

**WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY**

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 9410 Quantitative Research Methods in Social Work 3 Credits

Master Syllabus

I COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

This research course equips students with the knowledge and competence in quantitative research methods needed to conduct independent research in social work practice or social welfare policy. The purpose of this course is to prepare students to select and implement research designs that are appropriate and adequate for answering contemporary social work practice and social welfare policy research questions.

II KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students will demonstrate advanced knowledge and skill in their understanding and articulation of the following:

1. Fundamental aspects of epistemology relevant to social work;
2. Application of the basic elements and phases of research design;
3. Ability to evaluate the quality of research conducted by others;
4. Facility in designing research, especially in aspects preceding data analysis.
5. Use criteria related to validity, reliability, feasibility, and practicality in designing a research study;
6. Application of basic sampling concepts, designs and decisions within research designs;
7. Ability to identify and to strengthen weaknesses in research logic and design;
8. Ability to apply ethical principles in the conduct of research, including human subjects protection, and their relationship to the social work value base;
9. Familiarity with gender and ethnic sensitivity in conducting research;

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10. Ability to provide as well as to accept constructive and productive critiques on research issues and decisions.

III PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Students are expected to demonstrate their progress in basic comprehension, integration, analysis, and application of the course material through class assignments, e.g., papers, presentations, discussions, and draft/final versions of research proposal).

IV COURSE TEXTS AND READINGS

Fowler, F.J. (2002). *Survey research methods*. (3rd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2005). *Research methods for social work* (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Shadish, W.R., Cook, T.D. & Campbell, D.T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Additional Required Readings are identified in Section VIII.

Mandatory On-Line Training on the Protection of Human Research Participants

All students will be required to complete **all modules** of the University's on-line training for the protection of human research participants and to submit documentation substantiating completion. Human Investigation Committee, Wayne State University. Internet WWW page at URL: <http://www.hic.wayne.edu>.

V ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE

Students are introduced to all aspects of research design preceding data analysis. Our class sessions will include informal lectures, class discussions, and student presentations. We will use a seminar format and will critique student assignments, papers and published articles. Nonetheless, this course integrates a heavy experiential learning component whereby students will learn by applying what has been studied, by receiving critical feedback on what you have done, and by attempting to improve your performance in light of that feedback.

VI ROLE OF THE STUDENT

Students are expected to attend all class sessions; absence from class may affect student

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grades, particularly excessive absences and tardiness. More than two absences will result in students being asked to withdraw from the class. Students are expected to arrive for class on time and stay until the end of the class session. Students are expected to be prepared at class time for discussions pertaining to assigned readings and in-class presentations. As a courtesy to all, cell phone use should be restricted to vibrations – no rings. Please limit beeper use to emergencies only. For further details, see the University Statement of Obligations of Students and Faculty Members of the teaching-learning process.

VII GRADING POLICY

Final grades will be determined in the following manner:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Value of Assignment (% of Total Grade)</u>
Written Assignments	25
On-Line HIC Training	-10 points if not completed
In-Class Presentations	15
Draft of Research Proposal	20
Final Version of Research Proposal	40
Total Points	100

The following grading scale will be used to determine your final grade.

A	= 95-100
A-	= 90-94
B+	= 87-89
B	=83-86
B-	=78-82
E	=77 or below

1. Written Assignments

There are six writing assignments, each of which pertains to the development of a research proposal. The first three assignments relate to the development of a researchable question, development of hypotheses and while the second three assignments relate to the development of hypotheses and a suitable research design.

2. In-Class Presentations

Students will prepare 10 minute oral presentations for each of their written assignments. Each student will be required to distribute copies to all classmates of each assignment.