

Course Number	SOWK 355	Classroom	Online
Course Name	Research in Context		
Day(s) & Time	Synchronous Online via Zoom: Every Tuesday between 9:30am and 11:30am Asynchronous learning: One hour per week		
Instructor	Dora Tam, Ph.D.		
U of C E-mail	dtam@ucalgary.ca	Phone	403-329-2796

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

An introduction to basic research methodology, data analysis and a critical appraisal and application of research findings within a reflective model of practice.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social Work 355 is a required course for the BSW program. This course provides an introduction to basic research methodologies, which provide a framework and fundamental tool for ethical and competent professional social work practice. The course has practical importance in that the knowledge and skill domains of research enable social workers to be knowledgeable consumers of social research. Further these knowledge and skill domains allow social workers to identify and select the most appropriate interventions, services and programs, to monitor their effectiveness and respond to the accountability concerns of program participants, funders and the general public.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Be familiar with the basic logic and vocabulary of contemporary social work research;
2. Understand the knowledge generation process and the roles of qualitative and quantitative approaches;
3. Be able to appropriately use existing relevant social work research literature
4. Understand and apply key research approaches and processes including: the function of research in social work, research ethics, the formulation of research questions, qualitative and quantitative approaches, the process of conceptualizing and operationalizing variables, sampling, research design formulation and data collection, data analysis and issues of diversity in research.
5. Be able to apply these skills in critically analyzing social work research.
6. Have a basic foundation for evaluating practice and program outcomes.

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND/OR READINGS

Grinnell, R. M., Jr., Williams, M. & Unrau, Y. (eds.). (2019). *Research methods for Social Workers: An introduction* (12th ed.). Pair Bond.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A D2L site is set up for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials. A laptop, desktop or mobile device with Internet access, microphone and speaker is required for D2L and Zoom access.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

Clarification of values, knowledge acquisition, understanding of social problems in the societal, organizational, family and personal contexts are all essential ingredients in education for social work practice and covered in the core curriculum. This research course is an important element of that curriculum. It introduces ways of knowing and developing knowledge, as a means of analyzing, interpreting and ordering the knowledge content of other courses. Together with the content of other required social work core courses, this course prepares the student for practicum experiences and for social work practice by providing knowledge and skills necessary to: (1) Analyze and understand the research foundations of the social work knowledge base and practice; and (2) To perform the conceptualizing, operationalizing, and monitoring needed in social work practice.

No pre-requisites are required.

CLASS SCHEDULE

For the first Synchronous Zoom Session, please check your U of Calgary email for the Zoom link and password access. For asynchronous learning, please spare at least one hour each week to read the course required readings, reading materials posted on the respective D2L course site, and/or one of the suggested readings listed on the later part of this course outline.

Dates & Weeks	Contents and Readings
Sept. 8 Week 1	Introduction to the course; Research in Social Work Formulating Research Questions Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapter 1 & 2)
Sept. 15 Week 2	Research Ethics and Culturally Competent Research Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapter 4 & 5)

Dates & Weeks	Contents and Readings
<p>Sept. 22 Week 3</p> <p>Library Orientation by Justine Wheeler</p>	<p>Writing Literature Reviews</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapters 3)</p> <p>Additional Readings:</p> <p>Tam, D.M.Y., & Coleman, H. (2009). Defining criteria on professional suitability for social work practice. <i>Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work</i>, 14(2), 105 - 121. http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=44157756&site=ehost-live</p> <p>Tam, D.M.Y., Tutty, L., Zhuang, Z.H., & Paz, E. (2015). Racial minority women and criminal justice responses to domestic violence. <i>Journal of Family Violence</i>, 31, 527-538. https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/article/10.1007/s10896-015-9794-7</p>
<p>Sept 29 Week 4</p>	<p>Quantitative and Qualitative Research Approaches</p> <p>Mixed-Methods Research Approach</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapters 6, 7 & 8)</p>
<p>Oct. 6 Week 5</p>	<p>Measurement & Measuring Instruments</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau, Chapters 9 & 10</p>
<p>Oct 13 Week 6</p>	<p>Sampling</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapter 11)</p> <p>Assignment 1 Due</p>
<p>Oct. 20 Week 7</p>	<p>Single-Subject Designs</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau, Chapter 12</p>
<p>Oct. 27 Week 8</p>	<p>Group Designs</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapter 13)</p>
<p>Nov. 3 Week 9</p>	<p>Take Home Quiz</p>
<p>Nov. 10</p>	<p>No Class (Fall Term Break)</p>
<p>Nov. 17 Week 10</p>	<p>Collecting Data: Quantitative & Qualitative Methods</p> <p>Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapters 14, 15 & 16)</p>

Dates & Weeks	Contents and Readings
Nov. 24 Week 11	Analyzing Qualitative Data Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapters 18)
Dec. 1 Week 12	Analyzing Quantitative data Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapters 17)
Dec 8 Week 13	Research Proposal and Reports Summary of course Grinnell, Williams and Unrau (Chapters 19 & 20) Final Assignment Due

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

USE OF INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES IN CLASS

The use of laptop and mobile devices is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Students are to refrain from accessing websites that may be distracting for other learners (e.g., personal emails, Facebook, YouTube) during class time.

GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS IN ONLINE CLASSES

Students are expected to participate actively in all Zoom sessions. If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected, if they are able, to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.). All students are expected to behave in a professional manner during the session.

MEDIA RECORDING FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

ZOOM RECORDINGS OF ONLINE CLASSES

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

All assignments are to be submitted to the Dropbox of this course.

Assignment 1: Literature Search and Annotated Bibliography (30%) Oct 13 Due

Aligned Course Learning Outcome: 1, 2, 3, & 4

Based on what students have learned from Chapters 1 through 8 and the Library Orientation, each student will:

- 1) develop a research question (i.e., a statement of your research);
- 2) develop a literature search strategy for the research topic (e.g., keywords, database, inclusion and exclusion criteria);
- 3) conduct a literature search for recent journal articles in the last five years on the chosen research topic;
- 4) record the search history;
- 5) select 10 most relevant and interested full-text available **research articles** (i.e., quantitative, qualitative or mixed-method research) from the search;
- 6) download these 10 selected articles;
- 7) develop an annotated bibliography (with information on background and purpose of the study, methods, results/findings, conclusions and implication) on these 10 selected articles; and
- 8) create a report to document your research topic, literature search and to develop an annotated bibliography (excluding cover page, ranges between 10 to 14 pages, double line spacing).

Assignment 2: Take Home Quiz (30%) Nov 3 Due

Aligned Course Learning Outcome: 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6

This open book Take-Home Quiz will be based on major concepts covered in the text and/or in class between Week 1 and 8. Quiz questions will be distributed in the beginning of the class on Nov 3, 2020. **Students will have 48 hours to complete the Quiz by submitting their quiz paper to the respective D2L site.** [Note: Any student who are not able to take/complete the Take Home Quiz for whatever reason, there will be **NO** make-up Quiz. The weight of this 30% grade points on the Take Home Quiz will then be evenly redistributed to the other two assignments.]

Assignment 3: Analysis of Research (40%) Dec 8 Due

Aligned Course Learning Outcome: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6

This assignment involves critical analysis on one of the selected research articles (i.e., quantitative, qualitative or mixed-method research) identified for Assignment 1. The paper is expected to be written in essay format and to present the discussion under sub-sections (e.g. research questions, ethical considerations, etc.). This assignment is designed to increase students' understanding of research methods through **critical analysis of one recent research article**. PLEASE UPLOAD THE JOURNAL ARTICLE ALONG WITH THIS ASSIGNMENT. The assignment involves integrating course materials and critically examining the research article to answer the following set of questions:

1. What is the main research question that the researcher(s) was/were seeking to

explore/answer? Why is this issue important to the reader and the profession?

2. How comprehensive was the literature review? How well did literature review articulate justification for the proposed research? (e.g. what theoretical framework was being discussed? How comprehensive and thorough was the literature review being presented?)
3. What are the main ethical considerations attached to the research? How were these addressed? (e.g. issues related to informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, etc.)
4. If applicable, to what extent were issues of culturally competent research being addressed? (e.g. research with low-income families, people with disabilities, racialized and/or marginalized groups, minor or older adults, etc.)
5. What research approach (quantitative, qualitative or mixed method) did the author(s) use in this research? Why do you think the author(s) used the approach (Quantitative, qualitative)? Was their choice appropriate and well justified? (e.g. how well was this deductive or inductive approach being presented)
6. Describe the research design used (e.g. sub-type of experimental Design, Case Study, or Participatory Action Research). Why do you think the author(s) used this design? Comment on the use of research design in addressing the research question(s)?
7. Describe the method in which research participants were selected (i.e. sampling). Comment on the advantages/disadvantages/implications of the sampling methods used. Was the authors' choice appropriate?
8. Describe the measures (i.e. tool(s) being used for data collection) and the data collection methods (e.g. paper survey questionnaire, pre-post test design, individual interview, etc.). Explain the advantages/disadvantages/implications of the approach used. Why do you think the authors used this approach?
9. In what ways are issues of credibility addressed (e.g. internal and external validity for quantitative research or trustworthiness for qualitative research)? To what extent do you trust findings/conclusions of this article?
10. Comment on how well the discussion/summary/conclusion sections were being presented. What are the implications for social work practice? Explain.

In preparing the Assignment 1 and 3:

1. Use APA (7th edition) format to prepare this paper, include page numbers for your papers.
2. Provide a cover page, which includes title of the assignment, course title and number, your name and student ID, instructor's name and date of submission.
3. Use proper referencing on the article reviewed and supporting literature.
4. Use proper sub-headings.
5. For Assignment 3, excluding cover page and references, the assignment should range between 12 and 15 pages and be double line spacing.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all assignments electronically through their respective Dropbox in D2L. Assignments should be submitted in Word format. Assignments should have a file name as follows: "Full name and assignment number" (e.g., Jane Smith Assignment 2). Assignments are due before midnight on their due date (unless specify). Please note that it is the student's responsibility to keep a back-up copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Grades are deducted for late submissions (one grade level per day will be deducted e.g. B to B-) unless otherwise specified in the course outline. Except for unpredictable circumstance, it is the student's responsibility to request an extension from the instructor in writing should you require more time and offer an alternate due date and time for the instructor's consideration; otherwise deduction for late submission will apply.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

All assignments will be assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented and referenced in APA format. If you need writing support, please connect with the Student Success Centre, at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. Students are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

GRADING

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course.

The University of Calgary **Undergraduate Grading System** and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding	95 - 100
A	4.0	Excellent – superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter	95 – 100
A-	3.7		90 – 94
B+	3.3		85 – 89
B	3.0	Good – clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete	80 – 84
B-	2.7		75 – 79
C+	2.3		70 – 74
C	2.0	Satisfactory – basic understanding of subject matter	65 – 69
C-	1.7		60 – 64
D+	1.3		55 – 59
D	1.0	Minimal Pass – marginal performance	50 – 54
F	0.0	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements	Below 50

COURSE EVALUATION

Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the standard University and Faculty of Social Work course evaluation forms. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Coups, E. (2011). *Statistics for the behavioural and social sciences: A brief course*. Pearson.

Ashbourne, L.M., **Tam, D.M.Y.**, Al Jamal, A., Baobaid, M., & Badahdah, A. (2020). Arab families’ stories of migration from war zones: Gender roles and family relations in flux. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, Link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2020.1736363>

Coleman, H. (2011). Qualitative data analysis. In R. Grinnell, Jr. & Unrau, Y. (Eds.), *Social work research and evaluation* (8th Edition), (pp. 447-464). Oxford University Press.

Corcoran, K., & Fischer, J. (2013). *Measures for clinical practice: A sourcebook*. Vol. 1 & 2 (5th. ed.). The Free Press.

Drawson, A.S., Toombs, E., & Mushquash, C.J. (2017). Indigenous research methods: A systematic review. *International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 8(2), 1-25.

Kerr, D., Smith-Carrier, T., Wang, J., **Tam, D.M.Y.**, & Kwok, S.M. (2017). *Population Aging and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)*. *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, 6(4), 34-55.

Fletcher, F., Baydala, L., Letendre, L., Ruttan, L., Worrell, S., Letendre, S., & Schramm, T. (2011). “No lone person:” The ethics consent process as an ethical dilemma in carrying out community based

- participatory research with a First Nations community. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health*, 9, 323-346
- Hart, M.A., Straka, S., & Rowe, G. (2017). Working across contexts: Practical considerations of doing Indigenist/anti-colonial research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 23(5), 332-342.
- Kwok, S.M., & **Tam, D.M.Y.** (2010). Chinese immigrant youth and the justice system in Canada. *Canadian Social Work Journal*, 12(1), 114 – 122.
- Neuman, W. L., & Robson, K. (2015). *Social work research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed.). Pearson Canada Inc.
- Pettus-Davis, C., Grady, M.D., Cuddeback, G.S., & Scheyett, A. (2011). A practitioner's guide to sampling in the age of evidence-based practice: Translation of research into practice. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 39, 379-389. DOI: 10.1007/s10615-011-0345-2
- Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2016). *Essential research methods for social work*. Cengage Learning.
- Tam, D.M.Y.**, & Coleman, H. (2009). Defining criteria on professional suitability for social work practice. *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*, 14(2), 105 - 121.
- Tam, D.M.Y.**, Brown, A., Paz, E., Birnbaum, R., & Kwok, S.M. (2018). Challenges faced by Canadian social work field instructors in Baccalaureate field supervision. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 38(4), 398-416.
- Tam, D.M.Y.**, Tutty, L., Zhuang, Z.H., & Paz, E. (2015). Racial minority women and criminal justice responses to domestic violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 31, 527-538.
- Thyer, B.A., & Pignotti, M. (2011). Evidence-Based Practices Do Not Exist, *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 39, 328-333.
- Thurston, W. E., **Tam, D. M. Y.**, Dawson, M., Jackson, M., & Kwok, S.M. (2016). The intersection of gender and other social institutions in constructing interpersonal violence in Guangzhou China. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 31(4), 694-714.
- University of Calgary. (n.d.). Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board information page.
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/cfreb>

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

As members of the University community, students and staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students and staff are also expected to demonstrate professional behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. Consistent with the aims of the Social Work Program and the University of Calgary, all students and staff are expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives; to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback; and to contribute to building learning communities that promote individual and collective professional and personal growth. While critical thought and debate is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must always be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviour in class that is consistent with our professional values and ethics, as outlined in the Canadian Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics (2005) and the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2019). Both can be found online at:

<https://acsw.ab.ca/site/practice-resources?nav=sidebar>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS). SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>

RESEARCH ETHICS

"If a student is interested in undertaking an assignment that will involve collecting information from members of the public, they should speak with the course instructor and consult the CFREB Ethics Website (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/cfreb>) before beginning the assignment.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials created by professor(s) (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is

prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- **Wellness and Mental Health Resources**
- **Student Success**
- **Student Ombuds Office**
- **Student Union (SU) Information**
- **Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information**
- **Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points**
- **Safewalk**