SOCW 3373.001
Social Work Research Methods
Spring 2024
Instructor Office Hours: T 9:30-12, W 9-12, 2-4; R 9:30-12

COURSE SYLLABUS

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 SOCW 4355: Research Practicum.

II. COURSE OVERVIEW
The purpose of this course is to provide you with an understanding of the ways by which social workers conceptualize, create and disseminate research, as well as how to apply the research from others for the benefit of consumers. The course will introduce quantitative and qualitative research methods to be applied at micro, mezzo, and macro environments. Specifically, this course will closely examine social work research germane to client populations, specific unmet client needs, and intervention strategies to address these unmet needs. Special emphasis will be placed on the methods used by social workers to engage, assess, treat, and evaluate interventions. This course will also address issues related to diversity, oppression, ethical decision making, and the differential impacts of research on diverse groups of clients and environments. An important component of SOCW 3373 is the discussion of the methods of research that can be used. This course is a pre-requisite for SOCW4355.

III. COURSE CONTACT HOURS AND STUDY HOURS
Course credit is determined per CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

Please keep in mind that, under federal financial aid eligibility requirements, SFA policy 5.4 defines the credit hour as “(1) Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.” So, for instance, a 3-credit hour face-to-face course in the fall term should approximate 3 hours of classroom time/direct instruction and at least 6 hours of out-of-class work per week. Online or hybrid courses
should employ various strategies for creating student-professor contact and are held to the same standard for contact hours and out-of-class work as face-to-face classes.

IV. TEXT AND MATERIALS

REQUIRED TEXT:

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

V. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The BSW program at SFA features the generalist practice in a Rural Context. Both are defined below.

**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.

Briefly, generalist social work 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 problem identification and solving focus that follows a problem-solving framework.
- Addresses the complexity of individual, family, group, organizational and community system interactions.
- Requires and integration of awareness, competence, and professional response to issues of values, ethics, diversity, culture, social justice and populations-at-risk.

**Rural context** refers to social work practice with people influenced by rural lifestyles and systems of all sizes within and outside of rural communities. There is no single accepted definition of rural. In fact, just as generalist practice in social work draws on multiple theories, generalist practice in rural contexts recognizes the many definitions currently in use and their advantages and disadvantages for research, practice, and advocacy. The School of Social Work at SFA utilizes several of these definitions within the United States and globally including:
The United States Census Bureau (urbanized areas, urban clusters, and rural populations); Office of Management and Budget (metropolitan, micropolitan, and non-core), Economic Research Service (rural urban continuum codes); and the United Nations that defines urban and rural according to the census definition for each nation, but suggests a definition of rural areas as having a population of less than 2,000 for international comparisons.

VI. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSWE 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

VII. OBJECTIVES / STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSWE 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 (Competency 1, 4, 7)
2. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication (Competency 1, 6, 7)
3. Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research (Competency 1, 4)
4. Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings (Competency 1, 2, 4, 7, 9)
5. Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery (Competency 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
6. Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes (Competency 1, 2, 4, 9)
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes (Competency 1, 2, 3, 4, 9)
8. Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes (Competency 1, 2, 4, 9)
9. Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels (Competency 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9)

Becoming a Scholarly Practitioner:

This course will help you establish your identities as scholarly practitioners and leaders. The
Scholarly Practitioner is defined as one who blends practical wisdom with professional skills and knowledge to identify, assess, and solve problems of practice, uses practical research and applied theories as tools for change; addresses problems of practice by collaborating with key stakeholders, including the university, educational institutions, communities, individuals, families, and organizations.

VIII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The primary instructional model for this course is collaborative learning. Specifically, the class will cover course content, course objectives, and methods of classroom assessment. The course will incorporate the following instructional strategies: lecture, class discussion, group exercises, online activities, assigned readings and individual projects. You are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. You are also encouraged to offer input regarding instructional strategies and assignments. Most importantly, you are expected to be an active learner and to ask for clarification when you have questions. In order to be successful in the class, it is important that you attend regularly, read the assigned material, and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. You will be expected to not only know the material presented, but to be able to apply it in experiential activities. Lectures will not duplicate the reading material except to clarify or to expand upon it, as well as connect it to material covered in prerequisite courses. 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.

IX. COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

This course will utilize D2L/Brightspace to support the delivery of course content - go to https://www.sfasu.edu/d2lsupport

X. COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1 Topic: Introduction to course, review of schedule, ethics
Dates: 1.18
Specific topics: syllabus and assignment review; ethics review
Readings: NASW Code of Ethics
Assignment: review code of ethics and come prepared on 1.23 ready to discuss; get the textbooks
Class Preparation: Code of ethics assignment

Week 2 Topic: Why study research and intro to evidence-based practice
Dates: 1.23 & 1.25
Specific topics: research
Readings: chapter 1 and 2 in the text
Assignment: quasi-science homework
Class Preparation: read the chapters before class; make sure to submit homework

Week 3 Topic: Ethical and cultural issues in social work
Dates: 1.30 & 2.1
Specific topics: chapter 5 and 6
Readings: chapter 5 and chapter 6
Assignment: think about topic for assignment A
Class Preparation: read
**Week 4** Topic Library Day; Exam 1 review  
- Dates: 2.6 & 2.8  
- Specific topics; Library Day; review for exam  
- Readings: read chapters 1, 2, 5, 6  
- Assignment: read the chapters and study hard  
- Class Preparation: study and read

**Week 5** Topic: Exam 1; Review expectations for Paper A and review of Quantitative and Qualitative and Mixed Methods of Inquiry  
- Dates: 2.13 & 2.15  
- Specific topics: Take Exam 1; Review instructions for Paper A; Chapter 3 in text  
- Readings: syllabus instructions for paper A; Chapter 3  
- Assignment: Paper A  
- Class Preparation: read syllabus for instructions and expectations for paper A and text chapter 3

**Week 6** Topic: Factors influencing the research process; Problem formulation  
- Dates: 2.20 & 2.22  
- Readings: chapter 4, and 7 in text  
- Assignment: read chapters in text  
- Class Preparation: chapters 4 and 7 in text

**Week 7** Topic: Measurement in qualitative and quantitative inquiry; review for X2  
- Dates: 2.27 & 2.29  
- Specific topics: chapter 8 and review  
- Readings: chapters 3,4,7,8 in book  
- Assignment: Paper A Due in dropbox before deadline  
- Class Preparation: study chapters 3, 4, 7, 8

**Week 8** Topic: Exam 2 and Dr. Morris out of town for conference  
- Dates: 3.5 & 3.7  
- Specific topics: Exam 2;  
- Readings: review chapters 3, 4, 7, 8 for exam;  
- Assignment: study for exam 2;  
- Class Preparation: study for exam;

**Week 9 Topic: Spring Break - - No class**  
- Dates: 3.12 & 3.14  
- Specific topics: Surveys from the book, and Morris review of expectations of paper B  
- Readings: read chapter 10 and read the instructions for the paper in the syllabus  
- Assignment: Assignment B  
- Class Preparation: read chapter 10 and the assignment B in the syllabus

**Week 10** Topic: Surveys and review of Assignment B  
- Dates: 3.19 & 3.21  
- Specific topics: quantitative and qualitative measurement instruments; surveys  
- Readings: chapter 9 & 10  
- Assignment:  
- Class Preparation: read the chapters 9 and 10
Week 11 Topic: Sampling and Easter Break-no class
   Dates: 3.26 & 3.28-no class
   Specific topics: quantitative and qualitative approaches to sampling
   Readings: chapter 11
   Class Preparation: read chapter 11

Week 12 Topic: experiments and quasi-experiments chapter 12
   Dates: 4.2 & 4.4
   Specific topics: research
   Readings: chapter 12
   Assignment: read the chapter before class
   Class Preparation: chapter 12

Week 13 Topic: review for X3 and then actually take X3
   Dates: 3.26 & 3.28
   Specific topics: review chapters 9-12; take exam 3
   Readings: chapters 9-12
   Assignment: study chapters 9-12
   Class Preparation: study chapters 9-12

Week 14 Topic: Single-case evaluation design and Program Evaluation
   Dates: 4.16 & 4.18
   Specific topics: single case evaluation and program eval
   Readings: chapter 13 and 14 in text
   Assignment: read the chapters before class
   Class Preparation: chapter 13 and 14

Week 15 Topic: Additional methods in qualitative inquiry and analyzing available records
   Dates: 4.23 & 4.25
   Specific topics: qualitative and secondary analysis
   Readings: chapter 15 and 16
   Assignment: work on final paper
   Class Preparation: read chapter 15 and 16 in text

Week 16 Topic: Dead Week review
   Dates: 4.30 & 5.2
   Specific topics: Review for final
   Readings: chapters 13-16
   Assignment: finish Assignment B; submit before due date
   Class Preparation: finish the paper and read/re-read the chapters in preparation for final

Week 17 Final Exam 5.7.24 at 1p in-class

XI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Class Attendance and Participation: In order for the class to discuss the readings, it is essential for you to read assigned material before coming to class, to attend class regularly, and to participate in class discussion. You are responsible for all material covered in class and assigned in the syllabus, whether or not you have attended class.

   Cell Phones/Pagers/Electronic Devices: Because such devices are disruptive to the classroom environment, I ask that you refrain from using them during class. I also ask that you either
place such devices on silent mode or turn them 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 weekly readings. Since lectures and class discussions are designed to answer questions about the material and expand upon the basic concepts, you are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class. Furthermore, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the information, as evidenced by active participation in class discussion. For example, you should present well-formulated questions and comments that demonstrate prior preparation.

C. **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.

You are 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 http://www.sfasu.edu/73.asp). Missing an exam without either prior permission or an excused absence will result in a grade of "0" on that exam. I will schedule make-up exams.

D. **Attendance and Participation:** As this is class is so fast-moving, attendance and active participation is required for each scheduled class period. Active preparation is required between classes as a function of keeping up with readings and assignments. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. I do accept University-approved excuses for absences and tardiness, or for those instances that accompany documentation. All other excuses will not be accepted.

E. **Assignments:** You are 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.

Late assignments will result in 10% of the total possible points being deducted from the total points earned for each day the assignment is late, with 10% deducted immediately following the date/time the assignment is due. The only exception is an excused absence as defined by the SFASU General Bulletin.

**XII. GRADING POLICY**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>4 @ 100 pts. each = 400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take home activities or Quizzes</td>
<td>= 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment A</td>
<td>= 100</td>
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<td>Assignment B</td>
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XIII. GRADING SCALE

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>473-540</td>
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XIV. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Per Class Attendance Policy SFA 6.7 students are expected to attend all classes, laboratories, and other class-related activities on a regular and punctual basis. Attendance policies will be stated in the course syllabus. For those classes where attendance is a factor in the course grade, an accurate record of attendance will be maintained. Absences At the discretion of the instructor, students may be excused from attendance for reasons such as health, family emergencies, or student participation in approved university-sponsored events. When possible, students should notify their instructors in advance about absences. Students are responsible for providing documentation in a timely manner to the instructor for each absence. The instructor determines whether such documentation is satisfactory. Students missing classes, other than for university-sponsored trips, should contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) and request that an absence notification be sent to the instructor(s). The notification is not an excuse, and is not evaluated by OSRR. The notification is only provided as a courtesy to the student and the student's instructor(s). If participating in university-sponsored events, announcements in mySFA may constitute official notification. Faculty members sponsoring activities that require their students to be absent from other classes must submit to the provost and vice president for academic affairs an explanation of the absence, including the date, time, and an alphabetical listing of all attending students. If approved by the provost and vice president for academic affairs, this information will be posted on mySFA. Whether absences are excused or unexcused by the instructor, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments. Students with accepted excuses may be permitted to make up work for absences equaling no more than 15% of the scheduled course meeting time for the term, depending on the nature of the missed work. The timeline for completing make-up work will be determined by the instructor.

https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/6.7.pdf

XV. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (SFA Policy 4.1)

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer...
program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other electronic/online resources should be discussed with the instructor.

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Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Social work students are required to uphold the School of Social Work Academic and Professional Integrity Code they agreed to when they first enrolled in the program. The BSW/MSW/DSW Student Handbook and Academic and Professional Integrity Code outline 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. 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, visits to agencies, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate or 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.

**XVI. WITHHELD GRADES SEMESTER GRADES POLICY (SFA 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 coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf).

**XVII. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) 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 promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**XVIII. STUDENT WELLNESS AND WELL-BEING**
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.
If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, 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:**
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:
- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**Crisis Resources:**
- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741
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.

Please refer to the course schedule for the due date.

*DUE in the Dropbox in D2L March 3, 2024 before 23:59*
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.

**DUE in the Dropbox in D2L before 3 May 2024 at 23:59**
Bibliography and References


