



Winter 2019

Course Number: SOWK 655B S01	Classroom: PF 4267
Course Name: Thesis Research	
Day & Time: Monday 5-8 pm (January 14 – April 15)	

Instructors: Dr. Christine Walsh & Dr. Angelique Jenney	Office Hours: By appointment
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COURSE OUTLINE

Syllabus Statement

An introduction to preparing a thesis proposal.

Course Description

A concluding course offered as final component of student course work. This course allows MSW thesis students and the instructor to engage in a series of research colloquia, thereby facilitating critical analysis, feedback and synthesis of materials covered, and skills learned in other course work. This process will help students to develop conceptual and methodological skills.

This course will be offered in form of lectures and discussion sessions in which students are encouraged to participate to discuss issues and concerns related to advanced social work research. In this course, students will also develop their preliminary thesis proposals and ethics applications.

Learning Objectives

1. Students should be able to explain the implications and importance of their own research topic to social work.
2. Students should be able to identify the rationales and objectives of their objectives of their proposed research project.
3. Students should be able to acquire the skills of conducting a literature review.
4. Students should be able to identify the use of appropriate data collection methodologies related to their research topic.
5. Students should be able to point out the limitations and benefits of the research methods adopted for their research project.
6. Students should be able to complete an initial draft of their research proposal.
7. Students should be able to identify ethical issues relevant to their proposed research and specify procedures to deal with these.

This course outline is designed to reflect and adhere to the following MSW Program Level Outcomes (PLO) as outlined by the CASWE Core Learning Objectives for Accreditation Standards as well as the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary.

1. Professional Identity: Acquire the ability for self-reflection as it relates to engaging in professional practice through a comprehensive understanding and consciousness of the complex nature of their own social locations and identities.
2. Values and Ethics in Professional Practice: Demonstrate skills to monitor and evaluate their own behaviours in relation to the relevant code of ethics.
3. Promote Human Rights and Social Justice: Understand their professional role in advancing human rights and responsibilities and social justice in the context of the Canadian society and internationally.
4. Diversity: Recognize diversity and identify how differences act as a crucial and valuable part of living in a society.
5. Critical Thinking in Professional Practice: Demonstrate critical thinking and reasoning in analyzing complex social situations to make professional judgements.
6. Critical Thinking in Professional Practice: Apply knowledge of a variety of social work theories and perspectives to critically analyze professional and institutional practices.
7. Research: Acquire knowledge and skills in conducting social work research and competence in evaluating professional practices.
8. Research: Critique, apply, and/or participated in elements of social work research.
9. Research: Apply social work knowledge and other ways of knowing (including but not limited to Indigenous knowledge) from other disciplines, to advance professional practice, policy development, research and service provision.

Relationship to Other Courses

As a required course for MSW thesis students, SOWK655 will provide students with an opportunity to synthesize the theoretical and research knowledge they have received throughout the MSW Program.

Course Text(s)

Given the diverse topics and methods of student dissertation projects, it is almost impossible to select a single research text that will provide adequate guidance for all students.

Heppner, P., & Heppner, M. (2004). *Writing and publishing your thesis, dissertation and research: A guide for students in the helping professions*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Books/Cole.

Locke, L., Silverman, S., & Spirduso, W. (2014). *Proposals that work: A guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

A list of required journal articles will be listed in the class schedule for students to download

Class Schedule

Course content will be presented through active class discussion (instructors and student-led) and guest speaker presentations from upper year PhD students. Throughout these opportunities students will be expected to attend class and participate fully. As in any course, the quality of the learning experience depends upon student involvement and direction. Students are encouraged to work together in this course – both in class and outside of scheduled class time. Support from peers (intellectual, social and emotional) is an important part of the doctoral journey. As this is an evening class, snacks or potluck suppers may become part of the class experience.

Class	Description & Readings
Class 1 – January 14, 2019	Introductions Review of course outline What is a dissertation/thesis proposal? Required Readings: Anastas & Kuerbis (2009) GADE Quality Guidelines (2008)
Class 2 – January 21, 2019	Developing Your Research Proposal – Part 1 What is a thesis proposal? Required Readings: Heppner & Heppner (Chapters 2, 4) Locke et al. (Chapters 1, 3)
Class 3 – January 28, 2019	PhD students only Portfolio– MSW students only Developing Your Research Proposal Part 2 See above
Class 4 – February 4, 2019	Literature Review: Constructing your Literature Review Part 1 Required Readings: Heppner & Heppner (Chapter 4) Locke et al. (Chapter 4)
Class 5 – February 11, 2019	Literature Review: Constructing your Literature Review Part 2 Required Readings: See above
February 18, 2019	Reading Week: No Class
Class 6 – February 25, 2019	The Focus on Methodology and Methods – Part 1 Required Readings: Heppner & Heppner (Chapters 12, 13) Locke et al. (Chapter 4)
Class 7 – February 28, 2019	The Focus on Methodology and Methods – Part 2 Required Readings: See above
Class 8 – March 4, 2019	The Focus on Impact/Significance
Class 9 – March 18, 2019	No class, preparation of proposal. Individual consultations as needed.

Class 10 – March 25, 2019	Proposal Presentations – PhD 2, MSW 1
Class 11 – April 1, 2019	Proposal Presentations – PhD 2, MSW 1
Class 12 – April 8, 2019	Final Class Wrap-up

Assignments

There are four assignments in this course. Each must be completed to pass the course. All written assignments must follow APA (6th ed.) style.

Assignment 1 – Ethics Review

Aligns with Course Learning Objectives 1 - 7 and Program Learning Objective 2

This assignment provides students the opportunity to review the ethics related to Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans by completing the CORE Tutorial

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/tcps2-core-tutorial>

Due Date: ongoing, Final Submission Date: April 15, 2019
Value: 5%

Assignment 2 – Detailed Outline of MSW Research Proposal

Aligns with Course Learning Objectives 1 - 5 and Program Learning Objectives 5 - 8

A detailed outline of your thesis is required. The document should include content informing the reader of your introduction rationale for your chosen topic, literature review and methodology including methods.

Due Date: March 4, 2019
Value: 15%

Assignment 3 – Research Proposal Presentation

Aligns with Course Learning Objectives 1- 7 and Program Learning Objectives 1 - 9

Each student will be given 30 minutes to present his/her proposal. The presenter will then lead a discussion on various aspects of the proposal. The entire class will be expected to read each proposal and to participate in the class discussion. You must provide a draft proposal at least seven days prior to the date of your scheduled presentation. Two of your peers will serve as the primary reviewers of your proposal and will lead the discussion related to your work.

Presentation: March 25 or April 1, 2019
Value: 30%

Assignment 3 – Thesis Research Proposal

Aligns with Course Learning Objectives 1 - 7 and Program Learning Objectives 5 - 9

This assignment will provide students with the experience of preparing their preliminary dissertation research proposal. Students are expected to submit a complete research proposal on a research topic of their choice that includes all the components discussed in class. Students should make explicit linkages between the research objectives, research perspectives chosen, and the methodologies adopted. The length of the written proposal should not be longer than 25 pages (not including the reference list, and any figures, tables, or appendices).

Due Date: Final Submission April 15, 2019
Value: 50%

Recommended Readings

- Anastas, J. W., & Kuerbis, A. N. (2009). Doctoral education in social work: What we know and what we need to know. *Social Work, 54*(1), 71-81.
- Antle, B. J., & Regehr, C. (2003). Beyond individual rights and freedoms: Metaethics in social work research. *Social Work, 48*(1), 135-144.
- Combs, J. P., Bustamante, R. M., & Onwuegbuzie A. J. (2010). An interactive model for facilitating development of literature reviews. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, 4*(2), 159-182.
- Group for Advancement of Doctoral Education (GADE). (2003). *Guidelines*. Available at: <http://www.gadephd.org/Portals/0/docs/gadeguidelines.pdf>
- Tri-Council Statement on Ethics. (2014). Available at: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2_2014/TCPS_2_Final_Wb.pdf

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 Graduate Grading System will be used.

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	85-89
B	3.0	Satisfactory performance. Note: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average 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. Note: 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.

Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

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-2.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, all students and staff are also expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives. The University of Calgary also expects all to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity.

All members of the University community participating in the Social Work Program are expected to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback. While critical thought, and debate, is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must at all times be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them. Where a breach of an above mentioned expectation occurs in class, the incident should be reported immediately to the Associate Dean or his/her designate. As stated in the University Calendar, students who seriously breach these guidelines may be subject to a range of penalties ranging from receiving a failing grade in an assignment to expulsion from the University.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviour in class that is consistent with our professional values and ethics. Students are expected to comply with professional standards for the Social Work profession as outlined by the Canadian Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics (2005): <https://casw-acts.ca/en/Code-of-Ethics> and the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2013): http://www.acsw.ab.ca/document/1327/final_standardsofpractice_20131104.pdf. Students are expected to ensure they are both familiar with, and comply with these standards.

RESEARCH ETHICS

"If a student is interested in undertaking an assignment that will involve collecting information from members of the public, he or she 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."

WRITING EXPECTATIONS

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments should be the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. You are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has extremely serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2.html>

All social work students are expected to review the Academic Integrity Module before beginning their program: <https://connect.ucalgary.ca/p8lqb1nucdh/>

A number of programs and services, including writing tutors, are available through the Student Success Centre (SSC) to assist graduate students increase productivity and overcome certain difficulties they may encounter. Additional information and the links for either appointment booking or event registration are available at: <http://ucalgary.ca/ssc/graduatestudent>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

A number of services are available through the Wellness Centre to support students in distress or those needing wellness supports: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/resources>

Wellness Centre 24 hours/day Phone Support (403) 210-9355

If a student requires immediate or crisis support, they can also call the Mental Health Help Line 1-877-303-2642 (toll free within Alberta for mental health advice).

Each individual is responsible to ensure compliance with the University of Calgary copyright policy. Individual questions and concerns should be directed to copyright@ucalgary.ca.

Any research in which students are invited to participate will be explained in class and approved by the appropriate University Research Ethics Board.

Students must use their ucalgary email address as the preferred email for university communications.

Cell phones must be turned off in class unless otherwise arranged with the instructor.

The Social Work representative to the Students Union is to be determined (swsacalgary@gmail.com).

Appeals: If there is a concern with the course, academic matter or a grade, first communicate with the instructor. If these concerns cannot be resolved, students can proceed with an academic appeal, and must follow the process of the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar.

The Student Ombudsman's Office can be reached at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/> for assistance with any academic and non-academic misconduct concerns.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act indicates that assignments given by you to your course instructor will remain confidential unless otherwise stated before submission. The assignment cannot be returned to anyone else without your express permission. Similarly, any information about yourself that you share with your course instructor will not be given to anyone else without your permission.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. Discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation, please register with the Student Accessibility Services <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/> (403) 220-8237 or email: access@ucalgary.ca. Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or to the Faculty of Social Work's Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning).

Building Evacuations

When the building evacuation alarm sounds, please take your personal belongings, if readily available, leave the building quickly and safely using the stairs and proceed to our primary Assembly Point – the Werklund School of Education Building. Wait there until you have received clearance from the Emergency Wardens to re-enter the building. You are encouraged to download the UofC Emergency App: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/emergency-instructions/uc-emergency-app>

Assembly points for emergencies have been identified across campus. The primary assembly point for the Professional Faculties building is the Education Block Food Court. The alternate assembly point is Scurfield Hall Atrium.

SAFEWALK (403) 220-5333

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night. Call (403) 220-5333. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

Supports for Mental Health

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (Room 370, MacEwan Student Centre, ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling/personal/) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy website (ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth).

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>