



USC | School of Social Work

Social Work 608 Section #60402D

Research and critical analysis for social work with children and families

3 Units

*“Research is formalized curiosity.
It is poking and prying with a purpose”*

Anonymous

Spring 2016

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, by appointment

Course Day: Tuesday

Course Time: 9 am – 1 pm

Course Location: SWC 106

I. COURSE PREREQUISITES

Advanced standing admission

II. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Critical analysis and application of various types of data, information, and evidence to understand client problems and service needs, identify appropriate interventions, and evaluate practice decisions.

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds on the Science of Social Work course in the first semester of the MSW program. It offers students the opportunity to further integrate research and data analysis as an aspect of their professional identities by developing knowledge and skills in the critical analysis and application of various types of data, information and evidence in their work with children, youth, and families, including: 1) agency data (case records, administrative databases, annual reports), 2) public data (e.g., vital statistics: Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), city/county/federal data: data.gov, compiled databases: KidsCount, Peristats, California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), Children's Bureau's child welfare outcomes database), and 3) empirical data (research studies, program evaluations, technical reports). Students will cultivate skills in the identification, analysis, and application of data for: 1) assessing client problems, their causes, and subsequent service needs; 2) informing practice decisions for meeting client needs within a particular agency, community, and policy context; 3) evaluating practice decisions based on client outcomes; and 4) informing policy and resource allocation decisions. The course will deepen students' foundational knowledge of research methods to

improve analytical skills and increase students' ability to effectively utilize various forms of data to inform their practice. Assignments related to problem identification, intervention, and evaluation of client outcomes will be tied to the field placement. The course recognizes the broad range of issues involving children, youth, and families, while at the same time allowing students flexibility in choosing specific areas of interest and service systems on which to focus their learning experience.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Objective #	Objectives
1	Explain the connection between policy, practice, and research in terms of its influence on child, youth, and family service delivery systems in diverse community settings.
2	Provide instruction in basic research methods to improve analytical skills.
3	Emphasize the critical analysis and application of data to understand problems and service needs of children, youth, and families in diverse community settings.
4	Emphasize the critical analysis and application of data to identify culturally-appropriate, evidence-informed interventions to address client problems through effectively meeting their needs.
5	Emphasize the critical analysis and application of data to evaluate the utility of interventions designed to address the problems, meet the needs of children, youth and families and inform decisions about policy and resource allocation.

V. COURSE FORMAT / INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The format of the course will consist of didactic instruction and experiential exercises. Case vignettes, videos, and role plays will also be used to facilitate the students' learning. These exercises may include the use of videotapes, role-play, or structured small group exercises. Material from the field will be used to illustrate class content and to provide integration between class and field. Confidentiality of material shared in class will be maintained. As class discussion is an integral part of the learning process, students are expected to come to class ready to discuss required reading and its application to theory and practice.

VI. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student learning for this course relates to one or more of the following ten social work core competencies:

	SOWK 608	Course Objective
1 Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior		
2 Engage in Diversity and Difference in Practice	*	2 & 3
3 Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice		
4 Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice	*	1, 2, 3 & 4
5 Engage in Policy Practice	*	1 & 2

6	Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
7	Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	*	1 - 5
8	Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
9	Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities	*	1 - 5

* Highlighted in this course

The following table explains the highlighted competencies for this course, the related student learning outcomes, and the method of assessment.

Competencies/ Knowledge, Values, Skills	Student Learning Outcomes	Method of Assessment
Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels ▪ Understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas ▪ Recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values and understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior ▪ Understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession ▪ Understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams ▪ Recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective ▪ Understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice 	Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context	Presentation Active Participation
	Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations	
	Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;	
	Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes;	
	Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.	

<p>Engage in Diversity and Difference in Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. 	<p>Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;</p>	<p>Assignment 1</p> <p>Assignment 2</p> <p>Assignment 3</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
	<p>Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences;</p>	
	<p>Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.</p>	

<p>Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education Understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. 	<p>Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels;</p>	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
	<p>Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice</p>	

<p>Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. Understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. 	<p>Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.</p>	<p>Assignment 1</p> <p>Assignment 2</p> <p>Assignment 3</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
	<p>Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.</p>	
	<p>Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.</p>	

<p>Engage in Policy Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. 	<p>Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.</p>	<p>Assignment 2</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
	<p>Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.</p>	
	<p>Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.</p>	

<p>Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand that engagement 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. ▪ Value the importance of human relationships. ▪ Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ▪ Understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. ▪ Understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. ▪ Value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. 	<p>Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.</p>	<p>Assignment 3</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
<p>Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.</p>		

<p>Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand that assessment 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. ▪ Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ▪ Understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. ▪ Recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. ▪ Understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. 	<p>Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies</p>	<p>Assignment 1</p> <p>Assignment 2</p> <p>Assignment 3</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
<p>Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.</p>		
<p>Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies.</p>		
<p>Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.</p>		

<p>Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand that intervention 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. ▪ Knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. ▪ Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. ▪ Understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. ▪ Value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. 	<p>Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.</p>	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
<p>Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies</p>		
<p>Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes</p>		
<p>Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.</p>		
<p>Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.</p>		

<p>Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. 	<p>Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.</p>	<p>Assignment 1</p> <p>Assignment 2</p> <p>Assignment 3</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>Active Participation</p>
	<p>Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.</p>	
	<p>Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program Processes and outcomes.</p>	
	<p>Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.</p>	

VII. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES & GRADING

Assignment	Due Date	% of Final Grade
Assignment 1: Critical analysis of research	Unit 6 – 7/5	20%
Assignment 2: Using data to assess problems & service needs	Unit 9 – 7/19	20%
Assignment 3: Using data to inform and evaluate practice	Unit 14 – 8/2	30%
Class Presentation	Unit 15 – 8/9	20%
Class Participation	Ongoing	10%

Each of the major assignments is described below.

Students will critically analyze and apply various types of data (e.g., administrative, public, empirical) in the development of 4 written assignments related to effectively serving a client population in their field

settings. These assignments will gauge students' ability to: 1) critically analyze research methods and findings in the children, youth, and families empirical literature; 2) use data to understand client problems and service needs within an agency and community context; 3) use data to identify appropriate interventions for addressing problems within the agency setting and policy context that governs the provision of services; and 4) use data to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to meet the needs of children, youth and families. Brief descriptions of each assignment are below; specific guidelines will be distributed in class.

Assignment 1: Critical analysis of research

Students will conduct a critical analysis of the research methods, findings, and research, practice and/or policy implications of empirical research related to an issue of concern in the children, youth and families field.

Due: Unit 6

This assignment relates to student learning outcomes 1-4 and 7-10.

Assignment 2: Using data to identify problems and service needs

Students will locate, analyze, and apply various forms of data to identify a problem for clients in their field placement settings, explain the problem's underlying causes, determine the corresponding service needs, and the limitations of existing services and policies for addressing the problem.

Due: Unit 9

This assignment relates to student learning outcomes 1-4 and 7-10.

Assignment 3: Using data to inform and evaluate practice

Students will locate, analyze, and apply various forms of data to identify culturally appropriate, evidence-informed intervention model and services that are appropriate to the agency setting and align with prevailing policies for addressing the identified problem from Assignment 2. Additionally, students will propose the collection and analysis of various types of data for evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed intervention model and services.

Due: Unit 14

This assignment relates to student learning outcomes 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9- 14

Please Note: All written assignments will be graded not only on content, but also on professional presentation, adherence to the guidelines, grammar, spelling, mechanics, and APA format.

Class Presentation

Students will prepare PowerPoint or Prezi presentations of their work over Assignments 2 and 3.

Due: Unit 15

This assignment relates to student learning outcomes 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, and 14.

Class Participation (10% of Course Grade)

Student participation is worth 10% of the grade. Participation will be based on performance in the group activities (e.g., active participation in-class group activities, constructive feedback, resource sharing), as

well as adequate preparation for class, active and substantive engagement in all class activities, timely submission of assignments, and personal conduct which fosters a respectful, collegial, and supportive learning environment.

Class Participation will be assessed according to the following criteria:

10 (A): Outstanding: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation and participation is substantial. Ideas offered are always substantive. Regularly provides one or more major insights and comments that provoke deeper thought. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion and class activities would be diminished markedly.

9 (A-): Very Good: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation and frequency in participation is high. Ideas offered are usually substantive. Regularly provides good insights and comments that provoke thought. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished.

8 (B): Good: Contributions in class reflect solid preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive and participation is regular. Provides generally useful insights and some comments that provoke thought, If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat.

7 (C): Adequate: Contributions in class reflect some preparation. Ideas offered are somewhat substantive. Provides some insights, but seldom offers comments that provoke deeper thought. Participation is somewhat regular. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished slightly.

6 (D): Inadequate: Says little in class and does not adequately participate in activities or present insights or ideas. Does not appear to be engaged. Submits late work. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not be affected.

5 (F): Nonparticipant: Attends class without engaging in the class discussion or actively participating in class activities. Submits late work or does not submit at all.

0-4 (F): Unsatisfactory: Misses class. When present, contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, and behavior may be inappropriate and/or disrespectful. Unable to work effectively on in-class assignments/activities and detracts from the learning process. Regularly misses assignment deadlines, if work is submitted at all.

Course grades will be based on the following:

Class grades will be based on the following:

Class Grades		Final Grade	
3.85 – 4	A	93 – 100	A
3.60 – 3.84	A-	90 – 92	A-
3.25 – 3.59	B+	87 – 89	B+
2.90 – 3.24	B	83 – 86	B
2.60 – 2.87	B-	80 – 82	B-
2.25 – 2.50	C+	77 – 79	C+
1.90 – 2.24	C	73 – 76	C
		70 – 72	C-

Within the School of Social Work, grades are determined in each class based on the following standards which have been established by the faculty of the School: (1) Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates very good mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has

demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student. (2) A grade of B+ will be given to work which is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment. (3) A grade of B will be given to student work which meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done adequate work on the assignment and meets basic course expectations. (4) A grade of B- will denote that a student's performance was less than adequate on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations. (5) A grade of C would reflect a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement. (6) Grades between C- and F will be applied to denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student's performance on the assignment.

VIII. REQUIRED AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & RESOURCES

This course requires two texts and a set of reserved readings available through the University's online system, ARES. Additionally, to address the breadth of content covered in this course and promote integration of knowledge gained from courses completed during graduate school, this course recommends the use of texts that have been used in previous courses, and other resources, as identified below.

Required Textbooks

Dudley, J. R. (2014). *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2005). *Research methods for social work* (5th ed). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Required non-text readings are available through the University's online reserves system, ARES. ARES can be accessed with a USC email and password at the following URL: <https://usc.ares.atlas-sys.com/>. Search under the Lead Instructor: Juan Carlos Araque, PhD or the Course Number: SOWK 608.

Note: Additional required and recommended readings may be assigned by the instructor throughout the course.

Recommended Textbooks

SW 534—Policy and Practice in Social Service Organizations

Karger, J. J., & Stoesz, D. (2008). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach* (4th ed). Boston MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Netting, F. L., Kettner, P. M., & McCurtry, S. (2006). *Social work macro practice* (5th ed). New York, NY: Longman.

SW 546 – Science of Social Work

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice*. (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Recommended Guidebook for APA Style Formatting

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

Purdue Owl APA style website: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Recommended Websites

Children's Data Network: <http://www.datanetwork.org>

Center for Non-profit Management: <http://www.cnmsocal.org/>

The Annie E. Casey Foundation: <http://www.aecf.org/>

Healthy City: <http://www.healthycity.org/>

Note: Additional required and recommended readings may be assigned by the instructor throughout the course.

Course Overview

Unit	Topics	Assignments
Part 1: Introduction and Understanding Research Methods for Social Work		
1	■ Course Introduction	
2	■ Review of the role of science in social work	
3	■ Research Methods: problem formulation, variables	
4	■ Research Methods, cont'd: sampling, measurement	
5	■ Research Methods, cont'd: design	
Part 2: Using Data to Inform Practice		
6	■ Understanding administrative, empirical, public data sources	Assignment #1 Due
7	■ Using data to identify problems and service needs	
8	■ Developing goals and objectives to guide practice	
9	■ Using data to identify interventions for meeting client needs	Assignment #2 Due
Part 3: Using Data to Evaluate Practice		
10	■ Logic models and program evaluation	
11	■ Process and outcome evaluations	
12	■ Measuring outcomes	
13	■ Analyzing evaluation data	
14	■ Statistical analysis	Assignment #3 Due
15	■ Class Presentations	Class Presentations
FINAL EXAMINATIONS / ASSIGNMENTS		

Course Schedule—Detailed Description

Part 1: Introduction and Understanding Research Methods for Social Work

Unit 1: Course Introduction

June 7

Topics

- Welcome and introductions
- Course overview
- Review of syllabus
- The connection among research, practice, and policy

This Unit relates to course objectives 1 and 2.

Required Readings

Henggeler, S.W., & Schoenwald, S.K. (2011). Evidence-based interventions for juvenile offenders and juvenile justice policies that support them. *Social Policy Report*, 25(1), 1-20.

Kania, J., & Kramer, M., (Winter 2011). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, pp. 35-41.

Maton, K.I., & Bishop-Josef, S.J. (2006). Psychological research, practice, and social policy: Potential pathways of influence. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 37(2), 140-145.

Unit 2: Reviewing the Role of Science in Social Work

June 7

Topics

- Purposes of research
- Research ethics
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Why study research? In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 2-26). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). The ethics and politics of social work research. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 94-123). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Culturally competent research. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 124-150). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Wodarski, J. S. & Hopson, L. M. (2012). Evidence-based practice: An introduction. In *Research methods for evidence-based practice* (pp. 1-18). Los Angeles: Sage.

Unit 3: Research Methods: Understanding research methods for effective analysis and application of data
June 14
Topics

- Problem formulation: Research questions and hypotheses
- Variables: Independent, dependent, control, moderating, mediating
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Problem formulation. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 152-179). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Conceptualization in quantitative and qualitative inquiry. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 180-208). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Unit 4: Research Methods, cont'd: Understanding research methods for effective analysis and application of data
June 21
Topics

- Sampling: probability and nonprobability methods, protection of human subjects
- Measurement: levels of measurement, nominal and operational definitions, reliability and validity
- Error, bias
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Sampling. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 379-409). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Measurement. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 209-237). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Unit 5: Research Methods, cont'd: Understanding research methods for effective analysis and application of data
June 28
Topics

- Design: pre-experimental, experimental, quasi, single case, evaluation
- Data collection methods: surveys, existing data, content analysis, case record reviews, observation
- Internal and external validity
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Causal inference and experimental designs. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 271-298). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Quasi-experiment designs. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 299-319). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Survey research. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 410-437). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Part 2: Using Data to Inform Practice

Unit 6: Understanding administrative, empirical, and public data sources for informing practice with children, youth, and families July 5

Topics

- Agency/Administrative data
- Public data
- Empirical data
- Use and misuse of data
- Case examples
- Data spotlight: Children's Data Network
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Required Readings

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Evidence-based practice. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 27-49). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2014). Analyzing existing data: Quantitative and qualitative methods. In *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.; pp. 439-467). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Unit 7: Using data to identify problems and service needs in diverse children, youth, and families populations July 5

Topics

- Identifying and understanding client problems and service needs
- Policy and programs
- Diversity-related considerations
- Data Spotlight: Predictive analytics and the Children's Data Network

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5

Required Readings

Dudley, J. R. (2014). Needs assessments. In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 109-142). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

Netting, F. L., Kettner, P. M., & McCurtry, S. (2004). Understanding problems and opportunities. In *Social work macro practice* (3rd ed., pp. 82-100). New York, NY: Longman.

Pearlmutter, S. (2002). Listening to clients: A research strategy for influencing social policy. *The Social Policy Journal*, 1(14), 43-61.

Putnam-Hornstein, E & Needell, B (2011). Predictors of child protective service contact between birth and age five: An examination of California's 2002 birth record. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 33(11), 2400-2407.

Unit 8: Developing goals and objectives to guide practice**July 12****Topics**

- Process and outcome aims
- Setting practice goals and objectives
- Policy considerations
- Administrative, public, empirical data sources
- Case examples
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Required Readings

- Dudley, J. R. (2014). Crafting goals and objectives. In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 144-164). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.
- Harris, M.B. & Franklin, C.G. (2003). Effects of a cognitive-behavioral, school-based, group intervention with Mexican American pregnant and parenting adolescents. *Social Work Research, 27*, 71-83.
- Solomon, B. (2002). Accountability in public child welfare: Linking program theory, program specification and program evaluation. *Children and Youth Services Review, 24*(6/7), 385-407.

Unit 9: Using data to identify interventions to meet the needs of diverse child, youth, and families populations**July 19****Topics**

- Agency mission, capacity, and strategic goals
- Connecting problems to practices and policies
- Evidence-based intervention
- Innovation and adaptation
- Diversity-related considerations
- Data spotlight: PracticeWise Evidence-based Services Database (PWEBS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) national registry of evidence-based practice (EBP)

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-3 and 5.

Required Readings

- Boyd-Franklin, N. (2003). Major family therapy approaches and their relevance to treating African Americans. In *Black families in therapy: Understanding the African American experience* (2nd ed., pp. 204-225). New York: Guilford Press.
- Chorpita, BF, Daleiden, EL, & Collins, KS (2014). Managing and adapting practice: A system for applying evidence in clinical care with youth and families. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 42*, 134-142.
- Guion, L. A., Chattaraj, S., & Sullivan-Lytle, S. (2005). Framework for culturally proactive programs. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences, 97*(1), 76-83.
- Herman-Smith, R., & Dudley, J. R. (2014). Improving how programs and practice work. In Dudley, J.R. *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 167-207). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.
- Kataoka, S. (2010). The practice of evidence-based treatments in ethnic minority youth. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 19*(4), 775-789.

Part 3: Using Data to Evaluate Practice**Unit 10: Process and Outcome Evaluations****July 26****Topics**

- Process and outcome evaluations
- Ethics
- Data sharing
- Case examples
- Diversity considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 2, 4, and 5.

Required Readings

Children's Bureau video: *Getting it done: Partnering to overcome concerns about data sharing.*

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/assistance/program-evaluation/virtual-summit/data-sharing-partnering>

Dudley, J. R. (2014). Evaluation and social work: Making the connection. In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 3-26). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

Dudley, J. R. (2014). The role of ethics in evaluations. In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 51-70). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

Dudley, J. R. (2014). Common types of evaluation. In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (pp. 71-89). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

Wodarski, J. S. & Hopson, L. M. (2012). Designs for daily practice evaluation. In *Research methods for evidence-based practice* (pp. 109-122). Los Angeles: Sage.

Unit 11: Measuring Outcomes in Children, Youth, and Families**Aug 2****Topics**

- Nominal and operational definitions
- Objective versus subjective data sources
- Standardized measurement tools
- Reliability and validity
- Measurement bias
- Diversity-related considerations

This Unit relates to course objectives 2, 4, and 5.

Required Readings

Dudley, J. R. (2014). Is the intervention effective? In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 213-250). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

Royse, D., Thyer, B. A., Padgett, D. K., & Loga, T. (2006). Measurement tools and strategies. In *Program evaluation: An introduction* (pp. 271-300). Belmont, CA. Thomson Brooks-Cole.

Unit 12 and 13: Analyzing Evaluation Data**Aug 2****Topics**

- The process of analysis
- Preparing the data
- Analyzing the data
- Drawing conclusions based on the data
- Case examples

This Unit relates to course objectives 2, 4, and 5.

Required Readings

Shears, J., & Dudley, J. R. (2014). Analyzing evaluation data. In Dudley, J. R. *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 255-275). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

Wodarski, J. S. & Hopson, L. M. (2012). Application of statistical techniques in the evaluation of practice. In *Research methods for evidence-based practice* (pp. 123-132). Los Angeles: Sage.

Unit 14: Statistical Analysis and Course Wrap Up**Aug 2****Topics**

- Reviewing descriptive, correlational and inferential statistical tests
- Reviewing the importance of data and research for social work
- Reviewing the ways data informs problems/needs, practices/intervention, evaluation, policy

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-5.

Required Readings

Brun, C. F. (2005). Reporting evaluation decisions: Coming full circle. In *A practical guide to social service evaluation* (pp. 186-205). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

Dudley, J. R. (2014). Preparing and disseminating a report of findings. In *Social work evaluation: Enhancing what we do* (2nd ed., pp. 277-292). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, Inc.

Unit 15: Class Presentations:**Aug 9****Topics**

- Class presentations on the use of various forms of data for: 1) identifying client problems and corresponding service needs within their field agencies, 2) determining intervention strategies to meet needs and address problems, and 3) evaluating their practice decisions.

This Unit relates to course objectives 1-5.

University Policies and Guidelines

IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the unit. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email (araque@usc.edu) of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students' observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements *in advance* to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to Scampus and to the USC School of Social Work Student Handbook for additional information on attendance policies.

X. ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

XI. SUPPORT SYSTEMS

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

XII. STATEMENT ABOUT INCOMPLETES

The Grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if there is work not completed because of a documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students

must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to be the instructor and reported on the official “Incomplete Completion Form.”

XIII. POLICY ON LATE OR MAKE-UP WORK

Papers are due on the day and time specified. Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances. If the paper is late without permission, the grade will be affected.

XIV. POLICY ON CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS AND/OR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

It may be necessary to make some adjustments in the syllabus during the semester in order to respond to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Adjustments that are made will be communicated to students both verbally and in writing.

XV. CODE OF ETHICS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (OPTIONAL)

*Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly
[<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/Code/code.asp>]*

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual wellbeing in a social context and the wellbeing of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. “Clients” is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

XVI. COMPLAINTS

If you have a complaint or concern about the course or the instructor, please discuss it first with the instructor. If you feel cannot discuss it with the instructor, contact the Course Lead Dr. Juan Carlos Araque (araque@usc.edu). If you do not receive a satisfactory response or solution, contact your advisor and/or Executive Vice Dean and Professor Dr. Paul Maiden for further guidance.

XVII. TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THIS COURSE (OPTIONAL)

- ✓ Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep!
- ✓ Come to class.
- ✓ Complete required readings and assignments BEFORE coming to class.
- ✓ BEFORE coming to class, review the materials from the previous Unit AND the current Unit, AND scan the topics to be covered in the next Unit.
- ✓ Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have.
- ✓ Participate in class discussions.
- ✓ AFTER you leave class, review the materials assigned for that Unit again, along with your notes from that Unit.
- ✓ If you don't understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
- ✓ Keep up with the assigned readings.

Don't procrastinate or postpone working on assignments.
