Semester/Year: Spring 2021  
Course Title: Research and Evaluation Methods I  
Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 5308 (formerly SOCW 5322)-001  
Instructor Name: Amanda Aykanian, PhD  
Faculty Position: Assistant Professor  
Faculty Profile:  
Office Number:  
Phone Number: 5083611140  
Email Address: amanda.aykanian@uta.edu  
Office Hours:  
Day and Time of Class (if applicable): Thursdays from 7pm to 9:50pm  
Location: online via Microsoft Teams  
Equipment: A laptop computer with webcam (including a microphone) and wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.  
Canvas: https://uta.instructure.com/  

A. Description of Course Content  
This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of and ability to use the evidence-informed practice process to identify, analyze and apply evidence-informed interventions. Students will be able to comprehend both quantitative and qualitative research and to synthesize the strengths and weaknesses of the social work literature. Students will be able to synthesize and evaluate research in terms of its content, quality, and applicability to clients. Students will understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge to apply to and evaluate the impact of interventions on clients or clients' presenting problems.  

B. Student Learning Outcomes  
The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs follow the CSWE Educational Policy and Standards that comprises nine competencies as follows:  

1. Apply research concepts to permit a critical analysis of social work research and evaluation studies with respect to quality, bias, ethics, and potential applications.  
2. Explain the relationship between theory and research.  
3. Identify the importance of research ethics and how to integrate research ethics into social work research process.  
4. Distinguish between different types of research designs and their applications to evidence-base social work research.  
5. Explain sampling and measurement theory and their applications to evidence-base social work research.  
6. Frame research questions and develop problem statements that reflect the issues under consideration including choosing appropriate research designs and methodology given a particular research question.
7. Apply research concepts and principles in the development and use of selected qualitative and quantitative methodologies and analytical approaches.
8. Demonstrate the ability to select culturally appropriate measures and measurement strategies given specific populations.
9. Construct an effective questionnaire and interview guide relevant to social work research.
10. Construct an effective research proposal.

Specifically, while this course addresses competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9, the main foci are competencies 4 and 9: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice; and Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;
- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply research concepts to permit a critical analysis of social work research and evaluation studies with respect to quality, bias, ethics, and potential applications.
2. Explain the relationship between theory and research.
3. Identify the importance of research ethics and how to integrate research ethics into social work research process.
4. Distinguish between different types of research designs and their applications to evidence-base social work research.
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6. Frame research questions and develop problem statements that reflect the issues under consideration including choosing appropriate research designs and methodology given a particular research question.
7. Apply research concepts and principles in the development and use of selected qualitative and quantitative methodologies and analytical approaches.
8. Demonstrate the ability to select culturally appropriate measures and measurement strategies given specific populations.
9. Construct an effective questionnaire and interview guide relevant to social work research.
10. Construct an effective research proposal.

C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Both of the required textbooks are Open Educational Resources (OER). OERs are freely available to you at no cost. From the links provided, you can access the textbooks online or download them in a variety of formats (PDF, MOBI, ePUB, etc.)


D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials

None

E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations

**Class Format**

The class meets virtually each week using Microsoft Teams, and the course content is divided into modules (see the course schedule below). Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due by the start of class that week.

Students will work in groups throughout the course. Group work during class will count towards your participation grade. The goal of group work is about helping students learn collaboratively. The exams and final paper are completed individually and NOT in groups.

**Graded Components**

**IRB Human Subjects Training (2.5 points):** Social sciences research generally includes data obtained through the use of human subjects. Due to the sensitivity of this issue, all human subjects research conducted at the University must be approved by the school’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) before beginning. The major goals of the IRB are to minimize the risk to human subjects (beneficence); ensure all subjects consent and are fully informed about the research and any risks (autonomy); and promote equity in human subject’s research (justice). Therefore, this course requires students to take the human subjects protection course by following the steps at https://www.uta.edu/ra/real/loginscreen.php. Addresses competencies 1 and 3.

**Plagiarism Tutorial (2.5 points):** This tutorial is designed to make you aware of what constitutes plagiarism. This will assist you in avoiding plagiarism in your papers for this class and others. Addresses competency 1.

2. Then, complete the quiz at the end of the tutorial.
3. The tutorial provides you with a certificate. Please upload the certificate in the space provided in Canvas.

**Class Participation (15 points):** Attending and actively participating in class is a crucial component of your learning experience and is therefore a graded aspect of the course. Each online session will include discussions and group work.

**Quizzes (20 points):** There will be six (6) quizzes in this course that will be administered via Canvas and must be completed prior to class that week. The quizzes will cover information from course readings, PowerPoints, and class lectures. **Quizzes cannot be re-accessed once submitted and cannot be made up. The lowest quiz grade will be automatically dropped.** Addresses competencies 4 and 9.

**Final Research Proposal Paper (30 points):** The final paper is to be completed individually. The purpose of this assignment is to challenge you to integrate and apply the information that you will learn in this class over the course of the semester. You will complete this assignment in four steps. **Addresses competencies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9.**

1. Problem statement and research question draft AND peer review (5 points)
2. Literature review draft AND peer review (5 points)
3. Methods draft AND peer review (5 points)
4. Final paper (15 points)

**Mid-term (15 points) and Final Exam (15 points):** Exams are to be completed individually. The exams are developed to test your knowledge of the material presented in your reading assignments and classroom discussions. The tests will be cumulative, covering everything from the class up to that point. The format of the exams will be mixed, potentially including multiple-choice, true/false, and essay. **Addresses competencies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9.**

**APA Format**

**All written assignments submitted for the course should adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Research ideas and study findings should be logically and coherently presented. Relevant citation of the literature must be evident in all written work. Grammar and APA style will be considered in grading.**


**F. Attendance**

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or engagement online via Canvas. This data is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

Information specific to modality and meeting times for this course are provided in the section below.
Attendance is not graded in this class. However, class participation points are earned through in-class activities and group work.

G. Grading

Grading Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Fail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>59 or lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Subjects Training</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism Tutorial</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Quizzes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Proposal Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see “Student Support Services,” below.

H. Make-Up Exams

Students are given a full week to complete the midterm and final exams. Missed exams cannot be made up.

I. Course Schedule

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due by the start of class that week.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 4th</td>
<td>Ethics in Social Work Research</td>
<td>Textbook - Ch. 3</td>
<td>Quiz #1 IRB Human Subjects Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11th</td>
<td>Design and Causality</td>
<td>Textbook - Ch. 4 Guidebook - Ch. 2</td>
<td>Final Paper Problem Statement and Research Question Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 18th</td>
<td>Defining and Measuring Concepts</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 5</td>
<td>Quiz #2 Peer Review of Problem Statement and Research Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 25th</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 6</td>
<td>Midterm Exam (Due March 6th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 4th</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Quiz #3 Final Paper Literature Review Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 11th</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 7</td>
<td>Quiz #4 Peer Review of Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 25th</td>
<td>Experimental Design</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 8</td>
<td>Quiz #5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1st</td>
<td>Qualitative Design</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 8th</td>
<td>Unobtrusive Research</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 10</td>
<td>Final Paper Methods Section Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15th</td>
<td>Real-World Research</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 11</td>
<td>Peer Review of Methods Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 22nd</td>
<td>Reporting Research</td>
<td>Textbook, Ch. 12</td>
<td>Quiz #6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29th</td>
<td>Final Review</td>
<td>No Assigned Readings</td>
<td>Final Research Proposal Paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FINAL EXAM DUE MAY 9TH**

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

**J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

**K. Librarian to Contact**

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is Brooke Troutman. Her office is in the campus Central Library. She may also be contacted via E-mail: brooke.troutman@uta.edu or by phone: (817)272-5352.

The following is a list of commonly used library resources:

- Library Home Page
- Library Services
- Subject Guides
L. Grade Grievances

For more information on the grade grievance process please see the BSW Program Manual or the MSW Program Manual. Grade grievance can be submitted through the BSW Grade Grievance form or the MSW Grade Grievance form located on the Forms and Resources website.

M. Institutional Policies

UTA students are encouraged to review these institutional policies and informational sections and reach out to the specific office with any questions. The following policies can be found on the UTA Syllabus Institutional Policies page:

- Drop Policy
- Observance of Religious Holy Days
- Disability Accommodations
- Non-Discrimination Policy
- Title IX Policy
- Academic Integrity
- Electronic Communication
- Campus Carry
- Final Review Week
- Student Feedback Survey
- Active Shooter
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Student Support Services

N. Mandatory Face Covering Policy

All students and instructional staff are required to wear facial coverings while they are on campus, inside buildings, and in classrooms. Students that fail to comply with the facial covering requirement will be asked to leave the class session. If students need masks, they may obtain them at the Central Library, the E.H. Hereford University Center's front desk, or in their department. Students who refuse to wear a facial covering in class will be asked to leave the session by the instructor, and, if the student refuses to leave, they may be reported to UTA's Office of Student Conduct.

O. Emergency Exit Procedures

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exits, which are the stairwells located at either end of the adjacent hallway. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.