Course Title:
Social Work Research Methods II

Course Number:
SWK 5093-101

Course Description:
An introduction to applied data analysis methods appropriate to research in social work practice evaluation and human services program evaluation. Prerequisite: SWK 5083 and graduate standing in social work.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: January 25-26, February 8-9, 22-23, March 8-9, 2013
Location: Room 120, Zarrow Hall, 700 Elm Avenue, Norman OK
Hours: Fri 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Sat 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: January 27, 2012

Campus Map and Parking Information: A map of the campus can be found on the OU website at: http://www.ou.edu/map/. You will need to use the search to find “Zarrow Hall” as it is not labeled on the map. 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: Kathie Nicoletti. Phone: 405-325-3333; Fax: 405-325-9148; email: apnorman@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: James Rosenthal
Mailing Address: Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work
University of Oklahoma
700 Elm Ave
Norman, 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 325-1401
Fax Number: (405) 325-7072
E-mail Address: jimar@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 405-325-7140 (outside the U.S.). (Text prices are available online.)
No new texts are needed. All texts and most class materials are the same as for last semester’s course. One of last semester’s class materials was inadvertently omitted from last semester’s syllabus. This was the online SPSS guide that accompanies the Rosenthal statistics text. This guide is included in the list of texts below. It is available online at our class’s D2L website.

All class texts are listed below, but you will not need to purchase any new materials; materials are listed as a formality.


5. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at [http://learn.ou.edu](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. The “Student Packet for Social Work Research Methods” (henceforth referred to as the “Student Packet”) and selected other materials will be available online on D2L.

6. Access to IBM SPSS Statistics software (Version 19 or 20) is needed. This software is installed at labs on the OU campus and at the School of Social Work. If you obtain it rather than use it at the School’s labs, the most economical way to do so is by renting a student version. The recommended student package is the IBM SPSS Base GradPack 20 for Windows (or for Mac; Version 19 is OK). The 6-month rental license should get you through your two research courses. The “onthehub online store” [google “on the hub spss”] has 6 month SPSS licenses, though, almost assuredly, you can find the same elsewhere. The base SPSS package (rather than standard or premium) will suffice for our course. If you buy this package, the student version of it typically costs in neighborhood of $200+ which provides (or at least did in the past) a four-year license.

7. Student Packet for Social Work Research Methods. Course packet (about 200 pages) will be available at King Kopy in Norman. King Kopy is one block west of Jenkins on the north side of Boyd. Phone: (405) 321-0202. [Though this Packet will also be available on the D2L website, students will need a hard-copy of this to do class exercises, and, hence, purchase is highly recommended; coordinate with professor to assure yourself that packet is available when you go to KingKopy]

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.

**Course Purpose:**

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.
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:

- FY 3 - Competency: Students are knowledgeable about scientific inquiry, and the importance of critical reading of research. Associated Behaviors:
  - FY 3.1-Identify and critique multidimensional assessment, prevention, intervention, and practice evaluation tools (Assessed in Assignments #1 and 2)
- FY 6 - Competency: Students understand quantitative and qualitative research along with scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Associated Behaviors.
  - FY6.1- Understand the importance of evidence-based practice (Assessed in Assignments #1 and 2)
  - FY 6.3- Use research evidence to inform practice (Assessed in Assignments #1 and 2)
- FY 10 - Competency: Students have the knowledge and skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Associated Behaviors: Evaluation
  - FY 10.4-Monitor and evaluate interventions (Assignments #1 and 2)

Teaching / Learning Methods
Lecture, class exercise, group assignment, paper, research project, journal critique, video, test, statistics software applications

Class Policies:

A. Methods of Evaluation
   Tests, papers, research projects, group and individual presentations, class participation, attendance, class participation, computer exercises

   Students are advised that plagiarism checking software is used in evaluating assignments. This places an electronic copy of your work on the web.

   Academic Misconduct: Students should acquaint themselves with University guidelines regarding academic misconduct. These may be found at: http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity/ (see also, last page of syllabus)

B. Breakdown of Class Grading
   - Quantitative Methods Journal Critique (15%)
   - Qualitative Methods Journal Critique (15%)
   - Exam on Course Content (28%)
   - Research project (30%)
   - Computer assignments (12%)

   Good attendance and/or class participation can raise a borderline grade upwards. Poor attendance and/or participation can move a borderline grade downwards.
All late work loses one-half grade (5 points) if late up to 24 hours; 24 hours → one week loses one letter grade (10 points). One additional letter grade (10 points) lost for each additional week or part of a week that work is late.

Where student misses more than two classes (evening, morning, afternoon times counted as separate classes) professor reserves right to have student withdraw from the class.

C. Academic Conduct

Each student should acquaint him or herself with the University’s codes, policies, and procedures involving academic misconduct, grievances, sexual and ethnic harassment and discrimination based on physical handicap. This information can be obtained at www.ou.edu/studentcode. Students should also be familiar with the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work Academic and Professional Performance Policy and the NASW code of ethics.

Electronic devices may only be used for purposes directly related to class.

D. Statement of Reasonable Accommodation

The University of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (Norman) or the Office of Disability Resources (Tulsa). These offices then determine and notify the student and instructor of any accommodations in this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norman</th>
<th>Tulsa</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Resource Center</td>
<td>Office of Disability Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>620 Elm Avenue – Suite 166</td>
<td>Schusterman Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goddard Health Center</td>
<td>4502 East 41st Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman, OK 73019-2093</td>
<td>Tulsa, OK 74135-2512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>405-325-3852 (voice)</td>
<td>(918) 660-3100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>405-325-4173 (voice)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:drc@ou.edu">drc@ou.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

E. Provost-Approved University Activities and Religious Observances

It is university policy “to excuse student absences that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays.” Therefore, a make-up exam will be given when it falls on a practiced religious holiday and/or for religious observances and “Provost-approved University-sponsored activities such as scholarly competition, fine arts performances...” and legally required activities, such as emergency military service and jury duty... (Student Codebook, p. 26)

Major Course Divisions:

A. Review of statistics

- Descriptive statistics
- Univariate statistics
- Introduction to multivariate statistics
- Data interpretation and research design

B. Computer software application (using SPSS 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

**Course Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Class activities and due dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 25 night</td>
<td>Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 14: Qualitative methods Rosenthal, Chapter 1: Data Presentation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 26 am</td>
<td>Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 19: Qualitative data analysis Rosenthal, Chapters 2—4: Data presentation, Central tendency, Variability</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 26 pm</td>
<td>Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 15: Available records Rosenthal, Chapters 5 – 7: Distributions, Relationship, Odds ratio</td>
<td>Groups discuss quantitative research article (read article prior to group meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 8 night</td>
<td>Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 13: Program evaluation Rosenthal, Chapters 8—9, review of 10 and 11, 12: Correlation and regression, Differences in means, Intro to inferential</td>
<td>Quantitative critique due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 9 am</td>
<td>Rosenthal, Chapters 13 (thru 13.3) – 15: Confidence intervals, Significance tests</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 9 pm</td>
<td>Rosenthal, Chapter 16: Power; 17 - 21 only need to learn when to use tests</td>
<td>Groups discuss qualitative research article (read article prior to group meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 22 night</td>
<td>Rosenthal, Chapter 22—23 (thru 23.3): More tests, Reasoning</td>
<td>Qualitative critique due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23 am</td>
<td>Rosenthal, Chapter 24: Data interpretation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23 pm</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 8 night</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Tentative plan will be not to meet; may need to meet if we are behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 9 am</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Student research presentations on research projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 9 pm</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Student research presentations on research projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 12 9am</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Professor will give comments for rewrite if complete high-quality draft of research paper is handed in. Computer assignments and extra credits due.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 18 9am</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Final research papers due.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 25 9am</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No work accepted after this date.</td>
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</table>
Course Assignments:

Assignment # 1: Quantitative Methods Journal Critique Assignment

Select a quantitative research article related to social work practice and answer the following questions. Please respond “by the numbers”.

1. Classify the research study as using quantitative methods or qualitative method (or, occasionally a mixed methods approach 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 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?
How could the study be improved? Is the study an important one?

22. What is an additional research question with implications for practice that you thought of based
on this research study.

Criteria for Assignment:
- 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 #2: Qualitative Methods Journal Critique Assignment

Select a qualitative research article related to social work practice and answer the following questions.
Please respond “by the numbers”.

1. Classify the research study as using quantitative methods or qualitative methods (or,
ocasionally a mixed methods approach combines both of these methods).

2. What is the purpose of the study, that is, the key research question(s)?

3. In just one or two sentences, summarize the reviewed literature. Is this literature grounded in
social work (and human services) practice?

4. How were the participants selected for the study (convenience, purposive, snowball, etc.)?

5. How did the researcher(s) describe the participants in this qualitative study?

6. What approach did the researcher(s) use to identify the relevant themes and categories in the
qualitative data collected? Discuss methods used (if any) to establish reliability, and describe
validation strategies (if any) used to deal with issues of validity.

7. Researcher subjectivity and/or researcher bias can be issues in qualitative research –
sometimes, for instance, researchers see what they “want to see”. Describe methods (if any)
that the researcher(s) used to reduce subjectivity and/or bias. Do you think that subjectivity
and/or bias are important issues in this research study?

8. What are the key study results? (Don’t interpret results here; instead describe them in
straightforward, reasonably detailed fashion).

9. Qualitative research often generates new ideas, insights, and ways of viewing a topic or issue –
sometimes qualitative research generates new theory. Describe new ideas, conceptualizations,
and/or theory (if any) that this research study generated. For instance, did it help you gain new insights regarding the research question?

10. Depth of inquiry and/or observation is often a feature of qualitative research. Did this research study help you gain an intuitive, “in depth” understanding of the research question(s). Explain. How did study methods facilitate (or hinder) this.

11. One criticism of qualitative research is that replication can be difficult, sometimes because insufficient detail about study methods is presented. Do you think that this study can be replicated? Discuss.

12. To what populations, groups, and/or settings (if any?) do you think this study’s findings can be generalized, that is, in what populations, groups, and/or settings would you strongly expect to find similar results? Discuss cautions and/or limitations regarding generalization.

13. Assess strengths and limitations of the study design that have not been addressed in your responses to prior questions? For instance, what kinds of conclusions can and cannot be drawn?

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

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

16. Your comments. Did the study’s methods effectively address the research question(s)? What caught your attention? Did the study results turn out as you expected? How could the study be improved? Is the study an important one?

Criteria for Assignment:

- 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.

Research project assignment:

This assignment is described in KingKopy course packet materials (see end of packet). In addition to paper, students do a presentation on their project on the final day of class.

Computer exercises assignment:

For computer exercises, students will carry out exercises in Chapters 4 to 13 of Rosenthal’s online SPSS guide. Students will hand in files to dropbox demonstrating completion of exercises/steps in body of chapters and, also, at each Chapter’s end. Grade will be based on percentage of assignments (chapter and chapter exercises) completed. All chapters completed → 100%. None completed → 0%.

EXTRA CREDIT: Earn one extra credit point towards your final course grade by completing Chapters 14 and 15 of the guide: (one extra credit point per chapter = 2 possible points)

Exam on Course Content

This assignment (exam) covers the content presented in the course.

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

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.
Bibliography:

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. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

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
James A. Rosenthal

Education
• AM (1977) University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, Social Work Research Concentration
• BA (1971) University of Colorado, Psychology and Sociology.

Current Positions
Professor, Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, University of Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
Social Work Research Methods 1 and 2

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
Research Methods, Statistics, Child Welfare

Representative Publications and Presentations

Major Professional Affiliations
• National Association of Social Workers
• Council on Social Work Education.