

	THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA School of Social Work Course Outline – SOWK 420 – Introduction to Social Work Research
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The UBC School of Social Work acknowledges that we are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people.

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.

BSW Mission Statement: The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program addresses issues of power and issues of discrimination based on age, race, gender, sexual orientation, class and culture. The educational objective of the BSW curriculum is to provide students with the knowledge, values and skills necessary for an initial level of professional practice, focusing on the interface between personal problems and public issues. Critical thinking and structural analysis are central to the learning experience offered by the School and to the promotion of social justice and human well-being.

Year/Term	Winter Term 1, 2019. September 3 to November 29, 2019.
Course Title	SOWK 420: Introduction to Social Work Research
Credit Value	3 credits
Course Schedule	Mondays, 9:00 – 12:00 noon
Course Location	Room 124, School of Social Work, 2080 West Mall

Instructor	Office Location	Office Phone	e-mail address
Sheila Marshall	Jack Bell #336	604-822-5672	Sheila.Marshall@ubc.ca
Office hours	Mondays 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm or by appointment.		
Teaching Assistant	Office Location	Office Phone	e-mail address
Andrea Johnson			Andrea.Johnson@ubc.ca

PREREQUISITE and/or COREQUISITE

There are no pre- or co-requisites for this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theory and conduct of social research as applied to social welfare and social work practice. Development of social work research questions and design of studies.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Classroom-based lectures complemented by individual and group exercises, and discussion.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. To be able to define, and appropriately apply to practice, basic terms, concepts, and processes of research.

2. To define and argue the logic of various research designs, data collection, and basic data analytic techniques.
3. To critically evaluate research methodologies, data analyses, and interpretation of findings in relation to research questions.
4. To demonstrate the ways in which research can inform social work practice.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S) AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Wilkinson, L., Bouma, G.D., & Carland, S. (2019). *The Research Process*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Navarro, D.J., & Foxcroft, D.R. (2019). [Learning statistics with jamovi: a tutorial for psychology students and other beginners](#). (Version 0.70). DOI: [10.24384/hgc3-7p15](https://doi.org/10.24384/hgc3-7p15)

Navarro & Foxcroft is available free from the internet.
 Wilkinson et al. is available from the UBC Bookstore.

Additional readings are indicated in the Course Schedule below.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Exercise:	Contribution to Grade	Due Date:
Ethics module and reflection	5%	September 23, 2019
Creation of interview protocol or measure	20%	October 21, 2019
Content analysis	20%	November 18, 2019
Knowledge translation	30%	November 25, 2019
Visual presentation & interpretation of data	25%	November 25, 2019

COURSE SCHEDULE:

SESSION 1:	September 9, 2019
TOPIC:	Introduction to the course Why do research?
READINGS:	Wilkinson et al. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 Navarro & Foxcroft sections 1.1 and 1.2 CASW Code of Ethics; see p. 8, “Competence in professional practice”: https://www.casw-acts.ca/sites/default/files/attachements/casw_code_of_ethics.pdf
SESSION 2:	September 16, 2019
TOPIC:	Research Designs
READING:	Wilkinson et al. Chapters 4 and 7 Navarro & Foxcroft section 2.7
SESSION 3:	September 23, 2019
TOPIC:	Ethics in research

READING:	Wilkinson et al. Chapter 9. TCPS 2—2014 <i>Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7</i> . Available through: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/
SESSION 4:	September 30, 2019
TOPIC:	Constructs, Variables, & Measurement Asking questions, observing
READING:	Wilkinson et al. Chapters 5 and 6
SESSION 5:	October 7, 2019
TOPIC:	Validity & reliability of measurement
READING:	Shaw, S., & Crisp, V. (2011). Tracing the evolution of validity in educational measurement: past issues and contemporary challenges. <i>Research Matters, 11</i> , 14-19. (available from UBC library) Navarro & Foxcroft section 2.3
SESSION 6:	October 14, 2019
TOPIC:	No class, Thanksgiving Holiday
READING:	
SESSION 7:	October 21, 2019
TOPIC:	Sampling, linking sampling to design Tracking your research process, taking notes
READING:	Wilkinson et al. Chapter 8 (and review Chapter 7) Wilkinson et al. Chapter 10
SESSION 8:	October 28, 2019
TOPIC:	Content analysis of interview or text
READING:	Wilkinson et al. Chapter 12
WATCH:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wilBzZLjZ1M https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opp5tH4uD-w
SESSION 9:	November 4, 2019
TOPIC:	Descriptive statistics Visual presentation of numerical data

READING:	Navarro & Foxcroft sections 3 and 4 Wilkinson et al. Chapter 11
WATCH:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srqNCux0ijY
SESSION 10:	November 11, 2019
TOPIC:	No class, Remembrance Day
READING:	
SESSION 11:	November 18, 2019
TOPIC:	Testing hypotheses with statistics Associations between variables: categorical variables
READING:	Navarro & Foxcroft sections 9.1 to 9.4.2 Navarro & Foxcroft sections 10.2 to 10.5
WATCH:	https://www.discoveringstatistics.com/statistics-hell-p/egestes-predicting-categorical-outcomes/chi-square-test/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsrj647Tb3g
SESSION 12:	November 25, 2019
TOPIC:	Associations between variables: correlation
READING:	Navarro & Foxcroft sections 12.1 to 12.1.5
WATCH:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5kZ4erx8QE

ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments must be in APA format with 12 point font, double spaced, and 1" margins. Where referencing is needed, use APA referencing style. Failure to follow guidelines will result in the paper not being assessed until it has been reformatted according to guidelines.

Students must complete all assignments indicated for this course to receive a final grade in the course.

Students needing an extension for any assignment may, at their own discretion and no discussion with the instructor, take up to one additional week. Use of the extension does not impact the grading of the assignment. Assignments submitted on the final extension date are due at the beginning of the class period. Assignments submitted later than the *beginning* of the class period on the extension date will not be graded.

- 1) Ethics Module and reflection: Due September 23rd.
5% of total grade divided into 3% for completed tutorial and 2% for reflections.

Submit to Canvas a certificate of successful completion of the TCPS tutorial. The tutorial is accessed at <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

This assignment is aligned with TCPS guidelines and UBC ethics review boards' expectations that all people applying for ethical review and working with data complete the tutorial. A certificate is provided upon successfully completing this tutorial. Submit the certificate to Canvas for documentation of completion. (3%)

After completing the tutorial, reflect on the items in the tutorial and the experience of being tested in this way. Reflect on:

- The experience of reading the question and finding the answer that best fit your understanding of the issue.
- The experience of being 'tested'.
- Your understanding of how your answers are used to calculate your score.
- Any other feelings or thoughts that you recall as you completed the tutorial.
- Any information that you think is important but wasn't captured by the questions asked.
- Summarize your reflections by thinking about how this experience might be similar to research participants being asked to complete a survey.

Submit your reflections to Canvas.

Marked reflections will be returned through Canvas.

- 2) Creation of interview protocol or measurement device: Due October 21st.
20% of total grade.

Select for yourself a goal for either improving or maintaining your learning in social work.

- a) Define a related construct or use someone else's definition that you think will help with your goal (e.g., time use, mindfulness practice, physical exercise). Indicate how the construct links to improving learning in social work. (5 marks)
- b) Explain the rationale for the type of measure you are using (i.e., interview, daily diary, observation, scale, physiological assessment). (5 marks)
- c) Describe / display the measure. (5 marks)

Stop. Collect feedback from 2 to 3 colleagues about your measure.

- d) Document the feedback you received and the questions you asked to elicit this feedback. Note any potential edits you might include. Note any ideas from feedback that you hesitate to include. Explain all of your decisions (to include, discard ideas, maintain what you originally designed), referencing appropriate readings on reliability and validity. (5 marks)
- e) Describe / display the final version of your measure.

Submit your assignment in paper format at the beginning of the class on the due date. If your measure does not use paper, be sure to show a prototype via photograph or model or drawing. Do not submit this assignment through Canvas.

- 3) Content analysis: Due November 18th.
20% of total grade.

Select three social work blog entries from the list of websites on Canvas. Select entries from three different authors writing on similar topics. Use the following to guide your written report of the content analysis:

- a) Generate a research question that relates to social work practice or self-care. Link the question to theory and current research. Write one to two paragraphs that provide the rationale and sufficient background literature to pursue your research. (5 marks)
- b) Describe the sources of the three blogs (i.e., website address and date of blog entry)
- c) Conduct a content analysis of three blogs in relation to your research question (instructions in class will help you with this task). Be sure to document your process of selecting the three blogs, coding, and extracting any themes that emerge in relation to your research question.
- d) Report your procedures for conducting the content analysis. (5 marks)
- e) Report your findings. (5 marks)
- f) Write a conclusion regarding the findings in relation to the research question. Include a description of the limitations and directions for future research. (5 marks)

Submit your assignment as a printed paper at the beginning of the class period on the due date. Do not submit this assignment through Canvas.

- 4) Knowledge translation: Due November 25th.
30% of total grade.

Select a journal article on a topic related to an area of social work that interests you. The article must not be a review of literature. It must be a study that involves data collection, analysis, and interpretation. If you find an article of interest but do not understand the data analysis, do not throw it away as your instructor or TA may be able to assist you.

Decide your audience you would like to disseminate the information to (e.g., other social workers, general public, specific service users). Use the following to guide compilation of your project:

- a) Select a format for disseminating the information from the journal article. The format should be congruent with your audience and the type of information you will display. The format might be a pamphlet, power point presentation, poster, radio announcement, etc. (5 marks)
- b) Translate the information in the journal article so that your audience can access the information easily. (10 marks)
- c) In a separate document, describe the following in essay format:
 - i. The reason you selected the format
 - ii. The reason you selected the audience
 - iii. Your rationale for highlighting the message(s) from the journal article (5 marks)
 - iv. The information/sections in the journal article that you did not include in the dissemination and the rationale for your decision (10 marks)
 - v. Summarize the information in (i) to (iv) and conclude your essay.

Submit your knowledge translation output and the accompanying essay (the latter printed on paper) at the beginning of the class period on the due date. Do not submit this assignment through Canvas.

- 5) Visual presentation & interpretation of data: Due November 25th.
25% of total grade

Using the measurement device that you created to collect data on yourself for a period of time ranging from 7 to 14 days (your choice on length).

Compile the data in a file such as an Excel spreadsheet or MS Word.

Report in any format you would like the following information:

- a) The goal for either improving or maintaining your learning in social work.
- b) The construct you were assessing and how you assessed it.
- c) The procedures you used to collect data (e.g., did you collect every day?) (5 marks)
- d) The amount and/or frequency of data you collected. Note if there is any missing information (e.g., you forgot to fill in your daily diary one day) or any information that is not usable due to technical problems or any other reason. (5 marks)
- e) Describe how you condensed/summarized the information. (5 marks)
- f) Display visually the information. (5 marks)
- g) Interpretation of your findings. (5 marks)

SCHOOL/COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance

The attendance policy is in the student handbook on page 11:

<https://socialwork.ubc.ca/current-students/>.

The School considers class attendance to be an essential component of integrated learning in professional social work education. Therefore, regular attendance is required in all social work courses. Instructors may count repeated late arrivals or early departures as an absence, and a meeting should be setup to discuss this with the student. If students miss three or more classes, they may be considered to have not met the requirements of the course. If students have valid reasons, they could be withdrawn from the course with the approval of the instructor – otherwise, they would fail the course.

Other school policies can be accessed through the school of social work student handbook available on the School website.

LEARNING RESOURCES

UBC Learning Commons has a variety of tools and information such as; borrowing equipment, academic integrity (**APA Citation Guide**), writing support, skills for class, skills for life and academic support to assist students in their learning. <https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Support: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for

religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available at

<https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>

LEARNING ANALYTICS

Learning analytics includes the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. No learning analytics are being used in this class.

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Students may record segments of the classes **after** consulting with the Instructor.

UBC 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.