INTER-AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
ARECIBO CAMPUS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANISTIC STUDIES AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

SYLLABI

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Course Title:	Social Research Methodology
Code and Number:	SOWO 4873
Credits:	Four (4)
Academic Term:	
Teacher:	
Office hours:	
Office Phone:	878-5475 ext. 3431
E-mail address:	

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Analysis of the relationship of the social research process and the professional practice of social work. Study of qualitative and quantitative approaches to understanding social phenomena affecting diverse human systems. Emphasis on research as a tool for promoting effective professional practice. 4 credits Prereq: PSYC 3001 one course in Basic Statistics that is equivalent.

III. OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the main theoretical foundations of social research and its application to social work practice.
2. Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative approaches to studying social phenomena and select the appropriate methodology for specific social work research.
3. Critically interpret social research literature relevant to social issues in the Puerto Rican context.
4. Demonstrate the application of the sequence of phases of the social research process to the study of anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) from the practice of social work.
5. Explain the importance of using social research findings to evaluate effectiveness, improve professional social work practice, and promote positive social change.

6. Demonstrate in their conduct a commitment to the profession's principles, values, and ethical practices in social scientific research.

COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICAL BEHAVIORS (EPAS 2022) LINKED:

Competency 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.

Social workers use ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches in conducting research and constructing knowledge. Social workers use research to inform their practice decision-making and articulate how their practice experience informs research and evaluation decisions. Social workers critically evaluate and critique current, empirically sound research to inform decisions regarding practice, policy, and programs. Social workers understand the bias inherent in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. Social workers know how to access, critique, and synthesize current literature to develop appropriate research questions and hypotheses. Social workers demonstrate knowledge and skills in qualitative and quantitative research methods and analysis, and interpret data derived from these methods. Social workers demonstrate knowledge of methods for assessing reliability and validity in social work research. Social workers can articulate and share research findings in ways that are usable for a variety of participants and stakeholders. Social workers understand the value of evidence derived from diverse interprofessional research methods, approaches, and sources.

Social workers:

a. apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy and programs; and

b. identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance social work purposes.

Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with and on behalf of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers evaluate processes and outcomes to increase the effectiveness of practice, policy, and service delivery. Social workers apply anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives in outcome evaluation. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the person in his or her environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in outcome evaluation. Social workers use qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate outcomes and practice effectiveness.

Social workers:

a. select and use culturally sensitive methods for the evaluation of results; and
b. critically analyze findings and apply evaluation results to improve the effectiveness of practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

IV. COURSE CONTENT

A. Introduction to the course

1. Discussion of the résumé
2. Basic concepts
    a. Social research
    b. Pure research
    c. Applied research
    d. Scientific method
    e. Research-based on social work practice
    f. Evidence-based social work practice

B. Introduction to social scientific research

1. Definition of social research
2. Use of the scientific method in the study of society
3. Contribution to Social Sciences
4. Importance of social research in social work practice.
    a. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the social work professional's interventions.
    b. Application to social and public policies, evaluation of social programs
5. Relevance of practice-based research and research-informed practice (Competency 4, EPAS 2022).
    a. Evidence informs practice, and practice informs future research.
6. Dual role of the social worker-practitioner-researcher

C. Scope and approach of social scientific research

1. Research scopes and designs:
    a. Exploratory
    b. Descriptive
    c. Correlational
    d. Explanatory
2. Approaches (routes) and types of research designs:
    a. Qualitative
    b. Quantitative
    c. Mixed
3. Characteristics, advantages, and limitations of each scope and approach
4. Scope selection approach according to the research problem
5. Research design according to scopes and routes

D. Social scientific research process

1. Definition of a research concept

2. Statement and justification of a research problem

a. From observations and ideas to formulating a research problem.
b. Characteristics of a research problem.

i. Specific issue that merits study with scientific rigor
ii. Focused on core concepts or measurable or observable variables
iii. Aimed at describing, relating, predicting or explaining
iv. Delimitation of the problem
1) Specific population
2) Context of the study
3) Geographical location where it will be developed

c. Importance and contributions of the research to society, the discipline or other sectors concerned.

3. Literature review for the development of background information

a. Bibliographic search of the main areas of study
i. Primary sources
ii. Secondary sources
iii. Source review process
b. APA Writing Style 7th Edition

4. Formulation of research purposes

a. General objectives

5. Formulation of research questions

a. Features
b. Writing guidelines

6. Development of hypotheses and research objectives

a. Conceptual and operational definition of variables and objectives
b. Types of research variables: independent and dependent
c. Writing guidelines

7. Definition of variables in descriptive research

a. Conceptual and operational definitions of variables
b. Types of research variables
i. Independent
ii. Dependent

8. Development of a conceptual framework or theoretical perspective

a. Functions of the theoretical framework
b. Elements of knowledge and theoretical currents related to the main constructs under study.
c. Definition of terms
d. Guidelines for writing

9. Development of the methodological design of the research

a. Purposes and research questions
b. Relationship between research design and variables.
c. Types of designs

i. Exploratory
ii. Descriptive
iii. Correlational
iv. Experimental
v. Quasi-experimental

10. Definition of population and sample

a. Definition of population and sample
b. Types of sampling
    i. random
    ii. stratified
    iii. per conglomerate
    iv. for availability
c. Sample size

11. Data collection

a. Research techniques
    i. Observation
    ii. Use of existing information
    iii. Field research
b. Design of measuring instruments
    i. Questionnaires
    ii. Scales: Likert
    iii. Interview protocol

12. Data validation, analysis and interpretation

a. Quantitative
    i. Descriptive statistics
b. Qualitative
    i. Data coding and categorization
    ii. Thematic and narrative analysis

13. Presentation of results, limitations, and recommendations

a. Preparation of the final report
    i. Elements to include
    ii. Writing and style guidelines
    iii. Tabular and graphical representations
    iv. Bibliographic references

E. Research ethics

1. Ethical considerations applicable to social research: informed consent, confidentiality, risks
2. Institutional Review Board (IRB)
3. Code of Ethics of the College of Social Work Professionals of Puerto Rico: Professional Responsibilities and Obligations in the
    a. social research (Canon VII).

V. ACTIVITIES

1. Conferences
2. Group discussions
3. Practical and active learning exercises
4. Visit the Information Access Center (CAI) of the René Marqués Library on the campus to learn about the available resources.
5. Readings and exercises on bibliographic search in the CAI
6. Projection of audiovisual material

VI. EVALUATION

Criteria	Score	Weight
1. Partial Examination	100	27 %
2. Homework (forums, special assignments)	25	7 %
3. Application work*.	100	27 %
4. Socialized oral presentation on a research project analysis	50	12 %
5. Final exam	100	27 %
Totals	**375 points**	**100%**

Note: * = Assessment activity

VII. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY(IES)

A. **Title of the activity:** Critical review of a social research that addresses issues linked to anti-racism, diversity, equity, or social inclusion (ADEI).

B. **Objectives of the activity:** The purpose of this project is for students to demonstrate their understanding and application of course content regarding research methodology in the context of the social work profession. This will entail:

a. the critical analysis of a social research already conducted that addresses issues related to anti-racism, diversity, equity, or social inclusion (ADEI);

b. a group oral presentation on the key aspects of the project included in this guide.

Final written project through which the student will apply what he/she has learned in the course regarding social research in the context of social work in Puerto Rico.

C. **Assessment instrument:** This work's evaluation will be governed by a rubric that follows the format and content guidelines specified in a guide. A value of 110 points will be awarded.

D. **Metric:** Students must score at least 4 out of 5 points on the rubric and achieve 85% compliance as a benchmark. This score is determined by dividing the number of students who met or exceeded the benchmark by the total number of students enrolled in the course section.

VIII. SPECIAL NOTES

A. Auxiliary services or special needs

Any student who requires auxiliary services or special assistance, including reasonable accommodation, must request them at the beginning of the course or as soon as he/she becomes aware that he/she needs them, through the corresponding registration at the **Professional Counseling Center in the lobby of the Campus.**

B. Honesty, fraud, and plagiarism (General Student Regulations, Chapter V).

Dishonesty, fraud, plagiarism, and any other inappropriate behavior related to academic work constitute major infractions sanctioned by the General Student Regulations. As provided by the General Student Regulations, major infractions may result in suspension from the University for a definite period of more than one year or in expulsion from the University, among other sanctions.

C. Use of electronic devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices that could disrupt teaching and learning or the environment conducive to academic excellence will be disabled. Urgent situations will be addressed as appropriate. The use of electronic devices that allow accessing, storing or sending data during evaluations or exams is prohibited.

D. Compliance with the provisions of Title IX

The Federal Higher Education Act, as amended, prohibits discrimination based on sex in any academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, or other program or employment activity sponsored or controlled by an institution of higher education, whether conducted on or off the institution's premises, if the institution receives federal funds.

By current federal regulations, our academic unit has designated an Assistant Title IX Coordinator who will help and guidance about any alleged incident constituting sex or gender discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual assault. You may contact the Assistant Coordinator Lcda. Vilmariz Vázquez at 7878785475, extension 3326, or by e-mail at vvazquez@arecibo.inter.edu.

The Policy Document titled Standards and Procedures for Addressing Alleged Violations of the Provisions of Title IX contains the institutional rules for channeling any complaint filed based on this type of allegation. This document is available on the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico's website (www.inter.edu).

E. Use of electronic devices

Cell phones and any other electronic devices that could disrupt the teaching and learning process or disrupt the environment conducive to academic excellence will be disabled.

Urgent situations will be addressed as appropriate. The use of electronic devices that allow accessing, storing or sending data during evaluations or exams is prohibited.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Unless there is a health or safety emergency, your confidential information will not be disclosed to third parties outside of the University. However, there may be other circumstances in which disclosure of this type of information may be required. In such a situation, the faculty member has an obligation to comply and act accordingly.

IX. RESOURCES

A. Textbook(s)

B. Audio-visual materials:

1. Various videos about Nazi government experiments.
Genie: the wild child.
Gorillas in the Mist/Gorilias in the Mist.
The story of Oscar Sanchez, The Innocent of Montgat.
5. The Incredible Journey of the Butterflies
6. Spotlight (*En primera plana*, Spanish title)'.

C. Electronic Resources

National Association of Schools of Social Work in Puerto Rico (ANAETS). [@anaetspr] (2020). Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/pg/anaestspr/about/?ref=page_internal

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Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Metropolitan Campus. http://www.ramajudicial.pr/miscel/conferencia/PDF/5ta/La-etica-en-la-investigacion-Dra-Dagmar-Guardiola.pdf

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Royal Spanish Academy (2014). *Diccionario de la lengua española (*23.ª ed.). http://www.rae.es/rae.html

Rivera, B. (2017). *Digital learners: challenges and opportunities for the university professor in the classroom.* (Publication No. 10286331) [Doctoral dissertation, Universidad del Turabo]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Smith, T. (2021). Limitations to qualitative research. *eHow In Spanish. https://www.ehowenespanol.com/limitaciones-investigacion-cualitativa-info_180715/*

Inter-American University of Puerto Rico (2020). *Policy and standards on the protection of the rights of human subjects participating in research projects (Normative Document A-1220-065 dated December 16, 2020).* http://interponce3.azurewebsites.net/wp-content/uploads/documentos/dec-estudiantes/politicas-atanen-estudiantes/a-irb-013-2000r.pdf

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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