

HARDING UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH - 3300

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Office hours: MWF 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.  
2:00 - 2:45 p.m.  
T/TH 10:00 – 12:45 p.m.  
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Course Description: This course introduces students to research methods used by social workers. The organizing theme of the course is the relationship between research and social work practice. Specification of the research problem, generation of testable hypotheses, and topics such as sampling, measurement and research design are introduced. Applied statistics and statistical tests will be explored with regard to their use in social work research. Special emphasis will be given to ethical standards of research.

Course Objectives: At the conclusion of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods and the interface between these methods. (**PG 1, 4**) Assessment: Assignment 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, In-class activities, Exams
2. Develop a literature review that highlights research design, incorporates sampling decisions based on data analysis, ethical issues appropriate to the conduct of social work research and practice, and focuses on needed areas of research expansion. (**PG 1, 2, 4**) Assessment: Assignment 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 In-class activities, Exams
3. Define, differentiate, and apply skills in critical thinking, question development and interviewing. (**PG 1, 6, 9**) Assessment: Assignment 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, In-class activities, Exams
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to diversity in the research process, including issues regarding age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. (**PG 1, 2, 10**) Assessment: Assignment 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, Exams
5. Recognize the underpinning social work research provides for remediation of social and economic injustice and effective practice interventions. (**PG 3, 4**) Assessment: Assignment 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, In-class activities, Exams

Numbers in parentheses above indicate program goals (PG) and EPAS Competencies (EPAS) to which the course objectives (CO) are related; numbers in boldface type highlight the competency(ies) that receive the most emphasis. Practice behaviors that operationalize the EPAS competencies in this course are measured by faculty assessment of assignments.

Required Text: Marlow, C. (2011). *Research Methods for Generalist Social Work*, fifth edition. Belmont: Brooks/Cole Thompson Learning.

Students with Disabilities: It is the policy for Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Therefore, any student with a *documented disability* condition (e.g. physical, learning, psychological) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations, must contact the instructor and the Disabilities Office at the *beginning* of each semester. (If the diagnosis of the disability occurs during the academic year, the student must self-identify with the Disabilities Director *as soon as possible* in order to get academic

accommodations in place for the remainder of the semester.) The Disabilities Office is located in Room 219 of the Student Center, telephone, (501) 279-4019.

Time Management Expectations: For every class hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least two clock hours on course-related work, including but not limited to out-of-class time spent reading, problem solving, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams and other activities that enhance learning.

Assessment and Grading: Harding University, since its charter in 1924, has been strongly committed to providing the best resources and environment for the teaching-learning process. The board, administration, faculty, and staff are wholeheartedly committed to full compliance with all criteria of the Higher Learning Commission. The University values continuous, rigorous assessment at every level for its potential to improve student learning and achievement and for its centrality in fulfilling the stated mission of Harding. Thus, a comprehensive assessment program has been developed that includes both the Academic units and the Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units. Specifically, all academic units will be assessed in reference to the following Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose: The University provides programs that enable students to acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their academic disciplines for successful careers, advanced studies, and servant leadership.

In academics, assessment is used as a tool to improve individual courses and entire programs as well as to evaluate each student's knowledge, skills, and dispositions. There is a probability that what you learn in this course will be assessed in broader measures of student achievement such as the Social Work Exit Exam as well as your final competency evaluation in Field Placement.

Assessment of the knowledge, skills, and disposition of each student for the purpose of assigning a letter grade at the completion of this course will be assessed by means of the following:

1. Attendance: Class attendance is expected and required. You should have regular attendance and to be punctual for class. Any student who accumulates more than six **total** unexcused absences for in-person class attendance or six tardies during the course of the semester will have points deducted from their final grade. Two percentage points will be deducted from your final grade per excessive absence and five points per excessive tardy. \*Please note: Leaving class early without prior permission will be counted as an absence\* If you have extenuating circumstances be sure to clarify this with me, and you will not be penalized – the key issue being communication with me regarding your attendance in class.

2. Exams: Exams will cover the assigned text, lectures, and class discussions. You are responsible for material in the text, as lectures will not always cover the text material. Exams may be multiple-choice, true/false, or short answer discussion questions. Exams will be open book/open note and for online access students will be available for a 5-day period on canvas. For online access, there will have a set amount of time to complete the exam once it has been opened. (CO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Absences from exams can only be made up in the case of serious illness or family emergency. If an exam will be missed you must **call or email me before** the scheduled exam. If I am not in my office and you call, **leave a voice mail message**. You may schedule to take an exam early if a known problem exists. In all other cases, a grade of zero (0) shall be given for a missed exam. No exceptions will be made. (CO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

3. Class Participation Policy: Reading assignments should be completed before each designated class period. This includes being prepared to participate in classroom discussions. \* You are expected to participate in all classroom activities. \*

4. Cell Phones, communication devices, personal computers, tablets, etc.: Cell phones (or any other device) should be set to silent prior to the beginning of class if attending in person. If you are attending remotely, please set your speaker to silent unless you are making a comment/asking a question.

Personal computers, tablets, etc. are welcome with you if you are attending class in person, the device should be used for taking lecture notes only. Use of electronics during the class for any other purpose is not allowed. Any student found to be using a device for any purpose other than notes shall forfeit the privilege of having that device in class for the remainder of the semester and may be subject to expulsion from the class.

5. Class Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will be given individual and group assignments. Neatness, proper grammar and spelling will be required on all assignments. You are expected to turn in assignments on the designated due date BY CLASS TIME. If this is not possible, for an excusable reason, you must email me before class time to inform me of the issue and to work out a time to turn in the assignment without any late penalty. Work turned in the due date before 11:55 p.m. will receive a 5% late penalty. Work will be assessed a penalty of 10% per day beginning the day after the assignment was due. Assignments completed more than six calendar days after the due date will not receive credit unless explicit arrangements have been made with the instructor.

The following are brief overviews of the required assignments for this course. More details will be given in class discussions.

**Assignment 1:** *Summary and critique of quantitative journal article.* The article to be used for this assignment will be emailed to you and also posted to the course canvas. A rubric describing expectations for the format and content of the assignment will also be given in class. The summary and critique should be succinct – no more than 3 typed 1.5 spaced pages. Due **September 4**, 50 points (CO 1, 3, 4)

Sieben, A., Renner, L., Lust, K., Vang, W., & Nguyen, R. (2020). Adverse childhood experiences among Asian/Pacific Islander sexual minority college students. *Journal of Family Violence*, 35, 297-303.

**Assignment 2:** *Summary and critique of qualitative journal article.* The article to be used for this assignment will be emailed to you and also posted to the course canvas. The format will follow the rubric for assignment 1. The summary and critique should be succinct – no more than 3 typed 1.5 spaced pages. Due **September 16**, 50 points. (CO 1, 3, 4)

Campbell, R., & Winshester, M. (2020). Let the church say....: One congregation's views on how the Black church can address mental health with Black Americans. *Social Work & Christianity*, 47(2), 105-122.

**Assignment 3:** Schedule a meeting with Mrs. Lisa Fuller to discuss and refine your literature review assignment. This may be done at any point during August, September and most of October. Schedule your appointment using the link: <https://lisafuller.youcanbook.me/index.jsp>

After completing the consultation, please fill out an evaluation for Mrs. Fuller using this link: <https://library.harding.edu/SocialWork/Evaluation>

Due: **October 5**, 25 points (CO 1, 4, 5)

**Assignment 4:** *Initial Literature Review.* Each student will construct a research literature review of at least 6 research articles on the topic chosen for the research proposal. A rubric describing expectations for the format and content of the assignment will be given in class. The articles included are to be no

older than within 10 years of publication unless explicit permission has been granted to use an older article. **Note:** If you are working with a **partner**, the review should include a minimum of 8 research articles that meet the requirements. Due: **October 19**, 100 points (CO 1, 4, 5)

**Assignment 5: Interview Guide.** Students will create an interview guide of at least eight questions on the topic chosen for the literature review to use to conduct a minimum of 4 interviews. If possible, the interviews should be conducted with individuals who have knowledge of the intended area of inquiry. **Note:** If you are working with a **partner**, the interview guide should be used to conduct a minimum of 6 interviews. No Harding Faculty or Staff may be used for an interview without the explicit consent of the instructor. A 3 page minimum paper (5 page minimum with a partner) will be prepared based on the interviews and should include:

- \*a brief summary of any salient background information about the respondents
- \*a discussion of what was learned from the interviews – how are the individual respondents perspective's unique, how are they similar? Include observations on responses received.
- \*a detailed discussion of what you learned about the interview guide you constructed
- \*specifically address each of the following areas:
  - how useful were each of the questions
  - were the questions worded clearly, why or why not (overview each question)
  - what would have made the interview guide more useful (be specific)
  - what (if anything) would you do differently to improve your interviews

A copy of the interview guide is to be included. Due **November 6**, 100 points (CO 1, 2, 3, 4)

**Assignment 6: Revised Literature Review.** Each student (or partners) will revise and expand the literature review from assignment 4. The following sections should be included: (helpful hint - include these headings in paper)

- Title
  - Purpose Statement (problem/needs statement if this applies)
  - Literature Review (revised version of assignment 4)
  - Further Research Needs (what aspects of this topic still need to be researched)
  - References (any works cited in the proposal or accessed for inspiration)
- Due **November 20**, 100 points (CO 2, 4, 6)

**Assignment 7: Informative Post:** Each student (or partner group) will create an informative post on canvas highlighting the results of the topic-focused projects (4, 5, 6). This is to be a professional post complete with a handout style bibliography for the topic. The focus of the post should include a brief explanation your interest in the topic, information gained from your projects and needed continued research for social work practice. Please note: It is expected that posts and handout will be in word or pdf format. Do NOT use a google doc link for your work. Posts will begin on **December 2**

In addition, you are responsible for writing a thoughtful reflective comment on at least **two** discussions posted on dates that were not assigned to you. (i.e. you manage the comments posted for the discussion you created, then on dates when others post their discussions, you will respond to a minimum of two posts).

- 100 points for informative post/managing resulting comments
- 25 points for thoughtful comments on discussion posts (2 posts for 5 days)
- 125 points (CO 2, 4, 5)

**\*\*** In addition to these assignments, there will be time given in class for *group brainstorming* and problem solving. These sessions will involve giving and receiving feedback for the assignments. Each session and the resulting evaluation will be worth 10 points.

**Unacceptable Behavior:** The following behaviors are rude, distracting, and disheartening to other students. Exhibiting these behaviors may result in you being asked to leave the class and receiving an unexcused absence.

- \* Packing behavior: putting personal belongings up before class has been dismissed.
- \* Personal conversations during class lectures or discussions.
- \* Use of technology for a purpose other than class notes
- \* Doing assignments for other classes.
- \* Sleeping in class

All students are expected to abide by the Student Handbook. A student may be asked to leave class or other activities if they are not in keeping with these expectations.

**THE FINAL GRADE WILL BE COMPUTED AS FOLLOWS:**

A = 90% or above

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% or below

**\*Disclaimer:** The Harding University Social Work faculty recognizes that a legitimate survey of current thought will necessarily include ideas that may conflict with the Christian view of humanity and the universe and that details in some of the courses may be regarded as offensive to a sensitive student. It should be clear, however, that the purpose of the course is not to endorse the offending views, to weaken students' religious faith, or to denigrate any student's moral standards. Rather, the goal of the course is to evaluate these ideas and assignments through the mature Christian perspective of both the teacher and the student. If students are to be equipped intellectually and spiritually to solve the problems that they will meet, both on campus and in later life, they must form habits of examining every aspect of each question. The university, therefore, urges professors to give the students in their classes all significant points of view regarding any problem or principle that may arise. Less than this would defeat the purpose of a Christian education.

**COVID-19 Statement:** Our goal at Harding University is to provide a safe and positive learning environment for all of our students. As a faith-based university, we have a responsibility to care for one another. The current COVID-19 pandemic gives us a good opportunity to do so, by following the guidelines to minimize transmission of the novel coronavirus. Every precaution will be taken to be sure that class is conducted in a way that is safe and in compliance with state and university guidelines. If you feel a situation needs to be addressed in the classroom environment, please speak with me as soon as possible so that the situation can be improved.

Due to the uncertain and unusual climate during which this course is being offered, certain adjustments may have to be made including changes to meeting times, modalities and work assignments. Every effort will be made to notify students of any change as soon as possible. Because this course may/will be meeting using video conferencing, students are expected to find a safe, secure and reliable internet connection in order to participate in virtual meetings at the required level.

**Code of Academic Conduct:** All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of Christian scholars. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitutes academic misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to, Cheating, Plagiarism, Fabrication, Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty, etc. Academic misconduct is subject to automatic course failure (Grade of "F").

Please note: Anyone taking an exam from the classroom, either on the day of the exam is administered or on the day the exam is returned, shall be considered to have engaged in the offense of “theft” and shall receive a grade of “F” for the course. In addition, individuals who share assignments with students taking the course in a subsequent semester may be subject to having an academic integrity sanction added to their college record.

**YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOURSELF! BY ACCEPTING THIS SYLLABUS, YOU ARE ACCEPTING A CONTRACT BETWEEN YOU AND I, AND WE ARE AGREEING TO FULFILL OUR INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENTS.** I reserve the right to change course requirements, grading procedures, etc. at any time during the semester. You will receive sufficient notice if changes are made.

### **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

8/24 Introduction to the course  
8/26 Unit I notes  
8/28 Unit I notes (\*\*Schedule meeting with Mrs. Fuller for Assignment 3)

8/31 Unit I notes  
9/2 Unit I notes  
9/4 Unit I notes \*Assignment 1

9/7 Unit I/II notes  
9/9 Unit II notes  
9/11 Unit II notes

9/14 Unit II notes  
9/16 Unit II notes \*Assignment 2  
9/18 Unit II/III notes

9/21 Unit III notes  
9/23 \*\* Group Brainstorming  
9/25 Unit III notes  
**\*Complete the Unit I/II exam during this week**

9/28 Unit III notes  
9/30 Unit III notes  
10/2 Unit III notes

10/5 Unit III/IV notes \* Assignment 3  
10/7 Unit IV notes  
10/9 Unit IV notes

10/12 Unit IV notes  
10/14 \*\* Group Brainstorming  
10/16 Unit IV notes

10/19 Unit IV notes **\*Assignment 4**

10/21 Unit IV notes

10/23 Unit IV notes

10/26 Unit IV/V notes

10/28 Unit V notes

10/30 **\*\* Group Brainstorming**

**\*Complete the Unit III/IV exam during this week**

11/2 Unit V notes

11/4 Unit V notes

11/6 Unit V notes **\*Assignment 5**

11/9 Unit V notes

11/11 Unit V notes

11/13 Unit V notes

11/16 Unit V/VI notes

11/18 **\*\* Group Brainstorming**

11/20 Unit VI notes **\*Assignment 6**

11/23 – 11/27 No class - THANKSGIVING BREAK!!!

11/30 work on assignment 7

12/2 **\*Assignment 7**

12/4 **\*Assignment 7**

12/2 **\*Assignment 7**

12/4 **\*Assignment 7**

12/6 **\*Assignment 7**

**Final Exam Time (Unit V and VI): Monday, December 14 1:00 p.m.**