I. COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to research methods with an emphasis on social work. Students will learn about basic quantitative and qualitative research methods and their application to social work practice. This course serves as the foundation for advanced social work research courses, including SWK 455: Research Practicum.

REQUIRED TEXT:

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

II. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION
The BSW program at SFASU features a generalist perspective to social work practice, defined as follows:

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.

- Is multi-level to include individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Is multi-theory, allowing for the free selection of theories as appropriate
- Utilizes a problem identification and solving focus that follows a problem-solving framework
- Utilizes multiple interventions at multiple levels, as appropriate
- Addresses the complexity of individual, family, group, organizational, and community system interactions
- Requires an integration of awareness, competence, and professional response to issues of values, ethics, diversity, culture, social justice, and populations-at-risk
III. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLO) (CSWE CORE COMPETENCIES)
1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

*Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS, 2015) from the Council on Social Work Education

IV. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO) (CSWE COMPONENT BEHAVIORS)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
2. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
3. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
4. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings
5. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery
6. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes
8. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
9. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

V. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS
The primary instructional model for this course is collaborative learning. Specifically, the instructor will set course content, course objectives, and methods of classroom assessment. The course will incorporate the following instructional strategies: lecture, class discussion, in-class activities, assigned readings, and individual projects. Students are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. Most importantly, students are expected to be active learners and to ask for clarification when they have questions. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity

VI. COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS
This course will utilize Brightspace/D2L to support the delivery of course content (for help with Brightspace/D2L go to https://www.sfactl.com/student-support). You will need basic skills regarding the use of a word processor and web browser. Computers are available to you through several labs across campus (see www.sfasu.edu or the instructor for details).

Your computer should meet or exceed the minimum computer system requirements as listed below:
- Operating System: Windows XP, Windows 7, Windows 8 or a Macintosh with OSX or higher
- Processor: 2.0 GHz or higher
- Memory: 2 GB of RAM
- Internet: 1.5 Mbps+/high-speed recommended
VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Course Overview
- Introduction to APA
- D2L
- Why Study Research
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 1 and NASW Code of Ethics

Week 2: Why study Research?
- Evidence Based Practice
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapters 1, 2, Gambrill article

Week 3: Ethical and Cultural Issues in Social Work Research
- Culturally Competent Research
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapters 5 & 6

Week 4: Computer Lab Activity - Library Research

Week 5: Exam 1

- Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 3

Week 6: Factors Influencing the Research Process
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 4

Week 7: Assignment A Due

- Reviewing Literature and Developing Research Questions
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 7

Week 8: Measurement in Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 8

Week 9: Exam 2

- Quantitative and Qualitative Measurement Instruments
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 9 and Springer article

Week 10: Surveys
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 10

- Sampling: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 11

Week 11: Experiments and Quasi-Experiments
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapter 12

Week 12: Exam 3

- Single Case Evaluation Designs
  Program Evaluation
  Reading: Rubin & Babbie Chapters 13 and 14
Week 13:  **Assignment B Due**  
Additional Methods in Qualitative Inquiry  
Analyzing Available Records: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods  
**Reading:** Rubin & Babbie Chapters 15, 16 and Rubin article

Week 14:  Thanksgiving Break

Week 15:  Completion of any remaining course content  
Course summary and evaluation

Week 16:  **Final Exam**

VIII. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

A. **Class attendance and participation:** In order for the class to discuss the readings and complete in-class activities, it is essential for students to read assigned material before coming to class, to attend class regularly, and to participate. Furthermore, students are expected to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. Absences and/or a persistent pattern of lateness will affect a student’s grade. Finally, students are responsible for all material covered in class and assigned in the syllabus, whether or not they have attended class.

**Cell phones/pagers/electronic devices:** Such devices are disruptive to the classroom environment and students are expected to refrain from using them during class. All such devices are to be placed on silent mode or turned off during class. Repeated interruptions may result in a deduction of points from the final average.

B. **Readings:** The course outline provides a list of required readings for each week (students will receive a detailed schedule the first full week of class that will outline the readings to be covered each class). Since lectures and class discussions are designed to answer questions about the material and expand upon the basic concepts, students are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class. Furthermore, students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the information, as evidenced by active participation in class discussion. For example, students should present well-formulated questions and comments that demonstrate prior preparation.

C. **Quizzes:** The quizzes given over the semester will test for general comprehension of the course material (assigned readings and/or previous lecture topics). Missing a quiz due to an unexcused absence will result in a grade of “0” on that quiz. Make-up quizzes will be given for an excused absence as defined by the SFASU General Bulletin (available online at [www.sfasu.edu/bulletin](http://www.sfasu.edu/bulletin)) and will be scheduled by the instructor.

D. **In-Class Activities:** There will be a total of 10 in-class activities over the course of the semester. Each activity will be worth 5 points, which will be based on your preparedness and participation.

E. **Exams:** Four major application exams will be given during the semester. All material provided on the topics, including all assigned readings, discussions, lectures, discussion questions/response, and guest presentations are subject to examination. The exams will consist of matching, true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions.

The student is expected to take all exams at the scheduled time. Permission to miss any exam will be based on the policy for excused absences as stated in the SFASU General Bulletin (available online at [www.sfasu.edu/bulletin](http://www.sfasu.edu/bulletin)). Missing an exam without either prior permission or an excused absence will result in a grade of “0” on that exam. The instructor will schedule make-up exams.
F. **Assignments:** The student is responsible for completing assignments in accordance with the specific guidelines identified in the assignment description (in the syllabus). Assignments A & B are to be typewritten (by typewriter or word processor) in 12 pt. font with double spacing and standard margins. All assignments are to be in APA format per the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Failure to meet these guidelines will result in loss of points. See the descriptions of Assignments A & B for guidelines.

Students are expected to turn in assignments at the scheduled time. Permission to turn in any assignment late will be based on the policy for excused absences as stated in the SFASU General Bulletin (available online at [www.sfasu.edu/bulletin](http://www.sfasu.edu/bulletin)). Turning in an assignment late without an excused absence will result in 10% of the total points being deducted from the total points earned for each day the assignment is late, with 10% deducted immediately following the class period during which the assignment is due.

**GRADING:**
- Quizzes = 30
- In-class activities = 50
- Exams = 400
- Assignment A = 100
- Assignment B = 100
- Total = 680

**GRADING SCALE:**
- A 609-680
- B 541-608
- C 473-540
- D 405-472
- F 0-404

**Academic Integrity (SFASU Policy 4.1)**
Honesty and representing one’s knowledge and abilities appropriately are important ethical principles of the social work profession. All violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be addressed in accordance with SFASU Policy 4.1 – Student Academic Dishonesty (SFASU Policy 4.1 can be found at [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies)). All incidents will result in a grade of “0.” Given the limited number of graded assignments in this course, a “0” could have serious consequences for the student’s academic standing.

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

**Withheld Grades- Course Grades Policy (5.5)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work by the deadline set by the instructor of record, not to exceed one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F.
students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Acceptable Student Behavior
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, SFA Policy 10.4). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Masks (Cloth Face Coverings)

Mental Health and Wellness
SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS AND DISABILITIES
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (https://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/) at 936-468-3004 or disabilityservices@sfasu.edu as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, read

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (SFA Policy 6.1)
https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities-6.1.pdf
ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment A – Annotated Bibliography

Each student is expected to identify a current social issue or problem relevant to generalist social work practice. The topic must be approved by the instructor prior to beginning the assignment. Each student will then develop a comprehensive annotated bibliography on the chosen topic.

The following aspects of the social issue are to be addressed:

a. Problem Definition/Description and Etiology (cause) of the Problem
b. Description of the Population Experiencing the Problem (Characteristics, Issues, Strengths, and Weaknesses)

c. Competing Points of View Regarding the Problem
d. Implications for the Delivery of Generalist Social Work Practice Interventions.

The annotated bibliography should contain at least 10 References, including:

1. At least one article from a professional peer reviewed journal that informs the problem definition/ description and etiology (cause)
2. At least one article from a professional peer reviewed journal that informs the description of the population
3. At least one article from a professional peer reviewed journal that informs the description of the competing points of view
4. At least two articles from a professional peer reviewed journal that informs the implications for generalist social work practice.

The professional peer reviewed journals should either be from social work or closely related disciplines. The remainder of the resources can be drawn from professional peer reviewed journals, books, and reliable Internet sources.

Each entry is to be in APA format and followed by one to two paragraphs that briefly describe the source’s contents and importance to the chosen topic.

Students will submit assignments in the Drop Box folder in Desire 2 Learn no later than 4pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the Drop Box in D2L.

This assignment is due:
Assignment B – Critique of Empirical Social Work Literature

Each student is expected to identify 5 empirical articles that examine social work interventions to address the social issue/problem identified in Assignment A (you may use articles identified in the annotated bibliography).

The articles must be from a professional peer reviewed journal (social work or closely related discipline). Two of the articles must be quantitative and two of the articles must be qualitative. The 5th article can be either qualitative or quantitative.

Once the articles are identified, the student is expected to critically critique the following aspects of the article:

1. Thoroughness of Literature Review
2. Problem Formulation
3. Conceptualization and Operationalization
4. Measurement
5. Instrumentation
6. Sampling
7. Design
8. Data Analysis/Results
9. Implications of the Results
10. Discuss the Article’s Relevance/Applicability to Generalist Social Work Practice.

Each entry is to be in APA format and followed by paragraphs that address the above content.
Students will submit assignments in the Drop Box folder in Desire 2 Learn no later than 4pm on the due date for the assignment. The assignment will be considered late until it has been submitted to the Drop Box in D2L. See the D2L website: http://www.sfasu.edu/sfaonline/486.asp for student tutorials on using D2L.

This assignment is due:

Bibliography and References