

# USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck

School of Social Work

**Social Work 608.67208**

**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*

**Fall 2017**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Pamela Love Manning	<b>Course Day:</b>	Tuesdays
<b>E-Mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:lovemann@usc.edu">lovemann@usc.edu</a>	<b>Course Time:</b>	12:00pm-1:15pm PST
<b>Telephone:</b>	410 599-6139	<b>Course Location:</b>	Virtual Academic Center
<b>Office:</b>	Virtual		
<b>Office Hours:</b>	8:30am-9:00am PST and 1:30pm-2pm PST (Tuesdays)		

## I. COURSE PREREQUISITES

SOWK 546: Science of Social Work

## 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**

<b>Objective #</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
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**

The following table lists the nine Social Work core competencies as defined by the Council on Social Work Education's 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards:

<b>Social Work Core Competencies</b>	
1	<b>Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</b>
2	<b>Engage in Diversity and Difference in Practice</b>
3	<b>Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice</b>
4	<b>Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice*</b>
5	<b>Engage in Policy Practice</b>
6	<b>Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>
7	<b>Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>
8	<b>Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</b>
9	<b>Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities</b>

\* Highlighted in this course

The following table shows the competencies highlighted in this course, the related course objectives, student learning outcomes, and dimensions of each competency measured. The final column provides the location of course content related to the competency.