

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	2015-2016, Term 1
Course Title	Introduction to Social Work Research
Course Location	Online

Instructor	e-mail address
Dr. Vaughan Marshall	vaughan.marshall@ubc.ca

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.
4. Critically evaluate research methodologies, analysis, and interpretation.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

The course components include:

- A required textbook:
Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd 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: www.sagepub.com/engelprsw3e/study

EVALUATION:

Assessment will be based on the following:

- Midterm (invigilated) (30%)
- Final exam (invigilated) (30%)
- Two research article critiques (15% each)
- 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. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd 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. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd 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. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd 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. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd 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. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 6: Causation and Research Design

Module 7: Group Experiments

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 7: Group Experimental Designs

Module 8: Single subject designs

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 8: Single Subject Design

Module 9: Survey research

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 9: Survey Research

Module 10: Qualitative research I

Readings:

Engel, R.J., & Schutt, R.K. (2013). *The practice of research in social work* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Chapter 10: Qualitative Methods: Observing, Participating, Listening

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-I>

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

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-

Students can use the drop box located in the main office on the reception counter to submit their assignments or any correspondence to faculty, sessionals or staff. Items will be date-stamped and distributed to the appropriate mailbox throughout the day.

Return of marked student assignments -

Instructors coordinate the return of marked assignments. The options are as follows: a) the instructor returns the paper to students in class; b) if the paper has been submitted electronically, the instructor will mark it on-line (with track changes) and return to the student on-line; c) the instructor returns the paper to the student by snail mail (the student provides a self-stamped, addressed envelope to the instructor). Marked papers not returned by any of the options above will be held by the instructor. Marked papers will no longer be put in a box outside the instructor's office or at the main office counter.

Late assignments-

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.