I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

This course has three main goals:

1. **Students will understand the basics of social work research.** Core research concepts are presented including specification, design, data collection, measurement, survey design, bias, qualitative and quantitative research, clinical research (multi-subject and single subject), use of computers in data retrieval, data management and data analysis, research implementation, interpretation, and dissemination.

2. **Students will understand how research is used in social work practice.** This includes the ability to frame empirically answerable questions, locate data relevant to those questions, critically evaluate such data, and apply it to practice situations.

3. **Students will develop a deeper understanding of the research process through designing and executing a research project.** “Tell me, I’ll forget. Show me, I’ll remember. Involve me, I’ll understand” – Chinese Proverb

As core components of the course, values are explored and ethics are taught as they apply to research, and the intertwined nature of diversity, health, social, and economic justice, and research is presented and explored.
IIa. **MSW COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE (revised July 2016)**

**Competency 1:** Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

**Competency 2:** Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

**Competency 3:** Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

**Competency 4:** Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

**Competency 7:** Assess Individuals, Families, Teams, Organizations and Communities

**Competency 9:** Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Teams, Organizations and Communities

IIc. **COMMON PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS**

Pedagogical elements common to all sections of this course include:

1. This course includes in-class demonstrations of computerized information retrieval systems. These are shown at general (e.g. Wikipedia and/or Google), scientific (e.g. Google Scholar, PsychInfo), and specialty (e.g. Cochrane Collaboration, NGO) levels. Students will complete assignments demonstrating mastery of the above kinds of search engines.

2. Instructors will demonstrate critical evaluation of existing research that is relevant to social work practice. Students will complete assignments demonstrating their ability to criticize existing research at a basic level.

3. Students will complete a research project (possibly in teams) demonstrating their ability to formulate a question, choose and execute a design, implement the research, analyze and interpret resultant data, and create a product in a format fit for dissemination (e.g. PowerPoint, poster, paper, agency presentation, etc.)

4. Instructors will demonstrate/model the research process, showing how specific field-generated questions can be (1) formulated and operationalized, (2) how best available evidence can be located, and (3) critically evaluated, and applied to practice. Main emphasis will be on steps 1 -3 of the research process.

5. Instructors will provide students with examples of critical ethical issues in the history of social work research. Students will demonstrate compliance with ethical standards in their assignments.

III. **BROWN SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES**

**Academic Integrity:** If a faculty member or student suspects that academic or professional integrity has been violated, they are required to submit an Academic Integrity or Professional Integrity Violation form found on Inside Brown for review by the Assistant Dean of the program. The Assistant Dean or designated representative will aid in the investigation of the violation, which includes but is not limited to gathering relevant evidence; conversations with the instructor, student(s) involved, witnesses, and others as necessary. Depending on the seriousness of the case, the Assistant Dean may choose to refer the matter directly to the University Student Conduct Board. This referral procedure will generally be followed if it is believed that the penalty is likely to involve suspension or expulsion from the University. The Assistant Dean for the program or designated representative will offer to meet privately with the student(s) against
whom the complaint has been made. It is the student’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with the behaviors that constitute an academic integrity violation requiring referral.

**Student Handbook 2019**

**Accommodations:** If you have a learning, sensory, or physical disability or any other diagnosis that requires accommodations and/or assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please work with the [Disability Resource Center](#), a University-wide resource that provides academic accommodations support and referrals. After requesting academic accommodations by providing appropriate documentation, students approved for accommodations will provide an Accommodation Letter to the instructor and are encouraged to work directly with the instructor to discuss specific course needs. The student’s Academic Advisor and/or the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs can support a student through this process.

**Pronouns:** The Brown School embraces and promotes gender expansiveness as reflective of the lived experiences of many students, staff, faculty and members of our expanded community. The correct use of an individual’s pronouns is a critical part of an individual's identity and of building an inclusive community. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to use pronouns during introductions, are expected to use expressed pronouns of all Brown School community members, and are encouraged to apologize when mistakes are made. Educational resources are available at: [https://campuslife.wustl.edu/lgbtqiagender-pronouns/](https://campuslife.wustl.edu/lgbtqiagender-pronouns/)

**English Language Proficiency:** If your English language proficiency is such that you may need special assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please communicate these needs to your instructor who may refer you to the [Brown Communications Lab](#). If you would like help seeking additional English language resources, please visit the Global Programs Suite in Brown 309. You may also find the Academic Assistance resources available through the [Office for International Students and Scholars](#) to be helpful.

**Professional Use of Electronic Devices in the Classroom:** Computers or other electronic devices, including “smart pens” (devices with an embedded computer and digital audio recorder that records the classroom lecture/discussion and links that recording to the notes taken by the student), may be used by students at the discretion of the faculty member to support the learning activities in the classroom. These activities include taking notes and accessing course readings under discussion. If a student wishes to use a smart-pen or other electronic device to audio record lectures or class discussions, they must notify the instructor in advance of doing so. Permission to use recording devices is at the discretion of the instructor, unless this use is an accommodation approved by Disability Resources.

Nonacademic use of laptops and other devices and use of laptops or other devices for other coursework is distracting and seriously disrupts the learning process for other people in the classroom. Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the classroom during class for nonacademic reasons or for work on other coursework. Nonacademic use includes emailing, texting, social networking, playing games, instant messaging, and use of the Internet. Work on other coursework may include, but is not limited to, use of the Internet, writing
papers, using statistical software, analyzing data, and working on quizzes or exams. The nonacademic use of cell phones during class time is prohibited, and they should be set on silent before class begins. In the case of an emergency, please step out of the room to take the call. The instructor has the right to hold students accountable for meeting these expectations, and failure to do so may result in a loss of participation or attendance points, a loss of the privilege of device use in the classroom, or being asked to leave the classroom.

Religious Holidays: The Brown School recognizes the individual student’s choice in observing religious holidays that occur during periods when classes are scheduled. Students are encouraged to arrange with their instructors to make up work missed as a result of religious observance, and instructors are asked to make every reasonable effort to accommodate such requests.

IV. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC SUPPORT POLICIES

Accommodations based upon relationship or sexual violence, including sexual harassment and stalking: The University is committed to offering reasonable accommodations to students who are victims of relationship or sexual violence. Students are eligible for accommodations regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such accommodations may include but are not limited to implementation of a no-contact order, emergency housing, course/classroom assignment changes, assignment extensions and other academic support services. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your requests to rsvpcenter@wustl.edu or call directly to 314-935-3445.

There are four licensed RSVP counselors who serve as confidential resources. However, to implement requests for accommodations, limited information will be shared with the appropriate university administrator and/or faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX Director. If you would like to speak with directly Ms. Kennedy directly, she can be reached at (314) 935-3118, jwkennedy@wustl.edu, or by visiting the Title IX office in Umrah Hall. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555 or your local law enforcement agency. See: Title IX

You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling (314) 935-3445 for an appointment or visiting the 4th floor of Seigle Hall. See: RSVP Center

Bias Reporting: The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or
discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: brss.wustl.edu.

Mental Health: Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See Mental Health Resources.

Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI): The Center of Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) supports and advocates for undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students from underrepresented and/or marginalized populations, creates collaborative partnerships with campus and community partners, and promotes dialogue and social change. One of the CDI's strategic priorities is to cultivate and foster a supportive campus climate for students of all backgrounds, cultures and identities. See: diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/

Additional Issues or Concerns: If you feel that you need additional supports in order to be successful in your time at Brown, beyond the mentioned accommodations, please contact your Academic Advisor or Danielle Bristow, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. They can assist you in navigating a myriad of concerns.

V. READING

Required Resources
Textbooks:

Recommended Resources (not required)
Rubin & Babbie companion website: This site includes supplemental (and fun!) review materials to accompany the text. This is not a link to the textbook. www.cengage.com/social_work/rubin

Supplemental Resources (on reserve at the Brown School Library)
VI. ORGANIZATION OF COURSE: WEEKEND STRUCTURE

The course is divided into four weekend sessions (Fridays and Saturdays) over the course of the semester. However, as with other courses, students will be required to complete readings and assignments throughout the semester. In addition, student groups will attend meetings with the TA on some Fridays when class is not scheduled for consultation on their group research projects. The course is structured in two parts: Core Content/Individual Learning Opportunities; and Application/Team Learning Opportunities. We will cover course content through readings, internet and other electronic resources, peer-review exercises, individual and team exercises, exams, presentations, and discussions designed to stimulate an appreciation for the importance of research in your professional development. Additional materials such as handouts and readings will be provided in class where appropriate. Students are also encouraged to help each other using the peer-review model whenever possible. Active participation and full preparation by each student for each class is expected. If a student cannot attend class, they are required to e-mail the instructor(s) and TA before class. PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH DAY IS THE EQUIVALENT TO 2 CLASSES, AND NO ONE WILL BE EXCUSED FOR MISSING A WEEKEND UNLESS IT IS AN EXTREME EMERGENCY
WITH DOCUMENTATION OF THEIR ABSENCE. This course outline serves as a guide and is subject to change if necessary.

All written assignments must be uploaded on Canvas on the due date, and before the beginning of class if a class is scheduled on that date.

VII. ROLE OF INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENTS

Course expectations: The instructor(s) will prepare and deliver course material, be available to students for consultation by appointment, and provide timely and clearly explained feedback on student performance. The instructor expects students to attend each class on time; complete all assignments in a timely manner; come to class prepared, having read all assignments; participate in class discussions; be courteous to the instructor and fellow students; seek any necessary clarification regarding course expectations from the instructor; and provide the instructor with feedback about the effectiveness of the course. Students are also expected to schedule regular meetings between class weekends with their project team using an agreed upon method, and to attend all project team meetings. Any problems with attendance, meeting deadlines, or completing assignments should be discussed promptly with the instructor. The teaching assistant’s role is to assist the instructor in delivering course material, be available to students for consultation by appointment, and provide timely feedback on student performance. The teaching assistant will be supervised by the instructor in all activities related to the course. Email is the best way to reach the Instructor and TAs, and all e-mails should be sent to both instructors and Teaching Assistants.

Canvas Use: The instructor will post Power Point slides from class lectures, additional readings, handouts and links to useful websites and other relevant resources to the Course Materials section of Canvas.

Expectations for written work: All written assignments must be double-spaced, typed with a Times New Roman 12-point font and have 1-inch margins. Text citations and references list must be in correct APA (6th ed.) format. All sentences must be comprised of student’s own words. Ideas, information, and concepts that originated with any other source must always be noted as such (based on APA format). Material that is not correctly cited is considered plagiarized and provides grounds for academic discipline. Assignments should be carefully proof-read for spelling and grammar. Students are strongly encouraged to use the assistance and services of the Brown School’s Communications Lab or the University Writing Center.

Policy on Late Assignments: The instructor will accept late assignments for an extreme emergency, such as death in the family. Health-related issues will need to be documented with a certificate from the doctor attesting to the student’s ill health. Except under extremely unusual circumstances, papers must be turned in on the due date. Draft versions will not have the benefit of a review before the due date. Late assignments will result in a deduction of 1 full letter grade unless prior approval is obtained from the instructor or a compelling situation prevents prior approval. For example, a grade of A- on an assignment will receive a B- grade instead.
VIII. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Assignments: A detailed description of and instructions for each assignment is provided in the next section of the syllabus. Additional information on all assignments will be provided in class. Application of content through writing, revision of writing, and oral presentation is an integral component of this course.

As shown in the Table, there will be both individual products (i.e., on-line CITI training, 2 exams, and active participation) and team produced products (APA-style papers and class presentations). The purpose of producing these products are to: 1) increase your familiarity with library resources, including research journals, databases and the internet; 2) help you integrate research concepts covered in class into practice; 3) aid in the application of these concepts to research practice in the field of social work; and 4) prepare you for your policy and/or program evaluation course. All assignments have the added value of contributing to the final research project either indirectly through skills and knowledge gained or directly through iterative drafts.

NOTE: SOME ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE IN BETWEEN COURSE MEETINGS AND IT IS EXPECTED THAT TEAMS WILL MEET BETWEEN CLASSES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Grade (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITI training</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Before Class on Sept 20</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Upload Certificate to Canvas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement and Significance of the Problem/Research Questions Paper</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Sept 27 (Friday) by 5 am</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz # 1</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Oct 4 (Friday)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods Paper</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Oct 18 (Friday) by 5 pm</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz # 2</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Nov. 1 (Friday)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Instrument</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Nov 4 (Monday) by 5 pm</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation and Feedback</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Nov 22 &amp; 23</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Nov 26 by 5pm</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation (attendance, class/team meeting participation, class exercises, incorporating feedback for assignments)</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>All semester</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%

Grade Scale (%): 100-97 A+, 96-94 A, 93-90 A-, 89-88 B+, 87-84 B, 83-80 B-, 79-74 C+, 77-74 C, 73-70 C-, 69 and below F. Please note that all papers, exams, and presentations will be graded with a letter grade and not points. The average of your letter grade will correspond with the letter grade that you will receive for the course.
## IX. COMPETENCY ALIGNMENT TO ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Assignments</th>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Dimensions Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITI Training</td>
<td>C1, C3</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement and Significance of the Problem/Review, Synthesize, and Identify Gaps in Literature/Formulate Research Questions</td>
<td>C4, C7</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge/Cognitive Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Study Methods Paper (Sampling, Design, Ethical Issues, Data Collection Instrument &amp; Procedures)</td>
<td>C1, C7, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper and presentation w/ peer review</td>
<td>C4, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>C4, C7, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course Activities

| Developing Statement of the Problem/Research Questions using “Endgame: AIDS in Black America” | C2, C9     | Skills/Knowledge             |
| Developing Testable Hypotheses                                                       | C9         | Skills/Knowledge             |
| Completion & Critique of a Measure                                                    | C1, C4, C7 | Skills/Values/Cognitive Processes |
| Small Team Sampling Activity                                                         | C9         | Skills/Knowledge             |
| Proposed Study Presentation w/ peer feedback                                         | C9         | Knowledge/Cognitive Processes |
| Developing Qualitative Research Questions                                             | C9         | Skills/Knowledge             |
| Creating a Data Analysis Plan Based on Study Variables                               | C9         | Skills/Knowledge/Cognitive Processing |
| Data Analysis Lab – Using Appropriate Statistical Tests                              | C9         | Skills/Knowledge             |
| Data Collection Check-In and Problem-Solving                                         | C9         | Skills/Cognitive Processing  |
# COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module No. and day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings (prior to class)*</th>
<th>Assignments Due (prior to class or on dates as shown)**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Friday</td>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>Course Overview &amp; Introduction</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 1, 2, 3); Kumar (Ch. 1, 2)</td>
<td>CITI Training (individual) due before class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Friday</td>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>Specification of Research Area &amp; Formulating Hypotheses/Library Intro</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 4 &amp; 5) Kumar (Ch. 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Saturday</td>
<td>9/21</td>
<td>Conceptualization &amp; Operationalization</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 6) Kumar (Ch. 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Saturday</td>
<td>9/21</td>
<td>Measurement &amp; Instrumentation</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 7, 8, 9); Kumar (Ch. 9 &amp; 11)</td>
<td>Statement &amp; Significance of Problem/Lit Review (team) due 9/27 by 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Friday</td>
<td>10/4</td>
<td>Sampling &amp; Survey Research</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 10) Kumar (Ch. 10 &amp; 12)</td>
<td>Quiz 1 (individual-in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Friday</td>
<td>10/4</td>
<td>Values &amp; Ethics in Research</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 16 &amp; 17); Kumar (Ch. 14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Saturday</td>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>Research Designs</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 11 &amp; 12); Kumar (Ch. 7 &amp; 8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Saturday</td>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 14) Kumar (Ch. 13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Saturday</td>
<td>10/5</td>
<td>Qualitative Data Analysis</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 19)</td>
<td>Methods Section (team) due 10/18 by 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Friday</td>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>Data Management and Planning Data Analysis</td>
<td>Stiffman (Ch. 4 &amp; 5)</td>
<td>Quiz 2 (individual-in class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Friday</td>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>Quantitative Data Analysis</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 18) Drake &amp; Jonson-Reid (Ch. 13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Saturday</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Presenting Data: Results and Discussion</td>
<td>Kumar (Ch. 15 &amp; 16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Saturday</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Presenting Findings &amp; Crafting the Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Data Collection Instrument Due 11/4 by 5 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS LABS 12-5 pm</td>
<td>11/15</td>
<td>TA Meetings re: Data Analyses</td>
<td>Must bring research questions &amp; instrument</td>
<td>Optional Group Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Friday</td>
<td>11/22</td>
<td>Team Presentations &amp; Feedback</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Appendix B); Kumar (Ch. 17)</td>
<td>Final Presentations (team)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Saturday</td>
<td>11/23</td>
<td>Team Presentations &amp; Feedback</td>
<td>Final Presentations (team) Final Paper due 11/26 5pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Additional Readings for some classes will be posted on Canvas or provided in class
** Assignment instructions are in the syllabus, Canvas, & discussed in class.
DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) Training: Due Before First Class

Purpose:
- To gain an overview of important historical and current issues in the protection of human research subjects.
- To obtain certification in human subjects training for the assignment required in this course and for future involvement in research projects at Washington University.

Type: Individual

Description: You will review the training modules and complete the on-line modules and quizzes for Behavioral IRB Members & Researchers in the following Departments: Social Work, Anthropology, Economics, Education, Political Science, Psychology, Program in Philosophy, Neuroscience & Psychology, Program in Social Thought and Analysis. You will access the CITI training website using your WUSTL key (user ID & password). This assignment typically takes about four hours to complete. The system allows you to stop your session and return at a later time to complete the session; however you must follow the on-line instructions carefully to avoid losing stored information. Completing this assignment insures that you meet the minimum Human Subjects education required for human subjects contact for students involved in research projects on the Danforth campus (you may be required to complete the additional biomedical modules for any involvement with research projects on the Medical Campus). Upon completion, please upload the completion certificate on Canvas before the first class.

To enroll and access the training, follow these instructions:
1. Click: https://research.wustl.edu/
2. Search for CITI in the search bar. Scroll down and click "CITI Program"
3. Enter your WUSTL Key. If you have entered your WUSTL key in another website (e.g., BOX) on the same browser, you will automatically be logged in to CICI and see the homepage. If you have not set-up a two-step verification method for your WUSTL key, follow directions to set-up the verification method. Contact the WUSTL key help desk if you have any problems with this process: https://connecthelp.wustl.edu/Pages/support.aspx
4. From the CITI homepage, click "Washington University-St. Louis, MO"
5. At the bottom of the page, click Add a Course under "Learner Tools for Washington University-St. Louis"
6. A new page opens with questions to enroll you in the necessary course
7. Select “Initial Human Subjects Education (required one time only)” for Question “Which training(s) do you need to complete?”
8. Select “All other Danforth Schools/Departments not listed above” for Question 2 “What is your role or focus in human subjects research? Choose the appropriate group below”
9. Click Next
10. Find a course named “Other Danforth Schools” under “Courses Ready to Begin”
11. Click "Start Now" to start your CITI training
Statement & Significance of the Problem and Research Questions (Maximum 5 pages)

**Purpose:** To familiarize yourself with literature relevant to your team’s research topic and to practice writing the Introduction/Background and Research Questions section of a manuscript. To critically analyze and summarize the literature in your problem area. This will be the basis for the Introduction/Background and Research Questions section of your final project.

**Type:** Team (submit 1 paper per team; list all team members on assignment)

**Description:** Being able to critically and thoroughly assess the empirical literature for a given question is essential, whether you are developing a new program, applying for a grant, or proposing a new study. If your topic is within an established field of research, then you should know who the major researchers are and what they did. If your topic is new, then it is important to relate your topic to one or more of the closest lines of research. Regardless, you need to synthesize the information that you have collected, which is typically done in a literature review.

Identify at least 10 peer-reviewed journal articles that address some aspect of your team’s research topic (research problem). Introduce the topic. Integrate and synthesize the literature as it supports the significance of your team research project. Your literature review should form an argument; you should not simply repeat what others have done. You should show that you know what research has already been done in your area of interest and how your study will build upon that knowledge base. Use the literature to formulate where a gap in the literature exists and how your study will help fill that gap. **End the literature review by explaining the purpose of your team’s research study and stating your team’s research questions (at least 2) and hypotheses (as appropriate).**

The narrative should summarize the empirical literature in your area related to your team’s chosen research topic in 5 pages maximum. References and cover/title pages are not counted toward the page limit. Please adhere to APA format for this paper including in the format of references. Pages exceeding the page limitation will not be graded.

Chapter 7 of the Rubin & Babbie book and Chapters 2, 3, & 4 of the Kumar book provide some guidance for this paper. Appendices A and B in the Rubin & Babbie book and Chapters 13 in the Kumar book provide guidance on writing an introduction/background section for a research proposal or report.

**Grading Criteria and Suggested Length:** (of approximately equal weighting):

- Statement and Significance of the problem (1-1.5 pages)
- Literature Review & summary of existing knowledge on topic: What we know (2 pages)
- Identification of gaps in the literature: What we don’t know (1/2 page)
- Research questions and how they fill the gaps (1 page)
- References cited in the narrative (in APA style format)
- Quality of writing (format, proofreading, flow, citations, etc.)
Methods Section (Team Paper #2)

Purpose: To describe and justify your research design and methodology
Type: Team (one assignment submitted per team)
Pages: Four pages MAXIMUM, not counting cover page and references. Pages exceeding the page limitation will not be graded.

Paper components:

Introduction and Overview:
Briefly describe the statement and significance of the problem and the purpose of your study and how it will fill a gap in the literature. State clearly your research questions and any hypotheses you have related to your questions. Some proposals will have hypotheses and others will not. (1 page)

Methods
• Sample: Describe who your sample will be (including inclusion and exclusion criteria, and the number of participants you anticipate based on feasibility). Describe your sampling method (how are you going to sample these people and why you chose this method). Be as specific as possible about your procedures for sampling.

• Research Design: Is your research cross-sectional or longitudinal? Is it quantitative or qualitative?

• Data Collection and Variables: Describe how you will collect your data (paper vs. online survey, interviews). Will this be self-reported or interview data (collected by the researcher)? What are the independent and dependent variables that you will be measuring, and how are you operationalizing each of the variables? What demographic variables will you be measuring to describe your sample?

Ethical Issues
In this section, you need to describe any ethical issues you need to consider and what you will do to protect your study subjects (e.g., anonymity or confidentiality; risks & benefits; compensation).

Study Limitations
Describe the limitations of your study. What are the biases or limitations for your choice of sample and sampling method, data collection method, and research design?

Grading Criteria:
The following criteria will be used for evaluation of your paper (with suggested page lengths). Each component will be approximately the same weight.
Introduction and Overview (1 page)
Sample (1 page)
Research design (1/4 page)
Data collection (1/2 page)
Measurement / Data Collection Instrument (Team Paper 3)

**Purpose:** To gain experience developing a methodology section, selecting or drafting a data collection instrument, and creating an analysis plan

**Type:** Team (one assignment submitted per team)

**Description:** This assignment includes 2 parts – a narrative overview (2-3 pages) and a data collection instrument. In the narrative overview, your team should provide a brief overview of your measurement plans, including a list of variables that will be measured and operational definitions for each variable (how they will be measured), and how/why you made the decisions.

If your instrument includes previously developed and validated items or scales, please include references for those items/scales and discuss the reliability and validity of the instrument. If the items were created by the team, and it is a quantitative study, then a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient can be computed to report the internal consistency of the scale. The narrative overview should be 2-3 pages in length. **Only measures in the public domain or those that have been approved for use for the class by the developer or publisher can be used.**

The second part of the assignment is to include the instrument or survey that will be used to collect data for your research project. The type and length of the instrument (i.e., brief survey, in-depth interview guide, focus team guide) will be determined by your team’s research question. The instrument should accompany the narrative overview. The length of the instrument will be determined by the type of instrument and the concepts being measured.

*All teams will need to have their instruments approved by the instructor before using it in the field. Additionally, all teams must place the following language at the beginning of the data collection instrument/script:*

“As part of the requirements for their Research Methods course, students at the Brown School are conducting [a survey/interviews /focus teams] about [topic]. As part of this experience, you are being asked to answer some questions about [more information about the data you are collecting]. This exercise is strictly for educational purposes. The information gathered will be used for class assignments and will not be shared or disseminated outside the classroom in any way. You will not be asked to provide any identifying information (such as name, birth date, email address, etc.) or any information about your personal health. The [survey/interview/focus team] will take approximately [X] minutes to complete. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and may stop the [survey/interview/focus team] at any time without penalty. Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation that are unable to be addressed by the student administering this [survey/interview/focus team], you may contact the course instructor, Dr. Wendy Auslander, Ph.D. at wendyaus@wustl.edu or (314) 935-6634.”
The following criteria will be used to evaluate your paper. Note: This assignment will be a component of your Methods section for your final team paper.

- Overall description of measurement plans (e.g., type of instrument with justification for why selected it)
- Operational definitions of all variables being measured
- Discussion of instrument reliability & validity
- Data analysis plan (This should relate to each research question). Note: We realize that this will be a general plan).
- Instrument with instructions to the participant for administering data collection instrument and/or script, and human subjects paragraph
- Miscellaneous (formatting, proofreading, flow, APA citations, etc.)
Team Research Project Paper and Presentation

Final Paper Guidelines

Purpose: 1) To integrate and apply research methods skills and knowledge to develop and conduct a small scale research project, and to experience working on a collaborative research team. 2) To integrate feedback from previous papers into the final paper.

Type: Team to be uploaded on Canvas with any supplementary materials. Please make sure all components of your paper (including appendixes) are submitted as ONE WORD document.

Description: This 20-page assignment is meant to provide you with research knowledge and skills, as well as manuscript preparation skills. It builds directly upon previous assignments, which should help you through the process of formulating your team’s ideas and conducting the specific steps for this research project. Your team project should be a small, pilot project that will be implemented and completed within the course of the semester.

Deliverable: Each team will submit one written paper (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion/Conclusions), not to exceed 20-pages in length (or 25-pages for a qualitative study). Supplemental materials (described below) do not count towards the maximum length and include: Title Page, Abstract, Acknowledgments, References, Tables/Figures, Appendices, and Author Contributions. Papers should conform to APA format.

Format: The final paper will be formatted like a manuscript that you would submit to a peer-review journal. It will consist of the following sections:

Title Page: This page should include project title, date, course, and team member names (APA format dictates that team member names are ordered alphabetically).

Abstract: Construct a 250-word (maximum) abstract that summarizes the major points of your project and is organized in the following subheadings: Objectives, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. Objectives should highlight the major research question(s)/hypotheses you investigated. Methods should describe the study design, study population, sample size, and outcome (dependent) and major predictor (independent) variables (or major themes of interest for a qualitative study), as well as briefly describe how data were collected. Results should present the major findings, including your response rate and any statistically significant outcomes (or patterns uncovered/themes discovered for a qualitative study). Discussion/Conclusions should present the important “take home” points of the study.

Introduction: Introduce your research topic and describe its importance to social work. Provide an overview of the literature in which you illustrate what is known about the topic and where the gaps lie in the field. Conclude by presenting your research questions/hypotheses. (Page length recommendation: 4 pages)

Methods: Describe the methodology used to investigate your hypotheses. This includes study design, study population (e.g., sampling frame, sample size), inclusion/exclusion criteria,
operationalization of variables, data collection instrument (e.g., length, standard vs. self-designed vs. combination of the two), data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures. It should include a statement about research ethics and IRB approval (e.g., IRB approval was not required as this project was conducted for educational purposes alone, and the findings will not be shared outside the classroom or used to make generalizations about a larger population.). Your methods should be detailed enough so that your study could be replicated. (Page length recommendation: 4-5 pages)

Results: State the major results from your study. You do not need to discuss the implications of your results (that will happen in the Discussion/Conclusions section) but instead present the major findings. This may include numbers, outcome measures (e.g., relative risks, odds ratios), or themes and quotes (from qualitative work). (Page length recommendation: 5 pages, or greater for a qualitative study)

Discussion/Conclusions: Discuss the implications of your findings and relate them to what is already known/what has been done in the field. Include strengths and limitations of your study, as well as suggestions for future research. Conclude with a restatement of the major finding(s) in light of your study design. (Page length recommendation: 5-6 pages)

Acknowledgements: Provide an author affiliation list; list each team member alphabetically (include highest degree to date) with current school and degree program. Include brief thank-you statements to acknowledge those who assisted with the project but were not members of the team, if relevant.

References: References should be in APA format (i.e., listed alphabetically, hanging indent).

Tables/Figures: All tables and figures should be labeled numerically and with a title (e.g., Table 1: Demographics of the Study Population). Footnotes should be labeled alphabetically as they appear in the table/figure and should provide any additional information needed to understand the table/figure (e.g., \(^{a}CI = confidence\ interval, \(^{b}Numbers\ may\ not\ add\ to\ 100\%\ due\ to\ missing\ data,\ etc.). Each table/figure should have its own page. Font size within the table/figure should be no smaller than 10-point font.

Appendices: All appendices should be labeled alphabetically and with a title (e.g., Appendix A: Data Collection Instrument). Appendices will include: data collection instrument or interview guide, all data collection forms with raw data (i.e., completed surveys, transcribed interviews), and the output and syntax (or codebook) from your data analysis. You do not need to put a running head or page number on the appendix pages.

Author Contributions: The “Author Contribution” page is a standard component to manuscripts submitted to journals in consideration of publication. The page should describe the contributions (to the project, paper, and presentation) of each team member (e.g., Jane Smith conducted the initial lit review, identified questions for the final survey, wrote the Methods section of the paper, and helped to edit the final paper. Mary Green assisted with the literature review and data analysis, proofread the final paper, and put together all of the PowerPoint slides.)
Each person will also evaluate all team members (including yourself) using a form that will be placed on Canvas.

Grading: It is possible that team members may receive different grades depending on their contribution to the research project based on the individual team evaluations.

**Final Presentation Guidelines**

**Purpose:** To challenge you to develop a professional presentation that synthesizes your team’s research project and disseminates the project’s findings.

**Description:** Each team should prepare a single presentation that succinctly explains the research project and its methodology plus presents the findings from the project. All members must present a part of the presentation and should be able to respond to questions about any aspect of the project. The presentation should mirror the format and flow of the final paper (See Team Paper Guidelines).

Please include the following sections in your power point presentation:

- Introduction/background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion/conclusion

Each team will be allotted 25 minutes of presentation and 10 minutes for feedback from the class and questions. Please note that for each presentation, a team will be assigned as the primary reviewers and be responsible for providing constructive feedback on all aspects of the presentation. Please post your PowerPoint presentation on Canvas before the class, and bring copies for the class members and instructors. The presentation will be graded as a portion of the final team project and will be based on coherence, flow, timeliness, visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint) and team preparation (i.e., ability to answer questions, professionalism).