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Social Work Research I
Social Work 6011
Fall 2020

INSTRUCTOR: Armando Barragán, PhD, MSW

OFFICE: SB 419

PHONE: (909) 537-3501

EMAIL AND RESPONSE POLICY: abarragan@csusb.edu; **Note:** Please allow for 48 hours during business days and 72 hours during weekends and holidays to receive an email response.

CLASSROOM AND COURSE MEETING TIMES:

I. SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION

CSUSB's School of Social Work offers accessible, dynamic, and rigorous academic programs that prepare students with the professional values, knowledge and practice skills to effectively enhance the well-being of the diverse populations and communities of our region, state and world.

II. COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Introduction to research methods, ethics and politics of research, role of research in social work practice, sampling techniques, measurement, data analysis, research designs, problem formulation, and literature review. Culminates in a preliminary Research Project Proposal. Formerly offered as SW 612 Semester.

III. COURSE OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

SW 6011 is the first of four courses in the MSW research sequence. This course is an introduction to social work research. Knowledge and skills learned in this course are applied to the development of the Master's Project Proposal in SW 6012. The resulting research project is then implemented in SW 6013 and 6014.

This course is designed to help students understand major issues and processes underlying all empirical research endeavors and their application in a variety of research designs in the context of social work practice. Also, exploring the role of social work and the ethical, cultural, and pragmatic considerations that are of particular importance for research undertaken in a professional context.

IV. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND EPAS COVERAGE

SW 6011 will provide students with the foundation knowledge and skills necessary to begin to plan and carry out research related to their practice of social work. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

Number	Objectives
1	<p>Demonstrate understanding of the importance and role of research in social work practice which goes beyond common sense, personal impressions, unsubstantiated generalizations and stereotypes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Covered by: readings, lectures, and in class exercise weeks 1-11 b. Assessed by: Problem Formulation Assignment & Preliminary Proposal c. EPAS Competency & Dimension: 4, Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice; Knowledge Dimension
2	<p>Achieve a working understanding of the major issues that must be considered in all research, including: problem formulation, conceptualization and operationalization, literature review, measurement, reliability and validity, instrument construction, sampling, and data analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Covered by: readings, lectures, and in class exercise weeks 1-11 b. Assessed by: Problem Formulation Assignment & Preliminary Proposal c. EPAS Competency & Dimension: 4, Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice; Knowledge Dimension
3	<p>Explore various paradigms currently used in social work practice and an appreciation of the different contributions to practice knowledge that each can provide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Covered by: readings, lectures, class exercises, Week 1-11 b. Assessed by: written assignments and exam c. EPAS Competency & Dimension: 9, Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities; Knowledge, Cognitive/Affective Dimensions
4	<p>Assess various research designs that can be used within each general paradigm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Covered by: readings, lectures, and in class exercise weeks 6-11 b. Assessed by: homework, exam, Preliminary Proposal c. EPAS Competency & Dimension: 4, Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice; Knowledge Dimension
5	<p>Attain knowledge and ability to address the ethical, cultural, and pragmatic issues that must be given serious consideration in designing social work research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Covered by: readings, lectures, and class exercises (weeks 1 through 3) on research ethics and how these values are congruent with ethical standards of practice b. Assessed by: homework, exam c. EPAS Competency & Dimension: 1, Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior, Knowledge Dimension; 2, Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice, Knowledge; Cognitive/Affective Dimension

V. TEXTS/READINGS

1. Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2013). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (11th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 9780190859022 (**Required**)
2. Galvan, J. L. (2014). *Writing literature reviews* (7th ed.). Glendale, CA: Pycszak Publishing.
ISBN: 9780415315746 (**Recommended**)

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Course objectives will be met through lectures, class presentation by students, discussion, assigned readings, in-class activities, and exams. Students are expected to read assigned readings prior to class and to be prepared for graduate level discussion. Also, **please check your emails and Blackboard (Bb) course page daily, as I communicate virtually to update you on class news not otherwise mentioned in class.**

Cell Phones/Laptops

Cell phones should be silent during class time and not used for communication purposes. Laptops (and similar devices) may be used for educational purposes only (such as writing notes, accessing material related to this class). Any other use or any disruption due to laptop or other electronic device use will result in discontinuance of further use.

Class Attendance

This class is scheduled to meet twice per week. **Attendance in class is expected.** Students will have two free absences (excused or unexcused). Three absences will result in a full letter grade reduction for the course. Four absences will result in a fail. Two tardies will result in an absence. Leaving class before it is over will be considered an absence. Attendance sign-in sheet is passed around immediately starting the class hour. **If your name is not on the attendance sheet, it will be treated as an absence.** As a professional courtesy, please advise me via email if you are going to miss class.

Class Participation

An MSW is a professional degree that leads to providing services to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Participation in class discussion and in class exercises is expected. Communication is vital in this profession. Social workers must be able to speak in front of groups, as well as within group settings and with individuals. The use of self is important to develop. These skills will be practiced in this class.

Late Assignments/Exams(s)

Assignments must be turned in by the due date listed in the course syllabus. Exam(s) must be completed on the date of the exam. Any changes in due dates or exam date will be announced in class and/or on Bb. Unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, **no late assignments or exam(s) will be accepted/completed.**

Presentation of Written Assignments

The Problem Formulation and Final Paper should follow the formatting requirement as outlined by The Office of Graduate Studies

(<http://gradstudies.csusb.edu/thesisprojectdissertation/formattingmanuscript/manuscriptTemplate.html>).

A template of this format, specific for Social Work Research Projects, will be provided to you on Bb for your convenience.

Writing Resources Available Online

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

- *Highly recommended resource. Good for knowing how to cite and reference different types of sources.*

APA Style CENTRAL[®]: <http://www.apastyle.org/>

- *Additional resources from the authority of APA style formatting.*

VII. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

Course assignments are given the following value towards your final grade:

Assignment	Percentage of final grade	Due dates
Homework Assignments (2)	20%	Apr 30 & May 23
Problem Formulation	15%	Apr 25
Exam	25%	May 30
Preliminary Proposal	30%	Jun 11
Attendance & Participation	10%	Ongoing
Total	100%	

Homework Assignments

The goal of the homework assignments is to practice the concepts covered in class. Understanding the material, especially in a course such as this, is best done through application. The questions will include vignettes, multiple choice, short answer and a variety of other forms. On the date they are due, we will review it as a class. **You will get full credit if you complete the assignment by the due date. Only hardcopies brought to class will earn credit.**

Problem Formulation

The goal of this assignment is to prepare you for your Master's Research Project, which will take up most of your time and effort going into your second year. The Problem Formulation – part of the first chapter in the Master's Project Proposal – is an important section of your Master's Project. The Problem Formulation shapes the direction of your research project and gives the reader a clear idea of what issues you plan to address in your Project.

The Problem Formulation describes the problem your project seeks to address. By providing background information as context, your Problem Formulation should explain why studying this

problem is important for the field of social work. At the end, you will provide a research question, a key part of the Problem Formulation that establishes the focus of your proposed study.

I do not anticipate you to know exactly what your research topic is going to be when you start your Advanced Year. Do not stress too much about this. However, take this as an opportunity to start thinking about it, and to practice how to state a solid research question. The research question, in my experience, has always been difficult for students to obtain mastery. Practicing this before SW 613 will help you succeed in the Master’s Project.

Detailed information is provided in the Problem Formulation handout.

Exam

The goal of the exam is to assess your understanding of the concepts covered from Weeks 1-8. The midterm will be structured similar to the homework assignments & class activities (i.e., vignettes, short answer, multiple choice and others). You are free to use your notes and assignments to complete the exam. You cannot use your computer, mobile device or consult a classmate.

Preliminary Research Project Proposal (also referred as Preliminary Proposal)

The Preliminary Research Project Proposal is the culmination of the course. Similar to the Problem Formulation, the goal of the Preliminary Proposal is to prepare you for your Master’s Project in your Advanced Year. The Preliminary Proposal includes the Problem Formulation – which you have already completed and updated – Literature Review, Preliminary Thoughts on Design, Feasibility, and References. The format of this assignment is structured like the more formal Research Project Proposal you will complete in SW 613.

The Preliminary Proposal must be **submitted on Bb by the due date and time (found at the end of this syllabus)**.

Detailed information is provided in the Preliminary Research Project Proposal handout.

In the School of Social Work, M.S.W. grades are assigned as follows:

Percent	Letter grade
100-96	A Excellent
95-90	A- Very good
89-86	B+ Good
85-83	B Fair
82-80	B- Poor
79-76	C+ Below course expectations
75-73	C Seriously below expectations
≤ 72	F Failed course

Meaning of Grading Scale Descriptions

This section explains how the instructor evaluates your assignments and how your overall grade is determined.

(A) *Excellent*

- Far above expected performance or criteria.
- Extensive use, understanding and appropriate integration of a number of required, optional and other relevant readings.
- Clear evidence of the use of the student's own creative ideas and not just a repetition of ideas presented in class or in readings. There is evidence of the student's own critical thought.
- Special insights that go beyond what the authors had in mind. Able to analyze and apply ideas.
- Assignment is well organized, logical and well written.

(A-) *Very Good*

- Well above expected performance.
- The student used and incorporated relevant required course readings, as well as optional relevant readings in an appropriate fashion.
- Demonstrated critical thinking, logical progression of ideas and good, clear linkages between various readings and the ideas presented.
- Evidence of the use of the student's own ideas.
- Shows a beginning ability to analyze ideas. Also, a conceptual understanding of the issues under discussion.
- Assignment is well organized, logical and well written.

(B+) *Good*

- Assignment is within expected performance.
- Generally used required readings only.
- Demonstrated some evidence of own thinking.
- Some evidence of ability to integrate readings with ideas under discussion.
- For the most part, the paper is well organized, logical and well written.

(B) *Fair*

- Little use of readings.
- Little use of critical thinking and originality.
- Does not fully address all components required of the assignment.
- Writing, clarity and organization minimal.

(B-) *Poor*

- Failure at the graduate level. You will pass this course with this grade, but must get a high grade in another course to maintain 3.0 GPA for the term.
- No use of readings.
- Lack of critical thinking and originality.
- Writing and organization not acceptable at graduate level.

(C+/C) *Below and Seriously Below Expectations*

- Does not come close to addressing the criteria listed above.

VIII. WRITING COACH

The School of Social Work has a writing coach especially for its students. Our coach, Francesca Astiazaran, will help you identify problems you might have with your writing and assist you in finding solutions. **You can visit the writing coach at any stage in your writing: from as early as brainstorming and/or understanding your prompt to the final stages of your paper (and, of course, everything in between).** While she is not an editor and cannot simply go through your paper and "fix" things, she can help you with issues such as grammar, sentence structure, and word choice as well. Francesca can meet with you on campus, online (Via Zoom), or by email. Whichever type of appointment you choose will require an appointment in advance. You can visit the calendar and find instructions for booking an appointment at <https://csbs.csusb.edu/social-work/coach>.

If you need more help, you can also make an appointment at the CSUSB Writing Center: <http://undergradstudies.csusb.edu/wc/>

IX. INTERNET ACCESS TO COURSE MATERIAL

A Blackboard site is available for this class, in which the instructor will provide you with all of the materials you will need for the course.

X. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Plagiarism and Cheating

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's definition of and consequences for plagiarism and cheating (Under "Academic Regulations and Standards" in the Bulletin of Courses, <http://bulletin.csusb.edu/>). Among the possible consequences for plagiarism and/or cheating is expulsion.

Support for Students with Disabilities

The School of Social Work supports the University's commitment to diversity and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Faculty will provide reasonable accommodations to any student who is registered with The Office of Services to Students with Disabilities (SSD; <https://www.csusb.edu/ssd>). If you need accommodations in order to participate in this class, please let the instructor of the course know and contact SSD at (909) 537-5238.

Cal State San Bernardino Statement of Commitment to Diversity Excerpt

"In our commitment to the furthering of knowledge and fulfilling our educational mission, California State University, San Bernardino seeks a campus climate that welcomes, celebrates, and promotes respect for the entire variety of human experience. In our commitment to diversity, we welcome people from all backgrounds and we seek to include knowledge and values from many cultures in the curriculum and extra-curricular life of the campus community...Dimensions of diversity shall include, but are not limited to, the following: race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual

orientation, sex, gender identity, gender expression, ability, socioeconomic status, cultural orientation, national origin, and age” (From CSU San Bernardino’s University Diversity Committee, Statement of Commitment to Diversity, <http://diversity.csusb.edu/>, 2017).

Dropping and Adding

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they have enrolled in their classes, or officially dropped then if they do not intend to attend, by Census Date (usually two weeks after the start of the quarter). There are increasing penalties for not dropping or being properly enrolled by the Census Date (refer to “Academic Regulations and Standards” in the Bulletin of Courses, <http://bulletin.csusb.edu/>).

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The CSUSB campus is typically a very safe place. However, unforeseen events can happen anywhere. The purpose of this section of the syllabus to review different types of emergencies together to have a plan in mind. 911 can be called any time there is a need for an emergency response. The non-emergency phone number for campus police is (909) 537-5165. On campus phone, the number is 75165. The campus escort service for company walking to your car is (909) 537-5165.

If a class is canceled due to campus closing, please go to your course Blackboard site to see if there is an alternative assignment for that class session or for other updates.

The list below cannot cover every aspect of every possible situation, but it should cover some basics and provide some initial preparedness.

Emergency Preparedness Checklist

- Building Alarm goes off (fire or other). Evacuate building calmly. Only use stairs. Proceed as a group to the grass area beyond Parking Lot M (in front of Visual Arts Building). Stay there until building Marshall (wearing reflective vest) indicates all clear. There may be no Marshall in the evening, so go to the grassy area beyond parking lot M and wait for instructions. If someone in your class cannot use the stairs, assist the person to the safest place in the building and inform the police/fire department of their whereabouts so they can be safely evacuated. Please make sure you have familiarized yourself with where the nearest exit is, how to use stairs to get to the ground floor, and where Parking Lot M is.
- Earthquake. Building phones should sound alarm and give instructions, generally to duck under a desk, table, doorway to up against a wall. It is ok to hold on to a secure object. Make sure the door is open to your classroom if possible. Cover the back of your neck with your hands. Stay away from unsecured furniture. Once the shaking has stopped, proceed as quickly as possible to the stairs and evacuate. Do not use the elevators.
- Medical Emergency: Call 911 and report. Use any first aid available if trained.
- Dangerous person: Leave the area as soon as possible and let others know there is a dangerous person in the area. Call 911 and report.

- Shots fired/active shooter: Move away from the immediate path of danger, If possible, exit the building. Otherwise, SHELTER IN PLACE (definition below). Notify anyone you may encounter to avoid the location of gunshots. After evacuating the area of the shooting, seek shelter and stay there until emergency responders arrive and advise you what to do.
- Identify who in the class has training in the following areas: CPR, other first aid, shots fired/active shooter training.
- Definition of “Shelter in Place” and alternative safe locations. Go to the nearest room or office, close and lock the door. If the door has an interior lock, please lock, Turn off the lights. Seek protective cover. Stay away from doors and windows. Keep quiet and act as if no one is in the room. Do not answer the door. Wait for police to assist you out of the building. Call 911 from an on-campus phone. Faculty may suggest alternative safe locations.
- Discuss helping mobility, hearing, or sight impaired classmates.
- Look at the following websites and bookmark on phone:

<http://riskmanagement.csusb.edu/emergencymanagement/preparednessReferenceGuide.html>

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1472672897352-d28bb197db5389e4ddedcef335d3d867/FEMA_ActiveShooter_OnePagerv1d15_508_FINAL.pdf

<http://www.bucks.edu/resources/security/activeshooterprotocol/>

<https://www.dhs.gov/options-consideration-active-shooter-preparedness-video>

COURSE CALENDAR

(Note: subject to change with fair notice)

Week 1

Introduction to the Course: Role of Research in Social Work, Research Ethics & PoliticsGrinnell & Unrau Readings

Chap. 1: Introduction

Chap. 2: Problems, Questions and Hypotheses

Chap. 6: Research Ethics

Chap. 10: Evidence-Based Practice

Optional Reading

Galvan, Chap. 1: Writing Reviews of Academic Literature: An Overview

Galvan, Chap. 2: Considerations in Writing Reviews for Specific Purposes

Galvan, Chap. 3: Selecting a Topic and Identifying Literature for Review

Week 2

Problem Formulation: Reasoning and its Errors, Research Processes & Purposes, Agency Based ResearchGrinnell & Unrau Readings

Chap. 8: Finding Existing Evidence

Chap. 9: Evaluating Existing Evidence

Optional Reading

Galvan, Chap. 4: General Guidelines for Analyzing Literature

Galvan, Chap. 5: Analyzing Quantitative Research Literature

Galvan, Chap. 6: Analyzing Qualitative Research Literature

Galvan, Chap. 7: Building Tables to Summarize Literature

Galvan, Chap. 8: Synthesizing Literature Prior to Writing a Review

Week 3

Conceptualization of Quantitative Inquiry: Concepts & constructs. Levels of Measurement: What is it? Why is it important?Grinnell & Unrau Readings

Chap. 3: The Quantitative Approach

Chap. 12: Measurement

Chap. 13: Standardized Measuring Instruments

Chap. 25: Quantitative Data Analysis (pages 510-512)

Optional Reading

Galvan, Chap. 9: Guidelines for Writing a First Draft

Galvan, Chap. 10: Guidelines for Developing a Coherent Essay

Grinnell & Unrau, Chap. 4: The Qualitative Approach

Grinnell & Unrau, Chap. 5: The Mixed Methods Approach

Week 4	Measurement Principles: Errors in Measurement, Reliability & Validity
CITI CERTIFICATION DUE	<u>Grinnell & Unrau Readings</u> Chap. 12: Measurement Chap. 13: Standardized Measuring Instruments <u>Optional Reading</u> Galvan, Chap. 11: Guidelines on Style, Mechanics, and Language Usage Grinnell & Unrau, Chap. 14: Designing Measuring Instruments
Week 5	Sampling Techniques: Probability & Nonprobability Techniques
HOMEWORK 1 DUE	<u>Grinnell & Unrau Readings</u> Chap. 15: Sampling
Week 6	Quantitative Statistics: Descriptive Statistics
PROBLEM FORMULATION DUE	<u>Grinnell & Unrau Readings</u> Chap. 25: Quantitative Data Analysis <u>Optional Readings</u> Galvan, Chap. 12: Incorporating Feedback and Refining the First Draft Galvan, Chap. 13: Preparing a Reference List
Week 7	Quantitative Statistics: Associations Among Variables & Inferential Statistics
	<u>Grinnell & Unrau Readings</u> Chap. 25: Quantitative Data Analysis <u>Optional Readings</u> Galvan, Chap. 12: Incorporating Feedback and Refining the First Draft Galvan, Chap. 13: Preparing a Reference List
Week 8	Research Designs: Matching Purpose to Design (Group & Single Subject Designs)
	<u>Grinnell & Unrau Readings</u> Chap. 16: Group Designs Chap. 17: Single-Subject Designs

Optional Reading

Galvan, Chap. 14: Comprehensive Self-Editing Checklist for Refining the Final Draft

Week 9

Research Designs: Matching Purpose to Design (Group & Single Subject Designs) [con't]

Grinnell & Unrau Readings

Chap. 16: Group Designs

Chap. 17: Single-Subject Designs

Optional Reading

Galvan, Chap. 14: Comprehensive Self-Editing Checklist for Refining the Final Draft

Week 10

Qualitative Research Methods

HOMEWORK 2 DUE Grinnell & Unrau Readings

Chap. 19: Interviewing

Chap. 26: Qualitative Data Analysis – A Theoretical Approach

Chap. 27: Qualitative Data Analysis – A Step-by-Step Approach

Chap. 29: Evaluating Qualitative Studies

Week 11

Surveys, Program & Community Research: Program Evaluation Research

Grinnell & Unrau Readings

Chap. 19: Interviewing

Chap. 20: Survey Research

Week 12

Course Wrap Up, Evaluations and Final Exam Review

Week 13

Individual Consultations (in my office); NO CLASS MEETINGS

**MUST SECURE
RESEARCH
SUPERVISOR**

Week 14

Thanksgiving holiday; NO CLASS MEETINGS

Week 15

Final Exam Day

FINAL EXAM

Finals Wk

NO CLASS MEETING; Preliminary Research Project Proposal due by 11:50am

Submit Preliminary Proposal on Bb *and* a hard copy to my office (SB 419)