

**RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**19:910:505:99**

**METHODS OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH I**

**Spring 2019**

Instructor:

Email:

Office Hour (on Canvas):

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Introduction to scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge and skills, including: role of concepts and theory, hypothesis formulation, operationalization, research design, data collection, data processing, statistical analysis, introductory computer skills, and report writing.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

Research is a critical component of the professional practice of social work. Practice on any level must be based on sound and empirically validated concepts and theory. This course, applying a problem-solving approach, introduces the student to the scientific, analytic approach in social work practice and service delivery. It focuses on its role in knowledge building. This course, along with the second course, Advanced Methods of Social Work Research, seeks to prepare the practitioner to carry out three research roles: 1) consumer of research; 2) evaluator of practice; and 3) producer of research.

The basic course, which takes students through the entire research process, encompasses the following areas: posing a research question; conducting a literature review; generating a hypothesis; identifying the different kinds of variables, ethical and political issues, gender and ethnic issues, measurement issues, questionnaire construction, sampling, data collection, coding, data analysis, and communication of results.

Students are expected to participate in several exercises that will provide them “hands-on” experience in conducting key research activities. This includes computer aided data analysis and electronic literature searching. Students are also expected to read assigned articles illustrative of diverse research designs and critical research issues.

**PLACE OF COURSE IN PROGRAM**

This is the first of two required research courses, this one located in the foundation year. Its purpose is to introduce all students to the basic components of empirical research so that students may begin to apply their knowledge to the critical assessment of all their readings in the program and can begin to develop habits of searching the literature and critiquing what they read.

## **PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING GOALS AND THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION'S SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCIES**

The MSW Program at Rutgers is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE's accreditation standards can be reviewed at [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org).

In keeping with CSWE standards, the Rutgers School of Social Work has integrated the CSWE competencies within its curriculum. *These competencies serve as program level Learning Goals for the MSW Program and include the following. Upon completion of their MSW education students will be able to: demonstrate ethical and professional behavior; engage in diversity and difference in practice; advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice; engage in practice informed research and research informed practice; engage with individuals, families, groups organizations and communities; intervene with individual, families, groups organizations and communities; and evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.*

This course will assist students in developing the following competencies:

### ***Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice***

*Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.*

### ***Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities***

*Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness.*

**Assessment of Competencies/Program Level Learning Goals:** Because this course focuses on providing you with the knowledge, skills, and values for you to advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental Justice and engage in policy practice, it has been selected be to part of the School of Social Work overall assessment program of the social work competencies/program level learning goals. This means that one of the course assignments, the final exam, has been designed to assess your attainment of these competencies.

## **COURSE LEARNING GOALS**

Course level learning goals primarily relate to the aforementioned competencies/program level learning goals as the course addresses policy analysis skills and competencies as well as addresses human rights and social, economic and environmental justice through the study of the evolution of the US welfare state and the emergence of the social work profession.

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

1. Know the principles of logic in reasoning and scientific inquiry
2. Know culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge
3. Understand qualitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness
4. Understand quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness

### **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION STATEMENT AND SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING GOALS**

The mission of the School of Social Work is to develop and disseminate knowledge through social work research, education, and training that promotes social and economic justice and strengths individual, family, and community well-being, in this diverse and increasingly global environment of New Jersey and beyond.

School Wide Learning Goals: Upon graduation all students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior;
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; and
3. Engage, Assess, and Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2016). *Essential Research Methods for Social Work* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Other required readings can be accessed through the RU Libraries electronic reserve system at <https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/>. In the QuickSearch box on the [Libraries homepage](#), type the Course NAME or the Course Number (Social Welfare Policy and Service 1 19:910:504) and select Course Reserves in the autofill drop down).

### **Recommended Supplemental Text**

Weinbach, R.W. & Grinnell, R.M. (2014). *Statistics for social workers, 9th ed.* Needham Heights, Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) *Assigned Readings:* It is important that assigned readings be completed in a timely manner in order to have informed class discussions. All class lectures will assume that students have read the assigned material.
- 2) *Class participation:* Includes participation in class through discussions, and self-assessments. Class participation and attendance are considered in determining grades.
- 3) *Homework assignments:* Will be given during the semester. The homework assignments will be based on assigned readings and lectures and will consist of individual and team exercises.
- 4) *Two exams:* A midterm and final based on the readings.
- 5) *Team Assignments:* Throughout the semester teams will be assigned short exercises to complete. These are building blocks for the final research paper and can be incorporated into that final paper.
- 6) *One written assignment/ final research paper:* Students (in groups or individually) will formulate a research problem of relevance to social work and develop a research design for studying that problem. They will then integrate and apply the research concepts addressed in the course (i.e., sampling plan, instrument development, and data analytic plan). Specific guidelines for this assignment will be distributed during the semester.
- 7) *Human Subjects Certification:* completed online, guidelines will be posted.
- 8) *Writing Style:* All papers submitted for the course should adhere to the guidelines set forth by the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Research ideas and study findings should be logically and coherently presented. Relevant citation of the literature must be evident for all written work.

### **GRADING**

**School of Social Work new grading scale is as follows:**

A	92-100
B+	87-91
B	82-86
C+	77-81
C	70-76

F 0-69

\*Scores to be rounded up at .5

**Criteria for grading is as follows:**

1. Completion of assignments in a timely and appropriate manner.
2. Ability to integrate readings by practical application.
3. Ability to write clearly and concisely.
4. Ability to demonstrate creativity and analytical skills in projects.
5. Participation in discussions

**Grades will be based upon:**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. Participation in discussions* and exercises | 10%    |
| 3. Human Subjects Certification                | 15%    |
| 4. Midterm exam                                | 25%    |
| 5. Semester-long research project              | 25% ** |
| 6. Final exam                                  | 25%    |

**\* No credit given for late discussions****\*\*Please note that Canvas uses Turnitin, an internet plagiarism detection service that checks student papers. Its findings may negatively affect your grade.****COURSE EVALUATION**

Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and the instructor. This survey is completed by students toward the end of the semester, and all answers are confidential and anonymous. The instructor may also choose to conduct a mid-point evaluation.

**XIII. Course Outline.** Due dates not listed here will be posted with the assignments

Activity	Description	Due
<b>Module 1:</b>	<b>Scientific Inquiry and Evidence-Based Practice</b>	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 1: Why Study Research?</li> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 2: Evidence-Based Practice</li> <li>● McBeath, B., Briggs, H.E., Aisenberg, E. (2010). Examining the premises supporting the empirically supported intervention approach to social work practice. <i>Social Work</i>, 55, 347-357.</li> <li>● Lehrer, J. (2010, December 13). The truth wears off. <i>The New Yorker</i>, 86(40). <a href="http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/12/13/101213fa_fact_lehrer?currentPage=all">http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/12/13/101213fa_fact_lehrer?currentPage=all</a></li> </ul>	
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome to Research I</li> <li>● Chapters 1 &amp; 2 Lecture</li> </ul>	

Activity	Description	Due
Activity Assignment Discussion	Introduce yourself to the class Interview a social worker Lehrer article; see course website for more information	
<b>Module 2: Ethical and Cultural Issues in Social Work Research</b>		
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 5: Ethical issues in social work research</li> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 6: Culturally Competent Research</li> <li>● American Psychological Association (APA), pp. 12-20, 70-76.</li> <li>● Baumann A., Rodriguez, M.D., Parra-Cardona, J. R. (2011). Community-based applied research with Latino immigrant families: Informing practice and research according to ethical and social justice principles. <i>Family Process</i>, 50, 2, p132-148.</li> <li>● Graham, A., Powell, M.A., &amp; Taylor, N. (2015). Ethical research involving children. <i>Family Matters</i>, 96, p23-28</li> </ul>	
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapters 5 &amp; 6 Lecture</li> </ul>	
Podcast	<a href="http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/podcast/mp3/living_proof/cabassa_mental_health_tools.mp3">Episode 46 - Dr. Leopoldo Cabassa: Developing Mental Health Literacy Tools for the Latino Community</a> <a href="http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/podcast/mp3/living_proof/cabassa_mental_health_tools.mp3">http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/podcast/mp3/living_proof/cabassa_mental_health_tools.mp3</a>	
Assignment Discussion	Human Subjects Certification Exam Ethical Issues and Dilemmas (from Bauman)	
<b>Module 3: The Research Process: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods</b>		
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 3: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods</li> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 4: Factors Influencing the Research Process</li> <li>● Green, C.A., Duan, N., Gibbons, R.D., Hoagwood, K.E., Palinkas, L.A., &amp; Wisdom, J.P. (2015). Approaches to mixed methods dissemination and implementation research: Methods, strengths, caveats, and opportunities. <i>Administration &amp; Policy in Mental Health &amp; Mental Health Services Research</i>, 42 (5), 508-523.</li> </ul>	
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapters 3 &amp; 4 Lecture</li> </ul>	
Discussion	Rubin & Babbie, p. 57, 3.6 Practice-Related Exercise #3	
Discussion	The Interview	
<b>Module 4: Problem Formulation</b>		
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● R. &amp; B., Chapter 7: Problem Formulation</li> <li>● R. &amp; B., Appendix A: Using the Library</li> <li>● APA Manual, Chapter 7: Reference Examples, pp. 193-224</li> </ul>	
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapter 7 Lecture</li> </ul>	
Activity	Visiting the library online	
Assignment	<b>Milestone 1: Research question and hypothesis</b> <b>Milestone 2: Compile a short annotated reference list</b>	
<b>Module 5: Measurement</b>		

Activity	Description	Due
Readings  Lectures Assignment Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● R. &amp; B., Chapter 8: Measurement in Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry</li> <li>● R. &amp; B., Chapter 9: Quantitative and Qualitative Measurement Instruments</li> <li>● Lee, J., Abell, N., &amp; Holmes, J.L. (2015). Validation of measures of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in emerging adulthood. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>, 1-12. DOI: 10.1177/1049731515578535</li> <li>● Teglasi, H., Simcox, A.G. &amp; Kim, N.Y. (2007). Personality constructs and measures. <i>Psychology in the Schools</i>, 44(3), 215-228</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapters 8 &amp; 9 Lecture</li> </ul> Evaluating Scales Critique GSS questions	
<b>Module 6:</b>	<b>Sampling</b>	
Readings  Lectures Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 11: Sampling</li> <li>● Pettus-Davis, C., Grady, M.D., Cuddeback, G.S., Scheyett, A. (2011). Practitioner's guide to sampling in the age of evidence-based practice: Translation of research into practice. <i>Clinical Social Work Journal</i>, 39, 379–389.</li> <li>● Vervaeke, H., Korf, D., Benschop, A. &amp; Brink, W. (2007). How to find future ecstasy-users: Targeted and snowball sampling in an ethically sensitive context. <i>Addictive Behaviors</i>, 32, 1705-1713.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapter 11 Lecture</li> </ul> Ethics and Sampling	
<b>Module 7:</b>	<b>Midterm</b>	
Assignment	Go to Module 7 and complete exam	
<b>Module 8:</b>	<b>Surveys</b>	
Readings  Lectures Discussion Assignment	Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 10: Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Siebert, D.C. (2006). Maximizing response rates in survey research: Issues and methods. <i>Advances in Social Work</i>, 7, 2, 1-11.</li> <li>● Alessi, E. J., &amp; Martin, J. I. (2010). Conducting an Internet-based survey: Benefits, pitfalls, and lessons learned. <i>Social Work Research</i>, 34(2), 122-128</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chapter 10 Lecture</li> </ul> Choosing survey methods, R & B, p. 153 Sign-up to meet with Instructor	
	***Spring Break **** 	
<b>Module 9:</b>	<b>Designs for Evaluating Programs and Practice</b>	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 12: Experiments and Quasi-Experiments</li> <li>● Green, J. (2010). Points of intersection between randomized experiments and quasi-experiments. <i>The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</i>, 628 (1), 97-111.</li> </ul>	

Activity	Description	Due
Lectures Activity Assignment Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 12 Lecture</li> </ul> Team meeting with instructor Design a study exercise Threats to internal validity	
<b>Module 10: Single-Case Evaluation Designs; Program Evaluation</b>		
Readings    Lectures Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 13: Single-Case Evaluation Designs</li> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 14: Program Evaluation</li> <li>Lenz, S.A. (2015). Using single-case research designs to demonstrate evidence for counseling practices. <i>Journal of Counseling &amp; Development</i>, 93(4), 387-393.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 13 &amp; 14 Lecture</li> </ul> R& B, Practice-Related Exercise 4, p. 300	
<b>Module 11: Analysis of Data</b>		
Readings   Lectures Assignment Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 16: Analyzing Available Records</li> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 17: Quantitative Data Analysis</li> <li>Chapters 16 &amp; 17 Lecture</li> </ul> <b>Milestone 3: Variable analysis with SDA</b> Using secondary data	
<b>Module 12: Qualitative Inquiry</b>		
Readings       Lectures Activity Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 15: Additional Methods in Qualitative Inquiry</li> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 18: Qualitative Data Analysis</li> <li>Floersch, J., Longhofer, J.L., Kranke, D., &amp; Townsend, L. (2010). Integrating thematic, grounded theory, and narrative analysis: A case study of adolescent psychotropic treatment. <i>Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice</i>, 9, 343-363.</li> <li>LaSala, M.C. (2007). Queering ideas: The descriptive and theory-building potential of qualitative research with lesbian and gay families. <i>Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services</i>, 18, 2, 61-72.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 15 &amp; 18 Lecture</li> </ul> Prepare for final exam Strengths and weaknesses of qualitative inquiry	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Module 13: Writing Social Work Research Proposals and Reports; Paper Due</b>		
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rubin &amp; Babbie, Appendix C: Writing Social Work Research Reports</li> <li>APA, Grammar and Usage, pp. 77-86                Chapter 4, The Mechanics of Style, pp. 87-103                Chapter 5: Displaying Results, pp. 125-127                Chapter 6: Crediting Sources, pp. 169-192</li> </ul>	

Activity	Description	Due
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Miller, J.E. &amp; van der Meulen Rodgers, Y. (2008). Economic importance and statistical significance: Guidelines for communicating empirical research. <i>Feminist Economics</i>, 14, 2, 117-149.</li> </ul>	
Assignment	Writing the Final Report	
Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare for the final exam (Module 15)</li> <li>Review grading rubric for final paper</li> <li>Focus on writing the final paper with your team</li> <li>Focus on developing the final presentation with your team (Module 14)</li> </ul> <b>*** Milestone 4: Final Paper ***</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Module 14:</b>	<b>Presentations</b>	
Due	<b>***Milestone 5: Presentations ****</b>	
<b>Module 15:</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>	
Assignment	Go to Module 15 and complete exam	

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All work submitted in a graduate course must be your own.

It is unethical and a violation of the University's Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited material as your own. Use the APA citation style which is described in the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or footnote.

Acknowledgement is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

Plagiarism as described in the University's Academic Integrity Policy is as follows: ***“Plagiarism:*** Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution”.

Plagiarism along with any and all other violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Conduct. The AIF that you should contact is Laura Curran, at [lacurran@ssw.rutgers.edu](mailto:lacurran@ssw.rutgers.edu). The student shall be notified in writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ or incomplete grade shall be assigned until the case is resolved. For more information regarding the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, see: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers>.

To promote a strong culture of academic integrity, Rutgers has adopted the following honor pledge to be written and signed on examinations and major course assignments submitted for grading: ***On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this [examination or paper].***

### **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a

disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and [provide documentation](#).

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete [the Registration form on the ODS web site](#).