SSWN 637 SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH I

Instructor:
E-mail:
Phone:
Office:
Office Hours:

Course Description:
This first semester course of the two-semester research sequence examines the role of social workers as research consumers and practitioners. The course addresses the mission of Touro University Graduate School of Social Work by preparing students to become effective social workers capable of utilizing evidence-based principles in their practice. In this course, students are introduced to the foundations of research concepts as a basis for the expansion of social work knowledge and an opportunity for strengthening practice skills.

Students are taught ways to harness information and use it to augment their practice through library and on-line literature review, and to develop critical thinking skills, especially the ability to understand how knowledge (theory) is developed and critiqued. We will focus on identifying key issues presented in scientific articles, formulating research questions, with associated hypotheses, and writing effectively to communicate findings from reviews of the literature.

This introductory course provides students with the basic tools to understand and participate in social work research. Quantitative and qualitative research designs, data collection, and data management and analysis will be reviewed. Students will understand the inherent bias in research and evaluate design, analysis, and interpretation using an anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspective. The purpose of this course is to prepare professional social workers who will be able to critically evaluate research literature and plan simple research projects.

Expected Course Outcomes:

1. Develop an understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for practice while appreciating competing views about ways of knowing (4)

2. Critically analyze current research, determine its usefulness for social work practice, and apply research findings to inform practice, policy, and social work programs (4)

3. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic research concepts and their relationship to social work practice. (4)

4. Demonstrate knowledge about methods to assess reliability and validity in social work research (4)

5. Demonstrate an understanding of the value base, ethical standards and principles of the profession and its applicability to their practice as it pertains to research. (1)

6. Explore and understand ethical and value dilemmas and resolutions in social work research. (1)

7. Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work (1, 4)

8. Articulate their ability to connect social work theoretical and conceptual frameworks to the formulation of social research questions. (4, 9)

9. Develop strategies to answer social work research questions including questions about the effectiveness of social work interventions. (4, 9)

10. Demonstrate ability to access, critique, and synthesize the current literature to develop and answer appropriate research questions, and provide a rational for methods. (4)

11. Articulate concepts and principles associated with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research. (4)

CSWE Educational Policy

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) specifies nine core competencies to guide curriculum design in social work education 2022-EPAS.pdf (cswe.org). The numbers following each expected course outcome refer to these competencies. In social work education, the demonstration of competence is informed by knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes.

Required Texts:

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach. 4th edition. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN-10: 019777122X, ISBN-13: 978-0197771228

Other Research Text (Available online through Touro Library Website)

D'Cruz, H., & Jones, M. (2014). *Social work research in practice*. 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

DePoy, E., & Gilson, S. (2017). *Social work research and evaluation*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Acharyya, R., & Bhattacharya, N. (Eds.). (2019). *Research methodology for social sciences*. Taylor & Francis Group.

All these electronic books are available at Touro College Library. Click the above links and log into your library account to access them. You can read the chapters of these electronic books online or download the materials from the Touro Library website.

Recommended Journals:

The list below contains only social work journals. There are many other specialized journals that should be accessed for the literature search that you will do for this course.

Social Work
Research on Social Work Practice
Journal of Social Work Research and Evaluation
International Network for Advancing Science and Policy
Affilia: Feminist Inquiry in Social Work
Social Work Research
Social Service Review
Qualitative Social Work
https://www.inasp.info/publications
https://journals.sagepub.com/home/aff

Course Requirements:
It is expected that students will attend all class sessions and arrive on time, unless an emergency arises, in which the student will contact the professor by e-mail or telephone. Cell phones are either to be turned off or on vibrate to limit distractions.

Attendance:
Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. Students are to notify the instructor if they will be absent. Students are expected to be accountable for the entire content of the course. An instructor may ask a student to complete assignments to compensate for content missed. Students are permitted to use one absence for a religious or federal holiday when the university is open. Students missing more than 2 classes may be in jeopardy of receiving a lower grade or may fail the course.

Student Assignments:
Students are expected to complete all assignments required by the instructor. References used in written assignments should be properly cited, using the APA (American Psychological Association) reference style. Additionally, it is expected that written assignments will be presented in a thoughtful, coherent, logical, and scholarly manner.

Temporary Recording Policy:
If the classes are conducted synchronously via zoom, then the sessions will be recorded. These recordings will be posted into the courses Canvas site. These recordings are only accessible to members of the class and the instructor. At the end of the semester these recordings will be purged. Students are prohibited from sharing any recordings outside of class participants. Recordings do not take the place of your attendance.

Criteria for Student Evaluation:
Criteria used for evaluating students will include performance in the areas of written assignments (including depth and clarity of content, extent of research, scholarly presentation), exams, class participation and attendance.

Graduate Grading Policy:

A = 93 and above
A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89
B = 83-86
B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76
C- = 70-72
F = 0-69

A is awarded for excellence
B is awarded for good work
C is awarded for marginal work
F is awarded for failing work

Note: A grade of Incomplete may be given to students who have not completed a portion of course assignments and have received the instructor's permission. Grades of Incomplete will not be given to students who are doing substandard work to give them an opportunity to achieve an acceptable grade. If permission is granted for an Incomplete, a form must be signed and completed by the student and instructor. Incompletes are time limited.

Student Evaluation of the Course and Its Instruction:

Student feedback concerning the course and its instruction is encouraged throughout the semester. An in-process evaluation will be administered Week 4 or 5. A formal evaluation will be completed at the semester's end consistent with the school's policy. A notice will be sent to your Touro e-mail account when the evaluation opens. Your participation is required and your commitment to the course is not considered complete until you have submitted the evaluation. The Graduate School of Social Work relies on your feedback to make critical curriculum and instruction decisions. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Academic Integrity Policy

Touro University is a community of scholars and learners committed to maintaining the highest standards of personal integrity in all aspects of our professional and academic lives. Because intellectual integrity is a hallmark of ethical, scholarly, and scientific inquiry as well as a core value of the Jewish tradition, students and faculty are expected to share a mutual respect for teaching, learning and the development of knowledge. They are expected to adhere to the highest standards of honesty, fairness, and professional conduct in their academic work and respect for all community members.

Academic dishonesty undermines our shared intellectual culture and our ability to trust one another. Faculty and administration bear a major responsibility for promoting a climate of integrity, both in the clarity with which they state their expectations and in the vigilance with which they monitor students. Students must avoid all acts of dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating on examinations, fabricating, tampering, lying, plagiarizing, and utilizing AI tools without acknowledgment of such, as well as facilitating or tolerating the dishonesty of others. Academic dishonesty lowers scholastic quality and defrauds those who will eventually depend on the knowledge and integrity of our graduates. Furthermore, it misrepresents student efforts and mastery of course material both absolutely, and relative to others in their courses.

Touro University views violations of academic integrity with the utmost gravity. Such violations will lead to appropriate sanctions, up to and including expulsion from the university community. We commit ourselves to the shared vision of academic excellence that can only flourish in a climate of integrity.

The Touro University policy on academic integrity, which is outlined in this document, is designed to guide students as they prepare assignments, take exams, and perform necessary work to complete their degree requirements, and to provide a framework for faculty in fostering an intellectual environment based on the principles of academic integrity. It is presented here in order to educate the faculty on the parameters of and the enforcement of the policy.

The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), of which Touro University is a member, lists six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage, to allow institutional scholarship to flourish with integrity. To sustain these values, Touro University's Academic Integrity Policy, requires that a student or researcher:

• Properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others, including the use of AI tools and other emerging technologies;
• Properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work;

• Make sure that all work submitted as their own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration;
• Treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that:
• Everyone is given proper credit for their own ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments;
• All student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others;
• The academic and ethical development of all students are fostered;
• The reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold the principles of academic integrity threatens not only the reputation of Touro, but also the value of each and every degree awarded by the institution. All members of the Touro community bear a shared responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld. The Touro University works with faculty and students to promote an institutional culture of academic integrity, provides effective training that creates a commitment to academic integrity, and establishes clear procedures to deal with allegations of violations of academic integrity and monitoring the adherence thereto.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorized use of the writings, ideas and/or computer-generated material of others without appropriate acknowledgement, and the representation of them as one's own original work. It also includes the unauthorized use of computer-generated material via artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies without appropriate acknowledgement and the representation of them as one's own original work. Plagiarism encompasses acts of inadvertent failure to acknowledge sources, as well as improper attribution due to poor citation.

When using ideas/words from other sources, the student must clearly define the sources using standard methods of citation. Plagiarism can occur even when one does not use the exact words of another author. Paraphrasing written material by changing or rearranging words without the proper attribution is still considered plagiarism (even if it eludes identification by plagiarism detection software). It is therefore critically important that students understand how to cite. If students have any questions about the proper use and citation of material from other sources, they should seek help from their professors.

GSSW Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy
Students are responsible and expected to review, be familiar with, and uphold the academic honesty policy in all work submitted, including ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) as outlined below. Please review the Academic Integrity policy here.

AI Use Limited to Specific Assignments and/or Limited Use
In this course, the use of AI is governed by the university's AI Usage Addendum to the Academic Integrity Policy and the specific guidelines outlined below.
AI tools may be used **only** as indicated in each assignment directions. If you are requested to use AI, please use it according to policy. If you are not given instructions to use AI in the direction of the assignments the use of AI is not permitted.

AI use is prohibited for:

- Any assignments or activities not specified in the assignment directions
- Exams, quizzes, or take-home tests
- Final projects unless explicitly permitted
- Use of AI-generated text or output to write, complete, or substantially develop any portion of a graded assessment is **not permitted**.

Requirements:

- Any AI-generated content must be **clearly acknowledged** with the tool name, date of use, and a brief description of how it was used, per the TUS AI Addendum to the Academic integrity policy.
- Proper in-text citation to acknowledge location of AI assisted content within the body of the written work, proper reference list formatting, and an addendum including the acknowledgement with the tool name, date of use, and a brief description of how it was used must be included, per the TUS AI Addendum to the Academic integrity policy.
- Students are expected to follow APA formatting for all citations and the reference list.

Data Privacy Reminder
Only AI tools approved by the university (which are available through the TouroOne Portal) are to be used when working with confidential or personally identifiable information (PII). PII includes, but is not limited to, full names, ID numbers, grades, health data, and any information that could be used to identify someone. Be advised that non-approved software can collect any information from your device without your knowledge or consent, which could result in unintended consequences. Use of non-approved AI platforms is prohibited on TUS machines, and may result in academic, legal, or disciplinary consequences.
Please click here to access the full policy.

Accommodation:
Touro College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which protect persons from discrimination on the basis of disability in all its programming. The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who request them and supply appropriate documentation. Policies and procedures ensure that students with a disability will not, on the basis of that disability, be denied full and equal access to our programs or otherwise be subjected to discrimination. The College has a centralized Office of Student Disability Services. ("OSDS"). Graduate School of Social Work students with disabilities seeking reasonable accommodations should do so through the OSDS Coordinator for the Director of Student Advancement, Allison Bobick at 646-777-9373 or Allison.bobick@touro.edu . For further detail, see https://www.touro.edu/departments/student-disability-services/. Students must make instructors aware of their accommodation on the first class. If a student develops a situation requiring accommodation over the course of the semester, please contact Allison Bobick at 646-777-9373 or Allison.bobick@touro.edu for assistance.

Standards of Class Behavior
The faculty has primary responsibility for managing the class. Students who create a disruption in the class may be directed by the instructor to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. Behaviors defined as disruptive include persistently speaking without being recognized, using a cell phone in the class, eating in the classroom, interfering with the class by entering and leaving the room without authorization, carrying on private conversations, and refusing to follow the directions of the course instructor.

DATE	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
Module 3	**Research Ethics Training Online**	10
Module 5	**Assignment 1: Formulating A Research Question**	5
Module 8	**Assignment 2: Population of Interest and Problem Statement**	10
Module 10	**Assignment 3: Chart Summary of 8 Articles and Citing References using APA Citation Style (LITERATURE REVIEW)**	15
Module 12	**Standardized Exam**	30
Module 15/ Last Session	**Final Paper**	20
	Class Attendance/Participation	10

Assignments will be posted on Canvas. Please submit your assignments and final paper via the Assignments Folder of the Canvas. Students are responsible for keeping a copy of all work submitted.

Brief Description of Assignments:

1. Research Ethics Training Online
Go to https://www.touro.edu/departments/tuny-osp/irb/required-training-to-conduct-research/ or information on how to complete the CITI training, Social and Behavioral Research, Basic Course (altogether 13 modules). You will then click https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/, the link for citiprogram and follow the instruction to complete the training and obtain the certificate. CITI training has been widely used among all major educational and research institutions. When you are done with the training, print out your certificate in human subject protection and submit it via Canvas Assignments folder.

2. Standardized Exam
A multiple-choice exam will be held during the class**.** If you keep up with the reading, the exam will be straightforward. A list of study topics will be provided prior to the exam. Completion of practice quizzes will be helpful for you to prepare for the exam.

3. Three Mini Assignments
Assignments #1 - #3 are designed to teach you how to do a literature review.

- Assignment 1: Each student will formulate a research question grounded in their social work practice.
- Assignment 2: Students will conduct a review of scholarly journals to determine the extent to which this problem has been studied with what populations, and what is known about it.
- Assignment 3: Students will choose 8 articles that provide answers to their research question. A summary of the 8 articles (in table format) cited references using APA citation style will be required.

4. Final Paper
The above mini assignments turned in over the course of the semester will gradually build upon the literature review process. By the end of the third mini assignment, you will have done all of the preliminary steps to the actual literature review paper, and you will then summarize this body of literature in a final paper with approximately 9 to 10 pages. More detailed instructions to complete the mini assignments and final paper will be provided.

*All assignments should be APA style, typed, and doubled spaced using a standard 12-point font. References used in written assignments should be properly cited, using the APA reference style. For help

with APA reference style, go to https://libguides.tourolib.org/c.php?g=149110&p=980891#s-lg-box-3062353. Suggested lengths are provided for you but should be used as a general guideline and not a requirement. Assignments turned in that do not use APA style are subject to penalty. Assignments that are received after the due date will be penalized.

COURSE OUTLINE

Module 1: Introduction to the Course and Research

- **What is Research?**
- **Research, Social Work, and Professional Practice**

D'Cruz, H., & Jones, M. (2014). *Social work research in practice* (2nd Edition). Chapter 1, Research, Social Work, and Professional Practice.

Module 2: Ethics, Political, and Cultural Context of Social Work Research (Part 1)

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 2, Ethical and Cultural Considerations.

Waller, B. Y., Maleku, A., Quinn, C. R., Barman-Adhikari, A., Sprague Martinez, L. S., Traube, D., & Bellamy, J. L. (2022). Just Research: Advancing Antiracist and Antioppressive Social Work Research. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, *13*(4), 637–644. https://doi.org/10.1086/722974

The Appalling Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxeLohZEqs0&t=11s

Module 3: Ethics, Political, and Cultural Context of Social Work Research (Part 2)

Bracken-Roche, D., Bell, E., Macdonald, M.E., & Racine, E. (2017). The concept of 'vulnerability' in research ethics: an in-depth analysis of policies and guidelines. *Health Research Policy Systems, 15,* 8. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-016-0164-6

Pherali, T., Bragg, S., Borra, C., & Jones, P. (2024). Research ethics in social science research during health pandemics: what can we learn from COVID-19 experiences? *Research Ethics*, *21*(1), 97-126. https://doi.org/10.1177/17470161241252414

The Milgram Experiment, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TqJFp4y4zo

Module 4: Research Problem Formulation (Part 1)

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 1, Defining Research Methods.

DePoy, E., & Gilson, S. (2017). *Social work research and evaluation: Examined practice for action*, Chapter 8, Questions, Hypotheses, and Queries: The Basis for Rigor Assessment, p. 160-175

Module 5: Research Problem Formulation (Part 2)

D'Cruz, H., & Jones, M. (2014). *Social work research in practice*. (2nd Edition). Chapter 2, The Research Question.

Social Work Methods. *Research problem: Importance and steps in formulation* https://socialworkmethods.com/research-problem-steps-in-formulation/

Module 6: Literature Search and Library Resources

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 5, Creating a Literature Review

DePoy, E. G., & Gilson, F. (2017). *Social work research and evaluation: Examined practice for action*, Chapter 7, The Role of Literature in Examined Practice, p.138-159.

Module 7: Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 7, Variables and Measures, pp.121-130.

Module 8: Overview of Quantitative Research Designs and Experimental Research

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 6, Quantitative Research Designs

DePoy, E. G., & Gilson, F. (2017). *Social Work research and evaluation: Examined practice for action*, Chapter 9, Design in Both Traditions, p.176-186.

Module 9: Survey Research, Secondary Data Research, and Literature Review

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 9, Survey Research.

Copeland, P., & Ross, A. (2021). Assessing antiracism as a learning outcome in social work education: A systematic review. *Advances in Social Work, 21*(2/3), 766-778. https://doi.org/10.18060/24139

Acharyya, R., & Bhattacharya, N. (Eds.). (2019). *Research methodology for social sciences*. Chapter 8, Designing a Primary Survey-based Research, p.196-209.

Module 10: Design of Questionnaire, Reliability, and Validity

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 7, Variables and Measures, pp. 130-138.

Kwong, K. (2018). Career choice, barriers, and prospects of Asian American social workers. *International Journal of Higher Education, 7*(6), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v7n6p1

Module 11: Qualitative Research Design

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based*

approach. Chapter 4, Qualitative Research Designs

Hamilton-Mason, J., & Schneider, S. (2018). Antiracism Expanding Social Work Education: A Qualitative Analysis of the Undoing Racism Workshop Experience. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *54*(2), 337–348. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2017.1404518

Kwong, K. & Yu, Q.Y. (2017). Prolonged separation and reunification among Chinese immigrant children and families: An exploratory study. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 26*(9), 2426-2437.

Module 12: Standardized Exam

Module 13: **Sampling**

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 8, Sampling

Acharyya, R., & Bhattacharya, N. (Eds.). (2019). *Research methodology for social sciences*. Chapter 9, Sampling Methods – A Survey, p.210-231.

Module 14: Introduction to Quantitative Data Analysis

Faulkner, C. A. & Faulkner, S. S. (2025). *Research methods for social workers: A practice-based approach*. Chapter 12, Introduction of Descriptive Statistics, Chapter 13, Introduction of Inferential Statistics

DePoy, E. G., & Gilson, F. (2017). *Social work research and evaluation: Examined practice for action*, Chapter 12, Analysis, p. 248-266.

Module 15: Final Class - Student Brief Presentation of Research Topic