WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

APPLIED METHODS IN SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH
SWK6402
SUMMER 2019

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds upon content presented in Practice Research (SWK6401) and contains the focus on: problem formulation, conceptualization and operationalization of variables, use of measurement instruments, logic of research design (including sampling and design selection), ethical and legal Issues, quantitative and qualitative modes of observation, analysis of data, use of computers and computer programs, and research report writing.

Applied Methods in Social Work Research, a second course in research methodology, surveys the major designs used in social work. Abstract concepts are integrated into a hands-on research project. The student participates in a team or individual research project and learns the basics of conducting social work research, the ability to locate and integrate literature, and skills in writing about research. The research project is usually a secondary analysis of a sample of a large well-designed survey. In addition to the cognitive aspects, the course will also concentrate on two practical areas; the application of research principles through students' participation in group or individual research projects, and the development of library and research communication skills.

Research is presented as a logical extension of service delivery, rooted in the ethical imperative not to harm clients and to ensure that the methods employed in service delivery are effective. The course demonstrates the connection between foundation practice and research in that students will learn how to evaluate the utility of social research as it informs social work practice in the context of service delivery to clients.

I. COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES

This course will help students achieve the following competencies:

Competency 4 – Practice-Informed Research & Research-Informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice.

Social workers use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research. Social workers apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and social workers use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

MEASURE 4A - Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry

PLAGIARISM

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will

sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

HIPAA ALERT

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, *917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu*, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, *646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu*, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

E-RES (Electronic Reserve)

Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [**E-RES**]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

How do I Use E-RES?

1. Go to the library's online resources page:
   http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online_resources.asp

2. Click on E-RES. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access
   Service login and password.

3. Click on "Search E-RES" or on "Course Index," and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author. [all resesarch courses will be listed under **Auerbach**, the sequence chair]

4. Click on the link to your course.

5. Enter the password given to you by your instructor.

6. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.

7. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.

To view documents that are in pdf format, the computer you are using must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software. You can download it FREE at
www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

Basic Texts

All required and recommended texts are on reserve in the library, and required articles as well as suggested readings can be found on E-RESERVE. The E-RES password will be given to students at the beginning of the course.

The following two texts are required for this course:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0190228088 ISBN-10: 0190228083; Oxford University Press price: $39.95

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0199734763 9780199734764; Amazon price: $90.48

National Association of Social Workers (2008). *Code of Ethics*. Washington, DC: NASW Press

Recommended Text:

Kabacoff, R. (2013). *R in action: Data analysis and graphics with R*. Shelter Island, NY: Manning. 1617291382. Amazon Price: $49.05

In addition to text readings, students will receive handouts and resource materials periodically throughout the course. Additional optional readings will be suggested as they pertain to the topic area under discussion. Students are also expected to read extensively in the substantive area of their selected project, which will be reflected (in summary form) in their written review and synthesis of the literature.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

II. Students are expected to attend and participate in class sessions (see expectations in Wurzweiler's Student Manual); to submit **on time** the written assignments at end of outline; and to present and discuss their written work with the class. The final grade will be based on each student's performance in each of these three areas. There are 4 required assignments. The assignments follow the content areas and are designed to reinforce the topic areas covered.

Papers must conform to APA academic style when including citations and bibliography. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please refer to you student handbook on school policies regarding this matter.

III. Assignments

Assignment # 1 - *Due 4th session*
Critique of a Research Article

Using the outline below critique the article provided to you by the instructor.

1. What was the purpose of the study? Is the phenomenon to be studied clearly articulated and delimited?

2. What was the need or rationale for this particular study?

3. Which purposeful sampling technique was used? What was the sample size? How were people selected to be interviewed or observed?

4. What was the research role assumed by the researcher? What was the person's training and background?

5. How long was the researcher in the field?

6. What was the design selected?

7. What data collection strategies were used? Were multiple strategies employed?

8. What strategies did the researcher use to minimize potential bias (internal and external validity)?

9. What are the recognized limitations of the study?

10. What ethical consideration was addressed?

11. Did the researcher specify how informed consent, confidentiality, etc. were handled in the field?

Assignment #2 - Due 7th session
As a preliminary step to developing your research proposal in greater detail (see assignment #4), submit the following:

1. Statement of the general problem you are studying and why it is important.

2. Briefly discuss the theoretical/conceptual framework for your study.

3. List the major hypothesis and/or research question.

4. Prepare a table on your major variables as identified in item 2 above with information entered under the following column headings:

a) name of variable
b) classification (dependent, dependent, etc.)
c) conceptual definition
d) operational indicators
e) level of measurement

Example of table

Variable	Classification	Conceptual	Operational	Level of Measure
Return30	Dependent	Patient returns to hospital within 30 days	Yes/No	Nominal
ADL	Independent	Activities of Daily Living. The things we normally do in daily living including any daily activity we perform for self-care	Katz ADL scale. A measure with six indicators of physical independence (feeding, toileting, bathing, etc.)	Ordinal
Age	Control	Age of patient	Age in years of patient.	Ratio
Spouse	Mediating	Does Patient live with a spouse?	Yes/No	Nominal

5. Briefly identify and justify the type of research design you are considering.

Assignment #3 - *Due 10th session*

Prepare a literature review for your study. (Which will be integrated into assignment # 4) The literature review should be scholarly and inclusive.

Assignment #4 - *Due 14th Session*

MEASURE 4A - Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry

Outline of Thesis or Research Report

A. Title page
B. Acknowledgments
C. Table of Contents
D. List of Tables

I. INTRODUCTION

Review purpose of the project

a. What situation is to be analyzed?
b. What are the major questions to which answers are sought?
c. What hypotheses, if any, are to be tested?

Relevance of Project

a. Why is it important?
b. In what way will it advance social work knowledge or practice?

Frame of Reference

a. Develop the frame of reference within which you are exploring the problem.
b. What is the state of existing theory? Who has done what with what results?
c. How has current theory affected your specific topic and areas you plan to consider?
e. What are the principal variables/terms you will be using?
f. What are the limitations of the study?

II. METHODOLOGY

a. What is the study design - exploratory, descriptive or experimental (approach to studying the problem)?
b. What will be your sources of data?
c. What is the "population" you will sample?
    1. Define the universe.
    2. How will the sample be drawn?
    3. How representative of the universe is it and what level of generalization will be permitted by the study?

d. How will you collect your data? - Questionnaire, interview, observation, non-obtrusive measures, available records, etc.
    1. What are the advantages of this method?
    2. What topics are covered by the instrument?
    3. How are topics operationalized and why?

e. What is the reliability of your data and will it be tested?
f. What is the validity of your data and how will it be determined?
g. Limitations of data collected.

III. FINDINGS

a. What are the characteristics of your sample?
b. What statistical methods did you use and why?
c. Present and analyze your findings

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS / IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Competency #4 – Practice Informed Research and Research Informed Practice
MEASURE 4A - Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry

C. Grading

Class participation 20%
Paper 1 15%
Paper 2 15%
Paper 3 15%
Paper 4 35%

COURSE OUTLINE

Sessions 1 & 2
Introduction and orientation to the course. Review of nature and purpose of research, including ethical considerations.

Required Readings:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1 and 2)

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1 and 6)

Outline of Research Report (See Assignment #4)

Martin J. I. & Knox J. (2000). Methodological and ethical issues in research on lesbians and gay men. *Social Work Research*, 24(1), 51-59.

Morrow, V. (2012). The Ethics of Social Research with Children and Families in Young Lives: Practical Experiences. *Childhood Poverty: Multidisciplinary Approaches*, 24. (Available on Google Books at http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=HiP8E8FAAvIC&oi=fnd&pg=PA24&dq=research+ethics+in+social+work&ots=roPULAyi-9&sig=o0u31Hzwc5XK1OwKR3LF4G_EL5g#v=onepage&q=research%20ethics%20in%20social%20work&f=false)

Sprague, J. (2005). *Feminist methodologies for critical researchers: bridging differences*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

National Association of Social Workers (2008). *Code of Ethics*. Washington, DC

Sessions 3 & 4
Problem Formulation and Measurement

Required Readings:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 3 and 4)

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 2, 12,

13, 14, and pages 510-512)

Auerbach, C., Schudrich, W. Z., Lawrence, C. K., Claiborne, N., & McGowan, B. G. (2013). Predicting Turnover: Validating the Intent to Leave Child Welfare Scale. *Research on Social Work Practice*. Retrieved from http://rsw.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/06/24/1049731513494021.abstract

Sacks J. G. (1985). Specific strategies of problem formulation: A gap in our methods? *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 55(3), 214-224.

Sessions 5 & 6 **Learning Objectives 3, 4 & 7**
The Logic of Research Design and Reviewing the Literature

Required Readings:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 5)

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 18, 19, 20, 21, 28-29)

Session 7
Quantitative and Qualitative Modes of Observation and Sampling

Required Readings:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 10)

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 3-5, 15, 22-23)

Augsberger, A., Schudrich, W., Auerbach, C., & McGowan, B. G. (2012). Respect in the workplace: A mixed methods study of retention and turnover in the voluntary child welfare sector. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *34*, 1222–122.

Beckerman, N. L., Auerbach, C., & Blanco, I. (2011). Psychosocial dimensions of SLE: Implications for the health care team. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*, *4*, 63–72.

Recommended:

Rock, B. D., Haymes E., Auerbach, C., & Beckerman, A. (1992). Helping patients in the supportive milieu of a community residence program for the chronically mentally ill: Conceptual model and initial evaluation. *Social Work in Health Care* 16(3), 97-113.

Session 8

Required Reading:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York:

Oxford University Press. (Chapter 6)

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 33)

Auerbach, C., & Mason, S. E. (2010). The value of the presence of social work in emergency departments. *Social Work in Health Care*, *49*(4), 314–326.

Bisman C. D., & Hardcastle D. A. (1999). A model for using research methodologies in practice. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work,* 19(1/2), 47-63.

Kazi, M. A., Pagkos, B., & Milch, H. A. (2011). Realist evaluation in wraparound: A new approach in social work evidence-based practice. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *21*(1), 57–64.

Spivak, L., Sokol, H., Auerbach, C., & Gershkovich, S. (2009). Newborn hearing screening follow-up: Factors affecting hearing aid fitting by 6 months of age. *American Journal of Audiology*, *18*(1), 24–33.

Session 9 - 13

Analysis of Data: Hypothesis Testing, Inferential Data Analysis and Statistical Significance.

Required Reading:

Auerbach, C. & Zeitlin, W. (2015). *Making your case: Using R for program evaluation*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 7)

Grinnell, R. M., & Unrau, Y. A. (2014). *Social work research and evaluation: Foundations of evidence-based practice* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 25, 31, 32)

Session 14

Discussion of Research Findings of Final Project

Bibliography of Other Resources For Applied Research Methods

Berg, B. L. (2007). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences (6th ed.).* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Blalock, H. M. *(*1979). *Social statistics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Campbell, P. B. (1989). *The hidden discriminator: Sex and race bias in educational research*. Newton, Mass: Women's Educational Equity Act Program.

Cohen J., & Cohen P & West, S.G. (2002). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for behavioral sciences (3rd ed.).* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Fox, J., Weisberg, S., & Fox, J. (2011). *An R companion to applied regression*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications.

Ginsberg L. H. (2001). *Social work evaluation: Principles and methods.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Gravetter, F. J. & Wallnau, L. B. (2008). *Essentials of Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences.* Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

Hays, W. M. (1979). *Statistics for the social sciences.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Kabacoff, R. (2013). *R in action: Data analysis and graphics with R*. Shelter Island, NY:

Manning.

Levin, J. & Fox, J. A. (2013). *Elementary statistics in social research* (12th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Montcalm, D. & Royce, D. (2002). *Data analysis for social workers.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Neuman, W. L. (2009). *Social research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches (*7th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Patten, M. L. (2002). *Understanding research methods: An overview of the essentials* (3rd ed.). Los Angles: Pyrczak Press.

Pyrczak F. (2006). *Making sense of statistics: A conceptual overview*. Los Angles: Pyrczak Publishers.

Rubin, A. (2012). *Statistics for evidence-based practice and evaluation* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2013). *Essential research methods for social work.* Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

Royse, D., Thyer, B. A., Padgett D., & Logan, T. K. (2009). *Program evaluation: An introduction* (5th ed.). Belmot CA. Wadsworth.

Siegel, S. (1956). *Nonparametric statistics for the behavioral sciences.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sprague, J. (2005). *Feminist methodologies for critical researchers: bridging differences*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Tabachinick, B. G. (2012). *Using multivarite statistics (*6th ed.). New York: Pearson.

Weinbach, R. W. and Grinnell, R. M., Jr. (2009). *Statistics for social workers*, (8th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Weinbach, R.W. (2005). *Evaluating social work services and programs*. Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

Yegidis, B. L. and Weinbach, R. W. (2006). *Evaluating social work services and programs*, (5th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.