of first three chapters for thesis or two chapters for project of the final project/thesis report (problem identification, literature review, and methodology).

Assignment and Examination Schedule

	Points
Mini proposal	5
Human Subjects	5
Chapters 1 & 3 First Draft	20
Chapter 2 First Draft	15
Revised Chapters	25
Presentations	10
Participation	20
Total	100

Subject to Change Statement

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were absent.

Course Policies & Safety Issues

Attendance: Attendance will be taken during each class. Excused absences will be granted for reasonable cause. Points will be deducted from the student's attendance grade for unexcused absences.

Late Papers: The instructor will accept late papers for reasonable cause. However, instructor permission to submit the paper late must be obtained prior to the designated due date.

Rewritten Papers: Poorly written or incomplete papers, graded "C" or lower, may be rewritten and resubmitted by a due date assigned by the instructor. Rewrites can only receive a B grade as high as the lowest B grade received on that assignment.

Use of electronic devices (pagers, cell phones, etc.): To minimize class disruptions, please turn these devices off during the class. If you are required to be "on-call," please advise me at the beginning of class, turn off the "audio," and sit near the door, so you can exit with minimal disruption to the class. Please advise me if you would like to use your laptop in class, record the lecture etc. Websurfing and reading email during class are not allowed.

University Policies

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 CSU Fresno 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.

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 and includes 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).

Plagiarism Detection: The campus subscribes to Turnitin and the SafeAssign plagiarism prevention service through Blackboard. You will need to submit written assignments to Turnitin/SafeAssign. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose. You may indicate in writing to me that you refuse to participate in the plagiarism detection process, in which case I can use other electronic means to verify the originality of your work.

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. The minimum and recommended standards for the workstations and software, which may vary by academic major, are updated periodically and are available from [Information Technology](#)

Services (<http://www.fresnostate.edu/adminserv/technology/>) or the University Bookstore (<http://www.kennelbookstore.com>). 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 and 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. The Policy on Disruptive Classroom Behavior (APM 419) is well worth reading in defining disruptive behavior and detailing formal procedures for dealing with it, the policy contains a useful description of the learning environment.

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://libguides.csufresno.edu/copyright>).

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.

Adding and Dropping Classes: Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about the adding/dropping of classes, academic renewals, etc. Students can find more information on adding and dropping at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/classschedule/registration/add-drop.html>.

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 if they need the services provided by SupportNet to succeed in the course.

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/>.

For 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)." These may also be incorporated by directing students to the online required syllabus policy statement page (http://www.csufresno.edu/academics/documents/RequiredSyllabusPolicyStatements_001.doc)

Tentative Course Schedule

WEEK/DATE	ACTIVITY	Due Dates
<p>Week #1 August 27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introductions, overview, ideas for project/thesis ● Thesis/Project process; selecting a committee ● Structure of a research proposal/research report ● Human Subjects Issues/online training ● APA writing style (see APA manual/reference) ● Review of the research process; your competencies & needs ● Program evaluation & “basic research” ● Using Blackboard, online resources, & libraries ● Literature search/strategies <p>WEEK’S ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>A) Read in your area of interest.</i></p> <p><i>B) Discuss possible research problems/questions with your field supervisor <u>and</u> a faculty member. Bring your topic ideas and the major feedback received for each idea to the next class for discussion; Provide a copy of your paper to your chair</i></p> <p><i>C) Find out what the policy is for conducting research/empirical study wherever you plan to obtain your data. Bring to class for discussion.</i></p>	

<p>Week #2 September 3</p>	<p><u><i>Discuss list of ideas for project/thesis, feedback and development of intro/statement of the problem</i></u></p> <p>THE LITERATURE REVIEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose ● Theoretical/conceptual framework ● Critical analysis of empirical literature ● Developing/organizing your review ● Potential sources for literature <p>Focus will be on purpose of literature review and theoretical/conceptual framework</p> <p>WEEK’S ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Work on outline for the theoretical and conceptual literature review, complete an outline of this section.</i></p>	
<p>Week #3 September 10</p>	<p>LITERATURE REVIEW – Empirical literature</p> <p>Focus on purpose and organization & critique of empirical literature; Develop a topics list to guide your empirical literature review</p> <p>WEEK’S ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Complete theoretical/conceptual lit review outline. Create an outline for empirical literature review, begin to fill in content/references. Bring your outline to the class.</i></p>	<p><u>Mini-Proposal DUE</u></p> <p><u>Student Presentations (mini proposal)</u></p>
<p>Week #4 September 17</p>	<p>METHODS AND SUBJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identifying potential methods for study of your question ● Specify the populations and a sampling strategy <p>Focus will be on “best” feasible/doable methods to meet your research question/purpose</p> <p>HUMAN SUBJECTS discuss your plans for procedures to Protect Human Subjects</p>	

Week #5 September 24	<i>Independent study</i>	
Week #6 October 1	Presentations and feedback	<u>DUE: Chapter 2 – Student Presentations of Chapter 2</u>
Week #7 October 8	<i>Independent study</i>	Chapter 2 last draft
Week #8 October 15	<i>Independent study</i>	Due: Human Subjects
Week #9 October 22	Presentations and feedback	<u>Due: Chapter 3-Student Presentations</u>
Week #10 October 29	<i>Independent study</i>	Chapter 3 last draft
Week #11 November 5	<i>Independent study</i>	<u>Goal: Submission to readers this week</u>
Week #12 November 12	Wrap up of the semester. Discussion of next steps for research. <i>Consider having your reader(s) review draft depending on your contract with them. I also suggest that you meet with your chair to plan what, if anything, you will do to work on your project over the winter break as well as set up a time line for next semester.</i>	Chapter 1 last draft
Week #13 November 19	<i>Independent study</i>	

<p>Week #14 November 26</p>	<p>Presentations and feedback</p>	<p>DUE Final presentations</p>
<p>Week #15 December 3</p>	<p><i>Independent study</i></p>	<p>DUE: Completed Chapters 1, 2, 3 & all attachments</p>