# SWK-S 371 Social Work Research (3 cr.)

## Course Information

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|---|---|---|---|
| **Semester Year:** | XXXXX | **Instructor:** | XXXXX XXXXXXXXX |
| **Section Number:** | XXXXX | **Office:** | XXXX |
| **Location:** | XXXXX | **Email:** | XXXX |
| **Day:** | XXXXX | **Phone:** | xxxxx |
| **Time:** | XXXXX | **Office Hours:** | xxxxxxxxxx |

## Course Description

The general goal of this basic social science research methods course is to introduce and develop skills needed to conceptualize a problem, make use of available literature, design a research strategy, evaluate, organize, and integrate relevant data (both existing and new), derive useful solutions based on knowledge, and communicate those solutions to clients and colleagues.  The attainment of this goal will prepare students to engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice as social workers.  The course also helps students continue their own professional education, contribute to the development of the profession as a whole, and maintain their service to clients at a standard commensurate with the current level of knowledge. This is the first course in the research professional content area and provides basic knowledge about research methodology as it applies to social work. Social work practice and research share common features and processes as both are fundamentally problem-solving enterprises. Students are encouraged to generalize the basic concepts and principles of science presented within this course for use in the knowledge building activities that take place throughout the broader curriculum. Underlying principles of science and logic are emphasized and special attention is directed toward the recognition of common sources of error and bias in the implementation and interpretation of research studies as it affects the outcomes of research utilization. Students will be better able to recognize the impact of race, gender, age, and sexual orientation on the research process.

## Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course.

### Primary

- 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

  Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice (CSWE, 2015 EPAS, p. 8).

### Secondary

- 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
- 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

## Course Objectives

**S371-01:** Demonstrate knowledge of the scientific process, its application in the social sciences, and utilization in the helping process.

**S371-02:** Demonstrate skills necessary to the assessment and interpretation of existing research as a prelude to its use in decision-making in social work practice.

**S371-03:** Identify information needed to address questions and problems encountered in social work practice situations.

**S371-04:** Demonstrate knowledge of the range of research designs and their appropriate utilization in generalist practice.

**S371-05:** Demonstrate research skills such as conceptualizing a problem, formulating hypotheses and objectives, designing research strategy, collecting, analyzing, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data, including commonly encountered statistical procedures.

**S371-06:** Demonstrate skill in defining problems, interpretive tasks, and proposed actions for specific practice situations in a manner that can be observed or measured.

**S371-07:** Demonstrate understanding of methods to control variation and bias, including factors that can affect the reliability, validity, and representativeness of the information used by social workers in the problem-solving process, particularly as they diverse and oppressed populations.

**S371-08:** Identify the value assumptions and the ethical and political dilemmas encountered by social workers and social scientists in their efforts to gather, verify, and utilize knowledge with special emphasis given to the impact which these have on oppressed groups.

## Required Texts

Royse, D. (2011). *Research methods in social work.* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Galvan, J.L. (2009). *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences* (4th ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

**Journal Articles & Online Materials**

Bennett, L., & Bland, P. (2008). Substance abuse and intimate partner violence. Harrisburg, PA: VAWnet, a project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence/Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Retrieved from: http://www.vawnet.org

Ritter, A., & Cameron, J. (2006). A review of the efficacy and effectiveness of harm reduction strategies for alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 25*(6)*,* 611-624.

Thomas, M. D., & Bennett, L. W. (2009). The co-occurrence of substance abuse and domestic violence: A comparison of dual-problem men in substance abuse treatment and in a court-ordered batterer program. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions, 9*(3), 299-317.

Eckhardt, C. I., & Utschig, A. C. (2007). Assessing readiness to change among perpetrators of intimate partner violence: Analysis of two self-report measures. *Journal of Family Violence, 22*(5)*,* 319-330.

Padilla, Y. C., Crisp, C., & Rew, D. (2010). Parental acceptance and illegal drug use among gay, lesbian, and bisexual adolescents: Results from a national survey. *Social Work*, *55*(3), 265-275.

Designing a survey:

Instructions on Designing a Survey from Science Buddies website

LimeSurvey Instruction Manual

Survey Monkey Best Practices for Survey Creation

Schumacher, J. A., Homish, G.G., Leonard, K. E., Quigley, B. M., & Kearns-Bodkin, J. N. (2008) Longitudinal moderators of the relationship between excessive drinking and intimate partner violence in the early years of marriage. *Journal of Family Psychology 22*(6), 894-904.

Conners, N. A., Edwards, M. C., & Grant, A. S. (2007). An evaluation of a parenting class curriculum for parents of young children: Parenting the strong-willed child. *Journal of Child & Family Studies, 16*(3), 321-330.

Gitlin, L., Winter, L., Dennis, M., Corcoran, M., Schinfeld, S., & Hauck, W. (2006). A randomized trial of a multicomponent home intervention to reduce functional difficulties in older adults. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 54*(5), 4-14.

Hedrick, S. C., Sullivan, J. H., Sales, A. E. B., & Gray, S. L. (2009). Mom and pop versus the big boys: Adult family homes as providers of Medicaid-funded residential Care. *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, *21*(1), 31-51.

Hayes, H., Parchman, M., & Howard, R. (2011). A logic model framework for evaluation and planning in a primary care practice-based research network. *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine, 24(*5) 576-582.

Afifi, R., Makhoul, J., Hajj, T, & Nakkash, R. (2011). Developing a logic model for youth mental health*. Health Policy & Planning, 26*(6), 508-515.

Rockwell, D. H., Yobs, A. R., & Moore, M. B., Jr. (1964). The Tuskegee study of untreated syphilis: The 30th year of observation. *Archives of Internal Medicine*, *114*(6), 792-798.

Strolin-Goltzman, J., Kollar, S., & Trinkle, J. (2010). Listening to the voices of children in foster care: Youths speak out about child welfare workforce turnover and selection. *Social Work, 55*(1), 47-53.

Winstok, Z., Eisikovits, Z., & Gelles, R. (2002). Structure and dynamics of escalation from the batterers perspective. *Families in Society*, *83*(2), 129-141.

Conners, N. A., Edwards, M. C., & Grant, A. S. (2007). An evaluation of a parenting class curriculum for parents of young children: Parenting the strong-willed child. *Journal of Child & Family Studies, 16*(3), 321-330.

Padgett, D., Stanhope, V., Henwood, B., & Stefancie, A. (2011). Substance abuse outcomes among homeless clients with serious mental illness: Comparing housing first with treatment first programs. *Community Mental Health Journal, 47*, 227-232.

Preyde, et al. (2011) Long-term outcomes of children and youth accessing residential or intensive home-based treatment: Three year follow up. *Journal of Children and Family Studies, 30*: 660-638.

Stubenbort, M., Greeno, C., Mannarino, A., & Cohen, J. (2002). Attachment quality and post-treatment functioning following sexual trauma in young adolescents: A case series presentation. Clinical Social Work Journal, 30(1), 23-39.

Scholtes, V., Terwee, C., & Poolman, R. (2011) What makes an instrument valid and reliable. *Injury, 42*(3), 236-240.

The power of the situation: The impact of Milgram's obedience studies in personality and social psychology. *American Psychologist, 64*(1), 12-19

Stanhope, V. (2012). The tie that binds*… Qualitative Social Work, 11(4*), 412-430.

Stanhope, V (2012) Use of sabotage as a frame for clinically difficult clients. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 40,* 261-267.

Sullivan, W, P. & Carpenter, J. (2010). Community-based mental health services: Is coercion necessary. *Journal of Social Work in Disability and Rehabilitation, 9*, 148-167.

For support/supplement:  [Evidence Data Collection from Northern Arizona University](#)

## Recommended Texts

Holosko, M. J. (2006). Primer for critiquing social research: A student guide. Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.

American Psychological Association. (2009). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington DC: Author.

Perrin, R. (2010). Pocket guide to APA style (3rd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

See also:

[APA Style Guide website](#)

[APA Format for Citations](#) a 5-page pdf with a great summary, by Dr. Monit Cheung

[What's New in the Sixth Edition Manual](#) from the APA organization

## Course Content

This course educates students to apply the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge.   Opportunities are provided to learn that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. Social workers also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers apply critical thinking to engage in analyses of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.

## Resources

- Canvas email will also be used a way to communicate between instructor and students.  You are expected to check the course announcements on Canvas before each class.
- Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and be posted on Canvas (Resource tab).

## Course Outline

### Module 1: Introduction to the course and ways of knowing
**Dates:**

#### *Overview*
A. Review the Canvas site and full syllabus
B. Ways of knowing
C. Role of research

#### *Assignments*
##### Readings
1. Syllabus
2. Royse (Chapter 1)
3. Recommended: Holosko (Chapter 2, 3)

##### Individual Assignment
1. Syllabus Review Acknowledgement (Forum 1)
2. Ways of Knowing Discussion (Forum 2)

## Module 2: Ethical Thinking in Research & Unobtrusive Approaches to Data

**Dates:**

### Overview
A. Historical Context
B. Institutional Review Boards
C. Guidelines for Ethical Research
D. Potential Ethical Problems

### Assignments
#### Readings
1. Royse, 2011 (Chapter 3, 10)
2. Rockwell et al (1964)
3. Power of situation article

#### Individual Assignment
1. Ethics quiz

## Module 3: The Way Research Proceeds:  Quantitative Research Process

**Dates:**

### Overview
A. Steps in the quantitative research process

### Assignments
#### Readings
1. Royse (Chapter 2)
2. Galvan (Chapter 1, 2)

#### Group Assignment
1. Choose research partner
2. Submit group research question

## Module 4: Selecting a Topic, Identifying Literature, & Analyzing Quantitative Research Literature

**Dates:**

### Overview
A. Literature Review Guidelines
B. Building tables to summarize
C. Synthesizing literature

### Assignments
#### Readings
1. Galvan (Chapter 3, 4, 5)
2. Recommended: Holosko (Chapter 5, 7, 8)

#### Individual Assignment
1. Literature Search Exercise

## Module 5: Research Design

**Dates:**

### Overview

A. Comparisons with Groups

   1. Experimental designs
   2. Quasi-experimental designs

B. Single-system Designs

   1. Relationship to practice
   2. Intervention objectives
   3. Starting a single-system study
   4. Types of single-system designs

### Assignments

#### Readings

   1. Royse, 2011 (Chapter 4, 5)
   2. Stubenbort (2002)
   3. Gitlin et al (2006)
   4. Padgett et al (2011)
   5. Preyde et al (2011)
   6. Fals-Stewart (2003)

#### Individual Assignment

   1. Research Design Exercise

## Module 6: Research Design, continued

**Dates:**

### Overview

A. Program Evaluation

   1. Purpose of a Program Evaluation
   2. Types of Program Evaluations
   3. Evaluation Standards
   4. Cost-effectiveness Studies

### Assignments

#### Readings

   1. Royse, 2011 (Chapter 12)
   2. Galvan (Chapter 7)
   3. Connors et al (2007)
   4. Hays et al (2011)
   5. Afifi et al (2011)

#### Individual Assignment

   1. Quantitative Research Design Worksheet

2.  Begin prepping Forum 3 Evaluating Empirical Research Summary Table

# Module 7: Sampling

**Dates:**

## *Overview*

A.  Nonprobability Sampling
B.  Probability Sampling
C.  Sampling Considerations

## *Assignments*

### Readings

1.  Royse (Chapter 8)
2.  Padilla et all (2010)

# Module 8: Using Tools / Surveys

**Dates:**

## *Overview*

A.  Survey Research Methods
B.  Needs Assessments
C.  Types of Surveys
D.  Survey Comparisons

## *Assignments*

### Readings

1.  Royse, 2011 (Chapter 9)
2.  Padilla et al (2010)

### Individual Assignment

1.  Forum 3 – Evaluating Empirical Research Summary Table

# Module 9: Using Tools / Surveys, continued

**Dates:**

## *Overview*

A.  Does the tool already exist?

1.  Measurement:  Reliability & Validity

B.  Creating your own tool?

1.  Data Collection Instruments:  Scales & Questionnaires

## *Assignments*

### Readings

1.  Royse, 2011 (Chapter 6, 7)
2.  Fals-Stewart (2003)
3.  Eckhardt et al (2007)
4.  Scholtes et al (2011)

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5.  *see websites listed under Padilla et al (2010)

# Module 10: Quantitative Data Analysis

**Dates:**

*Overview*

A.  Univariate and Bivariate Statistics
B.  Introduction to Multivariate Statistics

*Assignments*

Readings

1.  Royse, 2011 (Chapter 13)
2.  Galvan (Chapter 8-11)

Individual Assignment

1.  Data Analysis Worksheet

# Module 11: Professional Writing

**Dates:**

*Overview*

A.  Writing grant proposals
B.  Writing research reports
C.  Writing for professional journals

*Assignments*

Readings

1.  Royse, 2011 (Chapter 14)
2.  Galvan (Chapter 13, 14)

Group Assignment

1.  Work on signature assignment:  Evaluating Empirical Research Project

# Module 12: Final Submission

**Dates:**

*Assignments*

Group Assignment

1.  Submit signature assignment

# Module 13: The Way Research Proceeds:  The Qualitative Research Process

**Dates:**

*Overview*

A.  Qualitative Research

*Assignments*

Readings

1.  Royse, 2011 (Chapter 11)

2. Galvan (Chapter 6)
3. Bennett & Bland (2008)
4. Strolin-Goltzman et al (2010)
5. Winstok et al (2002)
6. Stanhope (2012)

## Module 14: Qualitative Research, continued

**Dates:**

### Overview

A. See above

### Assignments

#### Individual Assignment

1. Qualitative Observation Exercise Due

## Module 15: Final Exam and Course Wrap-Up

**Dates:**

### Assignments

#### Individual Assignment

1. Final Exam
2. Course Review & Evaluations

# Assignments and Grading

More specific instructions for each assignment will be posted on Canvas. Instructor also will discuss details or answer any questions related to assignment during the class and office hours.

All assignments should be produced on a wordprocessor (or typed), double spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides, carefully edited and proofed, using no smaller than a 12 point font, and conforming to APA style (6th ed.)

## Assignments

1. Forum: Syllabus Review Acknowledgment (Individual Assignment)

   a. DUE: ......................................[date]
   b. Final Grade Percentage: .......1%

2. Forum: Ways of Knowing (Individual Assignment)

   a. DUE: .....................................
   b. Final Grade Percentage: .......2%

3. Ethics Quiz

   a. DUE: .....................................
   b. Final Grade Percentage: .......5%

4. Research Partner & Research Question Selection (Group Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......2%

5. Literature Search Exercise (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......15%

6. Research Design Exercise (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......5%

7. Quantitative Research Design Worksheet (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......5%

8. Forum: Evaluating Empirical Research Summary Table (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......10%

9. Data Analysis Worksheet (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......5%

10. Signature Assignment: Evaluating Empirical Research (Group Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......20%

11. Unobtrusive Qualitative Observation (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......10%

12. Final Exam (Individual Assignment)

  a. DUE: ......................................

  b. Final Grade Percentage: .......20%

## Assignment Details

### *Literature Search Exercise*

This assignment requires you to search electronic databases that specialize in scholarly journals. Some of these include Academic Search Premier, Psych INFO, Social Work Abstracts and MEDLINE (you are not limited to these databases, but they are a good starting point). You will need to use the University Library Website to access these databases. Feel free to contact me or the library if you need help locating the databases.

Once you locate the databases you will complete the following steps:

1. Select a social work topic of interest to you
2. Based on your topic, create a research question (e.g., what is the relationship between alcohol use and suicide in adult males?).
3. Identify the independent (e.g., alcohol use) and dependent variables (e.g., suicide completion).
4. Locate three (3) *quantitative* research studies (articles) from scholarly journals *relevant* to your research question using any of the databases stated above.
5. For each article:

   - identify the research question
   - sample size
   - describe the study participants
   - describe the findings, and
   - how each article contributed to your knowledge of the subject.

6. Provide the full citation of the article using APA formatting style.

## Assignment: Research Design Exercise

Sally has begun a new job in a residential facility for adolescents who have been in trouble with the law.  Because the state agency that provides the funding or her agency requires an evaluation, Sally was asked to conduct the study examining whether the program is effective.  Sally plans to start with helping teens in the agency read and spell better.  When their success in school improves, she believes that they will stay out of trouble with the law.  The intervention that she plans to employ is a computer software program called "hooked on vowels."  It comes highly recommended and is affordable.  Below are some facts related to her study:

- About 150 boys live in 15 different cottages; each cottage has three computer stations.
- Half of the boys will receive her intervention and the other half will serve as a comparison group.
- Sally will collect data before the intervention and for 6 months after each subject has left the facility.
- Some boys stay in the facility for 3 to 5 years, while other boys are in the facility for less than 6 months.
- Her director has informed Sally that once the boys leave the facility, it will be hard to keep track of them.  In a previous study conducted at the facility, only 10% of the boys who left the facility responded to a questionnaire.
- Sally wants to examine the following dependent variables:  number of arrests, GPA after leaving the facility, highest grade level attained before quitting school, attitudes toward school and current reading level.
- Sally is planning to employ a measure of attitude toward school that she has created herself.  Because the scale is homemade, she does not know how well it will measure attitudes toward school.  Sally has never used this scale before.
- Sally is planning on obtaining data on the boys' GPA by writing to them and asking them to report their grades to her.
- Last month, the agency director – who was loved by all the staff and residents and who was constantly advocating for the boys to stay in school – was exposed by a newspaper article that

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revealed that he misrepresented information on his resume at the time he was hired. According to the article, he had never finished college.

- Sally strongly believes that the intervention would make the boys much more enthusiastic about school. Because of that, she is planning to measure their attitudes weekly over a six-month period.
- The assistant to the director recommended that Sally not base her study on all the boys in the facilities, but instead target those who performed the worst in their last reading test. Sally is planning to adopt his suggestion.

1. Is maturation a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
2. Is history a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
3. Is testing a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
4. Is instrumentation a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
5. Is selection bias a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
6. Is statistical regression a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
7. Is mortality a possible threat to the internal validity of the study? Why or why not?
8. Of the above questions, how many did you provide a "yes" response?
9. Given your responses to the previous questions, how confident are you in the study's ability to attribute changes in the dependent variable to the independent variable? In other words, what is your level of confidence that the independent variable caused the changes in the dependent variables? Why?
10. What single modification could you make to the study that would improve it by eliminating at least 6 of the 7 threats to internal validity? Please explain your answer

## *Unobtrusive Observation in Qualitative Research Exercise*

You are collecting data for a qualitative research study examining interaction patterns of humans in various social settings. Ultimately, the researcher conducting the study is interested in comparing human interaction anywhere a group of humans meet and interact with each other such as: at court, a bar, a party, a concert, the library, or the school cafeteria. Your task is to make a single continuous observation of a group of 3 to 6 individuals at one of the locations described for at least 30 minutes. Record your observations using the guidelines below.

Field notes need to include the following elements:

1. The time you entered and exited the field; the date of the field observation; location of the field observation; and a brief descriptive topic label that captures the essence of the field session.
2. A description of the setting. This includes a description of the physical space including the furniture, decor, lighting, smells, and anything else that catches your attention. Also pay attention to the relationship of the setting to the community in which it is located and the pace or atmosphere of the place. First impressions are powerful and often convey what an outsider would have to say about the organization and its physical structure.
3. A description of the people in the setting. Include a list of people and their roles (make your best guess), short demographic and descriptive portraits of each person, and descriptions of their relationship to each other. Each time a person enters the site (the group you are observing), notes should include a short description of the newcomer. (These lists are

extremely useful to track participation in a setting over time, if you to make multiple observations.) Be sure to focus your observation on at least one group of individuals who are appear to be of equal status, e.g., a group of friends, students or police officers.

4. A short description of the events of the day. This should include what your day was like previous to the observation and how you were feeling in general prior to entering the field. It should include a general overview of the pattern of the visit. This would include observation of your own behavior and thoughts such as where you located yourself during the observation, what the reaction of others were to you, how your dress compared to the observed, what your reactions were during the observation and how this varied over the time of the observation. This recording provides a picture of the rhythm of the site.

5. A description of interaction among people in the setting (and in particular the specific group of individuals you are observing) in terms of general patterns that you observe as it relates to your observation question. With respect to the group that you are observing, did you notice a hierarchy in terms of status? Who seems to be in the role of the leader? Is the leadership role shared? What do you believe is the nature of the hierarchy, e.g., income, level of attractiveness? Did you observe that some individuals talk more of the time than others (this can be an indication of status)? What else did you learn about the individuals in your setting?

6. Your overall impressions of the day and of the setting. (If you were to make multiple observations, your impression can change over time and are recorded to gauge how understanding of the site evolves.)

7. What ethical issues or concerns were raised during your observations and reporting them, (e.g. confidentiality)?

Remember that your "experience" at your research site should be related back to the larger context. These may include description of the neighborhood and discussion of changes in the neighborhood in which the site is located, personnel or policy changes and so forth. For example, research in a church social service program should record events in the church that impact on the site. The number of people around a housing project or at a church during a particular setting should also be recorded in order to understand the frame of the micro setting.

## *Evaluating Empirical Research (Signature Assignment)*

Please review the chosen study(ies) and respond to the questions below. Also, identify where in the article you found the answer (excluding the abstract).

**Introduction & Literature review**

- What is the key research issue (the problem that motivated the study)?
- What is the primary purpose of the study?
- Identify at least one research question or research hypothesis.
- Identify at least one independent variable and at least one dependent variable, or identify two main variables if it is not an explanatory study.

**Methods**

- How were the variables measured? Were scales used? If so, what were they?
- Who are the study participants? What are the eligibility requirements of the study?
- What sampling technique was utilized?

- How does the sampling method influence your level of confidence that the sample is likely to be representative of the population?
- What are the implications of the sampling method used in terms of the study's generalizability?
- What is the sample size?
- Is the research design qualitative or quantitative?
- Based on the research design, what is your level of confidence in the study's internal validity?
- How were the data collected? (data collection procedures)

**Results**

- What are the characteristics of the people in the study's sample?  (Provide details about gender, age, ethnicity, geographical area, etc.)
- What are the main findings of the study?

**Discussion**

- What do the authors conclude from the study?
- What strengths and limitations of the study did the authors identify?
- Did the article provide suggestions for future research?  If so, what are they?
- Did the authors identify implications for social work practice or policy? If so, what are they?

## Grading Standards

Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the "good," "the high quality," "the competent," or the "satisfactory." They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few BSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most BSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite meet the standards of quality expected of a student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of BSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a

student and a future BSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of BSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

## Grading scale

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below a C are Unsatisfactory in the BSW Program]:

| | | |
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| A | 93% | Excellent, Exceptional Quality |
| A- | 90% | Superior Quality |
| B+ | 87% | Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality |
| B | 83% | Good, High Quality (expected of most BSW students) |
| B- | 80% | Satisfactory Quality |
| C+ | 77% | Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality |
| C | 73% | Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality |
| C- | 70% | Unsatisfactory Quality |