Practice Problem Portfolio

Practice Problem Statement: **2**
Practice Problem Identification Assignment Grading Rubric 2
Total: 25 points 3
Social Problem Statement: **3**
Social Problem Identification Assignment Grading Rubric 3
Total: 25 points 4
Annotated Bibliography: **4**
Annotated Bibliography Assignment Grading Rubric 4
Total: 30 points 5
Quantitative Article Analysis: **5**
Worksheet 5
Total: 25 points 7
Qualitative Article Analysis: **7**
Worksheet 7
Total: 25 points 10
Background & Significance Paper: **10**
Paper Grading Rubric 11
Total: 50 points 12
Research Design Consultation with Executive Director: **12**
Research Design Outline Grading Rubric 13
Total: 100 points 14

Week	Date	Assignment/Activity	Total Points
Week 5	Feb 17	Ethics Presentation Due	100
Week 6	Feb 24	Practice Problem Statement Due	25
Week 7	Mar 3	Social Problem Statement Due	25
Week 8	Mar 10	Annotated Bibliography Due	30
Week 11	Mar 31	Quantitative Article Analysis Due	25
Week 13	Apr 14	Background & Significance Paper Due	50
Week 14	Apr 21	Qualitative Article Analysis Due	25
Finals	May 5-11	Research Designs (Meeting with Executive Director)	100

Practice Problem Statement:

Identify a practice problem that is of interest to you. If you are working in the field or doing a practicum, pick a practice problem related to your site and concentration. If you are not currently working in the field, revisit your application and what is motivating your decision to pursue an MSW.

In one or two paragraphs describe your practice problem. Include at least 2 scholarly resources and 2 non-scholarly resources to help describe the problem.

Write one paragraph of things you are curious about after this reading and writing this summary.

Name 3-5 search words or phrases you will use to search the library or google scholar for additional scholarly resources.

Practice Problem Identification Assignment Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (5 points)	Good (4 points)	Fair (3 points)	Poor (0-2 points)
Description of Practice Problem	Clear, concise, and thorough description of the practice problem in one or two paragraphs. Includes at least 2 scholarly resources and 2 non-scholarly resources that are well-integrated and relevant.	Adequate description of the practice problem with minor gaps. Includes 2 scholarly resources and 2 non-scholarly resources, generally relevant.	Basic description of the practice problem, lacks depth. Includes fewer than 2 scholarly resources and/or 2 non-scholarly resources, some relevance.	Incomplete or unclear description of the practice problem. Includes fewer than 2 scholarly resources and/or 2 non-scholarly resources, minimal relevance.
Curiosities and Questions	Insightful and reflective paragraph detailing curiosities and questions that arise from the reading and summary. Shows deep engagement with the topic.	Adequate paragraph detailing curiosities and questions, shows engagement with the topic.	Basic paragraph with limited curiosities and questions, shows minimal engagement.	Incomplete or unclear paragraph, lacks reflection and engagement.
Search Words/Phrases	Identifies 3-5 highly relevant search words or phrases for additional scholarly resources. Shows understanding of	Identifies 3-5 relevant search words or phrases, generally effective.	Identifies fewer than 3 search words or phrases, some relevance.	Identifies fewer than 3 search words or phrases, minimal relevance.

	effective search strategies.			

Total: 25 points

Social Problem Statement:

Identify a social problem that impacts your practice problem. Think person-in-environment theory or general systems theory. You might visit the Grand Challenges for Social Work website. You might revisit content from your diversity class. You might review your Human Behavior and Social Environment lessons.

In one or two paragraphs, describe your social problem. Use 2 scholarly resources and 2 non-scholarly resources to help.

In one paragraph, describe the relationship between your social problem and your practice problem.

Write one paragraph of things you are curious about after reading and writing this summary.

Name 3-5 search words or phrases you will use to search the library or google scholar for additional scholarly resources.

Social Problem Identification Assignment Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (5 points)	Good (4 points)	Fair (3 points)	Poor (0-2 points)
Description of Social Problem	Clear, concise, and thorough description of the social problem in one or two paragraphs. Includes at least 2 scholarly resources and 2 non-scholarly resources that are well-integrated and relevant.	Adequate description of the social problem with minor gaps. Includes 2 scholarly resources and 2 non-scholarly resources, generally relevant.	Basic description of the social problem, lacks depth. Includes fewer than 2 scholarly resources and/or 2 non-scholarly resources, some relevance.	Incomplete or unclear description of the social problem. Includes fewer than 2 scholarly resources and/or 2 non-scholarly resources, minimal relevance.
Relationship Between Social Problem and Practice Problem	Insightful and clear paragraph describing the relationship between the social problem and the practice problem. Shows deep understanding of the connection.	Adequate paragraph describing the relationship, shows understanding of the connection.	Basic paragraph with limited description of the relationship, shows minimal understanding.	Incomplete or unclear paragraph, lacks description and understanding of the relationship.

Curiosities and Questions	Insightful and reflective paragraph detailing curiosities and questions that arise from the reading and summary. Shows deep engagement with the topic.	Adequate paragraph detailing curiosities and questions, shows engagement with the topic.	Basic paragraph with limited curiosities and questions, shows minimal engagement.	Incomplete or unclear paragraph, lacks reflection and engagement.
Search Words/Phrases	Identifies 3-5 highly relevant search words or phrases for additional scholarly resources. Shows understanding of effective search strategies.	Identifies 3-5 relevant search words or phrases, generally effective.	Identifies fewer than 3 search words or phrases, some relevance.	Identifies fewer than 3 search words or phrases, minimal relevance.

Total: 25 points

Annotated Bibliography:

Complete an annotated bibliography that includes 10 scholarly articles that help you understand the background and significance of your practice and social problem. At least 3 articles must be quantitative (experiment or pre-experimental) and 3 articles must be qualitative. I recommend you look for at least 1 systematic review or meta-synthesis. Your biography can include one grey or white paper.

Choose one Qualitative and one Quantitative article you will use for Part 5 & 6. I recommend that as we move through the semester, you complete the worksheet for the article using the information learned.

Annotated Bibliography Assignment Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (9-10 points)	Good (7-8 points)	Fair (5-6 points)	Poor (0-4 points)
Selection of Articles	Includes 10 scholarly articles that are highly relevant to the practice and social problem. At least 3 articles are quantitative and 3 are qualitative.	Includes 10 scholarly articles that are generally relevant. Meets the requirement for quantitative and qualitative articles.	Includes fewer than 10 articles or some articles are not relevant. Partially meets the requirement for quantitative and qualitative articles.	Includes fewer than 10 articles, many of which are not relevant. Does not meet the requirement for quantitative and qualitative articles.
Annotations	Annotations are thorough, well-	Annotations are adequate,	Annotations are basic, with limited	Annotations are incomplete,

	written, and provide a clear summary, evaluation, and relevance of each article to the practice and social problem.	generally well-written, and provide a summary, evaluation, and relevance of each article.	detail and clarity. Some annotations may lack evaluation or relevance.	unclear, or poorly written. Many annotations lack evaluation or relevance.
Quality of Sources	All sources are high-quality, peer-reviewed, and credible.	Most sources are high-quality, peer-reviewed, and credible.	Some sources are not peer-reviewed or lack credibility.	Many sources are not peer-reviewed or lack credibility.

Total: 30 points

Quantitative Article Analysis:

Analyze a quantitative research article (***experimental or pre-experimental***) from your annotated bibliography using the following framework. Turn in your "worksheet" and the original article.

Worksheet

Element	Description	Answer
Purpose & Significance	Was the need for the study established? Was data cited about prevalence or extent of the problem?	
Background/Literature Review & Theoretical Framework	Were all variables contemplated in the hypotheses? Did the discussion suggest a connection between the dependent and independent variable? Or, was a theory provided to explain the problem?	
Research question/Hypothesis	Were there research questions? What kind? Are the questions clear and they suggest that if answered will explain the problem?	
Independent/dependent variables	Are the IV & DV variables defined? If a descriptive study, are there any variables? Are the variables relevant to the problem?	

Sample	Were recruitment methods sound? Is the sample adequate in terms of size & characteristic; for example, subjects who are relevant to the problem are recruited?	
Human Subjects issue/ethics	Was the study reviewed by an IRB? Were there any protections to subjects?	
Research Design	Identify the research design. Is it appropriate to answer the question? What level of research does the design represent? For example-does this show causation?	
Measures used to assess	Are the measures appropriate? Do the measures assess the variables appropriately?	
Procedures	Are the procedures sound? Do they seem to bias the study? Is enough information provided so the study can be replicated?	
Results sections/Analyses	Does the article provide sufficient results to determine if the hypotheses were supported or not? Describe the statistical tests used, why those were the right tests, and what they mean.	
Discussion/Implications to practice	Are interpretations to the results offered in the discussion section? Do the interpretations seem sound and supported by the data/results?	
Limitations	Are limitations identified? Did the authors leave any limitations out? Are next steps offered?	
Threats to internal/external validity	What are the issues of external validity related to the sample? What are the problems of internal validity related to the measures? What are the issues of internal validity related to procedures?	
Disrupting privilege and oppression	What are the values that you think are represented in the research study. For example,	

	what assumptions do you think the researcher is making about the topic of study? About the people in their sample? How do you think that these values are represented in the way in which the authors discuss the study's findings? What positions of privilege and subordination do you think are held by the researchers? By the participants?	
Learner conclusion	Make an overall evaluation of the article. Decide if knowledge offered in the article should be "rejected", "adopted with reservations", or "adopted as presented" and point to your assessment in the sections above to support your decision.	

Total: 25 points

Qualitative Article Analysis:

Analyze a qualitative research article from your annotated bibliography using the COREQ guidelines.

Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative studies (COREQ): 32-item checklist

Developed from:
Tong A, Sainsbury P, Craig J. Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. International Journal for Quality in Health Care. 2007. Volume 19, Number 6: pp. 349 – 357

Worksheet

Item No	Guide Questions/Description	Answer (Provide Page Number)
Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity		
Personal Characteristics		
1. Interviewer/ facilitator	Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group?	
2. Credentials	What were the researcher's credentials? E.g., PhD, MD	

Item No	Guide Questions/Description	Answer (Provide Page Number)
3. Occupation	What was their occupation at the time of the study?	
4. Gender	Was the researcher male or female?	
5. Experience and training	What experience or training did the researcher have?	
Relationship with participants		
6. Relationship established	Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?	
7. Participant knowledge of the interviewer	What did the participants know about the researcher? e.g. personal goals, reasons for doing the research?	
8. Interviewer characteristics	What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator? e.g. Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic	
Domain 2: study design		
Theoretical framework		
9. Methodological orientation and Theory	What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? e.g. grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, phenomenology, content analysis	
Participant selection		
10. Sampling	How were participants selected? e.g., purposive, convenience, consecutive, snowball	
11. Method of approach	How were participants approached? e.g., face-to-face, telephone, mail, email	
12. Sample size	How many participants were in the study?	
13. Non-participation Setting	How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?	
14. Setting of data collection	Where was the data collected? e.g., home, clinic, workplace	
15. Presence of nonparticipants	Was anyone else present besides the participants and researchers?	

Item No	Guide Questions/Description	Answer (Provide Page Number)
16. Description of sample	What are the important characteristics of the sample? e.g. demographic data, date	
Data collection		
17. Interview guide	Were questions, prompts, and guides provided by the authors? Was it pilot tested?	
18. Repeat interviews	Were repeat interviews carried out? If yes, how many?	
19. Audio/visual recording	Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?	
20. Field notes	Were field notes made during and/or after the interview or focus group?	
21. Duration	What was the duration of the interviews or focus group?	
22. Data saturation	Was data saturation discussed?	
23. Transcripts returned	Were transcripts returned to participants for comment and/or correction?	
Domain 3: analysis and findings		
Data analysis		
24. Number of data coders	How many data coders coded the data?	
25. Description of the coding tree	Did the authors provide a description of the coding tree?	
26. Derivation of themes	Were themes identified in advance or derived from the data?	
27. Software	What software, if applicable, was used to manage the data?	
28. Participant checking	Did participants provide feedback on the findings?	
Reporting		
29. Quotations presented	Were participant quotations presented to illustrate the themes/findings? Was each quotation identified? e.g., participant number	

Item No	Guide Questions/Description	Answer (Provide Page Number)
30. Data and findings consistent	Was there consistency between the data presented and the findings?	-
31. Clarity of major themes	Were major themes clearly presented in the findings?	
32. Clarity of minor themes	Is there a description of diverse cases or a discussion of minor themes?	
Conclusions		
Disrupting Privilege and Oppressions	What are the values that you think are represented in the research study. For example, what assumptions do you think the researcher is making about the topic of study? About the people in their sample? How do you think that these values are represented in the way in which the authors discuss the study's findings? What positions of privilege and subordination do you think are held by the researchers? By the participants?	
Learner conclusion	Make an overall evaluation of the article. Decide if knowledge offered in the article should be "rejected", "adopted with reservations", or "adopted as presented" and point to your assessment in the sections above to support your decision.	

Turn in your "worksheet" and the original article.

Total: 25 points

Background & Significance Paper:

Write a paper that explains the background and significance of your practice problem. After reading your paper, I should have a firm understanding of both the practice problem and the social problem. I should understand the scope, impact, causes, and current approaches to address the problems. I should understand how the social problem impacts the practice problem (and vice versa). You will be graded on your writing quality, formatting (APA), and the depth of the content.

Paper Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (9-10 points)	Good (7-8 points)	Fair (5-6 points)	Poor (0-4 points)
Understanding of Practice Problem	Provides a comprehensive and clear explanation of the practice problem, including its background and significance.	Provides a clear explanation of the practice problem with minor gaps in detail.	Provides a basic explanation of the practice problem, lacking depth and detail.	Provides an incomplete or unclear explanation of the practice problem.
Understanding of Social Problem	Provides a thorough and clear explanation of the social problem, including its scope, impact, causes, and current approaches to address it.	Provides a clear explanation of the social problem with minor gaps in detail.	Provides a basic explanation of the social problem, lacking depth and detail.	Provides an incomplete or unclear explanation of the social problem.
Connection Between Practice and Social Problems	Clearly explains how the social problem impacts the practice problem and vice versa, demonstrating a deep understanding of their interrelationship.	Adequately explains the connection between the social and practice problems, with minor gaps in detail.	Provides a basic explanation of the connection, lacking depth and detail.	Provides an incomplete or unclear explanation of the connection.
Writing Quality	Writing is clear, concise, and free of grammatical errors. Demonstrates excellent organization and flow.	Writing is generally clear, with minor grammatical errors. Demonstrates good organization and flow.	Writing is basic, with several grammatical errors. Demonstrates some organization but lacks flow.	Writing is unclear, with many grammatical errors. Lacks organization and flow.
Formatting (APA)	Consistently follows APA formatting guidelines with no errors.	Generally follows APA formatting guidelines with minor errors.	Partially follows APA formatting guidelines with several errors.	Does not follow APA formatting guidelines or has many errors.
Depth of Content	Provides in-depth analysis and comprehensive coverage of the practice and social problems. Uses a variety of high-quality	Provides adequate analysis and coverage of the practice and social problems. Uses a variety of sources to	Provides basic analysis and limited coverage of the practice and social problems. Uses some sources to	Provides superficial analysis and minimal coverage of the practice and social problems.

	sources to support arguments.	support arguments.	support arguments.	Uses few or no sources to support arguments.

Total: 50 points

Research Design Consultation with Executive Director:

For your final assignment, you will present your **Background & Significance** paper as if you are a staff member proposing a research project at your organization. I will role-play the **Executive Director** who must decide whether to approve your proposed research direction. You will submit the notes you bring to the meeting but will be graded solely on your presentation and engagement with the material during discussion.

This assignment assesses your ability to:

- Clearly communicate a practice problem
- Distinguish the practice problem from the broader social problem
- Formulate and justify a research question
- Demonstrate understanding of potential research designs
- Show awareness of ethics, rigor, internal validity, and ADEI issues
- Think critically in real time

Oral Case Presentation (5 minutes)

In a **5-minute briefing**, you will present to the Executive Director (me):

- The practice problem facing the agency
- The social problem that shapes and reinforces it
- One clear **research question** the agency needs answered
- Whether you recommend a **quantitative**, **qualitative**, or **mixed-methods** approach
- A brief rationale for why this approach is appropriate
- One ADEI or ethical concern that must be handled carefully
- No slides. Notes allowed. Scripts are not.

This models professional communication used in real agencies and grant development.

Executive Director Q&A (15 minutes)

Following your briefing, I will ask questions to assess your understanding of research design (including sampling, measurement, data collection) and ethics. Below are questions you can use to prepare:

Research Design

- Why this design?
- Why not other possible designs?
- What would be gained or lost if we changed the design?

Internal Validity / Rigor

- What threats to validity affect your design?
- How would you ensure rigor?
- If qualitative: How will you ensure credibility, dependability, and confirmability?

Sampling & Feasibility

- Who should be included in the study and why?
- How will you recruit them?
- What barriers might affect participation?

Data Collection

- What measures, interviews, or data sources are appropriate?
- How will you ensure they capture what matters?
- What biases might shape your data collection?

Ethics

- What is the biggest risk to participants?
- How will you protect confidentiality?
- Are there power or vulnerability issues?

ADEI & Anti-Oppressive Research

- How does oppression shape the practice problem?
- How will your study avoid replicating harm?
- How will you account for context and identity?

Application to Agency Mission

- Why should the agency invest in this research?
- What decisions could this research inform?
- How might findings change services or policy?

Research Design Outline Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (9–10)	Good (7–8)	Fair (5–6)	Poor (0–4)
Clarity of Practice Problem & Social Problem	Clearly and succinctly explains the practice and social problems; strong distinction and deep understanding.	Clear explanation with minor gaps; distinction mostly clear.	Basic explanation with limited depth or unclear distinction.	Unclear, incomplete, or inaccurate explanation; no distinction.
Research Question	Clear, specific, answerable, and strongly aligned with agency needs.	Clear and relevant with minor issues.	Present but vague or weakly aligned.	Unclear, missing, or unrelated.

Recommended Research Approach	Well-justified recommendation demonstrating strong understanding.	Reasonable recommendation with minor gaps.	Limited justification or partial misunderstanding.	Unclear, unjustified, or inappropriate.
Rationale & Understanding of Alternative Designs	Thorough rationale with clear explanation of alternatives.	Good rationale with minor gaps.	Surface-level rationale; minimal alternative discussion.	Little to no rationale; no alternatives addressed.
Internal Validity / Rigor	Clearly identifies threats and strong strategies to address them.	Identifies threats with minor gaps.	Mentions threats but lacks depth or accuracy.	No relevant threats identified; poor understanding.
Sampling & Feasibility	Clear sampling plan, rationale, recruitment, and barriers.	Clear plan with minor gaps.	Plan lacks detail or feasibility.	Unclear or inappropriate sampling plan.
Data Collection & Measurement	Appropriate measures and strong understanding of bias.	Appropriate with minor gaps.	Basic description lacking clarity or accuracy.	Unclear or inappropriate data collection.
Ethics & Participant Protection	Thoughtfully identifies risks, protections, and vulnerabilities.	Identifies risks with minor gaps.	Limited discussion of ethics.	Incomplete or inaccurate discussion.
ADEI & Anti-Oppressive Considerations	Clear explanation of oppression, potential harms, and strategies to avoid harm.	Addresses ADEI with minor gaps.	Superficial or inaccurate discussion.	No meaningful ADEI discussion.
Application to Agency Mission / Persuasiveness	Compelling connection to mission; clear and professional presentation.	Clear connection with minor gaps.	Weak connection or unclear presentation.	Little connection; ineffective communication.

Total: 100 points