# ASHLAND UNIVERSITY SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT SOCWK-360-OAS: Research Methods in Social Science

## Spring 2026

**Credit Hours**: 3

**Prerequisites**: Math 108 (or Corequisite)

**Fee and charges**: none

**Classroom**: Online-- This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes, and requirements of the traditional face-to-face semester offering of this course.

**Instructor**: Dr. Jennifer Schulz, PhD, MSW, LSW

**Office**: Schar 240

**Office Hours**: T&W, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm (until maternity leave, estimated last week of February or first week of March)

**E-Mail**: jjacobse@ashland.edu

**Phone**: 419-651-3062 (text preferred)

**Catalog description:** An introduction to methodological techniques of research in the social sciences. Emphasis is placed on quantitative and qualitative research methodologies as they relate to building knowledge for practice and to evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice. Research ethics, analysis and evaluation of theoretical bases, research questions, analysis of development. Students are exposed to theoretical frameworks and acquire data, and use of technology are covered. SOC/SOCWK credit.

**Course materials:** Text: Schulz, J. (2026). *Social science research methods: Bridging research to life.* Cognella. ISBN: 979-8-8233-0838-0

**Student learning outcomes for the course:** By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Using the scientific process, apply theories and empirically-based knowledge of variables that influence human development and behavior across the life span. (Program outcome/core competency 4)
2. Using the scientific process, evaluate the extent to which practice interventions were successful. (Program outcome/core competency 4)
3. Using the scientific process, analyze and formulate concepts for the effective delivery of social policies and/or programs. (Program outcome/core competencies 4 and 9)

4. Evaluate research studies and apply research findings to practice. (Program outcome/core competency 4)
5. Demonstrate effective professional writing skills.
6. Understand and incorporate the values and ethics of social work research as well as general social science research with emphasis on working with subjects who often are a part of an oppressed population group. (Program outcome/core competencies 1 and 4)
7. Demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development through the use of research methodology. (Program outcome/core competencies 4 and 9)

Note: Competencies listed above in parenthesis refer to the Social Work Competencies established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in 2022.

1. *Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.*
2. *Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.*
3. *Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice.*
4. *Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice.*
5. *Engage in Policy Practice.*
6. *Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*
7. *Assess with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*
8. *Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*
9. *Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.*

**Student assessment criteria for the course: Total of 348 points**

- Discussions: 120 points (6 @ 20 points each)
- Reading Quiz: 10 points
- Worksheets 58 points (1 @ 28 points, 1 @ 30 points)
- Literature Review Paper: 50 points
- Video Blog: 30 points
- Midterm Exam: 30 points
- Final Exam: 50 points

**Grading Scale:** The standard AU grading scale will be used.

**Attendance/Late Work Policy:** Any late work is subject to 5 points per day late reduced from the overall grade of the assignment (if you receive 100 out of 100, it would be 95 out of 100 automatically if one day late, 90 out of 100 if 2 days late, and so on). **After 7 days, the assignment will NOT be accepted for credit and will result in a 0**. If you have a medical or other reason for assignments being late, please discuss with professor **prior to the assignment deadline** so we can discuss this together.

**Attendance Reporting:** Students are required to participate in a course-related activity within the first three days of the start date of the course. Students may be administratively withdrawn from the course and/or may lose financial aid benefits if a qualifying activity has not occurred between the student and the course work or faculty within the first three days of the course. Simply logging into a course online via the Learning Management System (LMS) is not considered a qualifying activity.

● Student non-participation during the first 8 days of a course may initiate the administrative course withdrawal process. Student non-participation, mid-course, for 14 consecutive days may also initiate the administrative course withdrawal process.

● According to policies and procedures set forth by Ashland University's Department for Veterans' Services, AU will grant any service member requiring more than a 30-day leave a release from coursework. Contact the Office of Veterans' Services for more information regarding this process.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

Students are expected to abide by the academic integrity standards outlined in the official Academic Integrity policy. This policy document can be found in the student handbook and on the Office of Records and Registration website: https://catalog.ashland.edu/academic-affairs/undergraduate#class-coursework-and-academic-integrity-policy1

Using computing resources in a manner that violates university academic integrity policies. Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor, the submission of AI-generated content as one's original work is one such violation.

**Student Accessibility Services Statement**

Our Accent on the Individual core value speaks to our commitment to offering equitable access to learning, and Ashland University is required, by law, to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. For students connected with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC), a Letter of Accommodation may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and reasonable. Students who are registered with the SAC and receive accommodations should notify the instructor as soon as possible to avoid any delays in implementing those accommodations. Accommodations are not provided retroactively. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives, and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Students who are not already registered but may be eligible due to a documented disability can initiate contact by visiting the SAC (930 Claremont Avenue) to discuss accommodations. The SAC determines accommodations on an individualized basis through an interactive process, including a meeting

with the student and a review of their disability documentation. More information can be found on the SAC web page, by emailing ausac@ashland.edu, or by contacting the Director at 419-289-5904.

Academic Engagement Reporting (see AU Academic Engagement Reporting Policy)

Federal law requires that, at the beginning of every term, faculty verify students' demonstration of academic engagement in each course. Students who fail to academically engage will be administratively dropped from their courses, which may impact eligibility for financial aid, athletics, scholarship, etc. Academic engagement is defined as active participation in course-related activities.

Examples include:

• Attending a synchronous class session (in person or online) with the opportunity for instructor-student interaction

• Submitting an academic assignment - including completing an exam or assessment

• Participating in an interactive tutorial, webinar, or computer-assisted instruction

• Contributing to a study group, group project, or online discussion assigned by the instructor

• Communicating with an instructor about academic matters

Academic engagement does not include passive activities such as simply logging into a course or viewing materials without participation, or meeting with an advisor or counselor. Faculty are to report students who have not demonstrated academic engagement via the Academic Engagement Survey in the SOAR Network.

Academic Support Services

Student Success is designed to be a central location that provides students with resources such as professional academic advising and peer tutoring. The staff emphasizes social, personal, and academic success and advisors assist students with degree planning, course registration, campus resources, academic success strategies, and understanding of University policies and procedures. Student Success is located on the seventh floor of the Archer Library. For more information, visit the Academic Support Services website.

The Tutoring Center

The Tutoring Center on the 7th floor of the Archer Library offers free tutoring for all undergraduate courses and academic skills including time management, study skills, note-taking, and test-taking strategies. The Center provides one-on-one, group study, and Peer-Led Team Learning sessions both in-person and virtually. Drop-in sessions are also available in person. For

more information, please contact Denisia Stoops at dstoops@ashland.edu or 419-207-6779. Additionally, you can visit the AU Tutoring Center website for more information.

The Writing and Communication Center (WCC)

Located on the first floor of Archer Library, the WCC offers free support to help students brainstorm, develop, and revise any written, visual, or oral assignments—essays, speeches, presentations, lab reports, and more. All Ashland students are welcome. Appointments are available Monday–Thursday (9 a.m.– 9 p.m.) and Friday (9 a.m.– 5 p.m.), with same-day options. To schedule an appointment, navigate to ashland.mywconline.com, and after creating an account, you can schedule an appointment. For more information, call the WCC at 419-289-5145, visit the WCC's website, or send an email to wcc@ashland.edu.

Archer Library Assistance

Archer Librarians can help with student research projects or assignments in-person and online. How? Schedule an appointment, email us at library@ashland.edu, or chat with a librarian on the Archer Library's website.

Counseling Services

At Ashland University, there is a place on campus that will help you pursue your academic and personal goals. Personal counseling services are FREE to all students and are designed to enhance the quality of your university experience. Ashland University provides personal, social, academic or career counseling-related services to address a variety of students' needs. To contact Counseling Services at AU call 419-289-5200. For more information, visit the Counseling Services website.

Military Leave & Deployment

Students who are members of the military, including the National Guard or Reserves, and are called to active duty, training, or deployment should notify your instructor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made to help you complete coursework or arrange for withdrawal without academic penalty. Ashland University will grant any service member requiring more than a 30-day leave a release from coursework. For extended deployments, contact the Registrar at regis@ashland.edu or Military Family & Veteran Services at veterans@ashland.edu to discuss your options

**Syllabus Schedule**

All discussion board conversation individual posts must be completed by Friday at 11:59 pm, and the comments on others' discussion posts are due Sunday at 11:59 pm of the SAME week.

There will be two exams: one during week 4 and one during week 8, both due at 11:59 pm on Sunday of their respective week.

All projects, papers, and other assignments will be due on Sunday of their respective week.

**Week 1: January 12-January 18, 2025**

Introduction to Research Methods & Ethics (Chapters 1 & 2)

- Discussion post due Friday, January 16
- Reading quiz due Sunday, January 18

**Week 2: January 19-January 25, 2025**

Literature Reviews & Qualitative Research (Chapters 3 & 4)

- Discussion post due Friday, January 23
- Literature review paper due Sunday, January 25

**Week 3: January 26-February 1, 2025**

Quantitative Research & Research Terminology (Chapters 5 & 6)

- Discussion post due Friday, January 30
- Concepts worksheet due Sunday, February 1

**Week 4: February 2-February 8, 2025**

Midterm week

****Your midterm exam is due at 11:59 pm, Sunday, February 8. A study guide and review activity are posted.****

**Week 5: February 9-February 15, 2025**

Program Evaluation, Single-Subject Design, and Statistical Methods (Chapters 7 & 8)

- Discussion post due Friday, February 13
- Worksheet due Sunday, February 15

**Week 6: February 16- February 22, 2025**

Sampling, Research Design, & Survey Research (Chapters 9 & 10)

- Discussion post due Friday, February 20
- Video blog due Sunday, February 22

**Week 7: February 23-March 1, 2025**

Careers in Research & Research Writing (Chapters 11 & 12)

- Discussion post due Friday, February 27

**Week 8: March 2-March 8, 2025**

Final Exam Week

****Your final exam is due at 11:59 pm, Sunday, March 8. A study guide is posted. The exam will be comprehensive, but there will be more emphasis on the second half of the class (chapters 7-12).****