

**COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 8322-01 (Section#13328), Spring 2017**

Research Methods II: Applied Quantitative Research on Evidence-Based Social Work

**TIME:** 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM Tuesday SOCW 221      **FACULTY:** Allen Rubin, Ph. D.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday and Tuesday noon, or by appointment

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**I. Course**

**A. Catalog Description**

Credit (3.0). Pre-requisite: SOCW 8311 and SOCW 8424, or permission from the instructor. Building upon the fundamentals learned in the first research course, this seminar emphasizes the application of this knowledge to a specific research topic and providing and receiving critical appraisals of each other's assignments.

**B. Purpose**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with opportunities to apply information learned in Research Methods I through a series of experiential assignments. These assignments may focus on a topic previously approved for their remaining studies or one proposed specifically for this course. A secondary purpose is to socialize students to the academic peer review process.

**II. Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. understand research design and measurement theory and its applications to evidence-base social work research, to include the evaluation of strengths and limitations of a variety of types of research designs;
2. have progressed in their ongoing development toward being able to conduct independent research of value for building the empirical knowledge base in social work;
3. have made progress toward eventually being able to write conceptually and methodologically sound research proposals on topics of importance to building the empirical knowledge base in social work, as illustrated in separate experiential assignments involving different methodological sections of a research proposal;
4. have made progress toward eventually being able to write sound research reports of studies that build the empirical knowledge base in social work and that are publishable in peer reviewed journals;

5. be able to provide and incorporate constructive critical feedback to and from colleagues regarding their colleagues' or their own research efforts;
6. accurately interpret and develop implications from a set of quantitative research results from the standpoint of statistical significance, substantive significance, and statistical power considerations.

### III. Course Content

Students will incrementally develop and critically appraise each other's work on experiential assignments connected to a research topic of their interest and approved by faculty.

### IV. Teaching Methods

Initial course sessions will emphasize lecture/discussion formats regarding each of the course objectives. The remaining sessions will be comprised primarily of students' oral and written presentations followed by instructor and peer feedback. If and when feasible, students will have the opportunity to attend and discuss colloquia presented by faculty applicants to UH or practice colloquia by UH doctoral students applying for faculty positions elsewhere.

### V. Textbooks

#### Required:

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2017). *Research Methods for Social Work (9<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning.

#### Recommended:

Rubin, A. (2013). *Statistics for evidence-based practice and evaluation, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*. Belmont, CA: Cengage.  
 Thyer, B., *Preparing Research Articles*, Oxford.

### VI. Course Requirements and Assignments

Each student is expected to complete each of 6 assignments and submit a copy of each to the instructor and each student in the class on the dates indicated below and in the course schedule section that appears later in this syllabus. Each student also is expected to be prepared to provide constructive critical feedback to each assignment submitted by the other students in the class.

No.	Points	Due Dates	Assignment
1	20	February 13	<p><b>Problem Statement (Approximately up to 10 pages)</b></p> <p>Guided by the relevant sections from the course textbook, prepare a problem statement section for a proposal for a quantitative research study. If possible, the proposal can eventually evolve into your dissertation proposal. The proposal will be developed incrementally as a semester-long project. This section should specify in precise terms the objectives of your proposed study, address why your research question/hypothesis is worth studying, your proposed study's potential implications for practice and/or policy, and how your proposed study goes beyond and builds on the prior literature (no need to cite more than several citations).</p>

2	20	February 26	<p><b>Conceptual Framework (Approximately up to 10 pages)</b></p> <p>Guided by the relevant sections from the course textbook, prepare a conceptual framework section of a proposal for your proposal. This section should identify and provide rationales for your research questions and/or hypotheses, variables (independent, dependent, and control), and operational definitions for each variable.</p>
3	15	March 20	<p><b>Measurement Instrument</b></p> <p>Guided by the relevant sections from the course textbook, construct a survey instrument that includes:</p> <p>A. A summated scale of at least 10 items to measure a social work construct pertinent to your proposal</p> <p>B. A set of questionnaire items to: 1) test the validity of the scale; 2) test hypotheses about variables related to scale score; and 3) describe relevant sample characteristics</p> <p>Also include a plan for testing the scale's reliability and validity.</p>
4	20	April 3	<p><b>Design &amp; Methods</b></p> <p>Guided by the relevant sections from the course textbook, describe your design arrangements, measurement plan, sampling plan, data collection methods, and data analysis plans</p>
5	20	April 24	<p><b>Article with mock data</b></p> <p>Guided by the relevant sections from the course textbook, submit a simulated article as if for publication based on the above 4 assignments and incorporating the fictitious data that this course instructor concocts to fit your study. The manuscript should be approximately 15-20 pages long and should be guided by the format of the journal, <i>Research On Social Work Practice</i>. It should begin with an abstract of no more than 100 words, followed by an introduction section, a methods section, a results section, and then a discussion section.</p>

## VII. Evaluation and Grading

Students will be expected to attend and participate actively in the discussion and feedback portions of every class session. For each class session that a student misses without a compelling reason, that student's class attendance/participation grade will be reduced by one-half of a point.

Because of the experiential learning process emphasized in this course, substantive limitations in student presentations will not lower their grade unless they reflect – in the instructor's judgment – inadequate effort in preparing a reasonable, clear and understandable presentation. Each written and oral presentation assignment will be graded up to a maximum of 30 points and each assignment will receive less than 30 points only if and to the extent that it reflects

insufficient preparation effort.

Grade Points will be as follows:

20 points: Assignment 1

20 points: Assignment 2

15 points: Assignment 3

20 points: Assignment 4

20 points: Assignment 5

5 points: Class attendance and active participation in discussion and feedback portions of each class session.

Total: 100 points

The following standard grading scale has been adopted for all courses taught in the college. Please use this scale to assign final course letter grades.

A = 96-100%	C+ = 76-79.9%
A- = 92-95.9%	C = 72-75.9%
B+= 88-91.9%	C- = 68-71.9%
B = 84-87.9%	D = 64-67.9%
B- = 80-83.9%	F = Below 64%

**VIII. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete):** The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are either **(a)** passing a course or **(b)** still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor of the course in which they receive an "I" grade to make arrangements to complete the course requirements. Students should be instructed not to re-register for the same course in a following semester in order to complete the incomplete requirements.

The grade of "I" must be changed by fulfillment of course requirements within one year of the date awarded or it will be changed automatically to an "F" (or to a "U" [Unsatisfactory] in S/U graded courses). The instructor may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements, and the grade may be changed by the instructor at any time to reflect work completed in the course. The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of **W**.

#### **IX. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism**

Definitions:

"Academic dishonesty" means employing a method or technique or engaging in conduct in an academic endeavor that contravenes the standards of ethical integrity expected at the University of Houston or by a course instructor to fulfill any and all academic requirements. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, the following:

##### *Plagiarism*

a. Representing as one's own work the work of another without acknowledging the source (plagiarism). Plagiarism includes copying verbatim text from the literature, whether printed or electronic, in all assignments including field.

##### *Cheating and Unauthorized Group Work*

b. Openly cheating in an examination, as copying from another's paper; c. Being able to

view during an examination, quiz or any in-class assignment an electronic device that allows communication with another person, access to unauthorized material, access to the internet, or the ability to capture an image, unless expressly permitted by the instructor;

d. Using and/or possessing “crib notes,” as unauthorized use of notes or the like to aid in answering questions during an examination;

e. Giving or receiving unauthorized aid during an examination, such as trading examinations, whispering answers, and passing notes, and using electronic devices to transmit or receive information;

f. Securing another to take a test in the student’s place. Both the student taking the test for another and the student registered in the course are at fault;

#### *Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation*

g. Changing answers or grades on a test that has been returned to a student in an attempt to claim instructor error;

h. Using another’s laboratory results as one’s own, whether with or without the permission of the owner;

i. Falsifying results in laboratory experiments;

j. Misrepresenting academic records or achievements as they pertain to course prerequisites or corequisites for the purpose of enrolling or remaining in a course for which one is not eligible;

k. Representing oneself as a person who has earned a degree without having earned that particular degree

#### *Stealing and Abuse of Academic Materials*

l. Stealing, as theft of tests or grade books, from faculty offices or elsewhere, or knowingly using stolen tests or materials in satisfaction of exams, papers, or other assignments; this includes the removal of items posted for use by the students;

m. Mutilating or stealing library materials; misshelving materials with the intent to reduce accessibility to other students;

#### *Complicity in Academic Dishonesty*

n. Failing to report to the instructor or departmental hearing officer an incident which the student believes to be a violation of the academic honesty policy;

#### *Academic Misconduct*

o. Any other conduct which a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest or improper in an academic setting.

#### *Process:*

Students shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty to the instructor of record involved or to the appropriate authority if the alleged act is not associated with a specific class within 5 class days of the incident.

Faculty or instructor of record shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty through their college hearing officer within 5 class days of the incident.

The faculty should include the recommended sanction in the report.

The college hearing officer will notify the student of the report and recommended sanction. The student can accept the sanction and waive a hearing or request a college hearing. A hearing shall be set within 10 days and would be consist of two faculty and three students chosen by the hearing officer.

## X. Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Date	TOPIC AND READINGS
January 17	<p>Course overview; Discussion of student ideas for their assignments; Review of Research Methods 1 content; Giving and receiving collegial feedback</p> <p><b>Suggested readings (regarding developing a thick skin):</b>            Rubin &amp; Knox, Data analysis problems in single-case evaluation            Levy, Data Analysis Problems in Single-Case Evaluation: Much ado about nothing.            Wong, Single-case evaluation on trial: Broken promise or new scapegoat?            Mattaini, The abuse and neglect of single-case designs            Rubin, The inflaming and defaming of the shrewd</p>
January 24	<p>Writing Research Proposals and articles; Reporting Statistical Findings</p> <p><b>Readings Due for This Class:</b>            Rubin &amp; Babbie, Chapter 23</p> <p><b>Supplemental:</b>            Rubin, <i>Statistics for Evidence-Based Practice and Evaluation</i>, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition: Appendix J</p>
January 31	<p>In lieu of class, work on Assignment 1 (Problem Statement), and meet with instructor by appointment for individual guidance,.</p>
February 7	<p>Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis</p> <p><b>Readings Due For This Class:</b>            Rubin &amp; Bellamy, Ch. 8 on Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses. (on Blackboard)            Cuijpers, P., et al. (2103). A meta-analysis of cognitive behavioral therapy for adult depression. On Blackboard)            PRISMA (Go to the site below and examine the PRISMA Checklist, Flow diagram, and Statement  <a href="http://www.prisma-statement.org/">http://www.prisma-statement.org/</a></p> <p><b>Supplemental:</b>            Maxfield &amp; Hyer, (2002) "The Relationship Between Efficacy and Methodology in Studies Investigating EMDR Treatment of PTSD," <i>Journal of Clinical Psychology</i>, 58, 23-41.            Rubin, "Unanswered Questions..."            Maxfield et al. (2004) "Some answers to..."            Rubin (2004) "Fallacies and deflections..."</p>
February 14	<p>Feedback on Assignment 1</p>
February 21	<p>In lieu of class, individual appointments with instructor for guidance on preparing Assignment 2 (Conceptual Framework)</p>

February 27	Feedback on Assignment 2
March 7	In lieu of class, work on Assignment 3 (Measurement Instrument), and meet with instructor for individual guidance by appointment.
March 14	Spring Break
March 21	Feedback on Assignment 3
March 28	In lieu of class, work on Assignment 4 (Design and Methods), and meet with instructor for individual guidance by appointment.
April 4	Feedback on Assignment 4
April 11-18	In lieu of class, work on Assignment 5 (Article with Mock Data), and meet with instructor for individual guidance by appointment.
April 25	Feedback on Assignment 5
May 2	Review session in preparation for qualifying exam

## **XI. Bibliography**

Please contact the instructor for additional references related to course content

## **XII. Americans with Disabilities Statement**

The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the UH Center for Disabilities at 713-743-5400.

## **XIII. Note From Instructor Concerning Changes to Syllabus and Schedule**

The instructor reserves the right (and flexibility) to alter the course outline or schedule in order to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints. Student flexibility for any necessary agenda shifts is appreciated.