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SWK 590: Research Methods in Advance Social Work Practice

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2021
ONLINE

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Brenda Moore, Ph.D., LMSW-AP
Office Location: Henderson Rm 308 (Commerce)
Virtual Office Hours (link posted in D2L via Zoom): Mondays 12:00 – 2:00 pm
University Email Address: Brenda.Moore@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: **Email**
Communication Response Time: Instructor will respond to email queries within 2 business days.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

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

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (2020). 7th ed.
Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

Optional Texts and/or Materials

Galvin, J.L. (2009). *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences*. 4th ed. Pyczak Publishing

Grinnell, R.M. Jr. & Unrau, Y.A. (n.d.). *Social Work: Research Proposals: A workbook*.
Pairbond Publications.

RECOMMENDED!

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.

Course Description

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. Prerequisite: SWK 531 or admission to the Advanced Standing Program.

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 advanced generalist model that is ultimately autonomous and self-correcting.

PROGRAM GOALS:

1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions.
2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change.
3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires a competency-based approach to identify and assess what students demonstrate in practice. In social work, this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. *Students achieve programmatic goals listed above through demonstration of the following **bolded** competencies for Advanced Generalist Practice (AGP).*

Competency AGP 2.1.1 Exemplify professional social work behavior and standards

Competency AGP 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to resolve dilemmas and create positive change

Competency AGP 2.1.3 Critically analyze practice solutions and
Communicate judgments and reasoning through decision-making processes

Competency AGP 2.1.4 Demonstrate the ability to build strengths based on mutual engagement with diverse populations

Competency AGP 2.1.5 Demonstrate commitment to strategies that address discrimination, reduce disparities, and promote social and economic justice

Competency AGP 2.1.6 Contribute to evidence-based best practice approaches to assess and improve effectiveness

Competency AGP 2.1.7 Differentially apply theories and frameworks of HBSE

Competency AGP 2.1.8 Promote social policies to improve service delivery systems

Competency AGP 2.1.9 Use leadership skills to respond, influence, and shape changing contexts

Competency AGP 2.1.10 Demonstrate autonomy in dynamic practice situations that involve:

2.1.10.1 Relationship-building at all levels of systems

2.1.10.2 Evidence-based assessment tools and intervention approaches

2.1.10.3 Effective intervention with complex problems and prevention strategies

2.1.10.4 Response to the feedback process from interventions

Competency AGP 2.1.11: Develop leadership skills as advanced generalist practitioners to enhance organizations and communities

Competency AGP 2.1.12: Demonstrate innovative problem-solving in social and organizational systems

Student Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)

Each competency (outlined above) describes the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes that comprise competency at the Advanced Generalist Practice (AGP) level. While content and activities of each course in the MSW curriculum covertly or overtly addresses each of the nine competencies, identified within each course is a set of specific practice behaviors representing observable components of one for more competencies. Content and assessment reflect the bolded competencies and the following practice behaviors:

AGP 1.6a Uses research and evaluation to assess intervention, efficacy and effectiveness

AGP 1.6b Develops and shares data to enhance best practices and professional knowledge

AGP1.6c Uses evidence-based research findings to improve practice

AGP 1.10j. Assesses, intervenes, and evaluates complex problems with all systems

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Ability to read and comprehend academic sources; ability to produce independently written academically sound documents.

Instructional Methods

Classes will be conducted via live Zoom sessions that generally meet weekly. Additional activities that require students to interface with the instructor, other students and the course material will be conducted via D2L.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Students must commit to the time required to comprehend course materials (both in the text and supplemental readings & activities, such as watching YouTube instructional videos, etc.). Students should make every effort to attend synchronous Zoom classes as scheduled..

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Assessments

SWK 590 Assignments

1. **Single System Design Project - 20% (100 points)** – Students will identify a problem area, implement an intervention, collect data and write up analysis on a classmate. This will include a 2-3 page review of relevant literature, written in APA format to support the chosen intervention.
 - a. Students are paired up and given time to explore an area for the SSD
 - b. Students must submit a statement of the problem, proposed intervention, chosen design and data collection method, and dates of implementation -
 - c. Students must collect data over a period of at least 4 weeks -
 - d. Final report due that includes outcomes and recommendations

2. **Formal Project Plan Formal Project Plan- 20%(100 points):** Students will be given a topic and can choose to work in groups of no more than 3 or individually to develop a project plan that falls into the category of program/practice evaluation (group design – survey method) or community needs assessment and develop a formal plan to implement and carry out the investigation in a real-world setting. Students will implement and collect data that will be analyzed in SWK 595 and the final result will be a completed report suitable as an executive summary; report to stakeholders, and/or a research brief.
 - a. Students must turn in a working outline for the literature review (supporting evidence and sources)
 - b. Students must turn in a working draft of the proposed method
 - c. Students must turn in draft documents of informed consent and data collection tools – will be further refined and developed during an in class workshop, with mandatory attendance.

3. **Worksheets/Activities - 10% (100 points):** Students will be given worksheets and activities throughout the semester to be completed in D2L

All students MUST complete the following Human Subjects Review Trainings AND submit Completed TRANSCRIPTS with Formal Project Plan:

A. Responsible conduct of Research for Social and Behavioral Sciences (link below)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/research/compliance/training/ResponsibleConductInstructions.aspx>

B. Protection of Human Subjects Training: Students conducting no more than minimal risk

<http://www.tamuc.edu/research/compliance/training/protection-human-subjectstraining.aspx>

4. Weekly Quizzes (10%)

5. Comprehensive Final - 20% (100 points)

6. Engagement – (20%) Students must engage in learning and interacting with the instructor and other students throughout this course, remotely via Zoom and in D2L. The student's final grade will depend on the **level of engagement** throughout the class.

Engagement will be measured participation in remote linkage via Zoom. **Students are expected to be “present” electronically (via Zoom) for all scheduled classes and class activities (ie, Zoom groups).** Every effort will be made to find a synchronous time to meet that's conducive for everyone. Because these will be scheduled in advance, students will be expected to plan this into their work/personal schedule. **If a student is unable to attend the Zoom class as scheduled, additional activities that reflect “engagement” will be required. It is the student's responsibility to ascertain what additional requirements there are.**

As with traditional class structures, up to 2 “absences” (physically or electronically) are permitted without penalty. Attendance will be taken via Zoom report on attendees. **Subsequent absences (starting with the 3rd) will result in 10 points penalty per “absence” off total points for the class.** Students who are unable to consistently engage with this class are encouraged to discuss their situation with the instructor.

Grading Scale

90-100% of points = A
80-89% of points = B
70-79% of points = C
60-69% of points = D
Less than 60% of points = F

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

All assignments are due on the due date stated in the Course Schedule and/or D2L. **Late assignments WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** and points will be forfeited. Please do not email an assignment to me unless you have received prior permission. It is easy to “lose” an email or have trouble opening attachments.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

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

Part of the grading process will include an evaluation of presentation, including clarity, coherence, logic and organization of the assignment. All assignments must be typewritten, using double-spacing and standard margins. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure the paper is in the possession of the instructor by the designated time. Any papers left in the mailbox or any other place are not the instructor’s responsibility. At the discretion of the instructor, it may be required to submit written assignments via “Turn-It-In”, a program utilized to determine instances of plagiarism. Below is a partial list of factors that are addressed in the grading process:

- Any error in APA reference or citation format from the 7th 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

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Instructor will respond to email queries within 2 business days.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

Engagement Policy

Final Evaluation and Grade Depends on both Classroom attendance and Participation

Inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment in each class significantly affects students' grades. No matter the course venue, students must engage in a comparable amount of time. Expectations of both Face-to-Face classes and those with Online components include time spent reading and studying course material. To earn a level of competency within a specific course, students must demonstrate both mastery of content and active engagement.

Mastery of content areas is evidenced by successful completion of course assignments such as written papers, group project deliverables, tests/quizzes and other tangible products designed by instructors to evaluate knowledge and skills.

Additionally, the Social Work Profession is built upon human interactions and building human relationships – which is defined as engagement. Engagement is defined as meaningful involvement in interactions with instructor, peers, outside stakeholders as appropriate (such as contacting a social worker to interview for a required assignment). Within the classroom setting, whether virtual or F2F, students must actively participate in engagement activities as outlined by individual instructors. These activities can include participation in a live, synchronous virtual classes, attending a Face to Face course when appropriate, interacting with peers in posted discussions and collaborating in group interactive projects.

It is imperative we communicate consistently and frequently. If, for any reason, you are not able to complete assignments or actively engage in the course, you **MUST** reach out to your instructor and let him or her know.

Student Conduct

Students preparing to become professional social workers must adhere to the *University Code of Conduct*, *Department Code of Conduct* and *National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics*.

University Code of Conduct located in the *Student Guide Book* at <http://www.tamuc.edu/campuslife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf> (pp 34- 66). On the University Website under Campus Life Documents

To become aware of University policies related to student academic and behavioral expectations for students refer to the Guidebook.

Department Code of Conduct

"Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class/lab/internship practicum or to block access to online courses and may refer offenses to the [Academic and Professional Issues Committee (API)] or to the Department Head. More serious offences by be referred to the University Police Department and/or the Judicial Affairs Office for disciplinary action" (Student Guidebook p 35)

Social Work students conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. Closely linked with professional recognition is the social worker's compliance with the profession's ethical standards. It is imperative for professional social workers to be competent and ethical in practice if the profession is to maintain the public trust. It is essential that each social work student gain a thorough understanding of the ethical principles that guide practice and actively demonstrate in behavior, both in and out of the classroom. Student conduct is to reflect the tenets of *NASW Code of Ethics* (located at <https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>) on the NASW website: <https://www.socialworkers.org>

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Course Schedule – SWK 590
 Spring 2021 ONLINE – **Zoom Class Proposed Mondays 6pm**
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE – SUBJECT TO CHANGE...

| | Date | Topic | Zoom Discussion Topics | DUE by End of Week |
|-------|----------------|---|---|--|
| Wk 1 | Jan 11 – 17 | Introduction to SW Research Ch. 1 -2 | Introductions, Syllabus, Pre-Test | |
| Wk 2 | Jan 18 – 24 | The Research Process (Ch. 3) Professional Literature | | |
| Wk 3 | Jan 25-Jan 31 | Professional Writing & Plagiarism (Ch 13) | Discuss Ch. 3 Quiz Ch. 1, 2, 13 | - Ch. 1 & 3 WS - CITI verification |
| Wk 4 | Feb 1 – 7 | CATCH YOUR BREATH | | |
| Wk 5 | Feb 8 – 14 | SINGLE SUBJECT DESIGN (Ch. 4) | Discuss Ch. 4 SSD Activity Quiz Ch. 3 & 4 | Ch. 4 WS |
| Wk 6 | Feb 15 – 21 | Research in Agencies & Comm (Ch. 5) | Discuss Ch. 5 Quiz Ch. 5 | Ch. 5 WS + Topics WS, <u>SSD Proposal DUE</u> |
| Wk 7 | Feb 22 – 28 | Group Research Designs (Ch. 7) | Discuss Ch. 7 Quiz Ch. 7 | Ch. 7 WS + Topics WS |
| Wk 8 | Mar 1 – 7 | CATCH YOUR BREATH | | |
| Wk 9 | Mar 8 – 14 | Sampling (Ch. 8) | Discuss Ch. 8 Quiz Ch. 8 | Ch. 8 WS + Topics WS |
| Wk 10 | Mar 15 – 21 | Measurement (Ch. 9) | Discuss Ch. 9 Quiz Ch. 9 | Ch. 9 WS + Topics WS |
| Wk 11 | Mar 22 – 28 | Qualitative Research (Ch. 6) | Discuss Ch. 6 Quiz Ch. 6 | Ch. 6 WS + Topics WS |
| Wk 12 | Mar 29 – Apr 4 | | | SSD Paper DUE |
| Wk 13 | Apr 5 – 11 | | | Formal Project DUE |
| Wk 14 | Apr 12 – 18 | | | Comprehensive Final Exam |

