

Course Number	SOWK 302 L06	Classroom	Online
Course Name	Research in Context Theme Course: Virtual Learning Circle		
Day(s) & Time	Synchronous Zoom Sessions: Tuesdays 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM MST		
Instructor	Hieu Van Ngo, PhD, RSW		
U of C E-mail	hngo@ucalgary.ca	Phone	403.220.7424

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

This course offers an introduction to knowledge generation relevant to generalist social work practice. Foundational concepts and approaches of various research methodologies will be introduced as ways of knowledge building to inform practice and influence policy, particularly within rural, remote and Indigenous contexts. Course Hours: 6 units; (6-0)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Learners will be introduced to the core concepts of social work research through a variety of learning activities, including presentations, assigned readings, online discussion, exercises and assignments. They will examine the social, cultural, political and philosophical contexts of knowledge building, with particular attention being paid to concerns of gender, culture, race and power relations. Learners will further examine diverse experiences with knowledge building through various research methodologies.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Define and explain the basic concepts and vocabulary involved in research;
2. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of various knowledge-building paradigms, particularly the empirical paradigm, Indigenous ways of knowing, and emancipatory paradigm;
3. Identify and explore solutions to the ethical issues and challenges in social work research;
4. Develop and articulate critical understanding of the contexts and values in shaping social work research;
5. Describe contextually relevant research methodologies; and
6. Apply social work research knowledge and explore the use a variety of knowledge generation methods to advance professional practice, policy development, research, and service provision.

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READINGS

Textbook

Reid, C., Greaves, L., & Kirby, S. (2016). *Experience, research, social change: Critical methods*. University of Toronto Press.

Additional Readings

- Brooks, A., & Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2007). An invitation to feminist research. In S. N. Hesse-Biber, & P.L. Leavy (Eds.), *Feminist research practice: A primer* (pp. 1-26). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Collins, P. H. (2015). Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41, 1-20.
- D'Cruz, H., & Jones, M. (2004). Making sense of data analysis. In H. D'Cruz, & M. Jones (Eds.), *Social work research* (pp. 132-166). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ginn, C. S., & Kulig, J. C. (2015). Participatory action research with a group of urban First Nations grandmothers: Decreasing inequities through health promotion. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 6(1), 1-16.
- Heron, J., & Reason, P. (1997). A participatory inquiry paradigm. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(3), 274-294.
- Holosko, M. J. (2001). Overview of Qualitative Research Methods. In B. A. Thyer, *The Handbook of Social Work Research Methods* (pp. 257 – 262). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Kovach, M. (2009). Creating Indigenous research frameworks. In M. Kovach, *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts* (pp 39 –54). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Potts, K., & Brown, L. (2015). Becoming an anti-oppressive researcher. In L. Brown, & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance* (pp. 20-38). Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Rai, L., & Lillis, T. (2013). 'Getting it write' in social work: Exploring the value of writing in academia to writing for professional practice. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18 (4), 352-364.
- Revire, R.(2001). Toward an Afrocentric Research Methodology. *Journal of Black Studies*, 31(6), 709-728.
- Waddell, M. C., Herron, V. R., Gobeil, J., Tacan, F., De Jager, M., Allan, A. J., & Roger, K. (2020). Grounded in culture: Reflections on sitting outside the circle in community- based research with Indigenous men. *Qualitative Health Research*, 30(4). 2343-2350.

Learners will be able to access the textbook and listed readings via the Ucalgary library (<https://library.ucalgary.ca/>). They will participate in inquiry-based learning activities that involve literature search and critical assessment of peer-reviewed articles. The list of recommended readings, posted on D2L, will also support learners to their understanding of the course contents.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

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

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

SOWK 302 is one of the four foundation theme courses in the BSW Learning Circles Program. There are no pre-requisites required for this course. It is usually completed concurrently with Social Work 303: Practice with Individuals in Context.

CLASS SCHEDULE

As a VLC course, learners will progress through the various learning modules that contain asynchronous (education at a learner's pace) and synchronous (education in real-time, i.e. live Zoom sessions) learning activities. The learning activities aim to promote inquiry-based learning and dialogues with instructors

and co-learners. The inquiry-based learning approach honours learners' diverse ways of knowing, as well as their abilities to reflect on their lived experiences, to generate knowledge, and to critically reflect on social work research.

Please note important dates for Winter 2021: Fee Deadline (January 22); Winter Break (February 14 - 20); Easter Holidays (April 2 and 5).

Dates	Topic/Module/ Required Readings	Synchronous Zoom Session	Assignments Due
January 12	General Orientation	January 12	
January 12 – January 22	Module 1: Knowledge Generation in Contexts <u>Readings</u> Heron & Reason (1997) Reid et al. (2006), Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5	January 19	
January 23 – February 2	Module 2: Indigenous, Feminist and Participatory Research Perspectives <u>Readings</u> Brooks & Hesse-Bieber (2007) Collins (2015) Ginn & Kulig (2015). Kovach (2009) Pott & Brown (2015) Reviere (2001) Reid et al. (2006), Chapter 2 Waddell et al. (2020)	January 26	Assignment 1 due January 25, 11:59MT
February 3 – February 13	Module 3: Quantitative Research Methods <u>Readings</u> Reid et al. (2006), Chapters 6, 7, 8	February 9	Assignment 2 (midterm) due February 8, by 11:59MT
February 21 – March 3	Module 4: Quantitative Methods Analysis <u>Readings</u>	February 23	

	Reid et al. (2006), Chapter 9 D'Cruz & Jones (2004)		
March 4 – March 14	Module 5: Qualitative Research Methods <u>Readings</u> Reid et al. (2006), Chapters 6, 7, 8	March 9	Assignment 3 due March 15, by 11:59MT
March 15 – March 25	Module 6: Qualitative Research Analysis <u>Readings</u> Reid et al. (2006), Chapter 9	March 23	Assignment 2 (final) due March 29, by 11:59MT
March 26 – April 9	Module 7: Research Communication and Knowledge Dissemination <u>Readings</u> Reid et al. (2006), Chapter 10 Rai & Lillis (2013)	April 6	
April 10 – April 15	Module 8: Summary	April 13	Assignment 4 due April 12, by 11:59MT

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Faculty of Social Work acknowledges the inequities experienced by racialized people, Indigenous people, and other marginalized populations. We aim to foster an environment that recognizes and celebrates diverse perspectives. Therefore, we are committed to eradicating all forms of injustices based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, religion, and disability.

GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS IN ONLINE CLASSES

Learners are expected to participate actively in all Zoom sessions. If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Unless requested otherwise, learners are required to turn on their webcams throughout the Zoom sessions. All learners are expected to behave in a professional manner during the session.

MEDIA RECORDING FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of learners. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during

the course. These recordings will be used for learning assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

ZOOM RECORDINGS OF ONLINE CLASSES

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for learners who miss a session. Learners will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1: Competing TCPS CORE Ethics Tutorial (5%) Due Date: January 25

Aligned Course Outcomes: 1, 3

Description: [The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans \(TCPS\)](#) is a joint policy of Canada’s three federal research agencies, namely the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The agencies require researchers to address ethical issues that arise in the course of research involving humans.

Learners will complete the online tutorial on research ethics, TCPS 2 CORE, which can be accessed at: <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome>. The tutorial takes approximately three hours to complete, though more time might be required for learners who wish to thoroughly peruse supplementary materials. Upon completion of the tutorial, each learner will be immediately awarded a completion certificate by the Panel on Research Ethics.

By the due date for this assignment, learners will submit their certificates of completion to the instructor via the SOWK 302 Dropbox in D2L and receive full marks. Those who fail to submit their certificates on the due date (by 11:59PM) will receive a zero for this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 2: Situating Self in Research (20%) Due Date: February 8 (1st Post) and March 29 (2nd Post)

Aligned Course Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4

Description: This individually written assignment will support learners to continually engage in self-reflexivity throughout the course. Learners will reflect on how their worldviews, beliefs, assumptions, social locations and related life experiences have guided their understandings of research and ethics. Learners will write two posts (one post at the midterm, and one post towards the end of the semester) to reflect on specific guiding questions. They will be expected to draw on and to integrate the readings and learning activities throughout this course, as well as the relevant materials from other courses. Learners will be responsible for editing and proofreading their own posts. While learners can maintain a personal tone, they will use proper APA formatting for citations. Each post will be between 750-1000 words (excluding references).

The detailed instruction for each reflective post, along with the grading criteria, will be posted on D2L. Assignment 1 will be submitted onto Dropbox via the D2L site.

ASSIGNMENT 3: Conducting a Literature Review (30%)

Due Date: March 15

Aligned Course Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Description: A literature review offers both a descriptive summary and critical assessment of research on a previously studied topic. It can be as comprehensive as a systematic review (<https://library.ucalgary.ca/c.php?g=255369&p=2995699>), or shorter in scope and resources (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x>). A literature review informs an audience of the existing knowledge about a topic, field, and/or area of interest by summarizing, comparing, contrasting, and connecting findings and themes documented in the current scholarly and grey literature. It sets the context for a research study, points out the gap(s) in the existing knowledge, and often justifies the formation of a research question.

For this assignment, learners will complete a preliminary literature review on a topic of their choosing. This assignment will serve as the starting point for the final assignment (creating a research proposal). Learners will include at least seven journal articles on their topic of interest, and a seven-page literature review on the articles selected (page limit excludes references). A submitted literature review should include the following sections:

1. An introduction of the topic, along with a rationale for selecting the topic and the guiding questions for inquiry;
2. Search strategy;
3. A descriptive annotation of the selected publications; and
4. A critical assessment of research approaches, findings and gaps among the selected publications.

To help guide this assignment, learners are welcome to engage in the following steps:

1. Choose a social work topic;
2. Develop a rationale on how and why you have developed your interest in the topic;
3. Formulate an inquiry question that specifically describes what you would like to know about your topic;
4. Use the U of C library to search for and locate journals that include your topic's information;
5. Find articles, read the abstracts and skim the articles to determine if they correspond well to your topic AND inquiry question;
6. Follow steps of a rapid literature review: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2914085/>. You may want to consider the following questions: How did the scholar(s) describe the methodology? Was it clear from the description how the methodology was implemented? What are the strengths of the methodology used in the study? What are the limitations of the methodology used in the study? How did the author(s) address the validity of the findings?;
7. Select at least 7 relevant journal articles that will inform your literature review;
8. Organize your articles by sorting and classifying their findings in a meaningful way, always considering your original topic and inquiry question. To help organize your thoughts, you may write a brief introduction to your subject of interest and research question; brief overview of your search strategy, including search terms and databases searched; critical annotations of 7 peer-reviewed publications that address your research question; and
9. Identify gaps of the literature review.

Detailed instruction for this assignment, along with the grading criteria, will be posted on D2L. Assignment 3 will be submitted onto Dropbox via the D2L site.

ASSIGNMENT 4: Developing a Research Proposal (45%)
Due Date: April 12

Aligned Course Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Description: Building on their work from Assignments 1, 2 and 3, learners will develop a research proposal (eight to 10 pages, excluding references). They will submit Assignment 4 onto Dropbox via the D2L site. According to Reitsma-Street (2003), a research proposal is a “statement of intent to look into a phenomenon and a plan about how to conduct the search” (p. 1). It is a thoughtful, feasible plan that promotes curiosity and quality scholarship. Learners will address the following elements in their research proposals:

1. **Research Question and Rationale:** When writing your research question, consider the various contexts and the specific knowledge gap within your topic area. What would be the potential contributions of your research to the existing literature, social work practice and solutions to community issues?
2. **Theoretical Orientation:** What is your ontological and epistemological foundation? What theories have guided your thinking about your research and informed the development of your research question and research design?
3. **Research Design:** What is your chosen research methodology (i.e. quantitative, qualitative, mixed)? What are your methods for data collection and data analysis? What are the potential strengths and limitations in your research design?
4. **Ethical consideration:** What are the potential ethical issues in your proposed research? How will you address the identified ethical issues?
5. **Knowledge dissemination and mobilization:** How will you share your research findings? How will you ensure that your research will be used to inform changes in practice, programs, services and policies ?

The detailed instruction for the research proposal, along with the grading criteria, will be posted on D2L. Assignment 4 will be submitted onto Dropbox via the D2L site.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Learners are expected to attend classes regularly and to actively engaged in all learning activities and discussions.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all assignments electronically through their respective Dropbox folders in D2L. Assignments may be submitted in Word or PDF format. An assignment should have a file name as follows: “Full name and assignment number” (e.g., Jane Smith Assignment 2). Assignments will be submitted by 11:59 pm on their due dates.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignments and papers are to be submitted on time, absolutely **NO extensions**, unless legitimate reasons are provided. Learners are responsible for notifying the instructor about legitimate reasons and to discuss extensions. Extensions to assignments deadlines will be the discretion of the instructor.

- Late assignments will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor.
- Late assignments will be **downgraded by one full mark (-1)** of the assignment grade **per day** including weekends, holidays and study weekdays.
- There is a **seven-day** maximum limit by which to accept late assignments where students have not asked for extension. No assignments will be accepted beyond this seven-day limit.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

All assignments will be assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only the mechanics of writing (e.g., grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented and referenced in APA 7th edition format. If you need writing support, please connect with the Student Success Centre, at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

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.

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.

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 at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/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://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/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 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/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

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
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (Calgary)
- Safewalk (Calgary)