

## **Social Work Research Course Syllabus**

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

Number: SCWK 415  
Credits: 5  
Pre-requisites: MATH 241, Statistics; SCWK 351, Internship Seminar  
Co-requisites: SCWK 400, Internship I  
Quarter offered: Fall

### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: John Domitrovich  
Office: Beaverhead Building, Room 131  
Telephone: 275-4889 (SKC); 251-2337 (Missoula)  
E-mail: [john\\_domitrovich@skc.edu](mailto:john_domitrovich@skc.edu)  
Office hours: As posted

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**Social Work Research** introduces knowledge and skills required for basic social work research. It provides an overview of research methods; examines ethical, political, and socio-cultural forces that influence research; and provides practice in reviewing and critically analyzing research designs. [Portfolio Course]

The following BSW program objectives are addressed in this course:

- #1 Apply critical thinking skills.
- #2 Apply the guiding principles and ethical standards of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- #4 Understand mechanisms of oppression and discrimination, particularly as they affect Native Americans, children, and other vulnerable populations.
- #10 Evaluate and apply research skills and studies to practice.
- #11 Evaluate effectiveness of practice.
- #15 Demonstrate cultural competency in practice with diverse populations, specifically with Native American people.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will be able to:

General Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate the ability to construct instruments with which to measure attitudes, behaviors, and issues encountered in a practice setting. (#1, #10)

*Measured by: Quizzes and Research Proposal.*

2. Demonstrate an understanding of basic research design, including program evaluation, and the ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of such designs to evaluate one's own practice. (#1, #2, #10, #11)

*Measured by: Quizzes and Critical Analysis Reports.*

3. Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method in the investigation of human behavior, with an emphasis on social justice and ethical concerns. (#1, #2, #10, #11)

*Measured by: Quizzes and Critical Analysis Reports.*

4. Demonstrate the ability to identify and utilize appropriate sampling techniques. (#1, #10, #11)

*Measured by: Quizzes, Critical Analysis Reports, and Research Proposal.*

5. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of single system design to evaluate and apply research skills to practice settings. (#10, #11)

*Measured by: Single System Design Exercise.*

6. Demonstrate knowledge of basic research skills by applying this knowledge to sample research proposal at end of quarter. (#1, #10, #11)

*Measured by: Research proposal.*

### Critical Thinking Objectives

7. Critically review and assess research conducted by others. (#1, #4, #10, #11)

*Measured by: Critical Analysis Reports.*

8. Demonstrate how to collect and analyze data using both qualitative and quantitative methods and effectively communicate empirically based knowledge. (#1, #2, #10, #15)

*Measured by: Quizzes, Critical Analysis Reports, and Computer Generated Graph Assignments.*

### Cultural Objectives

9. Demonstrate cultural competency in practice with diverse populations, specifically with Native American people. (#1, #4)

*Measured by: Research Studies on Diverse Populations Exercise*

## **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Text: Royce, D. (2004). *Research Methods in Social Work* (10<sup>th</sup> edition). California: Brooks/Cole.

Reading materials may also be handed out in class or be placed on EReserve through the library.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Weekly Quizzes. There will be ten weekly quizzes. If any of these quizzes are missed, without prior approval of the instructor, the student may do a makeup exam, but the highest grade received will be a grade of “C” (70%). The student must do the makeup exam within two class days. The quizzes will include multiple choice, short answer and essay type questions. 20 points each; 200 total points possible.
2. Computer Generated Graphs. These assignments will consist of two sets of graphs. The student will utilize a computer program to generate bar charts, stacked bar charts, line graphs, and pie charts to display sets of given research data. The student will also hypothesize plausible correlations between various data sets, perform scatter-plots of the data, display regression lines and correlation coefficients, and summarize the results. Two reports, each worth 50 points. Due weeks 4 and 6.
3. Single System Design Exercise. The student will utilize single system design techniques to assess an intervention at their internship site, or if such a methodology is not appropriate at the internship site, the student will do the same exercise with simulated data given to the student by the instructor of the course. 50 points. Due week 7.
4. Critical Analysis Reports. There will be two assignments designed to enhance the critical analysis of published research articles. Each assignment will focus on the examination, discussion, and analysis of one published research study. The student will provide a written summary of the article, indicate the research methods used in the study, describe any sampling design used, demonstrate whether reliability and/or validity was addressed and indicate the implications of the study. Each report is worth 50 points. Due weeks 8 and 9.
5. Research Studies on Diverse Population Exercise. Students will be given an example of social/social work research that has been done with a diverse population and they will be asked to assess the research methods used, ethical issues related to the research, and to summarize and assess the importance of the research to general practice. 50 points. Due week 10.
6. Sample Research Proposal. The student must turn in a sample research proposal at the end of the quarter that will demonstrate the students’ basic knowledge with respect to research design, ethical considerations, sampling theory, survey methods, and how this research could be used to evaluate one’s own practice. 100 points. Due week 11.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Class attendance will be considered in the final grade. A total of 100 points will be reserved for class attendance and 50 points for class participation. If the student misses one class, this will not affect his / her grade, but any classes missed after that will decrease the total attendance

points received by 10 points per class day missed. Any student who misses a total of six (6) or more classes will be asked to withdraw from the class. All students are expected to keep up on the assigned reading and to come prepared for class.

## GRADING

Attendance	100 points possible
Participation	50 points possible
Ten Weekly Quizzes	20 points each; 200 total points possible
Two Critical Analysis Assignments	50 points each; 100 total points possible
Two Computer Generated Graphs.	50 points each; 100 total points possible
Sample Research Proposal	100 points possible
Single system Design Exercise	50 points possible
Research Study on Diverse Population Exercise	50 points possible

A total of 750 points possible.

Grades will be based on the following accumulation of points:

675-750=A

600-674=B

525-599=C

450-524=D

Less than 450=F

### **Late work will not be accepted.**

An Incomplete grade (“I”) for this course is NOT an option, except in cases of extreme emergency or the death of a family member. In either situation, instructor approval is required. The instructor must be notified within 48 hours.

## WEEKLY OUTLINE

Week 1:	Discussion of syllabus; read chapters 1 (“Introduction”) and 2 (“The way research proceeds”)
Week 2:	Read chapters 3(“Ethical thinking and research”) and 4 (“Research Design”).
Week 3:	Read Chapter 5 (“Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement”)
Week 4:	Read chapters 6 (“Indexes, Scales, and Typologies”) and 7 (“The Logic of Sampling”); <b>Graphing Assignment #1 due</b>

- Week 5: Read chapters 8 (“Experiments”) and 9 (“Survey Research”)
- Week 6: Midterm Exam; **Graphing Assignment #2 due**  
Read “Single System Research Designs” article
- Week 7: Read chapters 10 (“Qualitative Field Research”) and 11  
 (“Unobtrusive Research”); **Single System Design Exercise due today**
- Week 8: Read Chapters 12 (“Evaluation Research”) and 13  
 (“Qualitative Data Analysis”); **Critical Analysis report #1 due today**
- Week 9: Read chapters 14 (“Quantitative Research”) and 15 (“The Elaboration  
 Model”); **Critical Analysis report #2 due today**
- Week 10: Read chapter 17 (“Reading and Writing Social Research”)  
**Research Study on Diverse Population Exercise due today**
- Week 11: **Research Proposal due this week**

## **SKC Syllabus Supplement**

### **Academic Honor Code**

All course work shall follow the guidelines of the Academic Honor Code as set forth by the SKC Student Handbook. Do your own work; allow other students to do their own work. **Plagiarism** involves the taking of someone else's words, ideas, or writings and presenting them as your own. Avoid plagiarism, and always acknowledge the ideas of others and cite your sources of information. Violation of the Academic Honor Code may result in failure of the assignment, the course, or possible expulsion from school.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations are provided to students with diagnosed or suspected disabilities through the ACCESS Office located in the Social Work Department in the Beaverhead Building. For additional information, contact John Domitrovich, the SKC ACCESS Officer, Beaverhead Building Room 131; 406-275-4889; john\_domitrovich@skc.edu.

### **Appropriate Behavior**

As an enrolled student of Salish Kootenai College, you are expected to display professionalism and responsibility in attitude and behavior. Treat yourself and others with courtesy and respect.

### **Course Transferability**

Transferability of any SKC course to any other academic institution is entirely dependent upon the program requirements of that other institution.

### **Course Responsibilities**

Knowledge of the course content, class lectures, assignments, and syllabus content are the responsibility of the student regardless of absenteeism. Syllabus content and calendars are tentative; instructors will notify you of any changes.

### **Study Time Expectation**

Students are expected to spend one (1) hour in class and a minimum of two (2) hours outside the class per week per every credit hour. For example, if this is a 5-credit course, you are expected to spend 5 hours in class and a minimum of 10 hours outside of class, a total of at least 15 hours each week to earn a C.

### **Attendance**

Good attendance and active participation will help you to achieve success in your academic career. Poor attendance will result in missed information, missed assignments and tests, and possible failure of the course.