Course Title:
Social Work Research Methods II

Course Number:
SWK 5093-101

Course Description:
Social Work Research Methods 2 [SWK 5093-101] is the second required research course in the curriculum of the graduate social work program. As such, it systematically builds on content presented in Social Work Research Methods 1 [SWK 5083]. This course develops the graduate students’ knowledge and skills in quantitative and qualitative analysis and in the reporting of social work research and evaluation data. Statistical concepts and methods are overviewed. The use of data analysis software is a central feature of this course. The course develops sensitivity to ethical issues and human diversity in the research process. Students carry out an applied research or evaluation project over the course of the semester.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
Dates: January 20-21, February 3-4, 17-18, & March 2-3, 2012
Location: OU Center for Spatial Analysis, 2 Partners Place, 3100 Monitor Ave., Bravo Conference Room, 2nd Floor
Hours: Fri. 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Sat. 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: January 20, 2012

Campus Map and Parking Information: A map of the campus can be found on the OU website at: [http://www.ou.edu/map/](http://www.ou.edu/map/). Search “Two Partners Place”. The entire campus is open for parking from Friday at 4:00 pm until Monday at 7:00 am. Students can park almost anywhere on campus including the parking garages, permits are not required and meters don’t have to be paid. OUPD will ticket illegal parking such as fire lanes, handicap areas and yellow curbs.

Site Director:
Cathy Yeaman. Assistant: Jan Plavchak. Phone: 405-325-3333; Fax: 405-325-9148; email: apnorman@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Marguerite Keesee, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: 2 Partners Place
3100 Monitor Ave, Suite 180
Norman, OK 73072
Telephone Number: 405-325-9611 (office)
405-388-5505 (cell)
E-mail Address: mkeesee@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.
Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:

Student materials are available at the Follett/AP Bookstore located in the Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900 Asp Ave., Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahomaunion.bkstr.com or by telephone at 866-369-9713 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-5960 (outside the U.S.). E-mail orders may be sent to oklahomaunion@bkstr.com. Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST on Friday. Summer hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day to 866-223-5607 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-1557 (outside the U.S.).


4. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.


This text is required for all social work courses.

Note: The Follett/AP Bookstore is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through the Follett/AP Bookstore.

Teaching/Learning Methods:

Integrated teaching approach that utilizes the following strategies throughout the semester:

- Lectures, exams and formal research papers
- Debate/critical thinking discussions
- Self-discovery activities
- Learning pairs
- Independent study/research
- Data gathering and synthesis
- Project based learning
- Small group work teams
- Case studies, and
- Role Modeling by direct example

Course Objectives:

Given regular class attendance, participation in class activities, completion of assigned readings, and successful completion of course assignments, students will, at the conclusion of the course, have the ability to:

A. Organize quantitative and qualitative observations into a data base
B. Possess basic skills in descriptive and inferential statistics and in the use of a statistical software program to analyze research data and develop charts and tables
C. Possess knowledge of different types of program evaluation and be able to carry out a basic program evaluation
D. Understand the different types of needs assessments and be able to carry out a basic needs assessment
E. Perform a thematic or content analysis of a qualitative dataset
F. Be able to carry out a presentation of research findings using multi-media materials
G. Be able to write a research paper with appropriate attention to the theory, method, results, and informed discussion

Social Work Competencies and Practice Behaviors Assessed:

EP 2.1.2 Competency: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
Associated Behaviors:
• Social workers make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work, Statement of Principles (Assessed in Assignment #1)

EP 2.1.3 - Competency: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
Associated Behaviors:
• Social workers analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation (Assessed in Assignments #1, 2a,and 2b);

EP 2.1.6 - Competency: Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research
Associated Behaviors:
• Social workers use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry (Assessed in Assignments #2a and 2b); and
• Social workers use research evidence to inform practice (Assessed in Assignments #2a and 2b)

EP 2.1.10 - Competency: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
Associated Behaviors:
(d) Evaluation
• Social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions (Assessed in Assignments #2a and 2b)

Course Outline:
A. Review of statistics
• Descriptive statistics
• Univariate statistics
• Introduction to multivariate statistics
• Data interpretation and research design

B. Computer software application (using PASW or similar package)
• Introduction to package
• Statistical procedures
• Graphical procedures

C. Qualitative research methods
• Defining characteristics
• Field research
• In depth interview
• Content analysis

D. Program evaluation and needs assessment
• Types of program evaluation
• Types of needs assessment
• Evaluation and practice

E. Developing the research report and presenting findings

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Session One: January 20-21, 2012:
• Readings:
  o Field: Chapters 1-5
  o Hogan: Chapters 1-3
• Computer Activities/Group Research Projects
• StatLab exercises: Frequency distribution, percentile rank, central tendency. Due by beginning of class February 3. StatLab assignments worth 5 points each.

**Session Two: February 3-4, 2012**

• **Readings:**
  - Field: Chapters 6-9
  - Using R: D2L
• Computer Activities and Handouts (review article, format for article review; instructions for research project/report) Work on Group Research Projects.
• StatLab: Standard deviation, correlation, confidence intervals
• Assignment 2: Turn in first journal article review critique to D2L dropbox by beginning of class February 17. (45 points – 18.75% of grade.)

**Session Three: February 17-18, 2012**

• Readings:
  - Field: Chapters 10, 15, & 18
  - Using R: D2L
• Presentations of article reviews/critiques – work on finishing ARP project
• StatLab: Standard (z) scores, one sample T-Test, two-sample T-Test (pick two)
• Assignment 1 Presentation: Ethics (Turn in written paper PowerPoint presentation turned in to D2L dropbox by the end of class on February 18. (40 points – 16.67% of grade.)

**Session Four: March 2-3, 2012**

• Readings:
  - Field: Chapters 10, 15, 18 continued through application
• Presentations of ARP/Written Research Projects/Course Evaluations
• ARP presentations during class/written assignments and PowerPoints turned in to D2L dropbox by the end of class March 3 (70 points – 29.2% of grade.)
• Assignment 2: Second article review turned in to D2L dropbox by end of class March 3 (45 points – 18.75% of grade)

**Evaluation**

**Assignment 1**

Ethics Article Assignment (40 points – 16.67% of total grade)

Instructions: Building on your first social work research course, the application of ethics to social work research is important when the research involves human subjects. A brief review of ethical standards in research introduced in Social Work Research methods I (SWK 5083) becomes the building block for a discussion of ethical dilemmas in social work research. Ethical issues related to your social work research study, and the role of an institutional review board as it relates to your individual research project will be delineated and discussed.

Required Readings: The ethics chapter or chapters in the primary text for the course.

1. Each working group will select one article from the *Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics* that has been published in the past five years. The article should be relevant to your research projects and interests. The journal’s website is: [http://www.socialworker.com/jswe/content/view/140/70/](http://www.socialworker.com/jswe/content/view/140/70/)
2. As a group, go over the article that your group selects and describe why the issues in the article are important to you as a social work researcher.
3. Finally, prepare and deliver a presentation about the ethical issues discussed in your article. Be sure to address ethical issues raised in the NASW code of ethics. Presentation during Session 3, Feb. 17-18, 2012
Assignment 2 a & b

Journal Critique Assignment (Each critique worth 45 points – 18.75% of grade each)

NOTE: two journal critiques will be carried out (one on a quantitative article: assignment 2a and one on a qualitative article: assignment 2b).

Instructions: Instructor will provide an article for you to critique: Answer the following questions regarding the article (note: just answer “by the numbers” (listing those numbers)

1. Classify the research study as using quantitative methods or qualitative methods (or, occasionally, a study combines both of these methods).
2. State the key study research question(s) or hypotheses.
3. If a theory(s) is examined or tested, state this theory and its major concepts. If no theory per se is examined, identify the overarching ideas that guide the study.
4. In just one or two sentences, summarize the “gist” of the reviewed literature. Is this literature grounded in social work (and human services) practice?
5. Identify the method of sampling as probability or non-probability. Also, indicate what particular type of probability (simple random, systematic, stratified, cluster, PPS, etc) or non-probability (convenience/availability, purposive, snowball, etc) is utilized. (Be sure not to mix up the process of sampling – how persons are chosen to participate in study with that of assignment – how (if at all) participants are assigned to groups/treatment conditions.)
6. Describe the specific criteria and rules used to select the sample.
7. Describe some key characteristics of the study sample (age, gender, ethnicity, key identifying features not mentioned in replying to prior question, etc.)
8. Identify the study’s major variables, classifying these as independent or dependent. If there is an intervention (treatment/stimulus), identify this. You may classify some independent variables as control variables. A control variable is an independent variable that is extraneous to the key research question(s) but which, if not controlled for, could bias study results.
9. State the operational definition of two variables in the study. This definition is one and the same as the specific way in which the variable is measured.
10. Indicate and assess the reliability of two measures. Assess the reliability of these measures (high/good versus “medium/marginal” versus low/poor). Note that the reliability of a multi-item scale is often indicated by coefficient alpha. When a variable is “hard data” (e.g., birth weight, height), it is self-evident that its reliability is extremely high. Do not choose such variables for this question.
11. Assess the validity of some of the study’s key measures. Point out any problems in validity. Pay particular attention to social desirability and to other factors that could lead to bias in the measurement process. (Note: the focus here is on the validity of the study’s measures not on the validity (internal or external) of the research design.)
12. Classify the research design. Major choices among quantitative methodologies include: randomized trial (same as true experiment), quasi-experiment, pre-experiment, single-subject/single-case, and time series. Among qualitative methods major choices include: field study, in depth interview, case study, and content analysis of written records.
13. If there is an intervention (treatment), describe it in two or three sentences.
14. If this is an experimental design (one testing an intervention), assess the treatment fidelity, that is the degree to which the planned for treatment/intervention was actually delivered as planned and in accordance with plans and treatment protocol (if one).
15. What are the key study results? (Don’t interpret results here; instead describe them in straightforward, reasonably detailed fashion).
16. Assess the limitations of and/or strengths of the study design with a specific focus on the drawing of causal conclusions. If the study is an experiment, discuss the threats to internal validity that are most relevant. For instance, which key threats cause problems? Which do not? What aspects of research design (i.e., random assignment to groups?) prevent and/or facilitate the drawing of causal conclusions. If the study is not an experiment then, rather than discussing the threats to internal validity, use more general language, that is, speak in terms of possible confounding variables and related issues that may affect the drawing of causal conclusions.
17. Identify, the population to which statistical inferences can be made. Hint: statistical inferences can only be made to the population, if any, from which the study sample was randomly selected -- otherwise, statistically-based conclusions are limited to the study sample itself.

18. Presume that this study is replicated. Identify key populations, groups, and/or settings in which you think results quite similar to this study’s results would be obtained. (Hint: the greater the similarity of a population/ group/ setting to that of study sample, the greater the expected similarity of results.)

19. Identify key practice or policy recommendations made by the author and/or that you would make based on the study.

20. Identify recommendations for future research made by author and/or that you think flow from the study.

21. Your comments.
- What caught your attention?
- Did the study results turn out as you expected?
- What were the study’s strong and weak points?
- How could the study be improved?
- Is the study an important one?

Criteria for Assignments 1 & 2:
- 4–6 Double-spaced pages, typed
- Any paper longer than 7 double-spaced pages will not be accepted.
- You may use direct quotes four or five times in this paper, but beyond that, responses should be in your own words. When you put in your own words (paraphrase), state ideas in a genuinely different way rather than only changing one or several words.
- Except for direct quotes (in which case, please reference page number and put in quotes) you need not cite any material that is cited from the article that you review.

Assignment 3:
STATLAB: Out-of-class assignments requiring each student to complete 10 online statistics activities. You will logon to the Statlab website and complete the assigned statistical activities. You will copy the information on the page showing that you successfully complete the assignment and answer in your own words a set of questions provided based on the statistical activity that you conducted. The Statlab’s are actual research experiments with real data that you will be given the option of adding your own data to. These labs allow you to continue to submit your answers with hints until you get them correct. So that it is not a matter of you getting the right answer but learning when and how to use the specific statistic and its limitations. Value of each lab is 5 points for a total of 40 (16.67% of grade).

Assignment 4:
ARP Research Final Report and Presentation. Groups of 2 students will conduct and present in class a research project that: (a) examines a social problem or social issue of concern to social work, (b) discusses relevant literature, (c) presents a research design / research methodology (i.e., measurements, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, and analysis methods/procedures), (d) discusses results/findings/outcomes, and (e) discusses conclusions and implications of the project for social work practice and/or social welfare policy, and future research. It is expected that each member of the group contribute equally to the overall effort; as a result, all members of a group will be given the same grade! The assignment details for the ARP (Applied Research Project) will be provided at the beginning of class and is also available on the course D2L website under the tab section.

A formal power point presentation of a group’s project will be made in class during Session 4. Each presentation will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria: (a) completeness of presentation, (b) breadth and depth of the presentation, and (c) presentation style and mode of delivery (i.e., logic, coherence, continuity, and quality). The research project will culminate as a type-written report. The
report will be of such a quality that it has the potential to be published as a refereed journal article. A format for writing the research report will be provided by the instructor during Session 2. Group reports must be type-written, double-space, font size 12. More information about this assignment will be provided in class. You need to get a copy of an article from the journal *Social Work Research* and the resources materials I have provided on writing research articles in APA for use as a guide for writing your paper. You will need to turn in a copy of the power point presentation as well as the final research paper. Please place in the appropriate dropbox on the course D2L webpage. Value of Assignment: 70 Points – 29.2% of total grade.

**Grading:**

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. (Tentative) Grading Parameters [Total of 240 Points]

- **A** = 216 to 240 Points
- **B** = 192 to 215 Points
- **C** = 168 to 191 Points
- **D** = 144 to 167 Points
- **F** = 143 Points or Less

Breakdown of Class Grading

- *Assignment 1*: 40 points (minimum, 16%)
- *Assignment 2a*: 45 points (minimum, 17%)
- *Assignment 2b*: 45 points (minimum, 17%)
- Applied Research Project (ARP): 70 points
- STATLab: 8 items, 40 points
  *Total of Common Assignments: 50% minimum

NOTICE: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy.

Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement

The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

Marguerite S. Keesee, Ph.D.

Education

- Doctor of Philosophy, Sociology, University of Oklahoma
- Masters of Arts, Sociology, University of Oklahoma
- Bachelors of Arts, Sociology with minor in Social Work, University of Oklahoma

Current Positions

- Center for Spatial Analysis, Research Associate
- Adjunct Faculty, College of Atmospheric and Geographic Sciences since 2011
- Adjunct Faculty, College of Liberal Studies since 2007
- Advanced Programs Faculty since 2009

Frequently Taught Courses

- Social Problems
- Deviance and Social Control
- Research Methods
- Introductory Statistical Analysis

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

- Deviance, Crime and Delinquency
- Social problems
- Demography
- Intimate Partner and Family Violence
- High Risk Health Behaviors with focus on HIV/STD
- Alcohol, Drugs and Society
- Health and Educational Disparities and Prevention
- Research Methods and Program Evaluation
- Risk and Crisis prevention, mitigation, response and recovery
- Community-Based Participatory Research

Representative Publications and Presentations

1 book, 1 book chapter, 5 journal articles and numerous governmental research/evaluation reports.

Representative Honors and Awards Received

- Awarded a Certificate of Recognition for Quality Service and Continuous Improvement to OMS and DHS.
- Awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Service in Oklahoma’s Block Grant Reform Process.

Major Professional Affiliations

- American Evaluation Association
- American Society of Criminology
- South Central ARC Users Group - SCAUG