



SWK 531 Research for Practice (03W, 04W, 05W & 06W)

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Gracie Brownell

Office Location: Henderson Bldg, 3rd Floor

Office Hours: 10am-12pm & Tuesdays 9:30-11am; 12pm-1pm & 3:45-4:45pm **or by appointment**
(via Zoom)

Office Phone:

Office Fax:

University Email Address: gracie.brownell@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: **email**

Communication Response Time: Within 24 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

MATERIALS – TEXTBOOKS, READINGS, SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

Grinnell, R.M, Jr. (2026). Foundations of Research Methods for Social Workers: A Critical Thinking Approach (2nd Edition). Pair Bond Publications

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (2019) 7th ed.

Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The scientific method in social work practice is presented. The methods of empirical research for knowledge building, the role of research in theory construction, research designs and data analysis, and methods of practice and program evaluation are introduced. Students learn to apply qualitative and quantitative research methods to the problems of social work practice.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Table 1 Competencies

	Activity/Assessment	Dimension
Competency 4: Engage in Practice Informed Research and Research Informed Practice		

Use practical experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research	Literature Review Article Analysis: Quantitative Study Qualitative Study Single System Design	Knowledge, skills, cognitive affective processes
Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings	Ethical Reaction Paper	Values Cognitive Affective Processes

Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery	Literature Review	Knowledge, skills and cognitive/affective processes
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes	Knowledge Tests #1; #2 and #3	Knowledge, skills Individuals, Families Groups, Organizations and Communities
Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes	Ethics Reaction Paper Article Analysis: Quantitative Study Qualitative Study Single System Design	Knowledge, skills, values and cognitive affective processes Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes	Article Analysis: Quantitative Single System Design	Knowledge, skills and cognitive and affective processes Individual, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities
Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo and macro levels a	Article Analysis: Quantitative Qualitative Single System Design	Knowledge, skills and cognitive and effective processes Individual, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

In this class you will utilize the Learning Management Systems (LMS) D2L for instructional and learning opportunities, submitting your assignments, participating in online synchronous and asynchronous discussions, accessing resources, and completing quizzes/tests. Additionally, knowledge and skills in using Microsoft Word PowerPoint and Outlook Email, if you have any issues with using the various systems or

software, it is your responsibility to contact support services and to notify the instructor of the problem.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This course will be delivered via synchronous and asynchronous sessions via D2L and will consist of live class sessions, pre-recorded lectures, group engagement activities, various assignments with some including experiential learning and practical application of the content areas. In addition, small lectures, discussion activities and workshops may be utilized to provide instruction during this course.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES OR TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

As a student in this course, you are responsible to engage in active learning and reaching out to the instructor if there are problems or challenges that is interfering in optimal learning. Communication is key when engaged in a fully online, virtual environment.

Expectations for success include:

1. Always demonstrate professional behavior, including demonstrating respect for instructor and peers; being open to feedback and guidance throughout this class and in the program.
2. Adhered to the School of Social Work and University student code of conduct, along with NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Begin reading the assigned text and supplemental readings as soon as possible, with a focus on completing all readings prior to engagement with instructor or peers.
4. Prepare to engage in live class sessions, discussions, and other activities so you can be a contributor as well as receiver of knowledge and skills.
5. Actively participate in engagement activities which will include live virtual class sessions, online discussions, and interactive learning opportunities -as this is vital for learning and success in both this course and the program.
6. Work ahead when possible, completing assignments ahead of due date so you are prepared to submit on the due date.
7. Sign into the D2L course multiple times during the week to access updated announcements or posted resources.
8. Check your university email daily. This is the official method of communication by the university, department, and instructor.
9. Be open and focused on the “process” and not the “product” as earning this degree requires time, effort, work and ultimately growth in knowledge, skills, abilities along with personal and professional attributes

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

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Worksheets = 15% of final grade
Exams = 35 %
of final grade

Core Assignments = 50% of final grade

ASSESSMENTS

Ethics Reaction Paper (core assignment) *each student will watch the movie: The Pregnancy Project, which will be scheduled in class and write a reaction paper using an outline provided by the instructor (50 pts)* [Instructions and Grading Rubric found in Appendix A](#)

Weekly Unit Worksheets *provided throughout the semester, students will complete worksheets that introduce them to research terms, concepts, and the basics of descriptive and inferential statistics (10 pts each)* Grading Rubric Appendix A

Dissecting Design in Social Work Research Assignment Article Analysis (core assignment) *each student will complete an analysis of a quantitative, qualitative and single-system design empirical study. Instructions and outline can be found on eCollege. (2 article analysis @ 25 pts each = 50 pts)* [Instructions and Grading Rubrics Found in Appendix A](#)

Contemporary Literature Review (Using AI for Research Analysis in Social Work) (core assignment) *each student will complete a 5-page review of relevant literature and information on an assigned topic. The paper must include at least 20 creditable sources to support information in the paper and follow APA guidelines for formatting and referencing. (100 pts)* [Grading Rubric Found in Appendix A](#)

Exam #1 *will cover the concepts and information presented in weeks 1-5 (50 pts)*

Exam #2 *will cover the concepts and information presented in weeks 6 -10 (50 pts)*

Exam #3 will cover the concepts and information presented in weeks 11–13 (50 pts)

Course Outline/Calendar

Table 2 Course Schedule

Week	Date	Content	Assignments
PART 1: The Contexts of Social Work Research			
1 8/20-23	LIVE SESSION MEET AND GREET #1 ZOOM Thursday 7pm	Introduction to Course	
2 8/24-30	No Zoom this week	Chapter 1 in text: Toward Accountability Chapter 5 in text: Research Ethics Introduction to Course – Question and Answer Session	
3 8/31-9/6	Live Class Session #2 Monday 7pm	Chapter 6 in text: Culturally Competent Research Discussion of Ethical Movie Review and Ethical Aspects of Protecting Human Participants	Worksheet #1 Due 9/6 Ethical Review of Movie: The Pregnancy Project Due 9/6
PART 2: Knowledge Development			
4 9/8-13	No Zoom this week	Chapter 3: Toward Evidence-Based Practice	Worksheet #2 Due 9/13 EXAM #1 open 9/8 – 9/13

9/7 Labor Day - University Closed		Chapter 4: Literature Reviews Chapter 7: The Scientific Method of Inquiry	
PART 3: Measuring and Defining Variables			
5 9/14-20	Live Class Session #3 Monday @ 7pm	Chapter 2: Formulating Research Questions Chapter 8: The Quantitative Approach (pages 252 – 258) Chapter 11: Measurement Discussion of What is a variable, how to define and operationalize variables in your study and understanding variables in published studies	Worksheet #3 Due 9/20 Dissecting Research Design in Social Work Assignment #1 Due no later than 9/20
6 9/21-27	No Zoom this week	Chapter 12: Measuring Instruments	Worksheet #4 Due 9/27
PART 4: Sampling and Research Designs			
7 9/28-10/4	No Zoom this week	Chapter 8: The Quantitative Research Approach Chapter 9: The Qualitative Research Approach Chapter 10: Mixed- Methods Research Approach	Worksheet #5 and Worksheet #6 Due 10/4

8 10/5-7 10/8-10/9 - Fall Break	Live Session #4 Monday @ 7:00 p.m.	Chapter 13 – Sampling Chapter 14 – Single – Subject Designs Discussion of the different research genres: Qualitative and Quantitative and Research Designs (pre- experimental; quasi- experimental and experimental)	Worksheet #7 Due 10/11
9 10/12-18	No Zoom this week	Chapter 15 – Group Research Designs	Worksheet #8 Due 10/18 EXAM #2 Open 10/12 – 10/18
PART 5: Collecting and Analyzing Data			
10 10/19-25		Chapter 16 : Collecting Data Discussion: Introduction to Data Analysis – introduction to basic statistical analysis	Dissecting Research Design in Social Work Assignment #2 Due no later than 10/25
11 10/26-11/1	Live Session #5 Monday @ 7pm	Chapter 18: Analyzing Quantitative Data Chapter 19: Analyzing Qualitative Data	Worksheet # 9 Due 11/1
PART 6: Writing Research Proposal and Reports			
12 11/2-8	No Zoom	Chapter 20: Quantitative Proposals and Reports	Worksheet #10 Due 11/8

		Chapter 21: Qualitative Proposals and Reports	
13 11/9-15	Live Class Session #6 Monday 7pm		AI Assisted Research Literature Review Assignment Due no Later than 11/15
14 11/16-22	No Zoom		Complete Course Evaluations
WRAP UP AND REVIEW			
15 11/23-24 11/25-26 Happy Thanksgiving!	No Zoom	Holiday	Complete Course Evaluations
16 11/30-12/4	No Zoom		Exam 3 Open 11/30 – 12/4

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universallmenu

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@etamu.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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID AND PASSWORD

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@etamu.edu.

TECHNOLOGY-RELATED ISSUES

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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS) – D2L

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

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTOR STATEMENT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EMAILS WITH INSTRUCTOR:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY 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.

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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU ATTENDANCE

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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

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

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources

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

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

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

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 ETAMU 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.

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

EAST TEXAS A&M SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH – COUNSELING SERVICES

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code or go to

https://studentsupport.telushealth.com/us/about#download_app to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

Table 3 Mental Health QR code



As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

DEPARTMENT AND ACCREDITING AGENCY STATEMENT:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

Appendix A

Instructions and Grading Rubric for Assignments

SWK 531

The Pregnancy Project Ethical Review

In social work research and social work practice we often the line between

participant/client autonomy and implementing what "we as professionals" believe is "best". As practitioners and researchers, we must always check our values and be sure, we are respecting clients/participants. This movie provides an excellent example of a valuable study wrought with ethical dilemmas for a social work practitioner/researcher.

Assignment

Pop some popcorn, fix some snacks, grab a notepad and settle in to watch an interesting and thought-provoking social study:

[The Pregnancy Project](#)

Watch the movie through the "eyes of a social work researcher". This means do NOT get caught up in the "topic" of stereotypes and prejudices of teen pregnancy, while an important topic, this assignment is about the "research project". The same approach could be implemented for a variety of social problems: racial profiling, drug addiction etc, for purposes of this assignment the "topic" is only important in relation to the *Focus on the methods, implementation and outcomes related to the research.*

Write a two-page reaction paper that addresses the three overriding ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report using the outline below:

- Identify the participants in this experiment?
- Provide your thoughts regarding the experiment and how it met and/or violated the following ethical principles. (Do not write in 1st person – write as if you are explaining the criteria in the context of the movie to an audience).

1. Respect for Persons

People should be treated as autonomous individuals, capable of making informed decisions when provided the information to do so. This principle also recognizes that, due to some circumstances such as age or disability, some persons have diminished autonomy and therefore require additional protection in research. The extent of this protection should depend on the risk of harm and the likelihood of benefit.

2. *Beneficence*

The principle of beneficence is reflected in two general rules: (1) do no harm and (2) maximize benefits while minimizing risks. Researchers need to weigh the potential risks and the benefits of the research, including the benefits extended directly to participants. Participants should not be asked to subject themselves to potential harm when they are unlikely to receive any direct benefit from their participation.

3. *Justice*

It is unfair to expect one group to take most of the risk when a different group will likely realize the benefit. For instance, in the [Tuskegee Study](#), the burden of the research fell to poor, rural, African families, whereas the disease knew no boundaries, including geography, color or income. In this study, one group assumed all the risk, whereas the entire society would benefit from any knowledge about the disease that emerged from the study.

- *Ethical Dilemma:* Is Gaby and her instructor(s) justified in subjecting the participants to the psychological and emotional discomfort incurred? Did the outcome justify the means?

Always include a cover sheet that has your name and assignment identified for each of your assignments.

Grading Rubric

Identified Participants correctly (3 pts)	
Identified 3 ethical principles-giving examples (30 pts)	
Addressed ethical dilemma (7.5 pts)	
Writing quality: Grammar/spelling/sentence structure (7.5 pts)	
Adhered to page limit (2 pts)	
Total points awarded	

Dissecting Design in Social Work Research Assignment #1 25pts

You will select a peer-reviewed article that uses either a quantitative, qualitative or single-system design. Do NOT select a “mixed methods” research design. You will then create a structured analysis that breaks down the study’s methodology, evaluates its rigor, and reflects on its relevance to social work practice. Below are the steps for this assignment.

Instructions

1. Article Selection (step one)

****You MUST Submit a PDF of the chosen article with key sections highlighted (research question(s); methodology description; sampling details and findings) along with the completed analysis**

- Choose a peer-reviewed research article published within the last 10 years. **
- The article must clearly use one of the following designs:
 - Quantitative (e.g., experimental, survey-based)
 - Qualitative (e.g., ethnography, grounded theory)
 - Single-system design (e.g., AB, ABA, multiple baseline)

Section I: Research Method Breakdown (use the following headings to complete your analysis)

Create a structured analysis that includes:

- **Research Question(s):** What is the study trying to find out? **2pts**
- **Design Type:** Identify and define the research design used. **3pts**
- **Sampling:** Who participated? How were they selected? **2pts**
- **Data Collection Methods:** What tools or techniques were used? **3pts**
- **Data Analysis:** How was the data interpreted? **3pts**
- **Findings:** What were the key results? **2pts**
- **Limitations:** What are the study’s weaknesses or gaps? **2pts**

Write information in a sentence format – not bullet statements. Be sure to include enough detail to demonstrate thorough analysis. Write this as if “I did not read your article” but only read your analysis of the study.

Section II: Critical Reflection (use critical thinking skills)

- How does the research design support or limit the study’s goals? **2pts**
- What ethical considerations are relevant? **2pts**
- How could this research evidence inform social work practice or policy **4pts**

****you MUST Submit a PDF of the chosen article with key sections highlighted (research question(s); methodology description; sampling details and findings)**

AI Use Policy for Research Analysis Assignment

Use of AI Tools for Assignment Review

Students are encouraged to use AI tools (such as Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT, or other platforms) to review their research analysis before submission. This may include asking for feedback on clarity, structure, or alignment with the selected research article.

However:

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

- AI tools may **not be used to write the analysis** or complete the assignment on your behalf.
- Any AI-generated feedback or grading must be clearly identified and used for **revision and learning**, not as a substitute for your own evaluation and cited correctly per APA guidelines. If used, but not cited/documented, your paper will be considered plagiarism, and you will receive a “0”
- Here is a link to information to correctly site the use of AI per APA guidelines

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/cite-generative-ai-references>

- If you use any AI tool, you must complete the **AI Companion Reflection** (see below) to demonstrate ethical and thoughtful use of AI. **This will be Section III of your paper.**

This policy is designed to you students develop responsible AI literacy and enhance their analytical skills through guided support. AI Companion Reflection (Required if AI was used)

If you used an AI tool to review your research analysis, please respond to the following in 1–2 paragraphs:

1. How did you use the AI tool? (e.g., What questions did you ask? What kind of feedback did you receive?)
2. What did the AI get right, and what did it miss? (Did it help clarify your thinking? Were there any inaccuracies or oversights?)
3. How did the AI feedback influence your final submission? (Did you revise anything? Did it deepen your understanding of the research design?)

Your reflection will not be graded for correctness, but for thoughtfulness and transparency. The goal is to help you engage critically with AI as a tool—not a shortcut.

Dissecting Design in Social Work Research Assignment #2 25pts

You will select a peer-reviewed article that uses either a quantitative, qualitative or single-system design. **YOU MUST SELECT A RESEARCH DESIGN DIFFERENT FROM YOUR FIRST ANALYSIS.** Example: If you selected quantitative study for your first analysis, you must use a qualitative study or single-system design study for this analysis. Do NOT select a “mixed methods” research design. You will then create a structured analysis that breaks down the study’s methodology, evaluates its rigor, and reflects on its relevance to social work practice. Below are the steps for this assignment.

Instructions

2. Article Selection (step one)

**You MUST Submit a PDF of the chosen article with key sections highlighted (research question(s); methodology description; sampling details and findings) along with the completed analysis

- Choose a peer-reviewed research article published within the last 10 years. **
- The article must clearly use one of the following designs:
- Quantitative (e.g., experimental, survey-based)
- Qualitative (e.g., ethnography, grounded theory)
- Single-system design (e.g., AB, ABA, multiple baseline)

Section I: Research Method Breakdown (use the following headings to complete your analysis)

Create a structured analysis that includes:

- **Research Question(s):** What is the study trying to find out? **2pts**
- **Design Type:** Identify and define the research design used. **3pt.**
- **Sampling:** Who participated? How were they selected? **2pts**
- **Data Collection Methods:** What tools or techniques were used? **3pts**
- **Data Analysis:** How was the data interpreted? **3pts**
- **Findings:** What were the key results? **2pts**
- **Limitations:** What are the study’s weaknesses or gaps? **2pts**

Write information in a sentence format – not bullet statements. Be sure to include enough detail to demonstrate thorough analysis. Write this as if “I did not read your article” but only read your analysis of the study.

Section II: Critical Reflection (use critical thinking skills)

- How does the research design support or limit the study’s goals? **2pts**
- What ethical considerations are relevant? **2pts**
- How could this research evidence inform social work practice or policy **4pts**

****you MUST Submit a PDF of the chosen article with key sections highlighted (research question(s); methodology description; sampling details and findings)**

AI Use Policy for Research Analysis Assignment

Use of AI Tools for Assignment Review

Students are encouraged to use AI tools (such as Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT, or other platforms) to review their research analysis before submission. This may include asking

for feedback on clarity, structure, or alignment with the selected research article. However:

- AI tools may **not be used to write the analysis** or complete the assignment on your behalf.
- Any AI-generated feedback or grading must be clearly identified and used for **revision and learning**, not as a substitute for your own evaluation and cited correctly per APA guidelines. If used, but not cited/documented, your paper will be considered plagiarism, and you will receive a “0”
- Here is a link to information to correctly site the use of AI per APA guidelines

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/cite-generative-ai-references>

- If you use any AI tool, you must complete the **AI Companion Reflection** (see below) to demonstrate ethical and thoughtful use of AI. **This will be Section III of your paper.**

Section III

This policy is designed to you students develop responsible AI literacy and enhance their analytical skills through guided support. AI Companion Reflection (Required if AI was used)

If you used an AI tool to review your research analysis, please respond to the following in 1–2 paragraphs:

1. How did you use the AI tool? (e.g., What questions did you ask? What kind of feedback did you receive?)
2. What did the AI get right, and what did it miss? (Did it help clarify your thinking? Were there any inaccuracies or oversights?)
3. How did the AI feedback influence your final submission? (Did you revise anything? Did it deepen your understanding of the research design?)

Your reflection will not be graded for correctness, but for thoughtfulness and transparency. The goal is to help you engage critically with AI as a tool—not a shortcut

Using AI for Research Analysis in Social Work (Contemporary Literature Review)

Objective: You will explore how AI tools can enhance your ability to analyze published social work research. You will engage in an AI-Assisted literature review, critical analysis and synthesis of findings to inform evidence-based social work practice. This assignment is designed to help you engage critically with AI technology while refining your research skills.

AI Use Policy & Reflection. This policy is designed to support responsible AI literacy and help students enhance their analytical skills through guided support and prevent compromising integrity of the assignment.

- AI tools **may not be used to write the analysis** or complete the assignment on your behalf.
- Any AI-generated feedback or grading you receive from the tool must be clearly identified in the content of your paper and used for **revision and learning**, not as a substitute for your own written work.
- Students must complete the **AI Companion Reflection** to demonstrate ethical and thoughtful engagement.

REFERENCE: How to CITE AI generate communications per APA guidelines. Here you can find policies and links to examples developed by APA for citing information generated using AI. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/cite-generative-ai-references>

Process Instructions:

- **Select a Research Topic**
 - Choose a social work-related topic of interest (e.g., child welfare, mental health interventions, homelessness, substance abuse, or policy advocacy). *You must receive approval of your topic from the instructor no later than the due date posted in the course syllabus.*
- **Gather Published Research**
 - Identify at least **15 peer-reviewed journal articles** related to the selected topic. Use academic databases through the University Library.
- **Use AI for Literature Review Assistance**
 - Utilize an AI tool (such as Microsoft Copilot or other AI-powered research assistants) to summarize key points from each article.
 - Compare AI-generated summaries with your own understanding to assess accuracy and depth. (critical thinking)

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- **Analyze Themes and Trends**
 - Use AI to identify common themes, patterns, and gaps across the selected articles.
 - Critically assess whether AI highlights meaningful connections between research findings.
- **Evaluate Bias and Limitations**
 - Assess how AI interprets the studies—does it overlook certain perspectives or biases present in social work research and practice?
 - Reflect on how [your] human analysis complements AI-driven insights.

Instructions for writing your paper

- **Write an APA formatted Report (3-5 pages). Include a cover page and reference page (not included in the 3-5 pages)**
- **Part I: Organize the content of your paper based on the patterns/themes identified across the studies.**
 - For each pattern/theme summarize the research findings and AI-assisted insights. This is NOT an annotated bibliography, but an integrated, synthesized presentation of the information across the studies.
- **Part II: Use of AI tool(s) to assist with evaluating research studies.**
 - Discuss the advantages and limitations of using AI in analyzing social work research. Look back to the process and report how AI helped you or how you might have disagreed with the AI results.
 - Provide recommendations for responsible AI integration in social work practice.
- **Part III: Application to Social Work Practice**
 - Discuss how AI-assisted research analysis could be integrated into real-world social work practice.

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- Identify ethical considerations when relying on AI for decision-making.

NOTE: Be sure to include correct in text citations and reference page as required by APA guidelines.

Part IV: AI Companion Reflection (Required) *Students who do not submit this component of the paper will receive a “0” for the assignment.*

1. How did you use the AI tool?

(What questions did you ask? What kind of feedback did you receive?)

2. What did the AI get right, and what did it miss?

(Did it help clarify your thinking? Were there any inaccuracies or oversights?)

3. How did the AI feedback influence your final submission?

(Did you revise anything? Did it deepen your understanding of the research design?)

Your reflection will be evaluated for thoughtfulness and transparency, not correctness. The goal is to help you engage critically with AI as a tool—not a shortcut.

Evaluation Criteria

- Depth of research analysis (Part 1) (30%)
- Effective use of AI tools (Part 1 and Part II) (15%)
- Critical reflection on AI limitations (Part II) (10%)
- Application of AI to social work practice and research (Part III) (20%)
- Clarity and organization of the report (10%)
- APA guidelines followed for formatting and citations (10%)
- AI companion Reflection (5%)

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