

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
School of Social Work
Methods for Social Work Research I
SW 416 MASTER SYLLABUS

Instructor:	
Time:	
Class Location:	
Office:	
Phone:	
Canvas:	https://unlv.instructure.com/login/ldap
Email:	

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SW 416, Methods for Social Work Research I, is the first course in the BSW Research Sequence. This course helps students understand the roles and the importance of research in the field of social work and social welfare. It provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become consumers of research as well as beginning producers of research knowledge. The course teaches students the relevance of research to practice, ethics of social work research, basic concepts and terminology in research methodology, single subject design, program evaluation, and the steps needed to design and conduct a research project. Problem formulation, literature review, hypothesis formulation, conceptualization and operationalization, research design, sampling, and instrument construction are all covered. Discussions, conclusions, and information dissemination are covered additionally. Students also learn how to evaluate own practice at different system levels. The needs and issues of minorities and diverse populations are emphasized along all steps of the research process (SW 426 emphasizes data collection and management skills, descriptive and inferential statistics, data analysis, and use of SPSS).

COURSE RATIONALE

One of the UNLV BSW program goals is to educate students to demonstrate the basic knowledge and skills in social research and statistics for the evaluation of professional practice at all system levels. In addition, students should learn to conduct ethical research with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. SW 416 and 426 help to fulfill this BSW program goal. SW 416 provides students with basic research concepts, knowledge, and skills, and prepares them to become effective research consumers and beginning producers. (SW 426 introduces students to data collection and management skills, data analysis skills, use of SPSS, and reporting of the research findings.)

PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

The program competencies for the BSW program flow from the mission, goals, and objectives of the School of Social Work and reflect the standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)—Educational Policy and Accreditation Standard

Competencies:

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.
- Competency 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

COURSE COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS:

In the Research Sequence, course competencies place an emphasis on knowing principles of logic, critical thinking, culturally sensitive and ethical approaches to building of knowledge, practice-informed research, research-informed practice, and evaluation of practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The course materials, instruction, and assignments will allow students the opportunity to achieve the following:

Competency 1:	Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	
	Practice behaviors:	Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
	Measurement:	Class discussion, research exercises, data collection instrument, final research proposal
Competency 4:	Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice	
	Practice behaviors:	Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
	Measurement:	Class discussion, midterm and final exams, research exercises, data collection instrument, final research proposal
Competency 9:	Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.	
	Practice behaviors:	Select and apply differentially-appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes Maintain a relationally and empowerment-based process that encourages individuals, families, and members of small groups to be active participants in an ongoing evaluation of the intervention process and outcomes.
	Measurement:	Class discussion, midterm and final exams, research exercises, data collection instrument, final research proposal

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments

There are five major requirements that must be satisfactorily completed in order for the student to receive a passing grade in the course. Overall student performance will be evaluated according to the quality of work on the following assignments:

ASSIGNMENT	Points
Attendance Regular and timely class attendance is required.	10
Participation in class activities/discussions Cell phone use and web surfing are not allowed during the class time. Participation in class discussions and activities is encouraged.	10
Mid-Term Exam*	15
Final Exam*	15
Research Exercises**	10
Research Proposal**	40
TOTAL POSSIBLE	
100	
* The dates for Mid-Term (about mid-semester) and Final Exams (close to the final week) will be announced in the class. No make-up tests will be given. For any exception to the rule, circumstances must be extraordinary, and prior arrangements must be made for the test.	
** The Research Exercises and Research Proposal will be explained in the class and outlines for those will be provided. All assignments must be submitted on time.	

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Public Health Directives

Face coverings are mandatory for all faculty and students in the classroom. Students must follow all active UNLV public health directives while enrolled in this class. [UNLV public health directives](https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/health-requirements) are found at <https://www.unlv.edu/coronavirus/health-requirements>. Students who do not comply with these directives may be asked to leave the classroom. Refusal to follow the guidelines may result in further disciplinary action according to the [UNLV Code of Student Conduct](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf), https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/StudentConduct-Code.pdf, including being administratively withdrawn from the course.

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the University community. We all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect,

fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, and are encouraged to always take the ethical path whenever faced with choices. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's educational mission. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person, from the Internet or any other source without proper citation of the source(s). See the [Student Conduct Code](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Auditing Classes

Auditing a course allows a student to continue attending the lectures and/or laboratories and discussion sessions associated with the course, but the student will not earn a grade for any component of the course. Students who audit a course receive the same educational experience as students taking the course for a grade, but will be excused from exams, assessments, and other evaluative measures that serve the primary purpose of assigning a grade.

Classroom Conduct

Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn, or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities are only permitted with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative withdrawal of the student from the course.

Copyright

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with, and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional [copyright policy information](https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright) is available at <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [UNLV Disability Resource Center](https://www.unlv.edu/drc) (SSC-A, Room 143, <https://www.unlv.edu/drc>, telephone 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. Students who believe that they may need academic accommodations due to injury, disability, or due to pregnancy should contact the DRC as early as possible in the academic term. A Disabilities Specialist will discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours, so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is

private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Final Examinations

The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur on the date and at the time specified in the Final Exam schedule. The Final Exam schedule is typically available at the start of the semester, and the classroom locations are available approximately one month before the end of the semester. See the [Final Exam Schedule](https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars), <https://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Identity Verification in Online Courses

All UNLV students must use their Campus-issued ACE ID and password to log in to WebCampus-Canvas.

UNLV students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to read and adhere to the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy), <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/misconduct/policy>, which states that “acting or attempting to act as a substitute for another, or using or attempting to use a substitute, in any academic evaluation or assignment” is a form of academic misconduct. Intentionally sharing ACE login credentials with another person may be considered an attempt to use a substitute, and could result in investigation and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

UNLV students enrolled in online courses are also expected to read and adhere to the [Acceptable Use of Computing and Information Technology Resources Policy](https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy), <https://www.it.unlv.edu/policies/acceptable-use-computing-and-information-technology-resources-policy>, which prohibits sharing university accounts with other persons without authorization.

To the greatest extent possible, all graded assignments and assessments in UNLV online courses should be hosted in WebCampus-Canvas or another UNLV-managed platform that requires ACE login credentials for access.

Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session, but cannot complete the last part of the course for reason(s) beyond the student’s control and acceptable to the instructor, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. For undergraduate courses, the incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the period indicated, a grade of “F” will be recorded, and the student’s GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete grade do not register for the course, but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I”

grade.

Library Resources

Librarians are available to consult with students on research needs, including developing research topics, finding information, and evaluating sources. To make an appointment with a subject expert for this class, please visit the [Libraries' Research Consultation](https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian) website, <https://guides.library.unlv.edu/appointments/librarian>. You can also [ask the library staff](https://ask.library.unlv.edu/) questions via chat and text message at <https://ask.library.unlv.edu/>.

Missed Classwork

Any student missing class, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or laboratory work because of observance of religious holidays will be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up opportunity will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for Fall and Spring courses (except for modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for Summer and modular courses, of their intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit the Missed Work policy, under Registration Policies, on the [Academic Policies](https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=29&navoid=7326) webpage, <https://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=29&navoid=7326>.

In accordance with the policy approved by the Faculty Senate regarding missed class time and assignments, students who represent UNLV in any official extracurricular activity will also have the opportunity to make up assignments, provided that the student provides official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

The spirit and intent of the policy for missed classwork is to offer fair and equitable assessment opportunities to all students, including those representing the University in extracurricular activities. Instructors should consider, for example, that in courses which offer a "Drop one" option for the lowest assignment, quiz, or exam, assigning the student a grade of zero for an excused absence for extracurricular activity is both contrary to the intent of the Faculty Senate's policy, and an infringement on the student's right to complete all work for the course.

This policy will not apply in the event that completing the assignment or administering the examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the University that could be reasonably avoided. There should be a good faith effort by both the instructor and the student to agree to a reasonable resolution. When disagreements regarding this policy arise, decisions can be appealed to the Department Chair/School Director, College/School Dean, and/or the Faculty Senate Academic Standards Committee.

For purposes of definition, extracurricular activities may include, but are not limited to: academic recruitment activities, competitive intercollegiate athletics, fine arts activities, liberal arts competitions, science and engineering competitions, and any other event or

activity sanctioned by a College/School Dean, and/or by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

Rebelmail

Rebelmail is UNLV's official email system for students and by University policy, instructors and staff should only send emails to students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is one of the primary ways in which students receive official University communications, information about deadlines, major Campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the University. Emailing within WebCampus-Canvas is also acceptable.

Tutoring and Coaching

The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching, and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, please visit the [ASC website](https://www.unlv.edu/asc), <https://www.unlv.edu/asc>, or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A, Room 254. Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library, and on the second floor of the College of Engineering building (TBE A 207).

UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the [Writing Center](https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/), <https://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>, located in the Central Desert Complex, Building 3, Room 301 (CDC 3-301). Walk-in consultations are sometimes available, but students with appointments receive priority assistance. Students may make appointments in person or by calling the Center, telephone 702-895-3908. Students are requested to bring to their appointments their Rebel ID Card, a copy of the instructions for their assignment, and two copies of any writing they have completed on their assignment.

PLAGIARISM – Proper credit must be given to others' ideas. They must be cited within the text (author(s) and page #'s) and in the references on a separate page at the end of the assignment (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 4th edition). Direct quotes must begin and end with quotation marks. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR – Professional social work education is an opportunity to learn, practice, and teach the professional principles necessary for ethical social work practice. You are expected to be on time for class; come prepared; exercise courtesy and respect towards your classmates. You are expected to engage in respectful and thoughtful discussions in class, deepening and broadening your repertoire of knowledge and skills in the interaction with others with different perspectives. Although our discussions necessarily involve our own experiences, please remember that the class situation is not a professional setting in regard to confidentiality. If you or someone you know requires assistance or counseling, please contact an

appropriate agency, or for referral, contact the social work office #702-895-3311, or my office, #702-895-_____.

Consensual Relationships – UNLV prohibits romantic or sexual relationships between members of the university community when one of the individuals involved has direct professional influence or direct authority over the other. For further information, see <http://hr.unlv.edu/policies/consensual.html>.

Classroom Conduct - Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities, are permitted only with the prior explicit consent of thick instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative drop.

Classroom Surveillance - Nevada Revised Statutes (State Law) 396.970 Surreptitious electronic surveillance on campus, exceptions. [Effective January 1, 2017.]

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, it is unlawful for a person to engage in any kind of surreptitious electronic surveillance on a campus of the Sustain without the knowledge of the person being observed.
2. Subsection 1 does not apply to any electronic surveillance:
 - (a) Authorized by a court order issued to a public officer, based upon a showing of probable cause to believe that criminal activity is occurring on the property under surveillance;
 - (b) by a law enforcement agency pursuant to a criminal investigation;
 - (c) By a peace officer pursuant to NRS 289.830;
 - (d) By a uniformed peace officer of the Nevada Highway Patrol Division of the Department of Public Safety Pursuant to NRS 480.365;
 - (e) Which is necessary as part of a system of security used to protect and ensure the safety of persons on the campus; or
 - (f) Of a class or laboratory when authorized by the teacher of the class or laboratory. (Added to NRS by 1993, 2138; A 2015, 575, 3668, effective January 1, 2017)

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Yegidis, B. L. & Weinbach, R. W. (7th or 8th edition). *Research methods for social workers*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	DATE	READINGS (Instructor reserves the right to change, however students will be notified of any adjustments)
1-3		Course Introduction, Scientific Methodology, Research, Policy, and Practice, Diversity, Empowerment, and Social Justice, Political and Ethical Issues

		<p>Scientific and Non-Scientific Inquiry Scientific Method and Research Steps Research, Policy, and Practice Gender/Diversity/Empowerment/Social Justice Political and Ethical Issues Theory and Concepts Deductive and Inductive Reasoning Qualitative and Quantitative Research Basic and Applied Research</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Yegidis & Weinbach,</i> ▪ <i>Chs. 1-2.</i>
4-7		<p>TOPIC: Problem Selection, Formulation, and Variable Selection</p> <p>Selection of a Research Problem, Exploration, Problem Refinement, and Research Questions Goal, Purpose, Significance, and Limitations Literature Review, Variable Selection Dependent, Independent, and Intervening Variables Hypotheses</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Yegidis & Weinbach,</i> ▪ <i>Chs. 3-5</i>
8-9		<p>TOPIC: Conceptualization, Operationalization, Instrument Construction, and Research Proposal</p> <p>Conceptualization and Operationalization Data Collection Instrument Formulation of a Research Proposal</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Yegidis & Weinbach,</i> ▪ <i>Chs. 3-5</i>
10-11		<p>TOPIC: Measurement and Instrument Construction</p> <p>Workings of Conceptualization, Operationalization, and</p>

		<p>Measurement Levels of Measurement Validity and Reliability Issues Construction of Measurement Instruments</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Yegidis & Weinbach,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Chs. 10-11</i>
12		<p>TOPIC: Sampling</p> <p>Population, Sampling Frame, Sampling Units Probability and Non-probability Sampling</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Yegidis & Weinbach,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Chs. 9</i>
13-15		<p>TOPIC: Research Designs</p> <p>Exploratory, Descriptive, and Explanatory Studies Cross-sectional and Longitudinal Studies Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches Survey Research Experimental Designs Single-Subject Designs Program Evaluation Other Research Designs</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Yegidis & Weinbach,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Chs. 6-8, 13, 14</i>
16		<p>TOPIC: Overview and Discussion</p>

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