



*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

**SWK 590: Research Methods for Advanced Generalist SW Practice**

Metroplex -Tuesdays 6-9 pm

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Catalog Description: 590. *Research Methods for Advanced Generalist Practice*. (3 semester hours).

This course provides students with information on advanced techniques of practice and program assessment. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs are taught. Evaluation research design, instrument selection and development, and techniques of data analysis are addressed. Ethical and behavioral issues in evaluation research are presented. Development of a comprehensive Literature Review that will be applicable to the student's SWK 595 Research Proposal will be the major project. Prerequisite: SWK 531 or admission to the Advanced Standing Program.

## **GOAL & COMPETENCIES:**

**1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

Apply critical and independent analysis of practice situations and effectively communicate their judgments, reasoning and decision-making processes (2.1.3)

Apply and contribute to evidence-based and best practice approaches to continuously assess and improve the efficacy and effectiveness of practice (2.1.6)

**2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Graduates will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

Apply social work ethical principles to resolve dilemmas and create positive change among individuals, families, groups, organizations & communities (2.1.2)

**3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Graduates will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

Exemplify and model professional social work standards and strive to enhance their professional growth and development (2.1.1)

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

This course is designed to equip students to evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions. The course prepares students to plan interventions with measurable goals and outcomes, select appropriate measures, and apply appropriate analytical and statistical methods in evaluation. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the research process including a review of the literature, methodology, results and implications for social work practice.
2. Identify the connection between research and evidence-based practice which reflects social work ethics.
3. Be able to locate, critique and evaluate evidence-based research, and apply that critical perspective to the design and evaluation of one's own practice interventions.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

This course is designed to equip students to evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice and evaluate their own practice interventions. The course prepares students to plan interventions with measurable goals and outcomes, select appropriate measures and apply appropriate analytical and statistical methods in evaluation.

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the research process including a review of the literature, methodology, results and implications for social work practice.
2. Demonstrate the ability to conduct research, program evaluation, and practice evaluation autonomously in an agency setting.
3. Identify the connection between research and evidenced-based practice.
4. Responsibly use social work values and ethics in research activities, including informed consent and confidentiality.
5. Be able to critique and evaluate evidenced-based research and apply that critical perspective to the design and evaluation of one's own practice and interventions.

## EPAS Practice Behavior Rubric

**COMPETENCY 2.1.1: Students will be able to exemplify and model professional social work standards and strive to enhance their professional growth and development**

**Measured through Performance of:**

- Knowledge of content measured on quiz/test questions
- Completion of assigned class activities

Competency is Demonstrated through the following Practice Behavior(s)					
	<b>Minimum Expectations not Met 1</b>	<b>Minimum Expectations Met 2</b>	<b>Met All Expectations 3</b>	<b>Exceeded Expectation 4</b>	<b>Demonstrated Excellence 5</b>
<b>AGP 1.2 Models professional demeanor in behavior and communication</b>					
<b>AGP 1.3 Adheres to professional roles and boundaries</b>					

**COMPETENCY 2.1.2: Students will be able to apply social work ethical principles to resolve dilemmas and create positive change...**

**Measured through Performance of:**

- Knowledge of Protection of Human Subjects measured on quiz/test questions
- Completion of online training
- Completion of assigned class activities

Competency is Demonstrated through the following Practice Behavior(s)					
	<b>Minimum Expectations not Met</b> <b>1</b>	<b>Minimum Expectations Met</b> <b>2</b>	<b>Met All Expectations</b> <b>3</b>	<b>Exceeded Expectations</b> <b>4</b>	<b>Demonstrated Excellence</b> <b>5</b>
<b>AGP 2.1</b> <b>Articulates and advocates social work values and ethics</b>					

**COMPETENCY 2.1.3: Students will be able to apply critical and independent analysis of practice situations and effectively communicate their judgments, reasoning and decision-making processes**

**Measured through Performance of:**

- Quizzes and Exam
- Completion of assigned class activities, including Literature Review paper
- Written & oral communication with instructor and peers

Competency is Demonstrated through the following Practice Behavior(s)
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	<b>Minimum Expectations not Met 1</b>	<b>Minimum Expectations Met 2</b>	<b>Met All Expectations 3</b>	<b>Exceeded Expectations 4</b>	<b>Demonstrated Excellence 5</b>
<b>AGP 3.1 Applies professional judgment and reasoning</b>					
<b>AGP 3.2 Synthesizes and effectively communicates relevant information to other</b>					

**Competency 2.1.6: Students will be able to apply and contribute to evidence-based and best practice approaches to continuously assess and improve the efficacy and effectiveness of practice**

**Measured through Performance of:**

- Quizzes and Exam
- Completion of assigned class activities, including Literature Review paper

<b>Competency is Demonstrated through the following Practice Behavior(s)</b>					
	<b>Minimum Expectations not Met 1</b>	<b>Minimum Expectations Met 2</b>	<b>Met All Expectations 3</b>	<b>Exceeded Expectations 4</b>	<b>Demonstrated Excellence 5</b>

<b>AGP 6.1 Uses research and evaluation to assess intervention, efficacy, and effectiveness</b>					
<b>AGP6.3 Uses evidence-based research findings to improve practice</b>					

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:**

This course stresses the importance of evidence based theory and practice methods. Consequently, it supports the practice courses that emphasize the importance of demonstrating effectiveness in professional interventions. This course builds on research knowledge and skills learned in prior research methods courses taken in a student’s BSW coursework or in the Foundation sequence. This course draws on materials from practice and HBSE to illustrate social work research principles, and it develops a professional model that utilizes practice evaluation to formulate a continuous improvement cycle in professional practice. The course prepares students to develop an advance generalist model that is ultimately autonomous and self-correcting.

**TEXTS:**

Kyrsik, J.L. & Finn, J. (2013). *Research for Effective Social Work Practice* (italicized). 3rd ed. New York: NY: Routledge.

**SUPPLEMENTAL SOURCES:**

You will be expected to start to develop your own resource list in your research area. You should also include articles and resources that include ethical issues concerning research with your population/question under study. The reference list at the end of this syllabus may also provide some resources for your study.

American Psychological Association [APA](2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.: APA.

Bannon, William (2013). *Seven steps to data analysis*. Stats Whisperer Press.

Fisher, J. & Corcoran, K. (2006). *Measures for Clinical Practice and Research: A Sourcebook*, Volume 2: Adults, Fourth Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fisher, J. & Corcoran, K. (2006). *Measures for Clinical Practice and Research: A Sourcebook*, Volume 1: Couples, Families, and Children. Fourth Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cournoyer, B.R. (2004). *The evidence-based social work skills book*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Kirkpatrick, L. A., & Feeney, B. C. (2013). *A simple guide to SPSS for Windows for version 21.0*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Royse, D., Thyer, B., Padgett., & Logan, T. K. (2002). *Program evaluation: An introduction* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Belmont CA: Brooks-Cole.

## **OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. **QUIZZES** (100 points): There will be 10 quizzes (one per chapter, Chapter One through Chapter 10). Quiz format may include multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. No make-up quizzes will be given. Quizzes will be ten (10) points each and will be added to the point total described in Course Requirements. Some quizzes will be in-class and some will be online through eCollege.
2. **COMPREHENSIVE EXAM** (100 points): A comprehensive final will be given which reflects content from the entire course. The format may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions. Questions may also come from any weekly quizzes.
3. **CLASS ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS** (100 points): There will be written weekly assignments over the assigned chapters. Some of these activities will be completed online through eCollege and some will be conducted and/or submitted in class.
4. **LITERATURE REVIEW** (100 points): Students will conduct and submit a comprehensive Literature Review relevant to an approved research topic that will be further developed into a research proposal for SWK 595.

## **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:**

All written assignments must demonstrate acceptable writing style, American Psychological Association (APA), including the use of Standard English, acceptable grammar, and the use of the American Psychological Association (APA) style of reference



citation. Papers may be required to be submitted electronically and may be reviewed through "Turn-It-In" to assess for plagiarism. Students are encouraged to use this resource available through the library for their own writing development.

Grading will include an evaluation for clarity, coherence, logic and organization of the assignment. All assignments must be typewritten, using double-spacing, 12 font and standard margins. (Do not double double space between paragraphs). It is the student's responsibility to ensure the paper is in the possession of the instructor by the designated time.. Below is a partial list of factors that are addressed in the grading process:

- Any error in APA reference or citation format from the 6<sup>th</sup> edition
- Lack of quotation marks at the beginning and end of all direct quotes
- Extra or missing punctuation (i.e. commas, semi-colons, colons, periods)
- Incomplete sentences (i.e., sentences without a verb)
- Run-on sentences (i.e., sentences that run together without appropriate punctuation and capitalization delineating each sentence)
- Incorrect spelling
- Inappropriate and inconsistent verb tense
- Lack of noun-verb agreement
- Incorrect use of capitalization (e.g., social work is generally not capitalized)
- Incorrect use of possessives (examples of correct use are Shawn's book, the parents' child)
- Any contractions (e.g., I'm, can't, won't), except in direct quotes from another source)
- Lack of neatness (e.g., hand written corrections, uneven indentions)
- Papers that are not typewritten
- Use of a size other than #12 font
- Lines not double spaced
- Margins that are less than or wider than 1 inch
- Failure to indent the first line of a paragraph
- Incoherent sentences

## **GRADING:**

QUIZZES (10 @ 10 pts)

100 points

Comprehensive Exam	100 points
Class activities & assignments	100 points
Literature Review paper	100 points

Total possible            400 points

A = 90% of possible points

B - 80% of possible points

C - 70% of possible points

Less than 70% of points requires student to repeat the class

**CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

Students are expected to attend class, reflecting responsibility which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. Roll will be taken regularly. Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student’s professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. Tardiness (or early departure) of more than 15 minutes will count as .5 absence (2 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 or more minutes early or does not come to class.

The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

Weekly	Up to 2 absences No penalty	3 absences 1 letter grade drop	4 absences Class grade of “F”	
Bi-weekly	Up to 3 absences No penalty	4 absences 1 letter grade drop	5 absences 1 letter grade drop	6 absences Class grade of “F”
Summer 10-week	Up to 1 absence No penalty	2 absences 1 letter grade drop	3 absences Class grade of “F”	

**ONLINE OR WEB-ENHANCED CLASSES:** Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via eCollege, students must log in and complete

assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to eCollege (which can be monitored by the instructor) and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

**NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION.** You have access to the university's computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs. If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate interactions with classmates, (2) Attentiveness, and (3) Active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation is based on instructor observation. Students will be given feedback if problems are evident.

### **POLICY ON DUE DATES:**

- 1) Assignments are due on the assigned date. Late submission of any assignment will result in an automatic 5 point deduction per day, beginning on the day/time it's due. Submissions over 5 days past due date will not be accepted.
- 2) There will be NO make-up on quizzes. In the event a student misses a quiz, there will be no points awarded.
- 3) There will be NO activity points awarded if a student fails to post or complete during the specified time period. In addition, F2F meetings AND online activities will be considered equally following the Class Attendance Policy stated previously.

4) All written assignments and activities are to be submitted to the correct eCollege location (specified in assignment guidelines) by the deadline stated.

### **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In™) to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

### **ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:**

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* to guide social workers' conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department's Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University's commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).

SWK 590 – AGP Research Methods

WK	DUE Date	Topic/Content	Assigned Readings	Assignments
1	1/19	Introductions Ch. 1 – Context of SW Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 1</li> <li>• Gibbs, L, &amp; Gambrill, E. (2002). Evidence-based practice: Counter arguments to objections. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>, 12, 452-476.</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.campbellcollaboration.org">www.campbellcollaboration.org</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://www.sswr.org">www.sswr.org</a></li> </ul>	Read about “Mentoring” interventions & effectiveness on the Campbell Collaboration website. REPORT in class AND <b>submit a ONE PAGE summary</b> of <u>what you learned</u> (up to 5 points) on 1/26
2	1/26	Politics & Ethics of SW Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 2</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.ohsr.od.nih.gov">www.ohsr.od.nih.gov</a> (Policies &amp; Procedures, SOP 12 – SOP 14E)</li> <li>• <a href="http://bioethics.od.nih.gov/IRB.html">http://bioethics.od.nih.gov/IRB.html</a> (Human Subjects Research Tutorials &amp; Case Studies)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Watch movie <i>Deadly Deception</i> by 1/26</li> <li>2. <b>Bring copy of university’s policies &amp; protocol</b> for research involving Protection of Human Subjects to class 1/26</li> <li>3. COMPLETE ETHICS TRAINING - Log into <a href="http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php">http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php</a> - <b>print off a certificate</b> for submission to receive points – submit 2/2</li> </ol> <p><b>QUIZ #1 (10 points) over Ch. 1</b></p>
3	2/2	Research Problems & Research Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 3</li> <li>• 2-3 research articles published by social work faculty at Texas A&amp;M University - Commerce</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critique a social work research article and identify: Research question/s, hypothesis, unit of analysis, how constructs were operationalized, and what research approach was used (exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive). Bring and REPORT in class</li> </ol> <p><b>QUIZ #2 (10 points) over Ch. 2</b></p>

4	2/9	Researcher Writing & Paraphrasing and Avoiding Plagiarism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 13</li> <li>• APA manual</li> </ul>	<p>1. Research YouTube videos on plagiarism &amp; paraphrasing. <b>Post on eCollege under Webliography</b></p> <p>2. Exercises on plagiarism and paraphrasing</p> <p>3. Exercise on writing a Literature Review</p> <p>4. Submit 1-page <b>DRAFT of Research Problem description (2-3 references) AND Research Question/s on 2/9</b></p> <p><b>QUIZ #3 (10 points) over Ch. 3</b></p>
5	2/16	Single Subject Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 4</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s using SSR</li> </ul>	<p>1. Exercises over SSR – in class</p> <p>2. <b>Develop a SSR design</b> for a behavioral change for yourself or someone close to you (your kids are great targets!). <b>Turn in 1-page description on 2/23</b> of your target behavior, how you will operationalize (measure the DV), your intervention (IV), and what SSR design you will use including how long your baseline, etc.</p> <p><b>Quiz #4 (10 points) over CH. 13 &amp; correct APA referencing</b></p>
6	2/23	Research in Agencies & Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 5</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s about Program Evaluation</li> <li>• Review links in eCollege and find completed Program Evaluations online</li> </ul>	<p>1. Exercise on Goals, Objectives &amp; Measures</p> <p>2. Develop and submit a Logic Model on <b>3/1</b></p> <p>3. <b>OUTLINE for Literature Review paper</b> and correct APA references for at least 10 scholarly articles <b>due 2/23</b></p> <p><b>Quiz #5 over Ch. 4</b></p>

7	3/1	Qualitative Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 6</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s on Qualitative Research</li> </ul>	<p>1. Read article in Families in Society (Schlager &amp; Moore, 2014); Read sample of dissertation (T. Watson) using qualitative research</p> <p>2. Find a scholarly SW article which uses qualitative research. Post in JOURNAL the citation, brief summary, and WHAT YOU LEARNED from this research (1 page) <b>by 3/8</b></p> <p><b>Quiz #6 over Ch. 5</b> Cont. data collection for SSD</p>
8	3/8	Group Research Designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 7</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s</li> </ul>	<p>1. Outline Ch. 7 following example in Doc Sharing CHAPTER 7 OUTLINES. <b>Upload completed outline</b> into this location for Instructor Only <b>by class 3/8</b></p> <p>2. Complete Group Designs (Ch. 7) worksheets – bring hard copy to <b>class 3/22</b></p> <p><b>Quiz #7 over Ch. 6</b> Cont. data collection for SSD</p>
	3/15	Spring Break		
9	3/22	Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 8</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s</li> </ul>	<p>1. Revise (if needed) your research question and write which research design would best address it – <b>bring to class 3/22</b></p> <p>2. Outline Ch. 8 following example in Doc Sharing CHAPTER 8 OUTLINES. <b>Upload completed outline</b> into this location for Instructor Only <b>by class 3/22</b></p> <p>3. Use one of your research articles from your Literature Review and describe the sampling approach that was used. <b>Bring to class 3/22</b> to discuss</p>



				<b>Quiz #8 over Ch. 7</b>
10	3/29	Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 9</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s</li> </ul>	<p>1. Outline Ch. 9 following example in Doc Sharing CHAPTER 9 OUTLINES. <b>Upload completed outline</b> into this location for Instructor Only <b>by class 3/29</b></p> <p>2. Use one of your research articles from your Literature Review and describe the measurement that was used. <b>Bring to class 3/29</b> to discuss</p> <p><b>Quiz #9 over Ch. 8</b> Cont. data collection for SSD</p>
11	4/5	Data Collection & Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 10</li> <li>• Assigned scholarly article/s</li> </ul>	<p><b>Completed LITERATURE REVIEW DUE in <u>DROPBOX WEEK 12</u> by <u>SUNDAY 4/3</u> midnight.</b></p> <p><b>Quiz #10 over Ch. 9 (in class)</b> Cont. data collection for SSD</p>
12	4/12	Research in Action	TBD	1. Submit a 3-4 page write up of your SSD project using the outline and following guidelines in Doc Sharing
13	4/19	Research in Action	TBD	
14	4/26	Research in Action	TBD	
	5/3	FINAL EXAM		Comprehensive Final Exam



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