

SOWK 546: The Science of Social Work

Section #67055 Thursday 4:00-5:15 pm PT [Live Class Session Link](#)

Section #67056 Thursday 5:45-7:00 pm PT [Live Class Session Link](#)

3 Units

Course Location: VAC

Course Folder: [Click for Google Drive Course Folder](#)

SYLLABUS

(Subject to change and customization by instructor)

*“Most of the world will make decisions by either guessing or using their gut.
They will be either lucky or wrong.” ~ Suhail Doshi*



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Office Hours Meeting Link: [Click for Office Hours Meeting Link](#)

Course Lead: Devon Brooks

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IT Help Hours of Service: 24 hours, 7 days/week

IT Help Contact Information: 213-740-5555
[consult@usc.edu](#), [sdp.lts@usc.edu](#) OR
[support@online.usc.edu](#)

I. Course Prerequisites and/or Co-Requisites

None

II. Catalogue Description

Introduction to the role of scientific inquiry in advancing social work goals. Inspires students to include science in their social work identity and professional decision-making.

III. Course Description

Students taking this course will develop an appreciation for the historical and contemporary roles of the science of social work, that is the use of empirical evidence and inquiry to advance the goals of professional social work. They also will develop a strong understanding of how the science of social work can inform and improve their own professional practice.

The course is designed to provide students with inspiration and training on harnessing their own critical and creative thinking. Emphasis is placed on the process of conceptualizing social work practice problems and questions (or “practice dilemmas”) that can be addressed by the science of social work.

Students will enhance their ability to effectively and efficiently locate the best available evidence for informing their professional practice, with a focus on locating evidence presented in articles published in high-impact journals. They also will develop strategies for appraising the level, quality, and applicability of empirical evidence as it relates to their practice questions and areas of professional interest. Additionally, students will strengthen their ability to translate and apply the best available evidence while considering their clients’ values and wishes, their own practice knowledge and abilities, and contextual factors. Throughout the course, students will reflect on and come to better understand the role that cultural diversity and difference play in the location, appraisal, and application of social work evidence.

By the end of the course students will be well-versed in the science of social work and in how to apply the concept as consumers of social work knowledge. They will be prepared to enter subsequent courses designed to enhance their ability to use the science of social work to evaluate professional practice (including their own) in a specialized area of practice.

IV. Course Objectives

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Appreciate how the science of social work is integral to professional social work and to one’s own identity and development as a professional social worker.

2. Use reflection and self-assessment as part of routine professional practice in order to identify practice problems and questions (i.e., practice dilemmas) that could be addressed by enhancing one's own professional knowledge. Formulate practice questions and effectively and efficiently locate the best available evidence for addressing specified practice questions.
3. Apply critical and creative thinking when appraising the strength of quantitative and qualitative research findings.
4. Use the best available empirical evidence to address practice problems and questions. Consider context, diversity and difference, and ethical and political considerations when adapting and translating empirical evidence in professional practice.
5. Be prepared to enter more advanced courses that provide training in the use of the science of social work to evaluate professional practice in a specialized area of practice.

V. CSWE Core Competencies Addressed in this Course

The following table lists the social work competencies, as established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2022), that are highlighted and evaluated in this course.

CSWE Core Competencies Highlighted in this Course:

Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

- 4a. Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy and programs.
- 4b. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations and Communities

- 9a. Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes.
- 9b. Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

VI. Course Format & Instructional Methods

This is a letter graded course offered in-person as well as online in the Virtual Academic Center (VAC). The web-based teaching and learning environment provided by the University's Blackboard Academic Suite™ System (<https://blackboard.usc.edu/>) will support access to course-related materials and communication for campus-based

students; the Digital Campus virtual platform, Canvas, will support access to course-related materials, communication, and live Zoom sessions for VAC students. The course will encompass a combination of diverse instructional methods, which may include, but are not limited to, the following: didactic presentations by the instructor, small- and large-group discussions, case studies, videos, guest speakers, experiential exercises, and computer-based, online activities.

***Please note:** It may be necessary for the instructor to adjust the syllabus and/or course during the semester. In such an instance, the instructor will inform the class both verbally and in writing.

Instructor's Oath

"As your instructor, to each of you, I pledge the following:

- *To appreciate you, your time and your effort;*
- *To be available and responsible;*
- *To be encouraging and supportive;*
- *To be objective and fair;*
- *To be prompt and timely;*
- *To be respectful, professional and appropriate;*
- *To try to be an engaging and effective instructor; and*
- *To strive for excellence in carrying out my responsibilities as an instructor as described in the USC Faculty Handbook.*

If at any time students feel the instructor has not honored this oath, they should contact the instructor with their concerns so the instructor has an opportunity to address them. If they feel that they cannot discuss their concerns about the course with the instructor, students should contact the Course Lead (Devon Brooks, devon.brooks@usc.edu). If their concerns remain unresolved, then students can contact the MSW Program Director, Dr. Lewis at j.lewis@usc.edu for further assistance.

VII. Technology Proficiency & Hardware/Software Required

This course requires the use of an online learning management system (LMS), as well as Microsoft Office (e.g., Word, PPT) and virtual meeting (e.g., Zoom) applications. The following links for USC technology support may be useful: [Zoom information for students](#), [Blackboard help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#). VAC students should contact tech support for assistance with Canvas: 833-740-1273, support@online.usc.edu.

VIII. Course Assignments, Due Dates & Percent of Final Grade

The table below presents all course assignments, due dates, and the percent of the final grade that each assignment is worth.

Assignment	Course Objectives Assessed by Assignment	Unit Due^[1]	% of Grade
Assignment 1 <i>Practice Knowledge Critical Reflection & Self-Assessment</i>	1, 2	Unit 5	20%
Assignment 2 <i>Professional Resource Collection & Research Article Preliminary Appraisal</i>	1, 2, 3, 4	Unit 10	35%
Assignment 3 <i>Research Article Comprehensive Appraisal and Application</i>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Unit 15	35%
Active and Proactive Learning, & Meaningful Participation		Units 1-15	10%

[1] Please note that in some instances assignment due dates may differ slightly among sections of this course. In those instances, due dates have been adapted to reflect the number of lesson weeks and University holidays for particular course sections.

Descriptions of Assignments

An overview of each assignment is presented below. Detailed instructions and grading guidelines for each assignment will be disseminated by the instructor.

Assignment 1 – Practice Knowledge Critical Reflection & Self-Assessment (20% of course grade) Due: Week 5

The overarching aim of Assignment 1 is to increase your appreciation of the science of social work by helping you to identify ways in which personal passions and professional interests and goals can be nurtured and enhanced through reflection and self-assessment. The assignment consists of three parts. The first part of the assignment addresses the connection between your cultural characteristics, life experiences and professional identity as a social worker. The second part of the assignment relates to current areas of professional interest and the professional knowledge you currently have in your specified area of interest. Finally, in the third part of the assignment, you will develop practice questions related to your specified areas of interest.

Assignment 2 – Professional Resource Collection & Research Article Preliminary Appraisal (35% of course grade) Due: Week 10

The overarching aim of Assignment 2 is to enhance your ability to effectively locate information and empirical evidence relevant to specialized practice in areas that are consistent with your professional goals and interests. The assignment consists of three parts. The first part of the assignment involves locating different kinds of information relevant to the effectiveness practice question that you formulate in Part 3 of

Assignment 1. The second part of the assignment focuses on locating academic articles describing empirical research studies relevant to the effectiveness practice question that you formulated. During the course, you will learn a core set of concepts and terminology related to scientific inquiry that you will be expected to understand and apply in the final part of the assignment, which consists of a critical appraisal of a research article and study.

Assignment 3 – Research Article Comprehensive Appraisal and Application (35% of course grade) Due: Week 15

Assignment 3 builds on Assignment 2. The assignment consists of a critical appraisal of a research article and study. Whereas the previous assignment focuses on appraisal of design and sampling methods, Assignment 3 focuses on appraisal of measurement methods and analyses. Additionally, Assignment 3 aims to prepare you for professional practice by enhancing your ability to integrate, translate, apply, and adopt the empirical evidence offered by the appraised article and study, taking into account limitations of the article and study and client characteristics and goals, your professional knowledge and expertise, and contextual factors.

Active and Proactive Learning, & Meaningful Participation (10% of course grade) Due: Units 1 – 15

Students are expected to be active and proactive participants in their learning and meaningful contributors to a positive learning environment. This will require mental, physical and perhaps emotional effort, both inside and outside the formal classroom.

Active learning involves completing required readings, activities, and/or asynchronous materials prior to class, and engaging in the class session with thoughtful comments, reflections or questions about concepts, readings and assignments. For VAC courses, active learning also includes remaining visibly onscreen throughout the duration of the live session, unless one has the permission of the instructor to mute the screen.

Proactive learning involves assuming responsibility for learning, anticipating workload and challenges, being organized and meeting deadlines, and taking the initiative to reach out to the instructor with any questions or concerns.

Meaningful participation consists of thoughtful and substantive participation that not only contributes to but enhances class discussion and activities. Meaningful participation also includes efforts that **contribute to a positive learning environment**; that is, one that is open, respectful, professional, engaging, fun, challenging, supportive, and effective. “Environment” refers to the formal classroom, small group settings, other settings, in-person or virtual/remote, in which learning or teaching might occur, including office hours and communications with the instructor and fellow students, and the overall climate and culture of the class.

Please note: Course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. As with any course in social work, course

topics may at times be political and/or personal in nature. Course content, class discussions, and self-reflection might trigger strong feelings. Every member of the class is responsible for creating a space that is both civil and intellectually rigorous. Even when strongly disagreeing with another’s point of view, it is important to remain respectful and mindful of the ways that personal identities shape lived experiences. Disrespectful language or behavior based on protected class (e.g., ability, age, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, pregnancy, etc.) disrupts and detracts from the learning environment and will not be tolerated. All such behavior will be reported to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX). An inclusive learning environment values the diversity in the class as an asset to the educational experience. Students should inform the instructor of any concerns that they have in this regard.

Furthermore, it is each student’s responsibility and right to determine how much personal information they disclose in class discussions, activities, and assignments. Students should be aware that complete privacy or confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in an on-line platform or classroom setting. Students also should note that since this is an academic and professional setting, the instructor may follow up with any student that discloses safety concerns. Students are encouraged to review the list of support resources at the end of the syllabus and to contact the instructor with any questions or concerns.

Please refer to the rubric below for the **criteria that will be used to determine the participation grade**. For each of five criteria, between 0 and 2 points can be earned, for a maximum of 10 points.

Criteria	Never or Rarely	Regularly	Often or Always
a. Student demonstrates active learning.	0	1	2
b. Student demonstrates proactive learning.	0	1	2
c. Student meaningfully participates.	0	1	2
d. Student contributes to a positive learning environment.	0	1	2
e. Student’s participation aligns with course expectations inside and outside of the classroom, synchronously and asynchronously.	0	1	2

Grading Scale

Assignment and course grades will be based on the following:

Grade Point Average / Letter Grade		Corresponding Numeric Grade / Letter 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 – 2.87	B-	80 – 82	B-
2.25 – 2.50	C+	77 – 79	C+
1.90 – 2.24	C	73 – 76	C
1.89 & below	C-	70 – 72	C-

Please note: A grade below “C” is considered a failing grade for graduate students at USC.

Within the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck 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.

IX. Assignment Submissions, Extensions & Extra Credit Policy

By the specified deadlines, assignments should be submitted through the course’s learning management system (LMS). Students are responsible for ensuring successful

submission of their assignments and are encouraged to maintain a copy of the submission confirmation for their records.

Prior to the due date, extensions may be granted for extenuating circumstances at the instructor's discretion. The instructor will confirm an extension and revised due date in writing/email. If the instructor accepts a late submission, it could be marked down for each day late. Assignments submitted more than one week past the posted due date may not be accepted for grading; however, this is at the instructor's discretion, assuming extenuating circumstances. The instructor may require documentation of the extenuating circumstance in considering an extension request.

Once an assignment is graded, the grade is final, unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., error in determining grade, academic integrity violation). Extra credit on an assignment is not permitted. Re-doing an assignment with the expectation that it will be re-graded is not permitted.

X. Grading Timeline

Students should expect grading and feedback from the instructor within two weeks of assignment submission. The instructor will notify students of any extenuating circumstances that might affect this grading timeline.

XI. Statement about Incompletes and In Progress Grades

The grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if a student is in good standing in the course and there the work left to be completed is due to 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."

[For Practicum courses only] At the discretion of the instructor, In Progress (IP) grades may be granted, given extenuating circumstances.

XII. Attendance

As a professional school, class attendance and participation are essential to students' professional training and development at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the class. Students cannot actively, proactively, or meaningfully contribute to a positive learning environment if they are not in attendance. 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 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 that will be missed or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to the [USC Student Handbook](#) and to the USC School of Social Work Student Handbook for additional information on attendance policies.

XIII. Classroom Norms

Class ground rules help to promote a positive learning environment by specifying behaviors that are encouraged and discouraged. The instructor will facilitate a class discussion to generate mutually agreed upon ground rules for the learning environment.

XIV. Zoom Etiquette and Use of Technology in the Classroom

For campus-based students, the use of laptops, tablets, smart phones during class generally is not recommended. Students may use these devices, however, if doing so contributes to their learning and is not disruptive to others in the class. For both campus and VAC students, permitted uses of technology include using laptops, tablets, smart phones to access course readings and materials, to take notes, and to complete small group activities and discussions. Non-permitted uses of technology include using laptops, tablets, smart phones to check email and social media, and to text or communicate with others who are not members of the class. Use of smart phones during class is not permitted except in an emergency or during a break. To minimize disruptions, students should place their phones on mute or in airplane mode before coming to class.

XV. Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. Students may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the [Office of Academic Integrity \(OAI\)](#).

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [Student Handbook](#), the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and [university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Special Note on the Use of AI Generators

AI generators, such as such as ChatGPT4 and Bard, can be useful tools. However, AI programs do not replace human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. AI text generators also may present incorrect or biased information and incomplete analyses. Within limited circumstances, with instructor permission and proper disclosure and attribution (see [USC Libraries' generative AI guide](#)), AI generators may be permitted in this course, per the University's academic integrity regulations. Using these tools without the instructor's permission, and without proper attribution and disclosure, constitutes a violation of academic integrity and will be reported to the [Office of Academic Integrity](#).

XVI. Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation, is prohibited. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor (Living our Unifying Values: [The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media (Living our Unifying Values: [The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

XVII. Course Evaluations

The USC Learning Experience evaluation occurs at the end of each semester. This evaluation is an important review of students' experiences in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation will be discussed in class by your instructor. In addition to the end-of-semester evaluation, a mid-semester evaluation is implemented in the School of Social Work. The process and intent of the mid-semester evaluation also will be discussed by your instructor.

XVIII. Required Textbooks

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

In addition to the required texts, other required readings are available through USC's online reserves system, ARES, and/or in the USC Libraries. A USC email address and password are required to access the system: <https://reserves.usc.edu/ares/ares.dll>. Use the search bar to locate the course by School, course number or Lead Instructor's last name.

XIX. Recommended Materials & Resources

Pyrczak, F. (2012). *Evaluating research in academic journals: A practical guide to realistic evaluation*. Pyrczak Publishing.

Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). *Using research for evidence-based practice* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Guides for Academic Integrity, APA Style Formatting, Writing & Research

American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Publisher.

APA formatting and style guide: The OWL at Purdue.
<https://owl.purdue.edu/>

USC guide to avoiding plagiarism:
<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/plagiarism>

USC guide to APA 7th writing style <https://libguides.usc.edu/APA7th>

Sample List of Professional Social Work Organizations

National Association of Social Workers. Available at <http://www.naswdc.org>

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research.
Available at <http://www.iaswresearch.org>

Society for Social Work and Research. Available at <http://www.sswr.org>

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Available at <https://www.cswe.org/>

XX. Course Schedule

The table below presents the topics for each unit of instruction. Students are expected to attend class having completed the required reading and, if applicable, the asynchronous course material. Asterisk(*) indicates a unit/week with a holiday.

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
1* Jan 11	Introduction to the Science of Social Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome and Introductions ▪ Overview of Course and Syllabus ▪ Introduction to the Science of Social Work ▪ Social Work Values and Empirical Evidence 	Required Rubin, A. & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i> . – Chapter 1: Why Study Research Recommended Brekke, J. S. (2012). Shaping a science of social work. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i> , 22(5), 455-464. Longhofer, J., & Floersch, J. (2014). Values in a science of social work: values-informed research and research-informed values. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i> , 24(5), 527-534. National Association of Social Work (2021). <i>Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers</i> . Washington, DC. https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English	
2* Jan 18	Engaging in Evidence-Based Social Work Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) in Social Work ▪ Assessing Clients and Identifying Professional Knowledge Needs ▪ Specifying Practice Dilemmas 	Required Rubin, A. & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i> . – Chapter 2: Evidence-Based Practice – Chapter 4: Factors Influencing the Research Process Recommended Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner's Guide to Using Research for Evidence-Based Practice</i> . – Chapter 1 - Introduction to evidence-based practice	

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 2 – Steps in the EBP process Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2012). <i>Evidence-Based Practice in Clinical Social Work</i> - Chapter 4: Assessment in clinical social work and identifying practice information needs 	
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>Jan 25</p>	<p>Formulating Practice Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the PICO Framework to Formulate Answerable Practice Questions ▪ Using Evidence and Research Hierarchies to Determine the “Best Available Evidence” ▪ Levels of Empirical Evidence ▪ Appraising Levels of Evidence 	<p>Required</p> <p>Rubin, A. & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 7: Problem Formation 7.1-7.4 <p>USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Library: Evidence Based Practice Resources</p> <p>Recommended</p> <p>Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner’s Guide to Using Research for Evidence-Based Practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 3 – Research hierarchies: Which types of research are best for which questions? - https://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/socialworkEBP 	
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>Feb 1</p>	<p>Searching for Empirical Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-disciplinary Sources of Information, Professional Knowledge, and Empirical Evidence ▪ Finding Relevant Empirical Knowledge and the Best Available Evidence ▪ Appraising Sources of Evidence 	<p>Required</p> <p>Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2012). <i>Evidence-Based Practice in Clinical Social Work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 5 – Locating practice research <p>Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i></p> <p>Recommended</p> <p>Appendix A – Using the Library</p> <p>USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Library: Finding Research Materials</p>	

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
		https://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/databases	
5 Feb 8	Appraising Research Articles and the Quality of Evidence; Research Design Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding the Research Process ▪ Research Article Appraisal ▪ Identifying Goals of Research Studies ▪ Appraising Quality of Evidence ▪ Introduction to Research Design [for assessing quality of evidence] ▪ Group Based Designs ▪ Causality 	Required Bohannon, J. (2013). Whose afraid of peer review? <i>Science</i> , 342(6154), 60-65. Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i> – Chapter 3: Quantitative, Qualitative & Mixed Methods of Inquiry – Chapter 12: Experiments and quasi-experiments Recommended Hierarchy of Social Work Evidence https://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/socialworkEBP	ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
6 Feb 15	Measurement Methods: Variables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualitative and Quantitative Measurement ▪ Characteristics of Variables ▪ Ethical and Cultural Issues 	Required Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016): <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i> – Chapter 7: Conceptualization in Quantitative Inquiry	
7* Feb 22	Measurement Methods: Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data Collection Techniques ▪ Locating Testing and Measurement Tools ▪ Ethical and Cultural Issues (Continued) 	Required Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i> : – Chapter 9: Quantitative and Qualitative Measurement Instruments – Chapter 10: Surveys Recommended https://libguides.usc.edu/socialwork/measurements	
8	Appraising Measurement	Required	

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
Feb 29	Methods and Instruments: Reliability and Validity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Validity and Reliability ▪ Research Article Appraisal ▪ Identifying and Appraising Measurement Methods ▪ Appraising and Selecting Instruments for Professional Social Work Practice 	Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 8: Measurement in Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry Recommended Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner's Guide to Using Research for Evidence-Based Practice.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 11: Critically appraising and selecting assessment instruments 	
9 Mar 7	Sampling Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nonrandom and Random Sampling Methods ▪ Ethical and Cultural Issues 	Required Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 11: Sampling: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches 	
Mar 10-17	SPRING RECESS!!		
10 Mar 21	Appraising Sampling Methods, External Validity and Applicability of Evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ External Validity and Threats to External validity ▪ Appraising Applicability of Evidence 	Required Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2012). <i>Evidence-Based Practice in Clinical Social Work:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 7: Evaluating research: Other issues of research methodology in Evidence-Based medicine/Evidence-Based practice 	ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
11 Mar 28	Research Ethics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Historical examples of research involving human subjects and their impact ▪ Belmont Report 	Required Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 5: Ethical Issues in Social Work Research - Chapter 6: Culturally Competent Research 	

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
<p>12 Apr 4</p>	<p>Appraising Internal Validity and Group-Based Design Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of Group Based Design [Unit 5] ▪ Internal Validity and Threats to Internal Validity ▪ Research Article Appraisal ▪ Identifying and Appraising Design Methods 	<p>Required</p> <p>Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 12: Experiments and Quasi Experiments - Chapter 13: Single-Case Evaluation Design <p>Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner's Guide to Using Research for Evidence-Based Practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 4: Criteria for inferring effectiveness: How do we know what works? <p>Recommended</p> <p>Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2012). <i>Evidence-Based Practice in Clinical Social Work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 6 – Evaluating research: Research designs in Evidence-Based medicine/Evidence-Based practice 	
<p>13 Apr 11</p>	<p>Understanding and Synthesizing Results from Research Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualitative Data and Analyses ▪ <u>Research Article Appraisal:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpreting Results from Qualitative Studies ▪ Adapting and Translating Qualitative Evidence into Interculturally-Responsive and Competent Practice 	<p>Required</p> <p>Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 18: Qualitative data analysis - Chapter 15: Additional Methods in Qualitative Inquiry 	
<p>14</p>	<p>Understanding and Synthesizing Results</p>	<p>Required</p>	

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
Apr 18	from Research Articles (Continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quantitative Data and Analyses ▪ Results from Quantitative Studies and Meta-Analyses ▪ Systematic Reviews ▪ Research Article Appraisal ▪ Adapting and Translating Quantitative Evidence into Interculturally-Responsive and Competent Practice 	<p>Rubin, A., & Babbie, R. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 17: Quantitative data analysis <p>Recommended Review</p> <p>Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2012). <i>Evidence-Based Practice in Clinical Social Work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 7: Evaluating research: Other issues of research methodology in Evidence-Based medicine/ Evidence-Based practice - Chapter 8: Meta-analysis and systematic reviews: Aggregating research results <p>Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner's Guide to Using Research for Evidence-Based Practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix B: What you do and don't need to know about statistics when critically appraising studies 	
15 Apr 25	Using the Science of Social Work to Improve Practice, Policy, Services, and Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparing for Implementation and Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practice Decision-Making ▪ Engaging Clients in Decision-Making ▪ Course Review and Wrap-Up ▪ Next Steps for the Science of Social Work 	<p>Required</p> <p>Brekke, J. S. (2014). A science of social work, and social work as an integrative discipline: have we gone too far, or not far enough? <i>Research on Social Work Practice, 24(5), 517-523.</i></p> <p>Mosley, J.E., Marwell, N.P., & Ybarra, M. (2019). How the “what works” movement is failing human service organizations, and what social work can do to fix it. <i>Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance, 43(4), 326-335.</i></p> <p>Recommended</p> <p>Drisko, J. W., & Grady, M. D. (2012). <i>Evidence-Based Practice in Clinical Social Work:</i></p>	ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE

Unit	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 9" Shared decision-making with the client - Chapter 10: Finalizing the treatment plan and practice evaluation <p>Rubin, A., & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner's Guide to Using Research for Evidence-Based Practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 12: Monitoring client progress 	
May 1-8	Exam Week – NO CLASS		

*Spring 2024 Calendar & Holidays**

Classes Begin	Monday	January 8
Marting Luther King's Birthday	Monday	January 15
President's Day	Monday	February 19
SPRING RECESS	Sunday- Sunday	March 10-17
Classes End	Friday	April 26
Study Days	Saturday-Tuesday	April 27-30
Exams	Wednesday-Wednesday	May 1-8

XXI. University Statement on Academic Conduct And Support Systems

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, comprises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. Students may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask the instructor if unsure about what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers in the classroom or in practicum. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course/practicum placement. The LOA must be given to each course/practicum instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible, as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. Students may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems

Students' health and well-being are important. Reaching out for assistance with physical, emotional, social, academic, spiritual, financial, and professional wellbeing is encouraged. USC has resources and support systems in place to help students succeed. Additional resources can be found on the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Website at: <https://dworakpeck.usc.edu/student-life/we-care-student-wellness-initiative> or by reaching out to the Student Wellness Coordinator in the SDP Office of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (sdp.adc@usc.edu).

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for campus-based students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

VAC Students: Uwill Counseling Services

Uwill is a counseling service available to VAC students. It is designed to support students during their time in the program. Uwill is a leading teletherapy platform that enables college students nationwide to receive real-time counseling online from a network of licensed mental health professionals. Students (enrolled or on leave of absence) can access up to six sessions (180 credits) per year with a licensed clinician at no cost to them.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity - 213-740-7884, kortschakcenter@usc.edu

The Kortschak Center offers academic coaching and resources.

The Writing Center - 213-740-3691, writing@usc.edu

The Writing Center offers individualized feedback on any kind of writing.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

XXII. List of Appendices

- A. Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work ADEI Statement
- B. Preamble to the NASW Code of Ethics
- C. Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Experience

Appendix A: Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

At the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, we aspire to promote anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion in our courses and professional practice. We value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives that our students bring into the classroom as strengths and resources that enrich the academic and learning experience. We offer and value inclusive learning in the classroom and beyond. We integrate readings, materials and activities that are respectful of diversity in all forms, including race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ability and disability, socioeconomic status, religion, and political perspectives. Collectively, we aspire to co-create a brave space with students and instructors to critically examine individual and collective sources of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and systematic oppression that affect the ability of people and communities to thrive. In this way, we fulfill our professional responsibility to practice the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), abide by the [CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#), and address the [American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, Grand Challenges for Social Work](#).

Appendix B: [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#)

Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly

Preamble

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being 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.

Appendix C: Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Experience in this Course

- ✓ Be proactive! TOGETHER, let's do everything we can to make this an educational and enjoyable experience for you. Try to anticipate issues that could present challenges and PLEASE REACH OUT TO ME so that we can problem-solve before rather than after the fact.
- ✓ Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep!
- ✓ Create a professional self-care plan.
- ✓ Complete required readings, assignments and activities before coming to class.
- ✓ Keep up with the assigned readings and assignments. Don't procrastinate!!
- ✓ Come to class and participate in an active, respectful and meaningful way.
- ✓ Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have. If you don't understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
- ✓ Stay offline while in class.
- ✓ Form study groups with other students in the class or in another section of the class.
- ✓ Take advantage of office hours and extra review/discussion sessions offered by your instructor. Contact me if you are concerned about or are struggling in class.
- ✓ If you believe it is necessary to receive support from a content tutor or Writing Support, please inform or involve me. I want to be able to help and support you in any way possible, but I need to know that you want/need support!! I am also happy to meet with you and your tutor.
- ✓ Keep an open mind and hopeful attitude!