SWRK 111
Introduction to Research Methods and Program Evaluation

Course Prerequisite

The successful completion of an undergraduate course in statistics with a grade of “C” or better and concurrent enrollment in SWRK 140C and SWRK 195B.

Course Description

The course is designed to provide social work undergraduate students with the logic, skills and methods of empirical research. Topics covered include: problem selection and formulation; hypothesis development, sampling techniques, research designs, statistical procedures; validity and reliability; measurement; data collection; data analysis; and ethical considerations.

It is the intent of the course to not only encourages the student to be intelligent consumers of social research and become actively engaged in empirical investigations in professional practice.

Course Objectives

When students complete the expected requirements of the course, they will be able to:

1. To provide the student with a broad perusal of current methodological ideas common to the field of human behavior;

2. To provide the student with a system for properly framing and delineating a research problem;

3. To provide a foundation for the development of consumer research skills;

4. To provide a foundation for the development of scientific research directly applicable to social work practice;
5. To provide the student with the rudimentary tools necessary to undertake a research project.

6. Acquire knowledge and skills in the use of computer technology to analyze data using SPSS for Windows, to communicate using E-mail, to search electronic media using Library resources, and discover and utilize resources on the Internet using appropriate search engines and search strategies.

7. Examine and understand ethical issues in social research.

Instruction Methods and requirements

It is essential that you attend class and are prompt. Missing classes hurts your chances for achieving an “A” grade for the semester. Missing more than three classes without proper excuse from the instructor seriously jeopardizes your chance of receiving a passing grade for the course. Social Work major students, please note that a “C-” grade is not a passing grade for the course.

In order to enhance feelings of safety and to create a positive learning environment, the following must apply:

1. You attend class
2. You are prompt
3. You have read the assigned material
4. You get your needs met by interacting with classmates and by raising your concerns and criticisms with the instructor
5. You work hard
6. You do not ridicule others
7. You own expressions of bigotry. In other words, rather than attribute a negative characteristic to a social group or to a member of that group, you begin with, “this is how I have been taught to believe,” or “I hate to admit it but I do have the belief that …”
8. You are committed to growth and self-exploration
9. You behave in a non-violent manner.
Accommodation

The university is committed to providing every reasonable academic accommodation to students with disabilities. The Office of Services to Students with Disabilities provides university academic support services and specialized assistance to students with disabilities. Individuals who need such accommodation must notify the instructor to arrange said accommodation. This instructor is committed in every effort to accommodate all special needs.

Assignments and Grading

Each student’s final grade will result from averaging the grades obtained from all the required items as described below. Class attendance and participation is a prerequisite in receiving a passing grade. Every time a student accumulates two tardiness (10 minutes after class in session)/or leaving the classroom without the instructor’s permission will be counted as one absent. Each student is allowed one free absent without good cause. Additional absence(s) regardless of cause/or reason will receive 25% deduction from the attendance portion. Five absences in the semester will result in the student not getting any point at all on the attendance portion toward the final grade.

Course requirements

Your finale grade will be based on the following evaluative criteria:

1. Examinations. Two midterm exams will be accounted for 40% of the final grade. Students may arrange to take the exam the day before it is given but make-up will not be allowed once the test is administered. Students who missed class on exam day will automatically consider that the student wants to drop that test.

2. Term paper. The term paper is either individually or a group research project (not to exceed 2 members in each group). You’ll receive a detailed guideline on the second week of the semester. The term paper will be accounted for 40% of your final grade. In a group project, each member will be judged base on the quality of his/her work, not the overall quality of the paper.

3. Attendance and participation is required as described above. Attendance will be accounted for 5% of the final grade.

4. A presentation of the Term Paper is required. Individual/group presentation will be accounted for 5% of the final grade.
5. Computer Lab. This Computer Lab will be accounted for 10% of your final grade. We will spend two sessions in the computer lab, MRP 1013. The lab work is mandatory for everyone. Each lab session will be accounted for 50% of the Computer Lab credit. Missing both computer lab sessions, you get zero point toward the final grade. There will be no makeup for the Computer Lab either.

Grading scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-85%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-81%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-78%</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72-75%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-71%</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below 68% not passing

Note. One must receive a “C” grade in order to pass the course.

Required Texts


Optional texts

As a result, your final grade is delineated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>% of your final grade</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Term Paper                      | = 40%                 | First Draft: 10/25/2006  
                                    |                       | Final Draft: 12/13/2006  |
| Midterm Exam                    | = 40%                 | Exam #1: 11/01/2006    
                                    |                       | Exam #2: 12/06/2006      |
| SPSS Lab attendance             | = 10%                 | First: TBA            
                                    |                       | Second: TBA              |
| Class Attendance                | = 5%                  | Every Session         |
| Group or Individual presentation| = 5%                  | 12/13/2006            |
| Total                           | = 100%                |                       |
Course Outline

Week 1  September 6, 2006
Introduction and overview of the course
Expectations, requirements, grading

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapter 1

Week 2  September 13, 2006
Introduction and overview continue
The language of research

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 1 & 2
Handout Research Paper Guideline

Week 3  September 20, 2006
The logic and typology of research
Problem statement formulation

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 1-3

Week 4  September 27, 2006
Hypotheses formulation
Framing theoretical framework
Lecture by the instructor
No reading required

Week 5  October 4, 2006
Literature review
Review of the literature pertaining to variables of interest, its levels of measurement, and their ethical issues

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 3 &4
Week 6     October 11, 2006

Research designs: Needs assessment & program evaluations
Measurements, validity, reliability issues

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 5 & 6

Optional preliminary draft for the research paper is due. If you want feedback for your preliminary draft, make sure to turn in your work in progress to me on this date. Late turned in will not be accepted.

Week 7     October 18, 2006

Protection of human subjects
Sampling methods

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapter 8

Week 8     October 25, 2006

Evaluations of practice
Single subject designs

First draft of Term Paper due

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapter 7

Week 9     November 1, 2006

Data collection and procedures
Limitations

Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapter 9

First midterm exam
Week 10  November 8, 2006
Organizing the data
Data cleaning
Labeling
Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapter 10

Week 11  November 15, 2006
Qualitative data analysis
Quantitative data analysis
Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 11 & 12

Week 12  November 22, 2006 **
Qualitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis continue
Reviews descriptive and inferential statistics
Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 12& 13

Week 13  November 29, 2006
Research writing
Writing final report
Outcomes display
Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapters 11-14

Week 14  December 6, 2006
Practice effectiveness
**Midterm Exam #2**
Reading assignments: Marlow, Chapter 15

Week 15  December 13, 2006
Individual/Group Presentations
**Term Paper due**