



<b>Course &amp; Session Number</b>	SOWK 672.S01	<b>Classroom</b>	Online
<b>Course Name</b>	Thesis Research Development		
<b>Dates and Time</b>	Start of Classes: January 9 End of Classes: April 3 Synchronous Zoom sessions: Mondays 5:00-7:50 PM except Feb 20 Add/Drop/Withdrawal Dates: Please refer to the course-specific deadline in your <a href="#">Student Centre</a> <sup>1</sup> .		
<b>Instructor</b>	Peter Gabor PhD RSW	<b>Office Hours</b>	Request by email
<b>UCalgary E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:gabor@ucalgary.ca">gabor@ucalgary.ca</a>	<b>UCalgary Phone</b>	403-329-2386

**OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, RACIAL JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DECOLONIZATION**

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW), University of Calgary (UCalgary), is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, racial justice, diversity, inclusion and decolonization. We affirm that diversity and uniqueness are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and community connections. We aim to foster an inclusive, thriving and equitable environment for our students, non-academic and academic staff, and community members. We take the stand that [equity](#) does not mean sameness in treatment of people, but rather requires measures and accommodations for diverse life experiences and circumstances to ensure that no one of a particular social group is disadvantaged, underrepresented or overlooked in all aspects of our work. We intend to address systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations, particularly for those who are members of racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, persons with disabilities, migrant groups (including refugees and immigrants), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, linguistic minorities as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, political, and/or cultural barriers to their education and employment. We also recognize, honour, and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, ways of knowing and doing, experiences, and strengths. An anti-oppressive lens, particularly intersectional, anti-colonial, anti-racist and decolonizing frameworks, will inform our work.

Please refer to our full statement of [Our Commitment to Equity, Racial Justice, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization](#), the work of the faculty's [Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#), and the university's [Indigenous Strategy](#).

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<sup>1</sup> In the Enrolled Courses table, under Deadlines, click on the Calendar icon by each course and the deadlines will appear.

## SYLLABUS STATEMENT

The course builds skills for social work thesis research development, including determining key components of the research process, such as integration of a substantive topic and corresponding research approach.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on thesis research development at the Master's level. The course is practical and targeted to students' advancement of their thesis research proposal. Students will learn about, and integrate, key components of a Master's thesis and process elements of the Master's thesis journey. This includes the development of the purpose statement, research question(s), research design (including recruitment, data collection and data analysis), ethics, credibility, and knowledge mobilization related to the student's research topic. This course will build on the philosophical and theoretical foundation developed in SOWK 670. It will also explore selecting and engaging with a supervisor, submitting the thesis proposal, submitting an ethics application, and preparing for defense. Successful completion of SOWK 670 is a prerequisite.

While Mondays 5:00 - 7:50 PM is scheduled for Zoom sessions, the format of the class may include individual and small group work away from the main class. The format of each class will be announced the week prior to the class.

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of key components of a thesis proposal;
2. Critically analyze options for how to approach the design of their thesis research;
3. Integrate their philosophical and theoretical stance with methodological decisions;
4. Advance their ability to critically reflect upon, justify and defend the methodological choices for each element of their research proposal; and
5. Apply their learnings to their research topic in the form of a research proposal.

## LEARNING RESOURCES

### 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](https://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw_code_of_ethics.pdf)

Canadian Association of Social Workers. (2005). *Guidelines for ethical practice*. [https://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw\\_guidelines\\_for\\_ethical\\_practice\\_e.pdf](https://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw_guidelines_for_ethical_practice_e.pdf)

First Nations Information Governance Centre (2014). *Understanding the First Nations Principles of OCAP*. <https://fnigc.inilibro.net/cgi-bin/koha/opac-retrieve-file.pl?id=2be8f15f2eff14b1f122b6a26023836a>

Government of Canada. (2018). *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical conduct for research involving humans*.  
[https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique\\_tcps2-eptc2\\_2018.html](https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2018.html)

**LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

A D2L site is set up for this course which contains 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**

This course draws upon content and learnings from core courses in the MSW, specifically SOWK 602 and SOWK 670. This course is the second of two required thesis research courses.

**CLASS SCHEDULE** (subject to modifications, depending on progress of class participants)

Date	Topic	Assignment due dates
Monday, Jan 9 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preview of course and review of the course outline</li> <li>• Overview of the thesis process &amp; proposal development</li> </ul>	
Monday, Jan 16 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of the study: Topic, literature, study rationale, purpose and research question, theoretical orientation</li> <li>• Selecting a specific approach to the research/inquiry</li> </ul>	
Monday, Jan 23 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations</li> <li>• 15 min presentation followed by 15 min discussion and workshopping ideas to refine and further develop your research approach</li> </ul>	
Monday, Jan 30 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations</li> <li>• 15 min presentation followed by 15 min discussion and workshopping ideas to refine and further develop your research approach</li> </ul>	
Monday, Feb 6 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations</li> <li>• 15 min presentation followed by 15 min discussion and workshopping ideas to refine and further develop your research approach</li> </ul>	
Monday, Feb 13 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sampling and recruitment of participants</li> </ul>	Assignment 1: research approach

Monday, Feb 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter Break – no class or course activities</li> </ul>	
Monday, Feb 27 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data plan (data required, instruments/protocols, collection)</li> </ul>	
Monday, Mar 6 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans for analysis</li> <li>• Establishing credibility/trustworthiness</li> </ul>	Assignment 3a: Submit CORE Certificate
Monday, Mar 13 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting methods together (workshopping your ideas)</li> </ul>	
Monday, Mar 20 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting methods together (workshopping your ideas)</li> </ul>	
Monday, Mar 27 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethical issues</li> </ul>	Assignment 2: Methodology
Monday, Apr 3 Zoom 5:00-7:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating elements of the research proposal</li> </ul>	Assignment 3b: Ethics paper
Friday, Apr 14	No class	Assignment 4: Draft proposal

## ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

### **GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS IN ONLINE CLASSES**

Students 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) for your best learning experience. 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 advised (or agreed) otherwise by their instructors, video cameras should be turned on during class and students are expected to manage their microphones as required. All students are expected to behave in a professional manner during all Zoom sessions.

### **ZOOM RECORDINGS OF ONLINE CLASSES**

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students 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	Due Date	Weight
<b>1: Research approach</b>	Describe your selected approach. Explain how your chosen approach is the best fit to fulfill the purpose of the study and answer the research question(s) posed. Building on the work of Assignment 4 in SOWK 670, show how the approach connects to your worldview and theoretical perspective. Present your ideas in class (30-minute workshopping session) and then submit a 4-6 page paper which integrates feedback from the session.	Present in class on Jan 23, 30, Feb 6, as assigned.  Paper due no later than Feb 13	30%
<b>2: Methodology</b>	In a 4-6 page paper, describe the main methodological choices in your study: sampling and recruitment of participants; data required, data collection tools and methods; approach to analysis; and establishing credibility/trustworthiness	March 27	35%
<b>3: Ethical issues</b>	(a) Complete the <a href="#">CORE course</a> on ethics and submit your certificate no later than March 15. <a href="#">The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2)</a> provides ethics guidance that applies to all research involving human participants. The online tutorial CORE-2022 (Course on Research Ethics) is an introduction to the TCPS 2 for the research community. It focuses on the TCPS 2 ethics guidance that is applicable to all research involving human participants, regardless of discipline or methodology.  (b) Write a 2-5 page paper, identifying ethical issues in your proposed research and show how these will be managed.	March 6 (certificate)  April 3 (paper)	25%
<b>4: Proposal</b>	Complete a draft of your proposal by inserting all the sections prepared in SOWK 670 and 672. This assignment will be graded for completeness and should be in a form that can be submitted to your thesis supervisor for feedback.	April 14	10%

## ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS**

As this is a graduate seminar class, students are expected to be fully present and engaged in all class sessions, activities, and discussions. If you have to miss a class, contact the instructor for information on possible make-up options.

### **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS**

Please submit all assignments electronically through Dropbox in D2L. Assignments should be submitted in Word format; if not possible, PDF will be accepted. Assignments should have a file name as follows: *Lastname\_Assignmentnumber* (e.g., Abebe\_Assignment3). Assignments are due by 11:59pm on their due date. Please ensure that the proper version of the assignment file is submitted and keep a copy of each assignment just in case.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late assignments will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor but may be subject to a grade reduction. If you cannot submit an assignment on time, please contact the instructor as soon as you become aware of the circumstances that prevent you from making an on-time submission.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING**

Assignments should represent your best effort and should be clearly written, well organized, and free of grammatical, spelling, and typing errors. Follow APA7 for format and style as well as for citations and references. A good resource for APA7 style is found [here](#). Writing and presentation will be a part of the assessment of each assignment. If you need writing support, please connect with the [Student Success Centre](#).

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, **written expressly by the student for this course. However, as the objective in this course is to build a thesis proposal, students are encouraged to build on previous work from this and other courses and may use such work within assignments in this course.** Students are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the [University Calendar](#).

## GRADING

The final grade for the course is the sum of the separate graded components. It is not necessary to pass each component separately to pass the course. The University of Calgary [Graduate Grading System](#) and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L. Grades may be rounded up at the discretion of the instructor—rounding is not automatic but is based on overall performance in the course. A+ grades are not automatic but will be awarded for **truly outstanding performance in the course**, as determined by the instructor.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage
A+	4.0	Outstanding	95-100
A	4.0	Excellent – superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter	95-100
A-	3.7	Very Good Performance	90-94
B+	3.3	Good Performance	85:00-7:509
B	3.0	Satisfactory performance. <b>Note:</b> The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable <b>average</b> that a graduate student must maintain throughout the programme as computed at the end of each year of their program.	80-84
B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in Graduate Studies. <b>Note:</b> Students who accumulate two grades of “B-” or lower can be required by the Faculty to withdraw from the programme regardless of the grade point average.	75-79
C+	2.3	All grades below “B-” are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted towards Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.	70-74
C	2.00		65-69
C-	1.70		60-64
D+	1.30		55-59
D	1.00		50-54
F	0.00		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. As well, around the middle of the course, we will take some time as a group to reflect on how the course is going. Course participants are also encouraged to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

## ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

**These texts are useful resources for this course and for the thesis process.**

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.) Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.) Sage

## 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's [Code of Conduct](#).

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).

### 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. 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. Please refer to the full policy on [Student Accommodations](#).

### 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](#) before beginning the assignment.

### Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please refer to the [Integrity and Conduct](#) section in the University of Calgary Calendar.

### 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 who use materials protected by copyright are expected to comply with the University of Calgary policy on [Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright](#) and requirements of the [Copyright Act](#) 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 and Gender-based 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.

### **Other Important Information**

Please visit the [Registrar's website](#) 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