



Course & Session Number	SOWK 355 S06	Classroom	D610
Course Name	Research in Context		
Dates and Time	Start of Classes: September 5 th End of Classes: December 5 th Dates and Time: Tuesdays 1:00 pm to 3:50 pm Add/Drop/Withdrawal Dates: Please refer to the course-specific deadline in your Student Centre ¹ .		
Instructor	Dr. William Pelech, PhD RSW Carly-Ann Haney, PhD(c) RSW	Office Hours	By appointment
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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.

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

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

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will be introduced to the core concepts of social work research through a variety of learning activities such as presentations, assigned readings, discussion, exercises, and assignments. Learning will occur in person, where students complete learning activities on their own or in teams. Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:50 pm are scheduled for classes in this course. Typically, two hours of scheduled classes will be focused on classroom-based instruction and the third hour will involve students working in their research teams.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learning objectives for this course include to:

1. have a beginning understanding of various knowledge-building paradigms including the scientific method, Indigenous ways of knowing, and feminist and participatory methods (PLO 6.1a, 6.2);
2. have an awareness of ethical issues in research (PLO 2.1);
3. understand the place of research in social work including the practice-research link (PLO 6.2, 10.4);
4. be prepared to apply social work knowledge, as well as knowledge from other disciplines, to advance professional practice, policy development, research, and service provision (PLO 6.1, 6.2);
5. have knowledge of culturally and geographically relevant research methodologies (PLO 4.1, 6.3);
6. understand how research can identify negative or inequitable policies and also bring to light the implications and outcomes of policies, especially for disadvantaged and oppressed groups (PLO 7.2); and,
7. be familiar with the basic concepts and vocabulary involved in research (PLO 6.1, 10.4).

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND/OR READINGS

DeCarlo, M. (2018) *Scientific Inquiry in Social Work*.
This is an open source book available for free download at
<https://scientificinquiryinsocialwork.pressbooks.com/>

(Scientific Inquiry in Social Work is © 2018 by Matthew DeCarlo and is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License (of policies <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

Leavy, P. (2017). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based and community-based participatory research approaches*. (Chapters 1 and 2) The Guilford Press.

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

Full-text version available for on the **SOWK 355 D2L site**.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Coups, E. (2011). *Statistics for the behavioural and social sciences: A brief course*. Pearson.

Bastien, B. (2004). *Blackfoot ways of knowing*. University of Calgary Press.

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (2013). *Measures for clinical practice: A sourcebook*. (5th. ed). The Free Press.

Grinnell, R. M., Jr., Gabor, P. & Unrau, Y. (2019). *Program Evaluation for social work: Foundations of evidence-based programs* (8th ed). Oxford University Press.

Grinnell, R. M., Jr., Williams, M. & Unrau, Y. (Eds). (2019). *Research methods for Social Workers: An introduction* (12th ed.). Pair Bond.

Leavy, P. (2017). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based and community-based participatory research approaches*. The Guilford Press.

Neuman, W. L., & Robson, K. (2015). *Social work research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed.). Pearson.

Strega, S. & Brown, L. (Eds.). (2015). *Research as resistance*. (2nd ed.). Canadian Scholars.

Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed Books.

University of Calgary. (2018). *Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board information page*.

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/cfieb>

Weinbach, R. W. & Grinnell, R. M. (2015). *Statistics for Social Workers* (9th ed). Pearson.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

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

The profession of social work is built upon a unique knowledge base, which allows its members to practice in an evidence-informed manner. It is thus critical for social workers to understand how that knowledge base is built and to learn to access, understand, evaluate, and use resources from the knowledge base. As such, this course is relevant to all other courses in the curriculum.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Important Dates for Fall 2023

- Start of Term: Monday, August 28, 2023
- First Day of Class: Tuesday, September 5, 2023
- End of Term: Friday, December 22, 2023
- Last Day of Class: Wednesday, December 6, 2023
- Fee Deadline: Friday, September 22, 2023
- Labour Day, no classes: Monday, September 4, 2023
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, no classes: Saturday, September 30, 2023
- Thanksgiving Day, no classes: Monday, October 9, 2023
- Remembrance Day, no classes: Saturday, November 11, 2023 (observed Monday, November 13)

Dates	Module: Topics & Instructors	Readings	Assignment
Sept 5	Introduction & epistemology & knowledge building paradigms; our knowledge base	DeCarlo Chapters 1 & 2	Forming Research Teams
Sept 12	Types of research; research process & questions Guest speaker: Indigenous paradigm(s)	DeCarlo Chapters 6, 7, & 8	
Sept 19	Evaluating research literature and research ethics	DeCarlo Chapters 3, 4, & 5	
Sept 26	Quantitative methods: Research designs	DeCarlo Chapter 12	Assignment 1: Research Intent (topic, questions & standpoints)
Oct 3	Quantitative methods: Selecting participants	DeCarlo Chapter 10	
Oct 10	Quantitative methods: Measurement and data collection instruments	DeCarlo Chapters 9 & 11	Assignment 2a: Annotated Bibliography
Oct 17	Quantitative methods: Data collection & analysis	DeCarlo Chapter 11	
Oct 24	Arts-based research and Community-based participatory research	Leavy Chapter 1 and 2	
Oct 31	Qualitative methods: Methodology and research design	Creswell & Poth, 2018, Chapter 4	Assignment 2b: Critical Appraisal-Quantitative
Nov 7	Qualitative methods: Data collection	DeCarlo Chapter 13	
Nov 14	Term Break – No Class		
Nov 21	Qualitative methods: Data collection & analysis	DeCarlo Chapter 14	Assignment 2c: Critical Appraisal-Qualitative
Nov 28	Research for social justice panel	DeCarlo Chapter 15	Assignment 3: Research Presentations

Dec 5	Summary and integration Course evaluation	DeCarlo Chapter 16	Assignment 3: Research Presentations
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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 experiences. 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.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

Social work research is often a collaborative activity involving several researchers and a variety of stakeholders. The ethical obligations of research require that research is purposeful and beneficial. Consequently, in this course, students will be asked to form research teams of 3 or 4 students to collaborate in the development of two research proposals: a qualitative proposal and a quantitative proposal. These proposals will be presented at the end of the term. Assignments in this course have been sequenced to culminate in this proposal presentation. Students will be provided time in class for this research collaboration in small teams.

1. **Statement of Research Intent (10%) -Due: September 26th 2023 at 11:59 pm**

Aligned Course learning Objectives: 1, 3, and 7

Assignment Description:

This assignment provides an opportunity for students to propose a tentative research topic of interest (and of relevance to social work practice). Each research team is asked to generate a statement which outlines the following:

- Topic-a potential topic of mutual interest and the importance of this topic;
- Standpoint-each team member will outline their research standpoint in relation to this topic; and
- Tentative Research Questions-outline two research questions- one question that is conducive to qualitative inquiry and one that is conducive to quantitative inquiry.

Length: maximum 3 to 4 double-spaced pages, not including title or reference pages

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

Submission: SOWK 355 Dropbox site

Assessment Criteria: Rubrics and further details will be posted on the SOWK 355 D2L site.

2. **Critical Appraisal of Related Research Literature**

a. Annotated Bibliography (10%) – Due: October 10th 2023 at 11:59 pm

Aligned Course learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7

Assignment Description:

Each research team is asked to conduct a search of the research literature related to their research team's stated topic of interest and prepare an annotated bibliography of at least 10 peer-reviewed articles to support the development of their research proposals. The bibliography must include articles which utilize qualitative and quantitative methods.

Consider the following points to prepare an annotated bibliography:

- Search criteria utilized for the annotated bibliography
- List the state research objectives and questions
- Describe the research methods
- Summarize significant findings
- Include recent peer-reviewed research papers (2011-2021)
- Use APA 7th reference style

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

Submission: SOWK 355 Dropbox site

Assessment Criteria:

Assessment will be based on the relevance of identified peer review research papers to the topic of discussion, search criteria, presentation of research objectives, questions, and methods, and correct use of referencing style. See SOWK 355 D2L site for additional information including a grading rubric.

b. Critical Appraisal of a Quantitative Research Article (25%)-Due: October 31st, 2023, at 11:59 pm

Aligned Course learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7

Assignment Description:

Each member of each research team is asked to select one article from their team's annotated bibliography which utilizes quantitative methods and prepare a brief critical analysis of this article.

Length: maximum 4 to 5 double-spaced pages, not including title or reference pages

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

Submission: SOWK 355 Dropbox site

Assessment Criteria:

See SOWK 355 D2L site for additional information including a grading rubric.

c. Critical Appraisal of a Qualitative Research Article (25%)- Due: November 21st, 2023, at 11:59 pm

Aligned Course learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7

Assignment Description:

Each member of each research team is asked to select one article from their team's annotated bibliography which utilizes qualitative methods and prepare a brief critical analysis of this article.

Length: maximum 4 to 5 double-spaced pages, not including title or reference pages

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

Submission: SOWK 355 Dropbox site

Assessment Criteria:

See SOWK 355 D2L site for additional information including a grading rubric.

3. Research Proposal Presentations (30%)- Due: In class on November 28th & December 5th 2023 (in-class)

Aligned Course learning Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7

Assignment Description:

Each research team is asked to prepare a proposal that will be presented on the final day of this course, which will answer one or two research questions utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods.

Using the outline provided below, provide a proposal for conducting research to answer the research question(s). Be sure to provide a description and rationale for each of the following:

- Describe the population you are interested in knowing more about;
- Indicate the sampling approach that you will use to enrol participants;
- Describe the data collection instrument;
- Describe the data collection approach;
- Describe the research design;
- Explain the advantages/disadvantages of your methods;
- Identify any ethical, cultural or diversity issues or challenges in the proposed research; and
- Identify the impact your proposed research will have and how it will further social justice.

Length: Each presentation will not exceed 20 minutes, including 5 minutes for questions and discussion.

Rubrics and further details will be provided on the SOWK 355 D2L site.

Submission: in-class presentation. Presenter slides must also be submitted via D2L dropbox.

Assessment Criteria:

The grade for this assignment will be made up of two components.

- Instructor grade: 20% based upon the following criteria:
- Student Participation Self-grade: (10%)- distributed by group members (focusing on each member's overall contributions to the development and implementation of the research team proposal presentation. Each team member must complete a research team grading form.

See SOWK 355 D2L site for additional information including a grading rubric.

Submission: SOWK 355 Dropbox site

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

Further details, including rubrics, regarding graded components will be provided in class and on the SOWK 355 D2L site.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

With the exception of the final research presentation, please submit all other assignments electronically through Dropbox in D2L. Assignments must be submitted in Word format and include your name in the file name. Assignments should have a file name as follows: "Lastname,Lastname,Lastname_Assignmentnumber" (e.g., AbebeSanchezEdwards_Assignment2). 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 and may be penalized with a grade reduction. If you cannot submit an assignment on time, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

Assignments should represent your best effort. They 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](#) at the University of Calgary. The [University of Lethbridge Writing Centre](#) is also available to Lethbridge-based students. It is located in the Library and provides individual consultations with trained academic writing instructors and tutors. There is no charge for this instruction, and the Writing Centre can assist students at all stages of the writing process.

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. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L.

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. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding performance	95-100
A	4.0	Excellent performance	85-94
A-	3.7	Approaching excellent performance	80-84
B+	3.3	Exceeding good performance	77-79
B	3.0	Good performance	73-76
B-	2.7	Approaching good performance	70-72
C+	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance	67-69
C	2.00	Satisfactory performance	63-66
C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	60-62
D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	57-59
D	1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.	50-56
F	0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	Below 50
CG		Credit Granted. Not included in the GPA calculation. See section F.1.3 for additional detail.	
CR		Completed Requirements. Carries no weight in calculating the grade point average. This will be noted in the calendar description as “Not Included in GPA” where applicable.	

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. A formative evaluation will be conducted midway through the course. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

Where appropriate, specific suggestions for additional readings will be provided at various points in the course.

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
- Emergency Evacuation/ Assembly Points
- Safewalk