



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

School of Social Work

Semester/Year: Spring 2017

Course Title: Research and Evaluation Methods I

Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 5308 (formerly SOCW 5322)-002

Instructor Name: LaToya Smith-Jones, PhD

Faculty Position: Adjunct

Faculty Profile: <https://www.uta.edu/profiles/latoya-smith>

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Office Hours: By Appointment (Online Class)

Day and Time of Class (if applicable): Online

Location: Online

Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.
Blackboard: <https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/>

A. Description of Course Content

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of and ability to use the evidence-informed practice process to identify, analyze and apply evidence-informed interventions. Students will be able to comprehend both quantitative and qualitative research and to synthesize strengths and weaknesses of the social work literature. Students will be able to synthesize and evaluate research in terms of its content, quality, and applicability to clients. Students will understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge to apply to and evaluate the impact of interventions on clients or clients' presenting problems.

B. Student Learning Outcomes

Section 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:

1. Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice (Relevant assignments: Article Critiques, Research Proposal Paper)
2. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and (Relevant assignments: Ethics Quiz, Article Critiques, Research Proposal Paper)

Section 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Social workers 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. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge.

Social workers:

1. Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry and (Relevant assignments: Ethics Quiz, Article Critiques, Research Proposal Paper)
2. Use research evidence to inform practice. (Relevant assignments: Ethics Quiz, Article Critiques, Research Proposal Paper)

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify elements of an evidence-based practice model, the research process and social work research methods with application to the process of evidence-based practice and evaluation of social work practice and programs.
2. Use and critically examine existing literature with emphasis on issues regarding cultural diversity, gender, sexual orientation, and sensitive topics (i.e., social and economic justice, oppression, and populations at risk).
3. Apply relevant social, cultural, economic and other diversity factors in the selection of topics, the methods employed, the nature of analysis, and the conclusions drawn in the research endeavor.
4. Apply scientific methods to issues of concern for social workers, including how to formulate meaningful research questions, select appropriate research designs, develop and employ basic methods of data collection and conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis.
5. Use empirical studies as a knowledge base to support professional interventions and decisions for the enhancement of client well-being.
6. Interpret statistical concepts and present results as they apply to social work.

C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Engel, R. J., & Schutt, R. K. (2014). *Fundamentals of social work research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2013). *Research methods for social work* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations

A. ASSIGNMENTS 1-3 (400 points): Research Proposal

There will be a portal located under Course Materials in order to upload the topic of your proposal. Failure to upload the topic will result in a 10 point deduction from Step One of the Assignment. (This will not be accepted late.)

- **Step 1:** Problem Statement (75 points)
- **Step 2:** Literature Review (125 points)
- **Step 3:** Methodology (150 points)

A detailed description will be uploaded by the second week of class of the requirements of the assignments (Step 1 - Step 3)

Students will complete the research proposal project individually.

The research proposal can be quantitative or qualitative. The purpose of this assignment is to challenge you to integrate and apply a majority of the information that you will learn through this class over the course of the semester. You will complete this assignment in three steps. After each step, you will get feedback within two weeks. The individual will prepare a final proposal to present to the entire class under Discussions (Student Learning Outcome 3-4). You will upload the Final Product in Blackboard for the class to view and provide feedback.

The text and references for the research proposal must be written in APA style (APA Publication Manual, 6th ed.) No exceptions.

Again, the requirements for Steps 1-3 will be uploaded by the second week of the course and will be located under Course Materials.

Final Proposal- 25 points, with corrections

IRB Human Subjects Training (20 points): Social sciences research generally includes data obtained through the use of human subjects. Due to the sensitivity of this issue, all human subjects research conducted at the University must be approved by the school's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before beginning. The major goals of the IRB are to minimize the risk to human subjects (beneficence); ensure all subjects consent and are fully informed about the research and any risks (autonomy); and promote equity in human subjects research (justice). Therefore, this course requires students to take the human subjects protection course by following the steps at <https://www.uta.edu/ra/real/loginscreen.php>. (Student Learning Outcome 3)

Plagiarism Tutorial (20 points): This tutorial is designed to make you aware of what constitutes plagiarism. This will assist you in avoiding plagiarism in your papers for this class and others.

1. Complete the tutorial available at <http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/index.html>.
2. Then, complete the quiz at the end of the tutorial.
3. The tutorial provides you with an option to email you certificate to your professor. Please upload the certificate in the space provided in Blackboard. Do not e-mail the certificate. E-mailing the certificate and not uploading it will result in a zero.

Quizzes Covering Assigned Readings (120 points total): A fifteen-question quiz will be administered for the weeks noted on the syllabus. The quizzes will cover any information that has been presented in class (weeks before) or information that should have been studied for that week (textbook, journal articles, and PowerPoints, videos). Students will have 20 minutes to complete each quiz. Quizzes will be available all week and therefore, they can not be made up or turned in late, no exceptions.

Discussions Boards/Weekly Assignment: Should be completed weekly. This assignment opens on Monday at 8 a.m. and closes on the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. You must respond to 2 classmates (5 points) unless otherwise noted and thoroughly answer the question. Your initial post is worth 5 points. There will be specific directions for each post. Please follow them in order to get full credit. They are not accepted late. Each response to a classmate must be a minimum of 100 words, unless noted. Each initial post should be 250 words unless noted. Failure to do so will result in a deduction in points. Please proofread your work, failure to do so will also result in point deductions. Discussions and Weekly assignments may come in different forms, make sure that you read the directions. These assignments are not accepted late and therefore will not be graded after the due date. Please do not ask for an extension because it will not be granted regardless of the reason.

Research Critique(3): 30 points each

Why Research Critiques? Research critiques are opportunities for you to analyze research concepts and academic articles in a way that can be easily understood by fellow social workers, advocates, and clients. The unfortunate reality is that most of the research that is produced today ends up in an academic journal, where it is likely to be read by only a few people. In fact, one review suggested that it takes an average of 17 years for original research to become standard practice. In social work, this can have devastating consequences—imagine that today, researchers published a paper discovering an important brain mechanism that can help address the trauma caused by severe child abuse and neglect, but it wasn't until 17 years later that the foster care system actually implemented a program that was based on this knowledge? In order for research to be helpful, it must be disseminated (communicated) in a timely manner to the people that are

actually going to apply the research, which means that social workers must be able to review, comprehend and synthesize research concepts for the benefit of their clients.

What is covered in each Research Critique? You will have 3 different research critiques. Each one will challenge you to identify and apply research concepts in order to critique a publication. You may be asked to review a news article, a research article, a program evaluation, a speech, video, etc. Publications will vary each semester depending on current events, politics and emerging research.

How do I complete a Research Critique? The instructor will provide you with a series of questions to answer in each research critique. These questions may be multiple choice, matching, true/false, or short answer. In completing each research critique, you'll need to refer to the textbook to answer each question and properly apply the research concepts from the course. Research critiques will be available on Blackboard and will cover the assigned reading for that week. You only have one attempt to complete the Research Critique. Research Critiques are not time-limited, which means you can work on it throughout the week, pausing and returning to it as you need.

F. Grading

A= 706.5 and above

B= 628-706.4

C= 549.5 - 627.9

D= 471- 549.4

F= below 471

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

G. Make-Up Exams

There will not be any make-up Quizzes, Exams, Research Critiques or Discussion Boards. Quizzes and exams will be timed and if you do not take a quiz or exam, you will receive a zero. The Sections (Problem Statement, Literature Review and Methodology) of the Research Proposal will not be accepted after being 7 days late. Each day the Sections of the Research Proposal are late, 15 points will be deducted. Please do not ask for extensions of assignments, regardless of the reason behind it. Assignments will not be accepted through e-mail. If you are having ANY technical issues with Blackboard and submitting assignments, you must contact the Blackboard helpdesk and not the course instructor. Incompletes will not be given for this course.

For assignments that are accepted late, points will be deducted on weekend as well. The Blackboard helpdesk is available on the weekends as well. Again, contact them through when you have technical issues.

H. Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients. As the instructor of this section,

I will maintain attendance records. If you do not complete an assignment you will be counted absent for that week. Please remember that you must check your e-mail and Course announcements in order to ensure that you are aware any changes or extra credit for the course.

I. Course Schedule

Week	Week Starting	Topics	Required Readings	Assignments
1	1/17-1/22	Introduction to course Introduction to research	Review syllabus	Introduction Discussion Board due 1/22
2	1/23-1/29	Science, Society, and Social Work Research	Ch. 1	Discussion Board Quiz #1
3	1/30-2/5	Process and problems in social work research	Ch. 2	Plagiarism Tutorial Discussion Board
4	2/6 -2/12	Ethics	Ch. 3	IRB Human Subjects Training Discussion Board
5	2/13-2/19	Conceptualization and measurement	Ch. 4	Discussion Board Research Journal Critique # 1
6	2/20-2/26	Sampling	Ch. 5	Research Proposal - Problem Statement Quiz #2
7	2/27 - 3/5	Experimental design	Ch. 6 -	Discussion Board Quiz # 3
8	3/6 - 3/12	Single-subject design	Ch. 7	Discussion Board Quiz #4
9	3/13 - 3/19	Spring Break		
10	3/20 - 3/26	Survey research	Ch. 8	Discussion Board Quiz # 5
11	3/27 - 4/2	Qualitative methods	Ch. 9	Discussion Board Quiz # 6
12	4/3 - 4/9	Evaluation methods	Ch. 11	Research Proposal - Literature Review
13	4/10 - 4/16	Quantitative Data Analysis	Ch. 12	Discussion Board Quiz # 7
14	4/17 - 4/23	Qualitative Data Analysis	Ch. 13	Research Proposal - Methodology
15	4/24- 4/30	Reporting Research	Ch. 14	Discussion Board Quiz # 8
16	5/1-5/5	Research Journal		Journal Research Critique #3

17	5/6 - 5/12			Final Proposal Due: All Parts 1-3 Remember to complete class survey!
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As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

K. Grade Grievances

See BSW Program Manual at: https://www.uta.edu/ssw/_documents/bsw/bsw-program-manual.pdf
Or MSW Program Manual at: http://www.uta.edu/ssw/_documents/msw/msw-program-manual.pdf

L. Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#), [major-based learning centers](#), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](#), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers **free** tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email IDEAS@uta.edu or call (817) 272-6593.

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming oneself or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call MAVS Talk at 817-272-TALK (817-272-8255). For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit <http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php>) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit <https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php>) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

M. Librarian to Contact

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is in the campus Central Library. He may also be contacted via E-mail: dillard@uta.edu or by Cell phone: **(817) 675-8962**, below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: <http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php>

The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:

Library Home Page..... <http://www.uta.edu/library>
Subject Guides..... <http://libguides.uta.edu>
Subject Librarians..... <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php>
Course Reserves..... <http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do>
Library Tutorials <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/tutorials.php>
Connecting from Off- Campus..... <http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus>
Ask a Librarian..... <http://ask.uta.edu>

N. Drop Policy

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

O. Disability Accommodations

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364.

Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

P. Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.

Q. Title IX Policy

The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean*

Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.

R. Academic Integrity

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

S. Electronic Communication

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

T. Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

U. Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

V. Final Review Week

For semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the*

class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.