



# USC | School of Social Work

## **Social Work SOWK 562**

### **Social Work Research**

### **Three Units**

#### **I. COURSE PREREQUISITES**

None

#### **II. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION**

SOWK 562 Social Work Research (three units). Introduction to research methods, including conceptualization of research problems, literature review, research design, sampling, measurement, data collection, and data analysis.

#### **III. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This foundation course is designed to provide an introduction to research methods and to produce an appreciation of the research process. It will explore general issues that are related to the conduct of social work research as applied to social work practice and service delivery in complex, urban environments.

In this course, students will review the characteristics and logical processes of social work research and understand the applicability of scientific and scholarly inquiry in advancing professional knowledge and improving social work practice to diverse clientele in numerous settings. Students will gain a conceptual and operational understanding of the various quantitative and qualitative methodologies used in the conduct of social work-related research. Students will be prepared to participate in a range of research activities including (a) conceptualization of research problems, (b) review of the literature, (c) evaluation of research design, (d) sampling, (e) selection of measurement tools, (f) data collection, (g) basic interpretation of data analyses, and (h) ethical considerations in the conduct of research with human participants. Attention will also focus on how racial, ethnic, gender, and lifestyle issues impact each stage of the research process.

Students will not be expected to carry out an actual study; however, they will complete a series of assignments that prepare them to utilize research as professional social workers. Students are coached to achieve a level of disciplined conceptual and analytical thinking in the process of developing their assignments and understanding and utilizing existing empirical literature.

**IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Objective	Objectives
1	Teach basic research principles and concepts within the framework of ethical practice of professional social work. Identify the ethical issues involved in professional social work research, including informed consent, confidentiality, use and abuse of sensitive data, the issue of withholding treatment to control groups, and the honest disclosure of findings.
2	Provide opportunities for students to increase awareness of and be sensitive to issues in the research process as they relate to various diverse populations such as defined by gender, race, sexual orientation, social class, religion, and vulnerable and oppressed groups.
3	Teach and demonstrate the importance of the role of social work empirical research and evidence-based practice research as they apply to social work practice and policy. The principles of research will be presented and students will have an opportunity to apply the principles to evidence search, review of the literature, and evidence appraisal in the context of individuals, groups, or communities.
4	Present foundation-level research concepts and build student skills including the use of research terms and vocabulary; the skill of identifying relevant social work research questions and hypotheses; identifying independent, dependent, and other variables; the measurement of variables including describing the concepts of reliability and validity; methods for sample selection; the exploration of research design options; and key foundation-level statistical concepts including descriptive and inferential statistics.

**V. COURSE FORMAT/INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

Four primary learning/teaching modalities will be used in class: (1) didactic presentation of material on the Virtual Academic Center platform; (2) critical discussion, interaction, and transaction among the instructor and students in the live session; (3) facilitated problem solving among students working around specific research questions; and (4) direct interaction with meaningful exercises that support students' conceptual development.

Please note that it may be necessary for the instructor to make adjustments to the syllabus during the semester.

**VI. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Student learning for this course relates to one or more of the following 10 social work core competencies:

Social Work Core Competencies	SOWK 562	Course Objective
1 Professional Identity		
2 Ethical Practice	*	1
3 Critical Thinking	*	3-4
4 Diversity in Practice	*	2
5 Human Rights and Justice		
6 Research-Based Practice	*	3-4
7 Human Behavior		
8 Policy Practice		
9 Practice Contexts		
10 Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate		

\* 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
<p><b>Ethical practice</b>—apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice</p> <p>Social workers competent in ethical practice:</p> <p>§□ Fulfill their obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision making</p> <p>§□ Are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law</p>	<p>1. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to identify ethical issues that are present in research contexts and be able to discuss strategies that could be used to address ethical concerns.</p> <p>Standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, Belmont Principles, and Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines will serve as frameworks for considering ethical issues.</p>	<p>Exam Questions</p> <p>Final Course Assessment Exam</p>

<p><b>Critical thinking</b>—apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments</p> <p>Social workers competent in critical thinking:</p> <p>§□ Are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment</p> <p>§□ Use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity</p> <p>§□ Understand that critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information</p>	<p>2. Locate, distinguish, and appraise multiple sources of knowledge that inform understanding of any social work research, practice, or policy question informed by research based-knowledge and practice wisdom.</p>	<p>Research Portfolio</p>
	<p>3. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication by accurately and consistently utilizing foundation-level research terms in both speaking and writing.</p>	<p>Exam Questions Research Portfolio Final Course Assessment Exam Class Participation</p>
	<p>4. Identify key elements and interpret and describe the meaning of results presented in research tables utilizing foundation-level statistical concepts.</p>	<p>Exam Questions Final Course Assessment Exam</p>

<p><b>Diversity in practice</b>—engage diversity and difference in practice</p> <p>Social workers competent in diversity in practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§□ Understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity</li> <li>§□ Recognize that the dimensions of diversity reflect intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation</li> <li>§□ Appreciate 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</li> </ul>	<p>5. Utilize an understanding of the fact that culture can shape the power structures faced by individuals and groups, and articulate and promote attention to issues in the research process as they relate to diverse populations, such as racial and ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, women, and a range of other groups.</p>	<p>Exam Questions Final Course Assessment Exam Research Portfolio</p>
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<p><b>Research-based practice</b>—engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.</p> <p>Social workers competent in research-based practice:</p> <p>§□ Use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery</p> <p>§□ Comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge</p>	<p>6. Articulate, orally and in writing, reasoned and relevant conclusions based on research findings that can inform practice, policy, and/or further research. This includes the ability to describe the relevance of research to the discipline of social work.</p>	<p>Research Portfolio Final Assessment Exam</p>
	<p>7. Identify and accurately describe the purpose of foundation-level research concepts and techniques utilized in published research. This includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify research questions and related hypotheses.</li> <li>b. Identify independent and dependent variables and describe how the concepts of reliability and validity affect the measurement strategies chosen.</li> <li>c. Identify and describe other foundation-level research techniques used in research such as methods for sample selection and research design options.</li> </ul>	<p>Exam Questions Final Assessment Exam</p>

**VII. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES, AND GRADING**

Assignment	% of Final Grade
<b>1) Research Portfolio (Assignments 30%; Final Integrated Portfolio 20%)</b>	50%
<b>2) Two In-Class Exams</b>	20%
<b>3) Sequence Final Exam</b>	20%
<b>4) Class Participation</b>	10%

**1) Research Portfolio Assignments (50% of Course Grade)**

The primary assignment for the course will be the completion of a **research portfolio**, which includes a series of small interconnected assignments and one final portfolio that connects all of the individual pieces into a unified approach to addressing a specific research question. The assignments are designed to allow students to apply the methodological content being learned in

meaningful ways, and using a manageable approach. Grading for the entire research portfolio process is designed to recognize that students will learn course material through application, with the final portfolio providing an opportunity to integrate, correct, and extend on initial portfolio segments. The assignments that comprise the research portfolio are listed below; instructors will assign the different sections of the research portfolio based on their specific course outlines; some Parts might be combined or separated by the instructor. *Template* descriptions that outline the research portfolio assignments are posted in the Course Toolbox. ***Detailed Portfolio Assignment Descriptions might be provided by your instructor. If your instructor provides you with detailed Portfolio Assignment instructions, please follow the outlines provided by the instructor, NOT the generic ones posted in the VAC platform.*** Due to the nature of the assignments, it is essential for students to submit all segments by the posted due dates; late assignments will not be accepted for credit, but should be submitted for review and instructor feedback.

**Portfolio Segments (total of 30%; percentages of each segment will be assigned by your instructor):**

**Research Question:** Identification of research cluster, literature search and summary, and a stated research question

**Variables and Measurement:** identification and measurement of major variables and summary of a known scale or instrument

**Sampling:** a description of the plan to get research participants/subjects (sampling plan)

**Design:** description of a the research design and its strengths and weaknesses

**Final Integrated Research Portfolio (20% of course grade):** Previous assignments are corrected, augmented and resubmitted, based on instructor comments and additional student understanding of content. Additional content on plan for analysis and reflection on the research process are included.

## **2) Exams (20% of Course Grade)**

There will be **two exams**, each worth 10% of the course grade. The exams will consist of short-answer items and vignette-based questions. Exams will be held during the live session. Exams will typically be administered during Weeks 7 and 14—**the exam dates may vary by instructor, and may be changed based on coverage of the needed material.**

## **3) Final Exam (20% of Course Grade)**

Students will complete a final exam, which will measure their ability to apply the knowledge acquired during the course. Vignettes and descriptions from published research articles will be presented, and students will be asked to answer questions about specific aspects of research methodology including ethics, research design, sampling, measurement, and interpretation of statistical results. **The exam will be administered during finals week, as per the USC Finals Week Schedule for the cohort. Please check the date of the Final Assessment Exam to ensure your availability.**

## **4) Class Participation (10% of Course Grade)**

Students are expected to contribute to the development of a positive learning environment and to demonstrate their learning through written and oral assignments and through active class



participation. Class participation should consist of meaningful, thoughtful, and respectful participation based on having completed required readings and assignments prior to class. When in class, students should demonstrate their understanding of the material and be prepared to offer comments or reflections about the material, and/or alternatively, to have a set of thoughtful questions about the material. This includes having completed the embedded Exercises and Unit Assessment Quizzes in advance of class, and participating in the review of the answers to Exercises and Unit Assessment Quizzes. Points will be deducted for failure to complete the Unit Assessment Quizzes and Exercises in the asynchronous course material prior to class. Failure to meet these expectations will result in the reduction of the participation grade. Class participation is worth 10% of the final grade.

Class grades will be based on the following:

Class Grades		Final Grade	
3.85–4.00	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
2.60–2.89	B–	80–82	B–
2.25–2.59	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 that 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 his or her approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades is determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student; (2) a grade of B+ is given to work that 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 is given to student work that 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– denotes 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 reflects a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas, and/or several significant areas requiring improvement; (6) grades between C– and F are 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 AND RESOURCES**

**Required Textbooks**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2016). *Empowerment Series: Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).

If the prior edition of the textbook as already been purchased, it is acceptable to use:

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2013). *Empowerment Series: Essential research methods for social work* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.).



## Suggested Additional Resources

### Guides for APA Style Formatting

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

*APA formatting and style guide*. (1995–2011). The OWL at Purdue. Retrieved from

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

(Instructor Note: This popular site for students—it is free, has switched to the 6th edition.)

USC guide to avoiding plagiarism. (n.d.). Available at

<http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=616087>

Winn, J. (2010). APA style: USC Lib Guides. Available at

<http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=26798&sid=639172>

(Instructor Note: HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.)

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

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## IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend every class and, if on the VAC, to remain in the synchronous online class for the duration of the class. Failure to attend class, arriving late or lack of active participation may impact your ability to achieve course objectives, which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class, without penalty, for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations that conflict with students' observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work that 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.

VAC Students are expected to follow Virtual Academic Center guidelines about appropriate conduct and attendance in synchronous live session. In consideration of classmates and the instructor, students are asked to keep external distractions that might interfere with class to a minimum.

## X. STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The review process can be found at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>

Additionally, it should be noted that violations of academic integrity are not only violations of USC principles and policies, but also violations of the values of the social work profession.

## XI. STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. *Please be sure the letter is scanned and emailed to the instructor as early in the semester as possible.* Instructors are not permitted to provide accommodations without this letter. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PST, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. The Office of Disability Services and Programs is aware of the USC School of Social Work Virtual Academic Center and will work with students on the mailing and electronic transfer of needed documents and verifications.

## XII. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

**Note:** The following Emergency Response Information pertains to students on campus, but please note its importance should you be on campus for a temporary or extended period. When not on campus: Call the 911 listing in your local community for any emergency.

To receive information, call the main number (213) 740-2711, press #2. "For recorded announcements, events, emergency communications or critical incident information."

To leave a message, call (213) 740-8311.

For additional university information, please call (213) 740-9233.

Or visit the university website: <http://emergency.usc.edu>

Students may also sign up for a **USC Trojans Alert** account to receive alerts and emergency notifications on their cell phone, pager, PDA, or e-mail account. Register at <https://trojansalert.usc.edu>.

## XIII. 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 by the instructor and reported on the official “Incomplete Completion Form.”

#### **XIV. POLICY ON LATE OR MAKE-UP WORK**

Papers are due on the day and time specified by the instructor. **Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the course instructor.**

It may be necessary to make some adjustments to 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**

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 well-being in a social context and the well-being 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 you cannot discuss it with the instructor, contact the SOWK 562 VAC Faculty Lead Instructor, Dr. Marcia Wilson, at [mrwilson@usc.edu](mailto:mrwilson@usc.edu) or the Research Sequence Chair, Dr. Alice Cepeda, at [alicecep@usc.edu](mailto:alicecep@usc.edu). If you do not receive a satisfactory response or solution, contact your advisor for further guidance.

### **XVII. TIPS FOR MAXIMIZING YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THIS COURSE**

- 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.

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*Don't procrastinate or postpone working on assignments.*

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**Course Overview**

The table below describes the topics for each class session and schedule for quizzes and the final exam. Your instructor will provide you with a Syllabus or a Syllabus Addendum that will include due dates for the Portfolio Segment Assignments. This schedule may vary based on semester start date, holidays, and other factors.

**Course Schedule—Detailed Description**

Session	Topics	Assignments and Exams
1	■ Course Introduction and Overview of Social Work Research Methods	
2	■ Types of Research in Social Work	
3	■ Ethical and Multicultural Considerations in Conducting Research	
4	■ Variables: The Conceptualization of Research	
5	■ Measurement Methods and Reliability and Validity	
6	■ Sampling Techniques and Considerations	
7	■ Exam 1: Social Work Research, Variables, Measurement and Sampling	<i>EXAM 1</i>
8	■ Qualitative Research Methods	
9	■ Introduction to Research Design	
10	■ Threats to Internal Validity	
11	■ Quantitative Statistics: Descriptive Statistics	
12	■ Quantitative Statistics: Inferential Statistics and Statistical Significance	
13	■ Inferential Statistics (Continued): Understanding Associations Between Variables	
14	■ Exam 2: Research Design and Statistics	<i>EXAM 2</i>
15	■ Social Work Research Context Revisited, Course Wrap-Up, and Evaluation	<i>Integrated Research Portfolio Assignment Due</i>
16	■ Final Exam during Finals Week	<i>Final Exam</i>

**Unit 1: Course Overview and Social Work Research Problems****Topics**

- Course Introduction and Overview
- Course Syllabus (Review of Expectations)
- The What and Why of Social Work Research
- Purposes of Social Work Research: Conceptual Overview in an Agency Context
- Research and Evidence-Based Practice
- Other Ways of Knowing
- Value of Scientific Inquiry and the Scientific Method

**Required Reading**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 1: Why study research?  
 Chapter 2: Evidenced-based practice

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
 Chapter 1: Why study research?  
 Chapter 2: Evidenced-based practice

Select this link for specific hints: Trojan integrity: A guide to avoiding plagiarism. Available at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tig.pdf>

**Unit 2: Types of Research in Social Work****Topics**

- Introduction to Research Methods in Social Work
- Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Inquiry
- Purposes of Social Work Research: Exploration, Description, Explanation, and Evaluation
- Introduction of Social Work Research Clusters
- Reviewing Literature in a Practice-Based Context

**Required Reading**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 3: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods of inquiry  
 Chapter 4: Factors influencing the research process  
 Chapter 7: Problem Formulation

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
 Chapter 3: Comparing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods of inquiry  
 Chapter 4: Factors influencing the research process  
 Chapter 5: Reviewing literature and developing research questions

USC guide to avoiding plagiarism. (n.d.). Available at <http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=616087>

**Unit 3: Ethical and Multicultural Considerations in Research****Topics**

- Experiments That Demonstrated the Need for Ethical Guidelines
- Belmont Principles
- List of Ethical Guidelines for Social Science Research
- Institutional Review Boards
- Multicultural Considerations

**Required Reading**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 5: Ethical issues in social work research  
 Chapter 6: Culturally competent research

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
 Chapter 4: Factors influencing the research process, pp. 60–62  
 Chapter 16: Ethical issues in social work research  
 Chapter 17: Culturally competent research

USC's IRB Human Subjects Protection Program. Retrieved from  
<http://oprs.usc.edu/about/human-subjects-protection-program/>

**Unit 4: Variables and Introduction to Measurement Concepts****Topics**

- Variables: The Conceptualization of Inquiry
- Specific Types of Variables
- Identifying Independent and Dependent Variables
- Level of Measurement

**Required Reading**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 8: Measurement in quantitative and qualitative inquiry

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 6: Conceptualization in quantitative and qualitative inquiry

Trochim, W. M. K. (2006). *Variables*. Web Center for Social Research Methods. Available at  
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/variable.php>

**Unit 5: Measurement Methods and Reliability and Validity****Topics**

- Measurement Principles: From Concept to Measurement
- Reliability and Validity
- Discussion of a Known Scale or Instrument
- Location and Assessment of Measurements



**Required Reading**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).

Chapter 8: Measurement in quantitative and qualitative inquiry

Chapter 9: Quantitative and qualitative measurement instruments

Chapter 10: Surveys

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).

Chapter 7: Measurement in quantitative and qualitative inquiry

Chapter 8: Qualitative and quantitative measurement instruments

Chapter 9: Surveys

American Psychological Association. (2010). *FAQ/Finding information about psychological tests*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/find-tests.aspx>

**Unit 6: Sampling Techniques and External Validity****Topics**

- The Concept of Sampling
- Defining the Population of Interest
- Probability and Nonprobability Sampling Techniques
- External Validity and Generalization
- Sampling Error
- Ethical Concerns in Sampling
- The Pragmatics of Sampling

**Required Reading**

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).

Chapter 11: Sampling: Quantitative and qualitative approaches

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).

Chapter 10: Sampling: Quantitative and qualitative approaches

**Unit 7: Exam 1****Topics**

- Understanding Exam Procedures
- Exam 1 Review Exercise: Practice Test

**Unit 8: Qualitative Research Methods****Topics**

- Qualitative Research Overview
- Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative Research
- Qualitative Research Methods
- Sampling and Measurement Issues in Qualitative Research
- Data Analysis and Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research

**Required Reading**

- Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 3: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods of inquiry (review)  
 Chapter 15: Additional methods in qualitative inquiry  
 Chapter 18: Qualitative Data Analysis
- Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
 Chapter 3: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods of inquiry (review)  
 Chapter 14: Additional methods in qualitative inquiry  
 Chapter 15: Analyzing available records
- Christenson, P., & Ivancin, M. (2006). *The "reality" of health: Reality television and the public health*. A discussion paper prepared for the Kaiser Family Foundation. Retrieved from <http://kff.org/other/the-reality-of-health-reality-television-and/>
- Hernandez, J. R. L. (2009). Photo-ethnography by people living in poverty near the northern border of Mexico [Forum]. *Qualitative Social Research*, 10(2). Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/viewArticle/1310/2810>
- Holdt, J. (2002). *American pictures*. Retrieved from <http://american-pictures.com/> Choose a chapter to view from <http://american-pictures.com/video/american-pictures/index-us.htm>

## Unit 9: Introduction to Research Designs: Matching Purpose to Design

### Topics

- Introduction to Research Design
- Continuum of Knowledge
- Matching Design to Research Purpose and Level of Knowledge
- Research Design Notation
- Common Designs Used in Social Work
- Ethical Issues in Research Design
- Threats to External Validity Related to Design
- Establishing Causation and Introduction of the Concept of Threats to Internal Validity

### Required Reading

- Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
 Chapter 12: Experiments and quasi-experiments
- Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
 Chapter 11: Experiments and quasi-experiments

## Unit 10: Threats to Internal Validity

### Topics

- Threats to Internal Validity Addressed by Design
- Threats to Internal Validity: How Threats to Internal Validity Relate to Design
- Threats to Internal Validity That Cannot Be Addressed by Design

### Required Reading

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
Chapter 12: Experiments and quasi-experiments (review)

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
Chapter 11: Experiments and quasi-experiments (review)

## Unit 11: Quantitative Statistics: Descriptive Statistics

### Topics

- Probability: Understanding the  $p$  Rejecting the Null Hypothesis Choosing Inferential Statistics Introduction of Statistics
- Level of Measurement Revisited: Categorical Variables (Nominal and Ordinal)
- Level of Measurement: Continuous Variables (Interval and Ratio)
- Measures of Central Tendency
- Measures of Dispersion

### Required Reading

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
Chapter 17: Quantitative data analysis

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
Chapter 18: Quantitative data analysis

Hoffman, R. D. (2003). Internet glossary of statistical terms. Retrieved from  
<http://www.animatedsoftware.com/statglos/statglos.htm>

(Instructor Note: Look at descriptions of mean; median; mode; range; variance; standard deviation; sampling distribution; statistic; parameter; null hypothesis; alternative hypothesis; statistical hypothesis; alpha; statistical significance; type I error; type II error; beta; and the relationship between alpha, beta and power.)

## Unit 12: Quantitative Statistics: Inferential Statistics and Statistical Significance

### Topics

- Inferential Statistics and Hypothesis Testing
- The Logic of Hypothesis Testing
- Basic Concepts of the Central Limit Theorem
- Statistical Significance: Introduction
- Testing the Null Hypothesis

### Required Reading

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
Chapter 17: Quantitative data analysis

Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work* (3rd ed.).  
Chapter 18: Quantitative data analysis

Hoffman, R. D. (2003). Internet glossary of statistical terms. Retrieved from  
<http://www.animatedsoftware.com/statglos/statglos.htm>

(Instructor Note: Look at descriptions of mean; median; mode; range; variance; standard deviation; sampling distribution; statistic; parameter; null hypothesis; alternative hypothesis; statistical hypothesis; alpha; statistical significance; type I error; type II error; beta; and the relationship between alpha, beta and power.)

Lane, D. M. (2008). *Chapter 9: Logistics of hypothesis testing: Ruling out chance as an explanation*. Rice Virtual Lab in Statistics. Retrieved from [http://davidmlane.com/hyperstat/logic\\_hypothesis.html](http://davidmlane.com/hyperstat/logic_hypothesis.html)

### Topics

- Introduction to the Measurement of Associations Between Variables
- Examples of Common Inferential Statistics: Chi-Squared, Students'  $t$  Test, ANOVA, Correlation
- Multivariate Statistics: Multiple Regression and ANCOVA

### Required Reading

Center for Teaching and Engaged Learning: Lessons 4, 6, and 13—Independent samples  $t$  test  
[http://eweb.furman.edu/~lpace/SPSS\\_Tutorials/lesson4.html](http://eweb.furman.edu/~lpace/SPSS_Tutorials/lesson4.html)  
[http://eweb.furman.edu/~lpace/SPSS\\_Tutorials/lesson6.html](http://eweb.furman.edu/~lpace/SPSS_Tutorials/lesson6.html)  
[http://eweb.furman.edu/~lpace/SPSS\\_Tutorials/lesson13.html](http://eweb.furman.edu/~lpace/SPSS_Tutorials/lesson13.html)

### Unit 14: Exam 2

#### Topics

- Reminder of Exam Procedures
- Exam 1 Review Exercise: Practice Test

### Unit 15: Course Wrap-Up, Evaluations, and Final Exam Review

#### Topics

- Course Wrap-Up: Putting It All Together
- Course Evaluation
- Final Assessment Exam Review

### Unit 16: Final Assessment Examination During Finals Week

#### Topics

- Final Exam