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

III. COMMON PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS – for multi-section courses
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 and public health practice. Students will complete assignments demonstrating their ability to critique existing research at a basic level.
3. Students will complete a team research project 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.
4. Instructors will demonstrate/model the EBP and EBPH 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.
5. Instructors will provide students with examples of critical ethical failures in the history of social work and public health research. Students will demonstrate compliance with ethical standards in their assignments.

IV. 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.
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/](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.

V. 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 Umrath 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.

VI. READINGS

Textbook:


NOTE: Readings may be updated and additional readings may be added throughout the course.

Supplemental Resources (on reserve at the Brown School Library)


**Effective Reading**

Readings will include articles and empirical reports to provide an overview of current thinking, conceptual issues, and methods used to garner empirical support. It is encouraged that you approach readings actively and systematically. Read to understand and not to memorize – it may be worthwhile to skip paragraphs. Effective reading includes *summarizing* the main theses upon completion of an article, and *evaluating* the research evidence used to support theses.

Summarizing includes asking:
1. What issue is of most concern to the author?
2. Why does the author think this issue(s) is important?
3. What theoretical assumptions guide the interpretation and integration of findings?
4. What are the main findings and/or main points of the chapter or article, and what is the most critical evidence presented by the author in support of these points?

Evaluating research evidence entails inquiring:
1. What are the strengths of the author's work:
   a. Theoretical or empirical contribution?
   b. Credibility/tenability of the assumptions?
   c. Appropriateness of the research design, measures, and sample selection for the question under investigation?
   d. Soundness of the interpretation of the data?
2. How would you improve on the author's work?
3. What questions provoked by the author's work merit further investigation?
4. What research designs or methods would be fruitful to addressing these questions in future investigations?

**VII. ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE**

The course contains both core content/individual learning opportunities, as well as group learning opportunities. We will cover content through readings, internet and other electronic resources, peer-review feedback exercises, individual and group exercises, presentations, and discussions designed to stimulate an appreciation for the importance of research in your professional social work development.

An adult-learner model is the basis of the course. **Active participation and full preparation by each student for each class is expected.** Regular and on time attendance, peer review, timely submission of assignments, and discussions of research as current event topics relevant to research methods also count toward active participation. **PLEASE BE PREPARED! The instructor will randomly call upon students to lead class discussion based on the readings or assignments for the week.**
VIII. ROLE OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Instructor’s role
The instructor is responsible for the learning environment and course content. The instructor will grade assignments and provide appropriate feedback. The instructor will respond to student inquiries regarding the readings and the course project, both individually and in concert with the co-instructor. The instructor is available during by appointment.

Student role
Class attendance and participation: The developmental nature of learning in this class requires students to keep up with readings, assignments, and attend class sessions. Students are expected to attend all class sessions unless illness or other emergencies make attendance impossible. If a student is unable to attend class, he/she should contact the instructor in advance, or failing that, immediately afterwards. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain class notes or updates from another student when class is missed. Students are expected to participate in class. It is the student’s responsibility to seek guidance and feedback from the instructor and teaching assistant as needed to assure progress. Due to the condensed summer course, more than one absence will be reviewed for whether the student has received enough content to complete the course. This will be done in collaboration between the instructors and the student.

Active team membership: Students will be assembled in small teams to work on projects and build skills in research methodology. Teams offer opportunities to develop ideas and gather feedback efficiently by maximizing the wisdom of the crowd. To be effective, team members must engage in key behaviors that include 1) making others feel comfortable and able to contribute, 2) dependably contributing quality work, 3) assigning clear roles and tasks, and 4) committing to expand the groups’ understanding of research methods. Students are expected to contribute actively to teams to ensure high quality work of all members.

Seeking assistance: Proactive and creative problem solving is an essential social work competency. Prior to seeking assistance about an assignment, students are expected to A) have completed all the relevant readings; B) have attempted to frame the problem clearly and succinctly; C) have developed at least two alternative solutions with a list of the pros and cons for each; and, D) have a clear and concise question or request for assistance. This is what an employer would expect of you in a professional setting.

Writing requirements: Use a professional style in all written communication (e-mail & class assignments). Please proofread all documents. Students should use the grammar and spell checking available in Microsoft Word before submitting papers. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the writing tutoring and assistance available at the Brown School and at the University Writing Center. Use of other sources and references should be guided by the dictum: “If you did not write it, then you have to cite it.”
Research ethics and protection of project evaluation data: Protecting the privacy and security of program, agency, and client data is of paramount importance. Students will be instructed about research ethics and strategies for protecting data security. All students are expected to have completed CITI training as a requirement of this course.

IX. MSW COMPETENCY ALIGNMENT TO ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Assignments</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>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>CITI Training</td>
<td>C1, C3</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Presentation</td>
<td>C1, C2, C4</td>
<td>Skills/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>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>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Activities</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Dimensions Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
</tbody>
</table>

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>Individual Presentations (critically evaluating empirical research)</td>
<td>Individually in groups</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research topic &amp; question with sources</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>Individual / Group</td>
<td>1) 9/24</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) 10/15</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) 11/12</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4) 12/10</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review with table</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITI training</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There will be both individual products (i.e., on-line CITI training, research topic and question, two exams, active participation – 50%) and group produced products (APA-style paper and class presentation – 50%). 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 research proposal 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.

X. COURSE OUTLINE
Week 1: 08/27 Introduction, Overview and Housework

Week 2: 09/03 Scientific Inquiry and Social Work
- Review of Syllabus & Assignments
- Research at JACSW
- Philosophy and Theory in Science and Research
- Deconstructing an Empirical Article
- On-Line Literature Search Procedures

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 1, Why study; Chapter 2, EBP; and Chapter 3, Philosophy & Theory

Week 3: 09/10 **The Ethics, Politics and Cultural Context of Social Work Research**
- Values, Ethics, and the Protection of Human Subjects
- The Need for Ethical Standards
- NASW Code of Ethics
- Research and social justice
- Conducting Culturally Competent Research

**Required Readings:**
Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 5, Ethical issues; and Chapter 6: Culturally competent research


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 4: 09/17**  
**Problem Formulation and Conceptualization**  
- Asking a Researchable Question  
- Selecting, Shaping and Refining Research Problems  
- Operational Definitions

**Required Readings:**  
Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 7, Reviewing literature and developing research questions; & Chapter 8, Conceptualization in quantitative and qualitative inquiry

**Week 5: 09/24** Individual Presentations and QUIZ #1

**Week 6: 10/01**  
**Measurement**  
- Levels of Measurement  
- Measurement Error  
- Validity and Reliability of Measures  
- Asking Questions  
- Constructing Scales  
- Scale Formats  
- Scale Bias

**Required Readings:**  

Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 4, Conceptualization in quantitative and qualitative inquiry; Chapter 9, Measurement in quantitative and qualitative inquiry; & Chapter 10: Quantitative and qualitative measurement instruments

**Recommended Reading:**  

**Week 7: 10/08**  
**Survey Research**  
- Designing Questions  
- Questionnaires  
- Interviews  
- Surveys
• Strengths and Weaknesses

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 16, Surveys Research

Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong op cit., Chapter 7: Survey research

Week 8: 10/15 No class

Week 9: 10/22 Sampling (Take Home QUIZ #2 distributed after class via Canvas)
• Probability and Non-probability Sampling
• Additional Sampling Methods

Required Reading:
Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 15: Sampling: Quantitative and qualitative approaches

Week 10: 10/29 Causal Inference, Correlation & Experimental Designs (Take home quiz due)
• Correlation Designs
• Experimental Designs
• Quasi-experimental Designs
• Internal and External Validity

Required Reading:
Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 11, Experiments and quasi-experiments; Chapter 12, Designs

Week 11: 11/05 Single-Case Evaluation Designs
• Data Gathering
• Single-Case Designs

Required Reading:
Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 13, Single-case evaluation designs

Recommended Reading:

Week 12: 11/12 Program Evaluation
• Formative (Process) Evaluation Research
• Summative (Outcome) Evaluation Research
• Practical Pitfalls

Required Readings:

Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 14, Program evaluation,

Week 13: 11/19 Scheduled Individual Presentations & Quiz #3

Week 14: 11/26 Qualitative Research Methods and Data Analysis
- Ethnography
- Focus Groups
- Case Studies
- Participatory Action Research
- Grounded Theory
- Content Analysis
- Coding

Required Readings:
Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 18, Additional methods in qualitative inquiry; Chapter 17: Analyzing available records: Quantitative and qualitative methods, Chapter 19: Qualitative data analysis

Recommended Readings:


Week 15: 12/3 Quantitative Data Analysis
- Data Entry
- Univariate Analysis
- Bivariate Analysis

Required Readings:

Rubin & Babbie, op.cit., Chapter 17: Analyzing available records: Quantitative and qualitative methods (review chapter); Chapter 21 - Chapter 23

12/10 Group Presentations (Take Home QUIZ #4 distributed after class via Canvas)