

School Vision: Building upon a foundation of social justice and an ethic of care, we are a community of learners actively engaged in the development of critical, transformative knowledge for social work practice.

Year/Term	2016-2017, Term 1
Course Title	Introduction to Social Work Research
Course Location	Online (with some classroom sessions)

Instructor	E-mail address
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to theory and conduct of social research as applied to social welfare and social work practice. The focus is on ways of generating new knowledge, and on understanding the strengths and limitations of various research methods.

Format of the course:

Online readings, readings from text and library course reserves, online web discussion

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

As a result of taking this course, students will:

1. Define and appropriately apply to practice basic terms, concepts, and processes of both quantitative and qualitative research.
 2. Define and argue the logic of various research methods, and strengths and limitations of each method.
 3. Demonstrate the ways in which research can inform social work practice.
- Critically evaluate research methodologies, analysis, and interpretation.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

The course components include:

- A required textbook:
Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Readings available through an online library course reserve in the course shell
- Readings available online through the UBC Library
- Course Notes available online for each module

- Student Study Site: <https://edge.sagepub.com/engel4e>

EVALUATION:

Assessment will be based on the following:

- Midterm (invigilated) (30%)
- Final exam (invigilated) (30%)
- Research article critique (30%)
- Participation in web discussions that address the application of course concepts to social work practice (10%)

OUTLINE AND READINGS:

Module 1: Introduction to course

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 1: Science, Society, and Social Work Research

Module 2: Philosophy and Theory in Social Work Research

Readings:

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2011). *Research methods for social work*. Belmont, CA: Brookes/Cole. (Chapter 3: Philosophy and Theory in Social Work Research) (Online course reserves)

Module 3: Research Ethics

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 3: Ethical and Scientific Guidelines for Social Work Research

MacQuarie University (2010). *Human research ethics for the humanities and social sciences*. Online tutorial available at: http://www.mq.edu.au/ethics_training/index.php.

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. (2010). *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. Available online at http://www.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf .
Chapters 3-5, 9, 10

Module 4: Conceptualization and measurement

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Chapter 4: Measurement

Kiersey, D., & Bates, M. (1984). *Please understand me: Character and temperament types*. Del Mar, CA: Prometheus. (pp. 5-13) (Online course reserves).

Module 5: Sampling

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 5: Sampling

Morse, J.M. (2000). Determining sample size. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(1), 3-5.
(Available through UBC Library)

Module 6: Causation

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 6: Causation and Research Design

Module 7: Group Experiments

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 7: Group Experimental Designs

Module 8: Single subject designs

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 8: Single Subject Design

Module 9: Survey research

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 9: Survey Research

Module 10: Qualitative research I

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2016). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 10: Qualitative Methods

Wallace, B. (May, 2005). Participatory action research can be complicated. *Social Work & Research*. Available online at
http://www.vipirg.ca/archive/publications/pubs/clippings/0505_bcasw_par.pdf

Module 11: Qualitative research II**Readings:**

Sparkes, A.C. (2001): Myth 94: Qualitative health researchers will agree about validity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 11(4), 538-552. (Available online through UBC Library).

Videos:

Phenomenology introduction: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cJzdweZ2-l>

Grounded theory: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unblpzwqgbU>

Module 12: Evidence-based practice**Readings:**

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2011). *Research methods for social work*. Belmont, CA: Brookes/Cole. (Chapter 2: Evidence-Based Practice) (Online course reserves)

Hall, J.C. (2008). A practitioner's application and deconstruction of evidence-based practice. *Families in Society*, 89(3), 385-393. (Available online through UBC Library)

Video:

Watch this video on Evidence-Based Practice in Social Work:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPqv9K-IZUI&feature=related>

COURSE POLICIES [attendance, participation, academic dishonesty]:*Excerpt from the UBC calendar:*

Regular attendance is expected of students in all their classes (including lectures, laboratories, tutorials, seminars, etc.). Students who neglect their academic work and assignments may be excluded from the final examinations. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness or disability should report to their instructors on return to classes.

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor before the drop date.

It is recommended that students retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should also retain all their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to view their marked examinations with their instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

Academic Dishonesty:

Please review the UBC Calendar "Academic regulations" for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Also visit www.arts.ubc.ca and go to the students' section for useful information on avoiding plagiarism and on correct documentation.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

See schedule in course shell.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Submitting Assignments-

You will do your midterm and your article critique(s) in the classroom with the instructor, so they will be collected then.

Return of marked student assignments -

You will be able to see your midterm in class the week after you write it. You will be able to see your first article critique in class the week after you write it.

Article Critique(s) (30%):

You will do a practice article critique before you do the first article critique for marks. If you are happy with your mark on your first article critique, you need not do a second article critique. If you would like to try to increase your mark, you can do a second article critique. If your mark is higher on the second critique, I will use the mark to calculate your final grade.

For each article critique, you will be given a short research article to read. If you understand the principles of research, you should be able to readily identify flaws in the research methods, and flaws in the conclusions drawn. You will be given a series of questions to draw your attention to particular features of their articles, and to structure your critiques.

You may use your texts and other supporting materials such as notes from the modules. Keep in mind that you have 2 hours to complete the article critique.

Web Discussion Board:

Each module has one or web discussion questions or topics that you are to address. Regular and active participation is expected. This means that you should demonstrate engagement with the topics, should provide thoughtful, well-written responses, and should give some evidence that they are reading and considering the posts of other students. As each module is to take one week, you should post your web discussions by midnight on Sunday each week. You do not need to post more than once for each module, although you may do so if you so choose. Postings should not exceed 250 words each.

Exams

There will be a midterm and a final exam, each worth 30% of the final grade. Exams will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer items, and will be based on readings and course notes. These are closed-book exams. You will be given 90 minutes to write each exam. Exam preparation guidelines will be given to students in advance of the exams.

The invigilated final exam will be scheduled during exam period.

IN-CLASS DATES

These dates are Friday afternoons, 1-4 p.m. in Room 124 (Room TBA for October 28th).

October 7 th	Tutorial with Neringa
October 14 th	Tutorial with Neringa
October 21 st	Midterm with Vaughan

October 28 th	Midterm feedback & Article Critique
November 4 th	Critique Feedback & Tutorial with Neringa
November 18 th	Optional second article critique
December 2 nd	Tutorial with Neringa

GRADING CRITERIA:

Letter Grade	Percent Range	Mid-Point	
A+	90-100	95	Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization and style are all at a high level. Student demonstrates excellent research and reference to literature where appropriate. Also, student uses sound critical thinking, has innovative ideas on the subject and shows personal engagement with the topic.
A	85-89	87	
A-	80-84	82	
B+	76-79	77.5	Represents work of good quality with no major weaknesses. Writing is clear and explicit and topic coverage and comprehension is more than adequate. Shows some degree of critical thinking and personal involvement in the work. Good use of existing knowledge on the subject.
B	72-75	83.5	
B-	68-71	69.5	
C+	64-67	65.5	Adequate and average work. Shows fair comprehension of the subject, but has some weaknesses in content, style and/or organization of the paper. Minimal critical awareness or personal involvement in the work. Adequate use of literature.
C	60-63	62.5	
C-	55-59	57	
D	50-54	52	Minimally adequate work, barely at a passing level. Serious flaws in content, organization and/or style. Poor comprehension of the subject, and minimal involvement in the paper. Poor use of research and existing literature.
F	0-49		Failing work. Inadequate for successful completion of the course or submitted beyond final date of acceptance for paper.