I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

This course has three main goals:

1. Students will understand the basics of social work and public health 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 evidence based 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.

II. MSW COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE

| Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior | C1 |
| Engage diversity and difference in practice. | C2 |
| Advance human rights and social and economic and environmental justice. | C3 |
| Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice. | C4 |
| Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | C7 |
| Evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities | C9 |
IIb. 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 which 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 EBP 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 EBP process.

5. Instructors will provide students with examples of critical ethical failures 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/lgbtqia/lgbt-resources/gender-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 sexual assault: The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb, Director of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center, or Jen Durham Austin, Support Services Counselor. Both Kim Webb and Jen Durham Austin are confidential resources; however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and 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, jw kennedy@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

Textbook:
*If you choose an older version, you are responsible for obtaining the updated information.

Recommended Resources (not required)
Rubin & Babbie companion website: This site includes supplemental review materials to accompany the text. The web address below is also listed in the Preface of the textbook: www.cengage.com/social_work/rubin

Supplemental Resources (on reserve at the Brown School Library)


**VI. ORGANIZATION OF COURSE**

The course is divided into two parts: **Part 1**: Core Content/Individual Learning Opportunities and **Part II**: Application/Group Learning Opportunities. We will cover course content through readings, internet and other electronic resources, peer-review exercises, individual and group exercises, quizzes, presentations, and discussions designed to stimulate an appreciation for the importance of research in your professional development. I will provide handouts, additional readings, and supplementary materials 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. Attendance, peer-review, and discussions of research as current event topics count toward active participation. This course outline serves as a guide and is subject to change if necessary.

Students are expected to bring a laptop with adequate performance specifications. More information about this requirement is listed in the Student Handbook on Inside Brown: https://insidebrown.gwb.wustl.edu/People/students/studenthandbook/Student-Resources-and-Non-classroom-Policies/Pages/Laptop-Computer-Requirement.aspx
A list of available software is here: https://insidebrown.gwb.wustl.edu/Departments/IT/Pages/Student%20Software.aspx

Students can visit Student Technology Services (https://sts.wustl.edu), located on the South 40, for assistance with computer issues. Please note that we have also partnered with the Library to make a limited quantity of laptops available for check out for those who need them.

VII. ROLE OF INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENTS

Course expectations: The instructor will: prepare and deliver course material; be available to students after class and by appointment for consultation; 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. Any problems with attendance, meeting deadlines, or completing assignments should be discussed promptly with the instructor. Email is the best way to reach me.

Expectations for written work: All written assignments must be double-spaced, typed with a Times New Roman or Arial 11 or 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 Writing 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 at the beginning of class on the due date. Draft versions that are late will not have the benefit of review. Late assignments will result in a deduction of 5% per day for each day late (including weekends) off the assignment score unless prior approval is obtained from the instructor or a compelling situation prevents prior approval.
VIII. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Assignments: A description of and instructions for each assignment for this course is provided in the Appendix 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 and the skills necessary to become an evidenced-based social worker or public health professional.

<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>Sep 9</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topic &amp; question with sources</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Sep 30</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviews [in class]</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>1) Oct 7</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) Dec 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review with table</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research design &amp; consent</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection instrument</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Nov 25</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research critiques</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Oct 21 Nov 11</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nov 18 Dec 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final presentation &amp; paper</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Dec 2 &amp; 9</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active participation (including attendance,</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>All semester</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class participation, critique discussion)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 100%

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(100-95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>(90-94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>(88-89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(85-87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>(80-84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>(78-79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(75-77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>(70-74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(≤69)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There will be both individual products (i.e., on-line CITI training, research topic and question, 2 quizzes, article critique, active participation – 60%) and group produced products (APA-style paper and class presentation – 40%). The purposes 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 fields of social work and public health; and 4) prepare you for your policy and/or program evaluation course and life as an evidenced-based social worker and/or public health professional.

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.
### IX. MSW COMPETENCY ALIGNMENT TO ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Assignments</th>
<th>Competency/Competencies</th>
<th>Dimension/Dimensions Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research topic and question with sources</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review with table</td>
<td>C4, C7</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITI Training</td>
<td>C1, C3</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research design and consent paper</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection instrument</td>
<td>C7, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Translation Practice Assignments on: What can go wrong in research, comparing media to published study, ethics of research, culturally appropriate research, correlation is not causation</td>
<td>C1, C2, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Cognitive Processes/Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper and presentation</td>
<td>C4, C9</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>C4, C7, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Competency/Competencies</th>
<th>Dimension/Dimensions Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing an abstract</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critiquing published research</td>
<td>C2, C7, C9</td>
<td>Values/Cognitive Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMILE operationalization activity</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group ethics case study</td>
<td>C2, C9</td>
<td>Values/Cognitive Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique of available surveys and data collection instruments</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity and reliability activity</td>
<td>C9, C4</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group activity on interviewing skills</td>
<td>C2, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group activity on qualitative analysis</td>
<td>C2, C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity on data visualization</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Skills/Knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## X. COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings (PRIOR to class)</th>
<th>Assignments Due**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>Course Overview &amp; Introduction</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 1, 2, 3)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sep. 9</td>
<td>Values &amp; Ethics in Research</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 4)</td>
<td>CITI Training (individual);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Sep. 16</td>
<td>Specification of Research Area &amp; Literature</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 7)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Searching</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Sep. 23</td>
<td>Conceptualization &amp; Operationalization</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 5 &amp; 6)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Sep. 30</td>
<td>Measurement &amp; Instrumentation</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 8 &amp; 9)</td>
<td>Research topic &amp; question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Oct. 7</td>
<td>Sampling &amp; Survey Research</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 10 &amp; 11)</td>
<td>Review 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>Study Designs I</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 12 &amp; 13)</td>
<td>Literature review &amp; table</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(group)</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research-critique 1(individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td>Study Designs II</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 12 &amp; 13)</td>
<td>Research-critique 2(individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Quantitative data analysis</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 16)</td>
<td>Research design &amp; consent</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Nov. 11</td>
<td>Data Management &amp; cleaning</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 17)</td>
<td>Research-critique 3(individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>Analysis of Existing Data Quantitative</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 18)</td>
<td>Research-critique 4(individual)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov. 25</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Rubin &amp; Babbie (Ch. 15)</td>
<td>Data collection instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Dec. 2</td>
<td>Research example</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research-critique 5(individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Dec. 9</td>
<td>Final Group Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Project Presentation</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Dec. 16</td>
<td>Final Project paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Project paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(group)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

** Assignment instructions are in the appendix, on Canvas & will be discussed in class
Active Participation

**Purpose:** To ensure that students are actively engaged in the course and maximize their opportunities to learn

**Type:** Individual

**Description:** Attendance and active participation are expected. Active participation includes being on-time for class, being prepared for class, having read all assignments prior to class, leading and engaging in thoughtful classroom discussion of the content matter, actively participating in group and in-class exercises. Peer-review participation is also expected as part of active participation in the course. Peer-review participation includes providing fellow classmates constructive written and verbal feedback on their work and professionally considering and incorporating, where appropriate, reviewer feedback on revisions of your own work. More detail on peer-review will be discussed in class.

**Date due:** All semester

**Percent of final grade:** 5%
Research Critique

**Purpose:** To learn to distinguish differences between actual research studies and the way the study was presented in popular media and to disseminate research findings in a meaningful way.

**Type:** Individual

**Description:** A peer-reviewed published research study along with a companion article in a popular press venue will be assigned by students group one week before the critique is due. The critique assignments will vary but will always involve a published research study and some form of popular press dissemination. These articles and student interpretations will be discussed in class.

**Due Date:** Oct 21, Oct 28, Nov 14, Nov 28, & Dec. 2 (submit via Canvas Discussion Forum)

**Percent of Final Grade:** 25%
Research Topic & Question with Sources

Purpose: To identify and describe a research topic of interest to you and to posit why your topic is important to social work/public health practice.

This assignment is similar to what will be needed as part of the group projects.

Type: Individual

Description: Identify and describe a research topic of interest to you. Locate at least 5 sources (at least 3 of which should be peer-reviewed journal articles) that provide background on this topic. In 2-3 pages of text, summarize what has been done on this topic (based upon the sources you found and citing them in the text) and justify why this topic is important to social work/public health practice. End your paper with 1-2 research questions or specific aims that your research project would address. Be sure that the research questions and/or specific aims are clearly identified as such (e.g., “This research study seeks to answer the question(s): …)

This write-up is similar to the Specific Aims and Background/ Significance sections of a research grant proposal and the Introduction/Background section of a peer-reviewed published manuscript.

This assignment should be 2-3 pages of text plus the list of references and a cover/title page. References and cover/title pages are not counted toward the page limit. Please adhere to APA for this paper including in the in-text citations and formatting of references. Pages exceeding the page limitation will not be graded.

Date due: September 30 (submit via Canvas by the beginning of class)

Percent of final grade: 15%

Grading rubric for Research Topic & Question: (25 points)

- Justification of importance of topic 5 points
- Importance/ relevance of sources 5 points
- Review & summary of existing knowledge on topic 5 points
- Research aim/ research question clearly stated 5 points
- Miscellaneous (format, proofreading, flow, citations, etc.) 5 points
Literature Review with Table

**Purpose:** To familiarize yourself with literature relevant to your group’s research topic and to practice writing the literature review. To develop the basis for the *Introduction/Background* section of your final project.

**Type:** Group (submit 1 paper with table per group; list all group 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.

There are two elements to this assignment: the **narrative** and **table**.

Cull at least 10 peer-reviewed journal articles that address some aspect of your group’s topic. Introduce the topic. Synthesize the literature as it supports the significance of your group research project. Your literature review should form an argument; you should not simply tell me 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 show me 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 group’s research study and stating your group’s research question and hypotheses (as appropriate).**

The **narrative** should summarize the empirical literature in your area related to your group’s chosen research topic in 5 pages or less. 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.

The accompanying **table** should list the authors, year published, sample size, research question, method of analysis, and conclusions. Depending on your group’s topic, you might wish to modify these categories or add some others. The table should provide the reader with a very clear overall picture of the (minimum) 10 citations discussed in the narrative. Such tables are extremely useful for seeing the evolution of studies, trends in the methods being used, and identifying gaps in the research.

Chapter 4 and Appendix A and B in the Rubin &Babbie book provides tips for literature searching. The Galvan (2006) book on reserve in the library provides a guide for writing literature reviews in the social and behavioral sciences although it is geared towards longer reviews (i.e., dissertation chapters).

**Date due:** October 21 (email to me (spark30@wustl.edu) and Maya (maya.williams@wustl.edu) by the beginning of class)

**Percent of final grade:** 10%
Grading rubric for literature review: (25 points)

- Justification of importance of topic                                      3 points
- Importance/ relevance of sources                                       2 points
- Review & summary of existing knowledge on topic                         4 points
- Identification of gaps in the literature                               3 points
- Research aim/ research question/ hypotheses clearly stated             3 points
- Presentation of review literature in table format                      5 points
- Miscellaneous (format, proofreading, flow, citations, etc.)            5 points
Human Subjects On-line (CITI) Training

**Purposes:**
- 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 future involvement in research projects

**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 ensures 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 email your automated completion certificate to me (spark30@wustl.edu) and Maya (maya.williams@wustl.edu) or bring a hard-copy of the completion certificate to class.

**Internet location:** Human Research Protection Office, Washington University


**Date due:** September 9

**Percent of final grade:** 5%
Research Design, Methodology & Consent

**Purpose:** To articulate and justify your research design and methodology and to practice preparing consent forms

**Type:** Group (one assignment submitted per group)

**Description:** You will provide an overview, using correct research terminology, of your research question, methodology (i.e., sampling strategy, measurement tools, research design and limitations), and ethical issues sections. The more detailed your overview is, the more helpful I can be with feedback for you. Be specific. This project overview should be 3-4 pages in length plus the consent form. Pages exceeding the page limitation will not be graded.

**Research Questions/Hypotheses**
Create a brief opening paragraph that very clearly specifies your research question/specific aim(s) and any hypotheses that you plan to test. Some proposals will have hypotheses and others will not. The nature of the question/research aim will dictate this. (This should be similar to what your group stated at the end of your literature review assignment.)

**Methodology**
- **Sampling:** Describe who your population is, what your sampling frame is, who you are going to sample, how many persons you are going to sample, how you are going to sample these persons, and why you chose this method of sampling. If using existing (public use/archival sources)…describe this data source and plans for extracting data.

- **Research Design:** Is your research cross-sectional or longitudinal? If longitudinal, which type of longitudinal design are you going to use? What is the name of your research design? If anything other than a cross-sectional design, show me the Rs, Xs, and Os of the design. If you are using a treatment intervention, describe the intervention.

- **Limitations:** Describe the weaknesses of your design. What threats to internal and external validity does your study face? What measurement problems does your study have?

**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; remuneration; informed consent). You may revisit the CITI training modules completed at the beginning of the semester. You also need to include a consent form for your study. Sample consent forms are presented in Ch. 4 of Rubin & Babbie. The WU HPRO website, has template consent forms for behavioral and biomedical studies:
http://hrpohome.wustl.edu/study_team/forms/all_forms.aspx

**Due date:** Nov.4 (email to me (spark30@wustl.edu) and Maya (maya.williams@wustl.edu) by the beginning of class)

**Percent of final grade:** 10%
**Grading rubric: (30 points)**

- Description of research aims, questions & hypotheses          2 points  
- Sampling                                                   5 points  
- Research design                                           5 points  
- Limitations                                                5 points  
- Description of ethical issues                             3 points  
- Informed consent form                                     5 points  
- Miscellaneous  (format, proofreading, flow, citations, etc.) 5 points
Measurement / Data Collection Instrument

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

**Type:** Group (one assignment submitted per group)

**Description:** This assignment includes 2 parts – a narrative overview and a data collection instrument. In the narrative overview, your group should provide a brief overview of your measurement plans, including nominal and operational definitions for each concept 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. The narrative overview should be 2-3 pages in length.

Next, your group will need to develop/decide on the instrument that it will use to collect data for your research project. The type and length of the instrument (i.e., brief survey, in-depth interview guide, focus group guide) will be determined by your group’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.

*If your group would like to collect data prior to this assignment’s due date, please arrange to turn in this assignment earlier in order to receive feedback on and approval of your instrument!*

**Due date:** November 25 (email to me (spark30@wustl.edu) and Maya (maya.williams@wustl.edu) by the beginning of class)

**Percent of final grade:** 10%

**Grading rubric: (30 points)**

- Overall description of measurement plans 5 points
  (e.g., type of instrument with justification for why selected it)
- Operational definitions of concepts being measured 5 points
- Discussion of instrument reliability & validity 5 points
- Instrument 5 points
- Data analysis plan 5 points
- Miscellaneous (format, proofreading, flow, citations, etc.) 5 points
Group Research Project with Final Paper and Presentation

**Purpose:** To challenge you to integrate and apply a majority of the information that you have learned through this class over the course of the semester

**Type:** Group (submit 1 final paper with supplemental materials & give 1 presentation per group)

**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 group’s ideas and conducting the specific steps for this research project. Your group project should be a small, pilot project that will be implemented and completed within the course of the semester.

**Deliverable:** Each group 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, Educational Experience Form, Abstract, Acknowledgments, References, Tables/Figures, Appendices, and Author Contributions*. The final paper should be compiled in either a binder or presentation holder. Papers should conform to APA format.

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

**Title Page:** This page should include project title, date, course, and group member names.

**Educational Experience Form:** This form, which will be posted on Canvas, will consist of a statement that the group project was conducted for educational purposes only, and that the project and its results are not to be disseminated beyond the classroom or used for pilot data for future research projects. Each group member will sign the form, recognizing their acknowledgement.

**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 public health/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: 4-5 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: 3-4 pages)

Results: State the major results from your study, including your response rate. 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). Refer to relevant tables or figures that illustrate the findings in greater detail. (Page length recommendation: 3-4 pages or 8-10 pages 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 group 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 group. Be specific when citing the contribution. (E.g., The authors would like to thank Dr. Jane Doe for providing her advice on questionnaire construction, Susan Green for her assistance with conducting a literature search, and John Smith for proofreading the manuscript.)

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., *CI = confidence interval; †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: Consent Form, Appendix B: Data Collection Instrument). Appendices will include: a) literature review table, b) study design/flow chart, c) consent form, d) study timeline chart, e) data collection instrument, f) all data collection forms with raw data (i.e., completed surveys, transcribed interviews), and g) 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 group member (e.g., Jane Smith constructed the initial lit review table, 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, designed the consent form, proofread the final paper, and put together all of the PowerPoint slides.)

Each person will also evaluate all group members (including yourself) using a form that will be placed on Canvas.

Grading: This assignment will be graded according to the criteria used in actual peer-reviews of manuscripts reporting the results of research projects. Your group will also present your research project with findings during the final class session. (Details on the presentation are described separately.)

Due Date: December 16 – Final paper (email to me (spark30@wustl.edu) and Maya (maya.williams@wustl.edu) by the beginning of class).
Percent of final grade: 10%

**Group Research Project – Presentation**

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

**Description:** Each group should prepare a single presentation that succinctly explains the research project and its methodology plus presents the findings from the project. Groups can decide whether to share presenting responsibilities or to have a single presenter, but all group members 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 – introduction/background, methods, results, and discussion/conclusion.

Final presentations are scheduled for Tuesday, **December 9**. Each group will be allotted **20 minutes total** to be divided between **10 minutes of presentation** and **10 minutes of question and answer**. Please email your PowerPoint presentation to me (spark30@wustl.edu) and Maya (maya.williams@wustl.edu) prior to class, as well as bring a back-up copy with you on a jump drive.

**Additional Information:**
- **Handouts** tend to help guide your audience and are recommended. If your group chooses to use them, you are responsible for preparing and providing handouts.
- As this exercise is designed to mimic a professional conference presentation, all group members are expected to dress professionally.
- The presentation will be graded as a portion of the final group project and will be based on coherence, flow, timeliness, visual aids (i.e. PowerPoint) and group preparation (i.e., ability to answer questions, professionalism).