



SW386-60: Research Methods

Course Information

Semester: SP 2022

Semester Hours: 3

Classroom Location: Online

Instructor Information

Instructor: Marte White, LCSW

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Office Location: Harbor Center

Zoom Office Hours by Appointment

Social Work Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Social Work program at Lewis-Clark State College is to prepare students for entry-level generalist practice. We are committed to the preparation of professional Social Workers instilling the knowledge, skills, values, and cognitive and affective processes to address the needs and potential of individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. Relying on a liberal arts foundation and drawing from an ecological, strengths-based perspective, the program prepares students to engage as professional Social Work practitioners who will be able to provide competent services with integrity to promote social justice and human rights recognizing the dignity and worth of the person. Graduates are prepared for practice with diverse populations understanding the person-in-environment influence on identity development and relationships, including a curriculum that highlights a global perspective. Through courses, internships, and student activities, the program aims to foster in its students a celebration of differences among people and a belief that respecting these differences enriches the quality of life for all. Graduates will practice from a set of ethical principles inherent in the Social Work profession, including the recognition that professional development is a life-long learning process. Our program is dedicated to the support of non-traditional age, rural, and lower income students. The program is also devoted to providing students the opportunity to engage in meaningful social science research projects (often program evaluation or needs assessments) through our research sequence, which culminates in a public symposium. (Revised September 2019)

Course Description

This course introduces the theory and application of basic social scientific research techniques, including qualitative and quantitative methods, data collection, data analysis, statistical thinking, assessment and single-subject design. The use of research as one tool in the professional repertoire of skills available to the social work generalist and evaluation of practice are emphasized. The ethics of scientific inquiry is stressed throughout. This course is designed for social work students only.

Introduction and Overview

Social work generalist practice entails the steps of engaging and assessing the client system, planning an intervention strategy, implementing the intervention with the client system, evaluating each step in the process, terminating with the client system appropriately, and following-up with the client and referral sources where needed. This is the first of three research courses. It focuses on the above evaluation step. Much of our understanding about individuals, groups, families, communities, and organizations is obtained through the testing of theories about these entities. As social work practitioners, we need the knowledge and skills to evaluate existing research, use research method skills to think critically about problems and issues in society, and test our conclusions. Social work practitioners need to be able to analyze existing data and data they collect to determine relationships between and among these variables. Ethically, social work practitioners must be aware of best practices for policy and practice interventions. Understanding research methods is one avenue to this knowledge.

Purpose of the Course in the Curriculum

The expected student outcomes in the Research sequence consolidate learning from all other components of the curriculum. Skills learned in the first year knowledge building sequence are built on and enhanced. The Human Behavior and Social Environment (HBSE) sequence is built on and enhanced. The HBSE sequence is one of the major foundations for understanding the philosophies, processes, product and context of Group-centered social work research. The various theory and methods courses, fieldwork, and the student's specialized interests as pursued through selective focusing in various courses, aid them in the formulation of researchable questions. The Social Welfare Services and Policy sequence provides a foundation for understanding the environment for social research including constraints, incentives, and ethical issues, as well as being the source of policy and service delivery questions requiring empirical investigations. The sequence draws heavily upon the HBSE knowledge and the generalist practice perspective.

Competencies & Practice Behaviors (Expected Learning Outcomes) Met in Course

The Council on Social Work Educations sets educational standards for all accredited social work programs. The **2015 Educational and Policy Accreditation Standard (EPAS)** establishes 9 Core Competencies and 31 Practice Behaviors that social work students are expected to meet upon graduation from an accredited BSW Program. Professional Social Work Education is competency-based education.

Educational Policy 2.1: Core Competencies Definition

Competency-based education is an outcome performance approach to curriculum design. Competencies are measurable practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge, values, and skills. The goal of the outcome approach is to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

Because of the focus on competency-based education, the faculty has identified within the LCSC curriculum where the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors are addressed and measured. Below are the Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors that are addressed in this course. Please note that the Practice Behaviors are linked to the Course Objectives and Assignments.

2015 Social Work Competencies Applied to this Course

COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
COMPETENCY 1:	Demonstrate Ethical & Professional Behavior
1.1	make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
1.3	demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
1.4	use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
1.5	use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior
COMPETENCY 2:	Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
2.2	present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as expert of their own experiences

COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
2.3	apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies
COMPETENCY 3:	Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice
3.1	apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
3.2	engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice
COMPETENCY 4:	Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
4.1	use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
4.2	apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings
4.3	use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery
COMPETENCY 8:	Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8.4	negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
COMPETENCY 9:	Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9.1	select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
9.2	apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes
9.3	critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
9.4	apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

Required Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Ed.). American Psychological Association.

Engel, R. & Schutt, R. (2018). *The Practice of Research in Social Work* (4th ed.). Sage

Classroom Expectations

Attendance

The primary teaching approach in this class will be collaborative learning. Materials in the course will be presented through discussion, lectures, group work, and media presentations. Students will be responsible for all materials presented in class and all outside assignments. Assigned readings and topics for the day are outlined in the Schedule and students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assignments. An absence is not an excuse for not coming to class prepared to be actively involved. Missing fifteen percent (15%) or more of the scheduled class sessions is considered excessive absences, and will result in the reduction of your final grade by 1 (one) letter grade. This policy applies to all classes taught as part of the social work curriculum. Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the instructor. (Found in [Social Work Handbook](#) p. 17).

Tardiness

Students in a professional program should conduct themselves as professionals in relation to the class session and assignments. It is not acceptable to be late for classes except in unusual circumstances. Frequent lateness or other unprofessional class conduct is likely to result in a lowered grade. Students are also evaluated on their personal and professional behavior or conduct in class as described in the Social Work Handbook.

Shared Client and Agency Information

In the classroom, students and professors will occasionally discuss clients and agencies. In these discussions, it is expected that information about clients and agencies should be disguised or eliminated if clients could be identified and that this information is to be held in confidence within the bounds of the Code of Ethics. You must disguise the identity of clients in written assignments including changing the name of the client.

Deadline for Submission of Class Assignments

1. Assignments must be submitted to the instructor during class sessions unless otherwise arranged and approved by the instructor.
2. Tests and assignments are due on the dates listed on the syllabus or as scheduled by the instructor of this course. Late papers and tests are not accepted. If due to extreme extenuating circumstances, the student is unable to turn a paper in on time, the student must contact the instructor prior to the due date.
1. Extra Credit: There are no extra credit assignments for this course.

Re-write Policy

Rewrites are not an option in this class. If you have any questions regarding the assignment, please do not hesitate to meet with this instructor. As the assignments are given on the first day of class (or at least two weeks before the assignment is due for pedagogical reasons) and because sufficient time is given, it is expected that quality work be submitted.

Professional Writing Standards

All printed work submitted to this professor should be prepared at a college standard of professional editing in accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.)*. Therefore, allow sufficient preparation time for proofreading and correction of typos, misspellings, and grammatical errors. The professor may require that you submit papers to the writing center prior to submitting to Canvas.

The reason for this expectation is that professionals are often judged based upon the quality of their written work. Carelessness in spelling and editing suggests that there will also be mistakes in the substance of the work. Therefore, written work, which has misspellings and other editing problems, will be graded down on this basis alone. All work must be completed in 12-point font, preferably Times New Romans style or a similarly readable style.

Note: The efforts you make will help you with your courses at LCSC as well as throughout your professional career because you will continue to be judged by other professionals based on your written work.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Part of the mission of Lewis-Clark State is to educate students to be ethical. Students share with the faculty the responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The College expects its students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments. Violation of the Academic Integrity Statement, in whole or part, could result in an "F" grade for the course. In addition to action by the professor, all incidents will be reported to the Social Work Program Director and possibly the Vice President of Student Affairs. The following acts of academic dishonesty are not acceptable:

- **Cheating:** using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise (e.g., an exam).
- **Fabrication:** unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise (e.g., a paper reference).
- **Plagiarism:** representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise (e.g., failing to cite references appropriately or taking verbatim from another source).
- **Facilitating academic dishonesty:** helping or attempting to help another to commit academic dishonesty (e.g., allowing another to copy from your test or use your work).

Challenging a Grade

Students who wish to challenge a grade must do so in writing within one week of receiving a grade. I will consider your request and determine whether to review your grade. If I choose to review your grade, I will review your assignment in full and may adjust your grade up or down.

Social and Economic Justice

Lewis-Clark State College's Statement of Inclusion

Regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation, you will be treated and respected as a human being. Please visit [LCSC's Diversity](#) web page for more information.

Social Work Program Expectations

The faculty members of the Social Work Program believe that we all share a responsibility for championing social and economic justice for all members of society. Guided by the **NASW Code of Ethics**, social workers should strive to:

- Eliminate personal and institutional discrimination,
- Ensure access to needed resources and opportunities for all persons,
- Expand options and opportunities for everyone, but especially for persons who are disadvantaged or disenfranchised,
- Respect cultural diversity in society,
- Advocate changes that improve social conditions and promote social justice,
- Encourage participation in the democratic process, and
- Encourage people to develop their own voice.

Grading Procedures

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage
A	95-100%	A-	90-94.9%
B+	87-89.9%	B	83-86.9%
B-	80-82.9%	C+	77-79.9%
C	73-76.9%	C-	70-72.9%
D	63-69.9%	F	62.9% and below

Grade Definitions

LETTER GRADE	DEFINITION
A	Above and beyond
B	Appropriate college level work meeting the syllabus' expectations
C	Minimal level for content and written communication

LETTER GRADE	DEFINITION
D	Poor content or poor written communication, and/or incomplete, and/or late
F	Below minimum standards for content and written communication, incomplete, and/or late

Class Assignments

1. Quizzes (10@10 Points)

- a. There will be weekly online quizzes for this class (no mid-term or final exam). Each quiz will be multiple choice questions or essay question. The quizzes will be taken on-line in Canvas. There are no make-ups for the quizzes unless the student has extraordinary circumstances that warrant a make-up. If you miss the window of availability for a quiz, you miss taking that quiz. All quizzes will be available for one week.

2. Research in the Media (50 Points)

- a. Students will be assigned a week to present a current article (published in the past four weeks) that they have located in the media (examples include, but are not limited to the local newspapers, Time, or The New York Times) that cites a research study. After reading the media article students will look for the original study that was referred to in the media article. Students will give a brief presentation in Discussion Board on the media article and the original research/journal article. The presentation will include an overview of the research and a discussion on any discrepancies between what was reported in the media and the original article. See grading rubric on Canvas for outline of presentation.

3. Article Summaries (100 Points)

- a. For this assignment, students will be collecting scholarly articles for their literature review. You will collect at least 10 articles. At least **eight** must be **empirical** (original research), **one** should be a literature review article, and at least **one** should be **qualitative** research. Articles should come from the **LC library database** and be no more than 10 years old. Do not use articles from websites. All articles must be scholarly. Students will complete Article Summary Forms for each of the ten articles. Article Summary forms will be explained during lectures.

4. Literature Review, (300 Points)

- a. Synthesize your findings from the 10 article summaries into a literature review.

This paper should cover some background information about your topic, what is known about your topic i.e., research that has been conducted (sample, methodology, findings, strengths/limitations of study) and what is yet unknown i.e., need for further study. In order to obtain full credit, you need a **minimum** of 10 scholarly sources (sources from peer reviewed journals or books) no references from websites will be accepted unless it is statistics information from a .gov website. The paper must be in APA format with cover page and reference page. See grading rubric on Canvas for details.

5. Final Literature Review, (200 Points)

- a. The final literature review will be your first literature review updated with corrections/suggestions per instructor.

6. APA – Chapter Summary’s/reference sheets (100 Points)

- a. You will read chapters 2, 4, 6, 8 and 9 of the APA manual and summarize the information from each chapter into a reference sheet for yourself.
 - i. **Chapter 2 – Elements and Format. Create a template for your papers that contain the required elements of a student paper.**
 - ii. **Chapter 4 – Writing Style and Grammar. Create a bullet point list of topics that you feel you need to work on.**
 - iii. **Chapter 6 – Mechanics and Style. Create a bullet point list of topics you may need to review.**
 - iv. **Chapter 8 – Works Cited. Create a bullet point list of topics you may need to review.**
 - v. **Chapter 9 - Reference List. Create a template for a reference list which contains references for:**
 1. **Journal Article**
 2. **Book**
 3. **Web Page**

7. Meeting with Librarian (100 Points)

- a. Schedule a meeting with Librarian to search for articles. You must come prepared with your topic. **You must meet with the librarian prior to the due date of the first literature review to receive points for this assignment.** You will receive an email from the librarian confirming that you attended your appointment. This email is what you will turn in on Canvas.

Tentative Class Schedule

Week & Date	Activity	Readings	Assignments
Week 1, Jan. 18-23	Syllabus, Overview of Class	Engel and Shutt Ch 1	Quiz 1 – Chapter 1
Week 2, Jan. 24-30	LC Library Resources Article Summaries		
Week 3, Jan. 31-Feb. 6	APA Videos Activity: Correcting APA mistakes	APA Manual Ch 2	APA Chapter 2
Week 4, Feb. 7-13	The Process of Social Work Research	Engel and Shutt Ch 2 APA Chapter 4	Article Summary 1 APA Chapter 4 Quiz 2 – Chapter 2
Week 5, Feb. 14-20	Literature Reviews	APA Manual Ch 6	APA Chapter 6
Week 6, Feb. 21-27	Ethics & Cultural Competence in Research. Read the Belmont Report located in “Resources” on Canvas.	Engel and Shutt Ch 3 APA Manual Ch 8	Article Summary 2 and 3 APA Chapter 8 Quiz 3 – Chapter 3
Week 7, Feb. 28-Mar. 6	Measurement, Instruments, and Measures of central tendencies	Engel and Shutt Ch 4 APA Manual Ch 9	Library Appointment Article Summary 4 and 5 APA Chapter 9 Quiz 4 – Chapter 4
Week 8, Mar. 7-13	Sampling External and Internal Validity	Engel and Shutt Ch 5	Article Summary 6 and 7 Quiz 5 – Chapter 5
Week 9, Mar. 14-20	Causation and Research Design	Engel and Shutt Ch 6	Article Summary 8 and 9 Quiz 6 – Chapter 6
Week 10, Mar. 21-27	Group Experimental Design	Engel and Shutt Ch 7	Article Summary 10 Quiz 7 – Chapter 7
March 28-Apr. 3	Spring Break – Enjoy!		
Week 11, Apr. 4-10	Single Subject Design	Engel and Shutt Ch 8	Quiz 8 – Chapter 8
Week 12, Apr. 11-17	Survey Research	Engel and Shutt Ch 9	Quiz 9 – Chapter 9
Week 13, Apr. 18-24	Evaluative Research Program Evaluations Process Evaluations Outcome Evaluations	Engel and Schutt Ch 13	Literature Review 1 Quiz 10 – Chapter 13

Week 14, Apr. 25- May 1	Qualitative Methods	Engel and Schutt Ch 10	
Week 15, May 2-8	Mixed Methods	Engel and Schutt Ch12 p. 331-340	Literature Review 2
Week 16, May 9-12	Finals week – no class		1000 Total Points
