University of Texas at El Paso
Masters of Social Work Program
SOWK 5313: Research Projects

crn: 21800 HSC room 216
6 pm to 8:50 pm

crn: 23882 HSC room 216
3 pm to 5:50 pm

Spring 2023

Meeting In Person and/or Hyflex

Instructor: Bruce D. Friedman, PhD, ACSW, CSWM, LCSW
Office Location: 437 Health Sciences
Office Telephone: 915-747-8078 (direct)        Email: bdfriedman@utep.edu
Office Hours: virtually accessible Monday – Thursday from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm Fridays 9:00 to 3:00 pm or by appointment

I. Catalog Description

Requires that students apply knowledge of the research process through active participation in an original research project under the direction of the course instructor. Restricted to MSW students.

II. Course Description

This graduate level course provides students the opportunity to integrate theoretical research knowledge in order to participate in an original research project. Specifically, students will be offered hands-on experience in conducting key research activities under the direction of the instructor. During the semester, we will cover 7 modules of research principles and steps as applied to social work research practice. Throughout the course, we will discuss various topics related to hypothesis formulation, operationalization of key concepts, data collection, data processing, analyses of quantitative and qualitative data, interpretation of results, and guidelines for reporting analyses. The goals of this course are to: 1) examine the purpose of scientific research methods in evaluation of theory and practice, 2) apply the basic principles of probability and sampling in making inferences; 3) assess knowledge of statistical techniques and construct visual displays of descriptive data and inferential statistics, 4) foster critical thinking skills for analyzing different forms of data (qualitative and quantitative) and developing explanatory models/theories in the field of social work, 5) integrate empirically validated knowledge in designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating service delivery, 6) empower students to create a positive social change by disseminating research findings through professional presentations and writings, and their roles as consumers, participants, and evaluators of scientific inquiries.

III. Course Objectives (linked to EPAS)

Social work courses are designed to improve students’ competence through instruction,
practice, and application of knowledge, values, and skills. “Social work competence is the
ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations
in a purposeful, intentional, and professional manner to promote human and community
well-being” (CSWE, 2015, p. 6). Through course assignments, students demonstrate the
ability to meet courses objectives related to EPAS Competencies. This course focuses
specifically on three aspects of social work competence: ethical and professional behavior
(Competency 1), research-informed practice and practice-informed research (Competency 4),
and evaluation of practice (Competency 9). Course assignments will assess and summarize
students’ competency levels. Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Course Objectives</th>
<th>Methods of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objectives</td>
<td>Methods of Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written,</td>
<td>Class Discussion, &amp; Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and electronic communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1E Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitatively</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualitative research methods and research findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy,</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and service delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9A Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9B Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluation of outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9C Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes</td>
<td>Class Discussion &amp; Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9D Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro,</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mezzo, and macro levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**III. TEXTS**

**Required:**

Friedman, Bruce D. (2021) *Community-Based Participatory Action Research: It’s all about community*. Cognella.


IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EVALUATION, GRADING

1. **Professional Conduct.** The mission of the UTEP Department of Social Work is to prepare competent and ethical social work practitioners who possess the knowledge, skills, and values required to prevent social problems, intervene in problem areas, and improve the social conditions of the region through culturally sensitive practice. Personal responsibility is a necessary part of the professional practice of social work. Attendance, punctuality, and participation are necessary components of personal
responsibility. As a hybrid class, attendance means being active in the BlackBoard Course through discussions and when there are virtual meetings. Professional participation requires familiarity with the assigned readings. Assignments are to be submitted by Sunday at 11:59 pm of the week they are due. Late assignments will be accepted only after consulting with the instructor with a justifiable rationale. Problems of unprofessional conduct will be addressed through the advisement and student status review procedures outlined in your student handbook.

2. **Academic Honesty:** Rigorous honesty is necessary for the practice of professional social work. The statement on academic honesty in the university catalog is the minimum standard that will be applied in this course. See also the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Students who display dishonesty will be referred to the Student Status Review process with a possible consequence of being recommended for discharge from the program.

3. **Writing Standards:** The ability to communicate using Standard Written English is a necessary component of professional practice. All assignments are to use Standard Written English. You cannot pass this class unless you demonstrate the ability to use Standard Written English. Refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (page 44), which is the stylebook required for this department. Written work is to be typed or printed using one-inch margins and using 12-point New Times Roman font. All assignments will be e-mailed through BlackBoard to retain confidentiality.

4. **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

   Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

   You will need to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

   If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP’s Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about *Microsoft Office 365* and follow the instructions.

   **IMPORTANT:** If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically
in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

NETIQUETTE
As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It’s possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other’s ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted on in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

- **Zoom or Collaborate SESSIONS**
  - This class is a hybrid class and requires that you participate either in person or in scheduled Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate sessions. The purpose of these sessions is for us to have some face time about the course material and/or to participate in small discussion groups with your classmates. These sessions will be held during the scheduled class times
  - Students are expected to participate in these sessions with a webcam and microphone. The sessions will be recorded by the instructor and provided so that they can be reviewed by classmates at a later time. Students should not record the sessions and post them to any sites.
  - If you are unable to attend a session, please let me know as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made when appropriate.

COVID-19 Accommodations
Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. If you are not permitted on campus, you should contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations.

*(classes with on-campus meetings)* Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may
contact Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

5. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Texas at El Paso is committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 93-112-The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

UTEP is dedicated to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities so they have equal access and opportunity to complete their education. University policy states that the student is responsible for informing the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) of their disability, and for requesting accommodations within two weeks of the start of each semester. CASS determines whether students need accommodation, and assists the instructor in providing accommodation. If you have or suspect a disability and need accommodations, you should contact CASS at Union Building East #106. Phone: (915) 747-5148 voice or TTY. Fax: (915) 747-8712Web: http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Title IX Statement
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities operated by recipients of Federal financial assistance. Sexual harassment of students, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim’s use of drugs or alcohol. An individual also may be unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual coercion, stalking, and relationship violence. All such acts of sexual violence are forms of sexual harassment covered under Title IX. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, UTEP does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the operation of its educational programs and activities. This commitment to non-discrimination applies to both employment in and admission to such programs and activities. http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=68750

Inquiries regarding Title IX should be referred to the University’s Title IX Coordinator: Gabriel Ramirez, JD, Title IX Coordinator (Investigation of concerns related to Faculty and Staff)

915-747-8358 gramirez2@utep.edu

Resources for Student Success and Well-Being
For help with writing: The University Writing Center (UWC) (Library Building 2nd [ground] floor, #227 (915)-747-5112 provides walk-in assistance with writing to all UTEP students at no cost. If you struggle with writing, the tutors at the UWC can help you. Check out their website – http://academics.utep.edu/writingcenter.

If you have a personal problem or issue that is affecting your studies, please contact the University Counseling and Psychological Services at (915) 747-5302. The center provides counseling, career advice, workshops on academic skills and personal-worth. Walk in appointments available. You can also visit a counselor in the Student Union at 202 Union West, www.utep.edu/counsel.

The Student Health Center is located in the Union Building East, Suite 100 (915) 747-5624.

Mental Health Crisis Line (915) 779-1800

National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-8255 and Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) (915) 534-5478

Related Resources

Center against Sexual Assault Family Violence Helpline: (915) 593-7300 or 1-800-727-0511

El Paso Police Department (911) or UTEP Police Department (915) 747-5611

Suspected harm of children or older persons, Child/Adult Protective Services 1-800-252-5400

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

V. Course Content

ASSIGNMENTS:

Attendance & class participation – this class is a hybrid class using BlackBoard. As a result, class attendance will include both when you log onto the course via BlackBoard as well as when you are in the virtual class sessions. Participation will be identified both by virtual class attendance and your posts to the class discussion. The initial participation will be done by a welcome message that must be completed before the end of the second Friday of the course. All initial discussion board posts should be completed by Thursday at 11:59 pm and responses to your classmates by Sunday at 11:59 pm. Here is a copy of the discussion rubric that will guide your grades.
Assignments –
Discussions will constitute 20% of your grade. Here are the assignments that will make up the other 60% of your grade for the semester. The assignments are: 1) complete the CITI Human Subjects Protection course (go to: citiprogram.org – register for human subjects research and then social behavioral researchers) (see attached PowerPoint) and then submit a copy of certificate of completion; 2) Community Mapping – select one of the two projects and develop a community map for a particular zip code; 3) Develop an asset map for your particular area; 4) Working in teams, develop a SWOT analysis for your area. Then design a strategy for engaging participants in a power analysis. This will include the names of people to contact and a brief elevator speech on how to engage them. There will also be a logic model on the steps to take in order to move the project forward. Assignments will be more specifically outlined on BlackBoard and can be downloaded, completed and resubmitted electronically. All groups will be responsible for presenting their study results to the class and possibly the stakeholders beginning the week 14 of the semester.

Discussions (20% of the grade) – There are a number of discussions throughout the course. To better enhance discussions, you will be placed in a base group for the semester. These will be the classmates with whom you are expected to interact on a regular basis. You are expected to provide an initial response by Thursday at 11:59 pm with a response to at least two class members by Sunday at 11:59 pm. This assignment is worth 20%. The discussion will be graded based on the rubric above.

Presentation of a research study (20% of the grade) – building upon all the previous assignments, a proposal to conduct a research study will be submitted. This presentation will be made within the base groups. Grading rubric will be posted on BlackBoard. Follow the guidelines for submitting an IRB protocol. The

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Non-performance</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Distinguished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply relevant course concepts, theories, or materials correctly. 25%</td>
<td>Does not explain relevant course concepts, theories, or materials.</td>
<td>Explains relevant course concepts, theories, or materials.</td>
<td>Applies relevant course concepts, theories, or materials correctly. examples</td>
<td>Analyzes course concepts, theories, or materials correctly, using or supporting evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with fellow classmates, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts. 25%</td>
<td>Does not collaborate with fellow learners.</td>
<td>Collaborates with fellow learners without relating the discussion to the relevant course concepts.</td>
<td>Collaborates with fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts.</td>
<td>Collaborates with fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts and extending the dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences. 25%</td>
<td>Does not contribute professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.</td>
<td>Contributes professional, personal, or other real-world experiences, but contributions lack relevance.</td>
<td>Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.</td>
<td>Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences to extend the dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support position with applicable knowledge. 25%</td>
<td>Does not establish relevant position.</td>
<td>Establishes relevant position.</td>
<td>Supports position with applicable knowledge.</td>
<td>Validates position with applicable knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
paper is to be typed and in APA format, not to exceed five pages. Due beginning of week 14. This assignment is worth 20%.

. **Topics to be Covered**

1. Introduction to social work research
2. Foundations to social work research, the role of theory
3. How to develop a researchable question through problem formation.
4. Searching, reading, and understanding the literature –
   a. How to critically analyze the literature
   b. How to write a literature review
5. Problem formulation and measurement
6. Constructing measures
   a. Research by the numbers - statistics
7. Research Design
   a. Experimental, Qualitative, Mixed Methods
   b. Reliability and Validity
   c. Survey
   d. Single Subject
8. Sampling
9. Protection of Human Subjects
10. Presentation of data – Reporting findings

**VIII. Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple assignments (4 assignments)</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of a research study</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grades will be determined as follows:

- 90% and above        A
- 80% to 89%           B
- 70% to 79%           C
- 69% & less                 No Credit

**IX. COURSE OUTLINE (subject to revision) – Weekly lectures are posted on Blackboard**

**Week Number:**

1  Introduction to course and BlackBoard. Syllabus is available on BlackBoard with expectations, and written assignment, presentations, required readings, class structure and organization of assignments. Defining concepts associated with Evidence-Based Practice.

   Class will meet both in person or virtually.
Readings:
Friedman Tool Kit (2017) Chapter 1

2 Ethics, Protection of Human Subjects, and Belmont Report

Readings:
Friedman Tool Kit (2017) chapter 10 and Citi Training

3 Steps in CBPR Process and various research hierarchies.

Readings:
Friedman (2021) Chapter 1, 2, & 5

4 International Conference Key Note Address

5 Defining Community

Readings: CBPAR Chapter 3 & 4

6 Asset Mapping

7 Power Analysis

8 Elevator Speeches, Testimony, Op-Ed

9 Logic Models

10 Experimental, Quasi-Experimental, Single Subject Designs, Systematic Reviews, and Meta-Analyses.

Readings:
Friedman Tool Kit (2017) Chapter 7 & 8

11 Quantitative Studies and Data analysis

Readings:
Friedman (2017) Chapter 5, 6, 9, 11
Instrumentation, validity, and reliability.
Goals and Objectives, translating them into intervention strategies. Formative and

12 Qualitative Data

Readings:
Friedman (2017) Chapter 12

Logic Model Assignment

13 Deciding how to implement and report the measures. Writing a proposal, research report, journal article.

Readings:
Friedman (2017) Chapter 13
14  **Group Presentations**

15  Wrap-up and assessment. Presentation of Research Study due Week 15  
Putting the social back in social work.

**Additional Reading and Resources**


Poole, D. L., & Colby, I. C. (2002). Do public neighborhood centers have the capacity to be instruments of change in human services? *Social Work, 47*(2), 142-152.

unit utilizing practice research. Social Work in Health Care, 31(1), 1-17.


experiences of pre-registration house officers in general practice. Medical Education, 35(8), 345-351.

Websites:

On-Line Stat Texts (free)
http://www.onlinestatbook.com/

Robert Wood Johnson Program Evaluation Examples

Tools and Resources for Assessing Social Impact
http://trasi.foundationcenter.org/browse.php

Community Tool Box: Needs Assessment
http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1042.aspx

W. K. Trochim, The Research Methods Knowledge Base
http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/

Logic Model Resource
https://templatelab.com/logic-model/