



Course & Session Number	SOWK 355 S05	Classroom	3-300
Course Name	Research in Context		
Day(s) & Time	Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.		
Instructor	Rick Enns, PhD, RSW		
U of C E-mail	renns@ucalgary.ca	U of C Phone	N/A

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

An introduction to basic research methodology, data analysis, critical appraisal and application of research findings within a reflective model of practice.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Professional codes of ethics require social workers to critically evaluate existing research literature to guide decision making, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and contribute to the knowledge base of the profession, regardless of the field or level of practice. Competence in various approaches support anti-oppressive models of practice. In this course, students are introduced to quantitative and qualitative research approaches that characterize knowledge generation in western societies with a greater focus on quantitative methodologies.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

2. understand the place and importance of research in social work practice,
3. understand the history of social work and social science research and consider research standpoint,
4. understand the ethical obligations of social work researchers,
5. understand the distinctions between Western and Indigenous research approaches,
6. understand basic quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis, and
7. evaluate and analyze social work research to be a critical consumer of research.

LEARNING RESOURCES

Weinbach, R. & Grinnell, R. (2015). *Statistics for social workers* (9th edition). Pearson.

This text is available in paperbound format at the UofA bookstore. A 12-month eText version is available through the publisher **at a significantly lower cost** of \$49.99 ([click here](#)). New textbooks ordered through Pearson Canada come with additional learning resources offered by the publisher.

The text is also available in new and used paperbound format and as an e-book (but without publisher learning resources) through Amazon ([click here](#)) - **please note that prices for paperback editions from vendors listed with Amazon may be significantly higher than the publisher's price so order carefully.**

Additional readings and resources will be posted or identified on the D2L site for the course.

A D2L site is set up for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials. A laptop, desktop or mobile device with Internet access, microphone and speaker is required for D2L and Zoom access.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

Through SOWK 355, students are helped to understand and critique research that informs all fields and levels of social work practice; as such, SOWK 355 material is relevant to the BSW curriculum generally. Students will be encouraged to link the processes of knowledge development with various aspects of social work practice covered in other BSW courses. Students will be encouraged to take a reflective, critical stance toward what is often “taken for granted” about social work research and practice.

ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THIS COURSE

The following beliefs and commitments underlie the design and delivery of this course:

- The classroom is an inclusive space where all are welcome and should be free from prejudice and discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
- The instructor and students are responsible to ensure full inclusion and will commit to this through self-reflection, peer support and constructive dialogue.
- Ideas, rather than individuals, are open to challenge. Students will range with respect to familiarity with the topics we will discuss in this course; all questions contribute to learning and all voices should be heard.
- Everyone in the classroom is a potential teacher and learner. Everyone brings valuable life experiences from which we can all learn. Some students may contribute prior learning and experience directly with research; others' contributions may be less direct and include, for example, skills in asking questions, knowledge of other cultures, and practice experience. All contributions will be honoured and appreciated.

- Students are responsible for their own learning. I will rely on you to direct and focus class discussions to meet your learning needs.
- The instructor will be responsive to students' questions in the classroom, through office appointments, and emails, and students commit to prepare for and attend classes on a regular weekly basis, and refrain from activities that distract or compromise learning in the classroom.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week and Date		Text chapters*	Modality
1 Sept. 9	Research and social work Quantitative, qualitative and Indigenous/ist approaches Research standpoint Course learning objectives (CLOs): 1, 2 & 4		In-class
2 Sept. 16	Research questions and the research hypothesis Types of research Variables and levels of measurement CLOs: 4 & 6		In-class
3 Sept. 23	Ethics Research design Sampling CLOs: 3 & 6		Online
Sept. 24	Written reflection due (20%)		
4 Sept. 30	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation		
5 Oct. 7	Descriptive statistics CLOs: 4, 5 & 6	2, 3 & 4	In-class
6 Oct. 14	Hypothesis testing CLOs: 4, 5 & 6	5, 6 & 7	In-class
7 Oct. 21	Inferential statistics CLOs: 4, 5 & 6	8, 9 & 10	Online
8 Oct. 28	Inferential statistics CLOs: 4, 5 & 6		In-class
9 Nov. 4	Mid-term exam (30%)		In-class
10 Nov. 11	Reading Week		
11 Nov. 19	Literature & annotated bibliography due (30%; no class)		

12	Nov. 25	Qualitative research approaches CLOs: 4, 5 & 6	In-class
13	Dec. 2	Qualitative research approaches CLOs: 4, 5 & 6	In-class
14	Dec. 9	Indigenist research approaches CLOs: 4, 5 & 6	In-class
Dec. 10		Research analysis due (20%)	

*additional readings will be listed on the D2L site for the course

Please note important dates for Fall 2021

- Block Week: Monday, August 30 to Friday, September 3, 2021
- Labour Day, Monday, September 6, 2021
- Start of Classes: Tuesday, September 7, 2021
- National Day of Truth and Reconciliation: Thursday, September 30, 2021 (no classes)
- Thanksgiving Day: Monday, October 11, 2021
- Remembrance Day: Thursday, November 11, 2021
- Term Break: No classes from Sunday, November 7 to Saturday, November 13, 2021
- Last Day of Classes: Thursday, December 9, 2021
- End of Term: Friday, December 24, 2021
- Add/Drop/Swap and Withdraw deadlines: Check the Student Centre

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND RECONCILIATION

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW) is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation. We affirm that diversity and differences are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, and community connections. We aim to foster an inclusive, thriving environment for our students, staff, postdoctoral fellows, and community members. We acknowledge systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations particularly for those who are members of the racialized, Indigenous peoples, disability and 2SLGBTQ+ communities, as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, cultural barriers to their education. We recognize, honour and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, experiences, and strengths. <https://socialwork.ucalgary.ca/about/about-faculty/equity-diversity-and-inclusion>

RECORDINGS OF ONLINE AND IN-PERSON CLASSES

The instructor will record material for the online sessions noted in the class schedule and may record face-to face classes for posting on the course D2L site. These recordings will be used to support student learning only, and for formal academic accommodations, and will not be shared or used for any other purpose. Recordings are not to be copied either in whole or in part or distributed for any purpose. Failure to comply with expectations noted here may be classified as instances of academic misconduct and subject to academic misconduct penalties as outlined by the university and may be considered a violation of copyright law.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

1. **Written assignment (due Sept. 24 by 11:59 p.m.)**

This assignment is an opportunity for students to identify a topic of interest (and of relevance to social work practice) and to examine their research standpoint. Students are encouraged to identify a topic that can support Assignments 3 and 4 below.

Length: maximum 4 to 6 double-spaced pages, not including title or reference pages

Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, APA 7th. ed. format

Weight: 20% of course grade

Course learning objectives: 1, 2, 3 & 4

Submission: Submit assignment as WORD document to the instructor at renns@ucalgary.ca

2. **Mid-term exam (November 4)**

Written in class, the exam will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions, drawing on material from the text, other assigned readings and classroom discussions. The exam will cover all material since the beginning of the term. This is not an open book exam; calculators will not be needed; writing will not be a factor in grading.

Length: 2 hours

Weight: 30% of course grade

Course learning objective: 1, 3, 4 & 5

3. **Annotated bibliography (due November 19 by 11:59 p.m.)**

Students will locate 5 to 6 relevant, peer-reviewed articles related to the topic area selected for Assignment 1 above using an academic data base. Guidelines for the assignment will be posted on the D2L site.

Length: maximum 6 to 8 double-spaced pages, not including title or reference pages

Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, APA 7th ed. format

Weight: 20% of course grade

Course learning objectives: 4, 5 & 6

Submission: Submit assignment as WORD document to the instructor at renns@ucalgary.ca

4. **Research analysis (due December 10 by 11:59 p.m.)**

Students will select one article from their annotated bibliography to critique according to guidelines that will be posted on the D2L site.

Length: maximum 8 to 10 double-spaced pages, not including title or reference pages

Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, APA 7th ed. format

Weight: 30% of course grade

Course learning objectives: 4, 5 & 6

Submission: Submit assignment as WORD document to the instructor at renns@ucalgary.ca

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

GRADING CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS COURSE

Grades assigned for each assignment will be rounded to 2 decimal points if necessary and all grades will be added at the end of term to determine the final grade for the course. Students must meet or exceed the lower threshold of the percentage range indicated to achieve the corresponding letter grade for the course.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the due date specified. Assignments should be submitted as WORD documents to the instructor by email at renns@ucalgary.ca.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are due by the date and time indicated on the course outline, unless an extension has been discussed and agreed upon with the instructor, as a result of emergency or unexpected circumstances, or for other reasons approved by the instructor. Five percent of the grade allocated for the assignment will be deducted for each day or portion thereof for late assignments if an extension has not been approved.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

Quality of writing is an important component of all written assignments. Students are expected to use APA 7th edition guidelines for formatting, and each written assignment will be evaluated for the quality and clarity of writing. Grading guidelines for each written assignment will include further details. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented and referenced in APA 7th edition format. [Click here](#) to connect with the Student Success Centre and [click here](#) for abbreviated APA 7th ed. resources. Additional APA resources can be found [here](#).

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. Students are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

GRADING

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course.

The University of Calgary **Undergraduate Grading System** and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding	95 - 100
A	4.0	Excellent – superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter	95 – 100
A-	3.7		90 – 94
B+	3.3		85 – 89
B	3.0	Good – clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete	80 – 84
B-	2.7		75 – 79
C+	2.3		70 – 74
C	2.0	Satisfactory – basic understanding of subject matter	65 – 69
C-	1.7		60 – 64
D+	1.3		55 – 59
D	1.0	Minimal Pass – marginal performance	50 – 54
F	0.0	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements	Below 50

COURSE EVALUATION

Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the standard University and Faculty of Social Work course evaluation forms. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

Additional readings will be posted in the course D2L site.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

As members of the University community, students and staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students and staff are also expected to demonstrate professional behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. Consistent with the aims of the Social Work Program and the University of Calgary, all students and staff are expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives; to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback; and to contribute to building learning communities that promote individual and collective professional and personal growth. While critical thought and debate is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must always be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviour in class that is consistent with our professional values and ethics, as outlined in the Canadian Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics (2005) and the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2019). Both can be found online at:

<https://acsw.ab.ca/site/practice-resources?nav=sidebar>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS). SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available <https://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf>

RESEARCH ETHICS

"If a student is interested in undertaking an assignment that will involve collecting information from members of the public, they should speak with the course instructor and consult the CFREB Ethics Website (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/cfreb>) before beginning the assignment.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials created by professor(s) (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These

materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Acceptable-Use-of-Material-Protected-by-Copyright-Policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE POLICY

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/sexual-and-gender-based-violence-policy>

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information