



University of Texas at El Paso
Bachelor of Social Work Program
SOWK 3430: Research Methods in Social Work
CRN: 12658
Fall 2021

Meeting Times:

Tuesdays 3:30-5:20 pm Undergraduate Learning Center Room 342

Thursdays 3:30-5:20 pm Zoom <https://utep-edu.zoom.us/j/9966816261>

Instructor: Jason Mallonee, DSW, LCSW

Office Location: 417 Health Sciences

Office Telephone: 915-747-8588 (direct)

Email: jrmallonee@utep.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Research Methods in Social Work (4-0). This class will provide students with an understanding of various processes for building knowledge for practice and for evaluation of service delivery. The concept and processes of evidence-based practice as utilized in social work will be learned and applied. Ethical standards, use of critical thinking, and writing skills will be emphasized. Theoretical constructs for conducting culturally sensitive, quantitative/qualitative research in the borderland's region will be examined.

Students will acquire skills in the use of technology, such as the internet, online discussion groups, and use of statistics for social work research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES (LINKED TO EPAS)

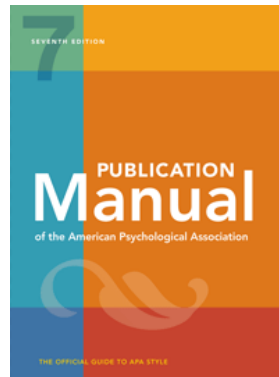
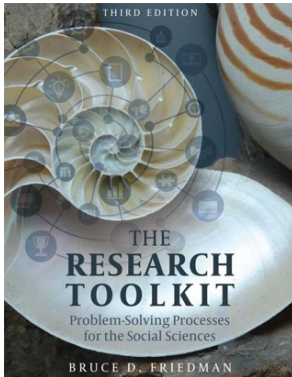
Social work courses are designed to improve students' competence through instruction, practice, and application of knowledge, values, and skills. "Social work competence is the ability to integrate and apply social work knowledge, values, and skills to practice situations in a purposeful, intentional, 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:

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

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

1. Friedman, Bruce D. (2017) *The Research ToolKit: Problem-Solving Processes for the Social Sciences* 3rd ed. San Diego, CA: Cognella.
2. American Psychological Association (2020) *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed.



COURSE TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, AND WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Topics to be Covered:

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

Assignments:

Attendance & class participation – this class is a hybrid class using Blackboard to complete asynchronous content and meeting live in person weekly. Attendance will include both reviewing materials in Blackboard and attending required in-person classes. Participation will be identified both by engagement in class as well as your posts to the class discussion boards. All discussion board posts should be completed by Thursday at 11:59 pm on the weeks they are due with responses to your classmates posted by Sunday at 11:59 pm of the same week.

Assignments – In addition to the final presentation of research study, there are five assignments, each worth 10 points, that are required throughout the semester and will total 50% of your grade. The assignments are:

1. Write an evidence-based research question;
2. Complete the CITI Human Subjects Protection course (go to: citiprogram.org – register for **human subjects research** and then **social behavioral researchers**) and then submit a copy of certificate of completion;
3. Review five articles that will assist you in developing a design for an evidence-based study based on your question;
4. Translate your research question into study goals and objectives; and
5. Develop a logic model to inform how you will gather the data. Assignment will be more specifically outlined on Blackboard and can be downloaded, completed and submitted electronically.

Discussions – There are 10 discussion board post assignments 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 with on a regular basis. You are expected to submit an initial post by Thursday at 11:59 pm on the weeks they are due and submit responses to your classmates’ posts by Sunday at 11:59 pm of the same week. This assignment is worth 20%. The discussion will be graded based on the rubric below.

Criteria	Nonperformance	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Apply relevant course concepts, theories, or materials correctly (25%).	Does not explain relevant course concepts, theories, or materials.	Explains relevant course concepts, theories, or materials.	Applies relevant course concepts, theories, or materials correctly. examples	Analyzes course concepts, theories, or materials correctly, using or supporting evidence.
Collaborate with fellow classmates, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts (25%).	Does not collaborate with fellow learners.	Collaborates with fellow learners without relating the discussion to the relevant course concepts.	Collaborates with fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts.	Collaborates with fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts and extending the dialogue.
Apply relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences (25%).	Does not contribute professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.	Contributes professional, personal, or other real-world experiences, but contributions lack relevance.	Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.	Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences to extend the dialogue.
Support position with applicable knowledge (25%).	Does not establish relevant position.	Establishes relevant position.	Supports position with applicable knowledge.	Validates position with applicable knowledge.

Presentation of a research study – 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, which will be discussed in class. The paper is to be typed and in APA format, **not to exceed five pages**. **Presentations will take place on 11/30 and 12/7, with all materials submitted to Blackboard by 12/5**. This assignment is worth 20%.

Grading:

Attendance & class participation	10%
Multiple assignments (5 assignments at 10% each)	50%
Discussion participation	20%
Presentation of a research study	20%

Final grades will be determined as follows:

90% and above	A
80% to 89%	B
70% to 79%	C
69% to 60%	D
< 59%	F

Weekly Schedule:

Week and Meeting Dates	Topic	Readings to Complete BEFORE in-person class	Assignments
Week 1 8/24 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 8/26 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course and Blackboard • Introduction to social work research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course syllabus (Review expectations, assignments, presentation, readings, course structure and organization, etc.) – available on Blackboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Introduction Post by Sun 8/29 • Week 1 Discussion Board. Topic: VARK Learning Style. Initial post due Thurs 8/26; Responses due Sun 8/29
Week 2 8/31 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 9/2 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of social science research • Foundations of research processes • Evidence-based practice and research hierarchies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Chapters 1 and 4 • Gibbs et al. (2007) “Evidence-Based Practice as if Your Life Depended on it” – in Blackboard • Morago (2006) “Evidence-Based Practice: From Medicine to Social Work” – in Blackboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 2 Discussion Board. Topic: Pros and Cons of Evidence-Based Practice. Initial post due Thurs 9/2; responses due Sun 9/5
Week 3 9/7 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 9/9 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a researchable question • Research ethics and the protection of human subjects <p><i>Continued, next page</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Chapters 2 and 10 • The Belmont Report (1979) – In Blackboard • The Declaration of Helsinki (1964) – In Blackboard • Silva-Martinez & Murty (2011) “Ethics and Cultural Competence in Research with Battered Immigrant Latina Women” – in Blackboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 3 Discussion Board. Topic: Research Ethics. Initial post due Thurs 9/9; responses due Sun 9/12 • Assignment 1: Write an Evidence-Based Research Question due 9/12 • Assignment 2: Complete CITI Human Subjects Protection Course due 9/19.

Week and Meeting Dates	Topic	Readings to Complete BEFORE in-person class	Assignments
Week 4 9/14 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 9/16 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a literature review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Chapter 3 • APA Manual Chapters 1-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 4 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 9/16; responses due Sun 9/19 • Assignment 3: Review Five Articles due 10/3
Week 5 9/21 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 9/23 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research design: experimental, quasi-experimental, single subject designs, systematic reviews, meta-analyses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Chapters 7 and 8 • Ray (2015) “Single-Case Research Design and Analysis: Counseling Applications” – in Blackboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 5 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 9/23; responses due Sun 9/26
Week 6 9/28 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 9/30 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external validity • Study reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Review Chapter 8 • Review additional materials in corresponding Blackboard module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Discussion Board this week. Use this extra time to finish Assignment 3.
Week 7 10/5 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 10/7 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative research methods and data analysis part 1 (variables, levels of measurement, sampling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Chapters 5, 6 (pp. 45-48) and 9 • Review additional materials in corresponding Blackboard module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 7 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 10/7; responses due Sun 10/10
Week 8 10/12 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 10/14 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative research methods and data analysis part 2 (descriptive and inferential statistics) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friedman (2017) Chapters 6 (pp. 48-63) and 11 • Review additional materials in corresponding Blackboard module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 8 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 10/14; responses due Sun 10/17
Week 9 10/19 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 10/21 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative research methods and data analysis part 3 (translating your research question into goals, objectives, and study elements) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 9 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 10/21; responses due Sun 10/24 • Assignment 4: Translate Your Research Question into Study Goals and Objectives due Sun 10/31
Week 10 10/26 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 10/28 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch-up and Review, Topics TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Discussion Board this week. Use this extra time to work on Assignment 4.

Week and Meeting Dates	Topic	Readings to Complete BEFORE in-person class	Assignments
Week 11 11/2 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 11/4 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theories of change and logic models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2004) "Logic Model Development Guide" in Blackboard Review additional materials in corresponding Blackboard module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 11 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 11/4; responses due Sun 11/7 Assignment 5: Develop a Logic Model due Sun 11/14
Week 12 11/9 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 11/11 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative research methods and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friedman (2017) Chapter 12 Dean (1994) "How to Use Focus Groups" in Blackboard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Discussion Board this week. Use this extra time to work on Assignment 5.
Week 13 11/16 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 11/18 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding how to implement and report study elements (proposal, report, journal article, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friedman (2017) Chapter 13 Review additional materials in corresponding Blackboard module 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Week 13 Discussion Board. Topic: TBD. Initial post due Thurs 11/18; responses due Sun 11/21
Week 14 11/23 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 Thanksgiving Holiday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting it all together: Presentation of Research Study (with Paper) assignment 	.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Discussion Board this week. Use extra time to prepare for final presentations. Presentation of Research Study (with Paper) due 12/5
Weeks 15-16 11/30 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342 12/2 3:30-5:20p Optional Zoom 12/7 3:30-5:20p UGLC RM 342	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final presentations Course wrap-up 		

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 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.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communicating effectively throughout this semester is critical to your success in this course. There are multiple channels for communication we will utilize, including:

- **Office Hours:** In addition to individual appointments, I have in-person drop-in office hours for your questions and comments about the course, or to discuss anything else. My office hours will be held in Room 417 in the Health Sciences building on the following days and times: Tuesdays 1-3pm and Wednesdays 9-11am.
- **Email:** UTEP email is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When emailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name.
- **Discussion Board:** If you have a question that you believe other students may also have, please post it in the "Ask Your Instructor" section of the discussion boards inside of Blackboard. Please respond to other students' questions if you have a helpful response.

- **Announcements:** Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance and Participation. Attendance for in-person sessions is important not only for your learning and success but also to create a community of learners. I expect you to review all course materials ahead of class, complete assignments on time (some exceptions made on a case-by-case basis; late assignment submission without contacting me first will result in a zero on the assignment), and actively participate in class discussions and discussion boards.

According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, “When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.” See academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalog for a list of excuse absences. Therefore, if I find that, due to non-performance in the course, you are at risk of failing, I will drop you from the course. I will provide 24 hours advance notice via email.

Make-up work will be given *only* in the case of a *documented* emergency. Note that make-up work may be in a different format than the original work, may require more intensive preparation, and may be graded with penalty points. If you miss an assignment and the reason is not considered excusable, you will receive a zero. It is therefore important to reach out to me—in advance if at all possible—and explain with proper documentation why you missed a given course requirement. Once a deadline has been established for make-up work, no further extensions or exceptions will be granted.

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 reading materials, watching videos and participating in discussion posts. 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.

Academic Integrity: 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.

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*, which is the stylebook required for this department. Written work is to be typed or printed using one-inch margins and 12-point type using New Times Roman font. All assignments will be e-mailed through Blackboard to retain confidentiality.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Please stay home if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, and alternative instruction will be provided. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID 19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit epstrong.org

RESOURCES FOR STUDENT WELLBEING

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)**

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

SYLLABUS MODIFICATION STATEMENT

To provide high quality education, the professor may elect to change this syllabus during the semester to make corrections, additions, or to accommodate emerging issues. If changes in the syllabus occur, students will be notified in class verbally and via Blackboard announcements. Additional Course Resources can be found in Blackboard.