

Spring 2019

Course Number: SOWK 602 S01	Classroom: PF 4259
Course Name: Research and Philosophy in Advanced Social Work Practice	
Day & Time: Wednesdays & Fridays, June 5, 7, 12, 14, 19 & 21 9:00am – 4:00pm	

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COURSE OUTLINE

Syllabus Statement

Explores social work research through examination of various approaches (qualitative and quantitative), paradigms and methods, and applies social work research to theories as students develop their professional practice model.

Course Description

In this course, you will develop your understanding of social work research through examining various approaches (qualitative and quantitative), paradigms, and methods. Competence in research is a foundational notion of social work practice and is highlighted in professional codes of ethics. As producers and consumers of research, often in collaboration with and across cognate disciplines, social workers must also ensure that research is conducted with and for the benefit of those served by the profession, across all levels and fields of social work practice, and that it aligns with the values of the profession. A thorough understanding of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research, and Indigenous and critical approaches, supports ethical practice. This course will consider the wider array of research methodologies, with a focus on quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Learning Objectives

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

1. Understand the relationship between research methodologies and philosophical systems that create and maintain ontological frameworks and ways of knowing;
2. Understand the paradigms that inform and differentiate quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, Indigenous and critical research approaches;
3. Recognize shared understandings and commitments across quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, Indigenous and critical research approaches in social work practice;
4. Understand how research can inform the professions' efforts to promote social justice;
5. Understand the research design, data collection, and data analysis strategies used in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method approaches;

6. Demonstrate skills necessary to incorporate quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research into social work practice irrespective of level or field of practice;
7. Critically evaluate research in social work practice, and
8. Apply course learnings to your specialization and the exit requirements of the MSW program.

Relationship to Other Courses

As one of four courses offered at the beginning of the MSW program, this course will support you in further developing research skills necessary to critically evaluate existing practice research and identify strategies to evaluate your practice. This course will assist you as you examine the profession's commitment to social justice, inclusion, and anti-oppressive models of practice, and as you consider how these core values of the profession combine with an understanding of social policy and fundamental theories of change to frame social work's unique contribution to change efforts and the promotion of social justice across all levels of practice.

Course Text

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Strega, S., & Brown, L. (Eds.). (2015). *Research as resistance: Revisiting critical, indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches* (2nd ed.). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Additional Required Readings

- Canadian Association of Social Workers. (2005). *Code of Ethics*. https://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw_code_of_ethics.pdf
- St. George, S., Wulff, D., & Tomm, K. (2015). Research as daily practice. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 34(2), 3-14.

Suggested Readings

- Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. (2014, December). *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical conduct for research involving humans*. Ottawa, ON: Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research. Available at: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2-2014/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf
- Datta, R. (2018). Decolonizing both researcher and research and its effectiveness in Indigenous Research. *Research Ethics*, 14(2), 1-24.
- Fassinger, R., & Morrow, S. L. (2013). Toward best practices in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research: A social justice perspective. *Journal for Social Action in Counselling and Psychology*, 5(2), 69-82. Available at <https://openjournals.bsu.edu/jsacp/article/view/491/469>

Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. Toronto, ON: University of London Press.

McGregor, D. (2018). From 'decolonized' to reconciliation research in Canada: Drawing from Indigenous research paradigms. *ACME*, 17(3), 810-831.

Rowe, S., Baldry, E., & Earles, W. (2015). Decolonising social work research: Learning from critical Indigenous approaches. *Australian Social Work*, 68(3), 1-13.

Van de Sand, A., & Schwartz, K. (2017). *Research for social justice: A community-based participatory approach* (2nd ed.). Halifax, NS: Fernwood.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood.

Class Schedule

Class, Date & Times	Topics	Readings
June 5 9:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Course overview • Defining research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell & Creswell (2018) – Chapters 1 & 3 • Strega & Brown (2015) – Introduction, Chapters 1 & 3 • St. George, Wulff & Tomm (2015)
June 5 1:00pm – 4:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research as clinical practice • Overview and alignment of philosophical worldviews, theories & research designs 	
June 7 9:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipating ethical issues • Role of the literature review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell & Creswell (2018) – Chapters 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7 • CASW Code of Ethics (2005)
June 7 1:00pm – 4:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose statement • Research questions, hypotheses & variables 	
June 12 9:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative research: Sampling & data collection methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell & Creswell (2018) – Chapter 8
June 12 1:00pm – 4:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative research: Data analysis, findings & discussion • Article critique 	
June 14 9:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative research: Sampling & data collection methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell & Creswell (2018) – Chapter 9
June 14 1:00pm – 4:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative research: Data analysis, findings & discussion 	
June 19 9:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed methods research: Data collection, analysis, findings & discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creswell & Creswell (2018) – Chapter 10 • Strega & Brown (2015) – Chapters 2, 10 & at least one of Chapters 4-9
June 19 1:00pm – 4:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical, Indigenous & Anti-oppressive Approaches 	

June 21 9:00am – 12:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge mobilization • Wrapping up a research project 	TBA
June 21 1:00pm – 4:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Passing the torch” • Closing circle 	

Assignments

1. Initial Reflections on Research (15%) – due by June 7, 2019

Write a reflection about your perspectives, thoughts, feelings and experiences on the following questions:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about research in general?
- What role, if any, does research play in your everyday practice as a social worker?
- From your perspective, how do research, social justice, and social work practice relate to each other?
- What one or two things (related to research) would you really like to get out of taking this class?

Length: 750-1000 words (approx. 3-4 pages double spaced)

Marks will be awarded based on depth of self-reflection (vs. description), comprehensive response to each question, and length.

2. Complete the Research Ethics TCPS2 CORE Tutorial (15%) – due by June 7, 2019

Please complete the Tri-Council TCPS 2 Tutorial Course on Research Ethics (CORE), which can be found online at: <https://research.ucalgary.ca/conduct-research/ethics-compliance/tcps2-core-tutorial> and click on “Go to TCPS2 Core Tutorial” button.

Self-register using your @ucalgary email address and complete the tutorial. Please note that this tutorial takes 2-3 hours to complete. Please submit your certificate of completion in the D2L Dropbox to receive marks for this assignment.

3. Developing a Research Question (25%) – due June 14, 2019

Based on your learnings during the first week of class, this assignment allows you to articulate the beginning processes of designing a research study, including ethical considerations. More specifically, you are asked to write a brief paper addressing the following six questions:

- Philosophical worldview – situate yourself within a philosophical worldview. What is your philosophical worldview? How does it align with your personal and professional values and beliefs?
- Theoretical framework – situate yourself within a theoretical framework. What theories underlie your social work practice? Your clinical practice? How do these align with your philosophical worldview and personal and professional beliefs?
- Research design – Given your philosophical worldview and theoretical framework, which research design would you use if you were to conduct a research study relating to clinical practice in an area of interest?
- Research question – Design a research question consistent with your chosen research design that you may use if you were to conduct your own research study relating to clinical practice in an area of interest.
- Contribution - How would your study contribute to social work practice and promote social justice?
- Ethics – What ethical issues do you anticipate you may encounter if you were to carry out this research study?

Length: 1500-1750 words (approx. 6-7 pages double spaced). A detailed rubric will be provided in class for this assignment.

4. Article Appraisal Assignment (45%) – due June 24, 2019

One of our major aims as social work practitioners and clinicians is to base our practice on current evidence – i.e., using best-available research evidence to guide our practice. Evidence-based practice requires that we have the knowledge and skills to be critical consumers of research. This assignment will help you to demonstrate your comprehension of research design elements and ability to apply critical research appraisal skills through the review of a quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, or other research article.

In this assignment, you will have an opportunity to search for and select a research article (peer reviewed) from a list provided or one of your own choice in a clinical area of interest to you. Then, you will critically appraise the article that you have chosen following the appraisal rubric to be provided in class.

Length: 3000-3500 words (approx. 12-15 pages, double-spaced).