

SOC W 603 – Research Methods in Social Work

Fall 2024

Mondays from 8:00 – 9:50 a.m.

KMBL-102

Professor: Dr. Gordon Limb, PhD

Office Location: JFSB 2165

Office Phone: 801-422-6649

Office Hours: By appointment is guaranteed, but feel free to stop by anytime!

Email: gordon_limb@byu.edu

Teaching Assistants:

Jill Burgon: sburgon3@student.byu.edu

Isabel Mora: irellert@student.byu.edu

Course Purpose

Students will be confident reading peer-reviewed articles and designing research studies. This will enable them to independently analyze and utilize research when working with clients.

Learning Outcomes

CSWE 2015 Competency 4

Students will be able to engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.

CSWE 2015 Competency 9

Students will be able to evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Assessment of Competence

The following points outline how Competency 4 will be assessed in this course, including the corresponding dimensions (*knowledge, values, skills, and processes*) necessary for learning and developing competence (see assignment descriptions for further details):

- Papers 1 & 2 require students to understand the fundamentals of research methods (*knowledge*), assess how their personal values and those of other authors may impact their interpretation of research (*values*), use prior research to inform their creation of a research question (*processes*), and apply their knowledge in composing the introduction and methods sections of an original research paper (*skills*). These papers help students understand how to conduct and consume research with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- In order to be considered proficient for competency 4, students must receive an 80% or better on paper 1 or 2. If a student is not proficient in this competency, he/she will follow remediation instructions as outlined in the BYU School of Social Work MSW Student Handbook.

The following points outline how Competency 9 will be assessed in this course, including the corresponding dimensions (*knowledge, values, skills, and processes*) necessary for learning and developing competence (see assignment descriptions for further details):

- Tests 1 & 2 require students to understand the fundamentals of research methods (*knowledge*) and demonstrate their ability to use their knowledge to design ethical research studies and interpret results (*skills, values, processes*). These tests assess information that is essential for conducting research with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- In order to be considered proficient for competency 9, students must receive an 80% or better on tests 1 or 2. If a student is not proficient in this competency, he/she will follow remediation instructions as outlined in the BYU School of Social Work MSW Student Handbook.

Link between BYU AIMS and Learning Outcomes

Intellectually Enlarging (*competence*)

Competency 4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice

Competency 9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Class Policies

1. Demonstrate charity towards others (including the instructor!) at all times.
2. After your first absence each additional absence will result in a 5% reduction in your overall course grade. If you need an exception, please speak with me.
3. After your first tardy (3 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early) each additional tardy will result in a 1% reduction in your overall course grade. If you need an exception, please speak with me.
4. Assignments (not quizzes or tests) can be turned in up to 24 hours past their due date, but you will only be eligible to receive a maximum of 50% of the total possible points (e.g., maximum of 10 points if the assignment is worth 20). Exceptions must be requested well in advance and approved in writing (i.e., email) by the professor or TA.
5. Unless the syllabus says otherwise, all assignments should be considered individual assignments. Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty, and may be dealt with by the instructor, school, college, and university as such.
6. Academic Honesty means students do their own work. This also means their instructors will evaluate that work. Work derived from generative artificial intelligence (AI) resources is not considered the students' original work. Honesty must extend to all forms of coursework. The use of advanced language models such as ChatGPT and other A.I. software is typically not permitted in this course. The purposes of this class go far beyond producing a well-written, publishable paper, and the assistance of A.I. reduces the likelihood that students will learn advanced writing, critical thinking, and problem solving skills. If a student is suspected of plagiarism or using A.I. assistance on any assignment, the professor will take the necessary steps to see if dishonest conduct has occurred, which may include asking to meet with the student and giving them an informal verbal assessment. If the use of A.I. on any assignment, quiz, or test has occurred, the student will be dismissed from class and receive a 0% final grade. If you would like to use AI then you must give a justification and get prior approval from the instructor.
7. From time to time I am asked why I do not use rubrics. I do use rubrics in some courses, but not when grading research papers. The reason for this is as follows. When I am asked by editors of academic journals to review articles submitted for publication, my recommendation is not made based on a rubric. They may ask me to assess the quality of specific aspects of the article, but my recommendation for publication is not based on any Likert-scale questions. There are many reasons a paper may be worthy of publication,

and the reasons behind one paper being accepted can be quite different from the reasons another paper is rejected. Sometimes the writing on an article is so poor that it overshadows the quality of the methodology and analysis, and vice versa. At times, a critical mistake in one area of the manuscript negates the quality of the rest of the article (sometimes considered a fatal flaw). In other instances, the presentation of the work is of such quality that a small sample size and somewhat elementary statistical analyses can be overlooked. In sum, by not using a rubric I am attempting to model the real-world protocol for the evaluation of research.

8. My office door is typically open but because sometimes there is a lot of noise in the hallways it might be closed. If you have questions, concerns, want to chat about class, want to chat about the gospel, or want to talk about life outside of school, **please come to my office and knock on the door!** Almost every time a student comes to my office and knocks on the door, they say, “*I am so sorry to bother you...*”. Students are my #1 priority. Students are BYU’s #1 priority.

University Policies

Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university’s expectation, and every instructor’s expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing & Responding to Sexual Misconduct

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Brigham Young University prohibits unlawful sex discrimination against any participant in its education programs or activities. The university also prohibits sexual harassment-including sexual violence-committed by or against students, university employees, and visitors to campus. As outlined in university policy, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are considered forms of “Sexual Misconduct” prohibited by the university. University policy requires all university employees in a teaching, managerial, or supervisory role to report all incidents of Sexual Misconduct that come to their attention in any way, including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Incidents of Sexual Misconduct should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator At t9coordinator@byu.edu or (801) 422-8692. Reports may also be submitted through EthicsPoint at <https://titleix.byu.edu/report> or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours a day). BYU offers confidential resources for those affected by Sexual Misconduct, including the university's Victim Advocate, as well as a number of non-confidential resources and services that may be helpful. Additional information about Title IX, the university's Sexual Misconduct Policy, reporting requirements, and resources can be found at <http://titleix.byu.edu> or by contacting the university's Title IX Coordinator.

Student Disability

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Whether an impairment is substantially limiting depends on its nature and severity, its duration or expected duration, and its permanent or expected permanent or long-term impact. Examples include vision or hearing impairments, physical disabilities, chronic illnesses, emotional disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety), learning disorders, and attention disorders (e.g., ADHD). If you have a disability which impairs your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC), 2170 WSC or 801-422-2767 to request a reasonable accommodation. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. If you feel you have been unlawfully

discriminated against on the basis of disability, please contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895, D-285 ASB for help.

Academic Honesty

The first injunction of the Honor Code is the call to "be honest." Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life's work, but also to build character. "President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education" (The Aims of a BYU Education, p.6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim. BYU students should seek to be completely honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

Deliberation Guidelines

To facilitate productive and open discussions about sensitive topics about which there are differing opinions, members of the BYU community should: (1) Remember that we are each responsible for enabling a productive, respectful dialogue; (2) To enable time for everyone to speak, strive to be concise with your thoughts; (3) Respect all speakers by listening actively; (4) Treat others with the respect that you would like them to treat you with, regardless of your differences; (5) Do not interrupt others; (6) Always try to understand what is being said before you respond; (7) Ask for clarification instead of making assumptions; (8) When countering an idea, or making one initially, demonstrate that you are listening to what is being said by others. Try to validate other positions as you assert your own, which aids in dialogue, versus attack; (9) Under no circumstances should an argument continue out of the classroom when someone does not want it to. Extending these conversations beyond class can be productive, but we must agree to do so respectfully, ethically, and with attention to individuals' requests for confidentiality and discretion; (10) Remember that exposing yourself to different perspectives helps you to evaluate your own beliefs more clearly and learn new information; (11) Remember that just because you do not agree with a person's statements, it does not mean that you cannot get along with that person; and (12) Speak with your professor privately if you feel that the classroom environment has become hostile, biased, or intimidating. Adapted from the Deliberation Guidelines published by The Center for Democratic Deliberation.

(<http://cdd.la.psu.edu/education/The%20CDD%20Deliberation%20Guidelines.pdf/view?searchterm=deliberation%20guidelines>)

Inappropriate Use of Course Materials

All course materials (e.g., outlines, handouts, syllabi, exams, quizzes, PowerPoint presentations, lectures, audio and video recordings, etc.) are proprietary. Students are prohibited from posting, sharing, or selling any such course materials without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course. To do so is a violation of the Brigham Young University Honor Code.

Devotional Attendance

Brigham Young University's devotional and forum assemblies are an important part of your BYU experience. President Cecil O. Samuelson said, "*We have special and enlightening series of devotional and forum assemblies...that will complement, supplement, and enrich what will also be a very productive period in your classrooms, laboratories, and libraries. We look forward to being with you each Tuesday...and hope that you will regularly attend and bring your friends and associates with you...A large part of what constitutes the unique 'BYU experience' is found in these gatherings where the Spirit has been invited and where we have the opportunity to discuss and consider things of ultimate worth and importance that are not afforded to the academic community on almost any other campus*" (from the address "The Legacy of Learning", 30 August, 2005). Your attendance at each forum and devotional is strongly encouraged.

Mental Health Concerns

Mental health concerns and stressful life events can affect students' academic performance and quality of life. BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS, 1500 WSC, 801-422-3035, caps.byu.edu) provides individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as stress management services. These services are confidential and are provided by the university at no cost for full-time students. For general information, please visit <https://caps.byu.edu>; for more immediate concerns please visit <http://help.byu.edu>.

Plagiarism

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, which may not be a violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in their own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law.

- Intentional Plagiarism - Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote.
- Inadvertent Plagiarism - Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but non-deliberate, use of another's words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from an ignorant failure to follow established rules for documenting sources or from simply not being sufficiently careful in research and writing. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their instructor and obtain guidance.
- Direct Plagiarism - The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source.
- Paraphrased Plagiarism - The paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for the author's own. Plagiarism Mosaic-The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one's own without acknowledging the source.
- Insufficient Acknowledgement- The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source.

Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

FHSS Diversity and Inclusion

In the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences, our classroom participation and behavior are guided by our mission statement, the BYU honor code, and principles of Christian discipleship (President Russell M. Nelson, News Release, 2020, <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/president-nelson-shares-social-post-encouraging-understanding-and-civility>). It is imperative that we value and respect every person as a child of Heavenly Parents who has divine worth. Consequently, we need to take steps to listen to, learn from, and love one another by striving to consider thoughtfully the opinions of others and use language that is polite, considerate, and courteous even when we strongly disagree. It is essential to create an educational environment that ensures "the gift of personal dignity for every child of God" (Elder Holland, "A Perfect Brightness of Hope", April, 2020). This includes embracing one another compassionately and "eliminat[ing] any prejudice, including racism, sexism, and nationalism" (Elder M. Russell Ballard, "The Trek Continues", Oct, 2017)...regardless of age, personal circumstances, gender, sexual orientation, or other unique challenges" (President Russell M. Nelson, "The Love and Laws of God", Sep, 2019). It is vital to delight in individuality and welcome diverse perspectives and experiences as we "work tirelessly to build bridges of understanding rather than creating walls of segregation" (President Russell M. Nelson, "The Love and Laws of God", Sept, 2019). To accomplish these goals, we seek unity in higher principles of equity, charity, collaboration, and inclusiveness in order to build an environment in which all students, faculty, and staff can participate in, contribute to, and benefit equally from the academic community.

Materials

Recommended:

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed., Rev. ed.). Washington, DC: Author. (or the 7th Edition)

Engel, R. J., & Schutt, R. K. (2017). *The practice of research in social work* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Grading

95% = A	88% = B+	80% = B-	74% = C	68% = D+	60% = D-
90% = A-	84% = B	78% = C+	70% = C-	64% = D	0% = F

Assignment Grading

CITI Training	1 point (<i>weighted as 1% of final grade</i>)
TA Consultation #1	1 points (<i>weighted as 1% of final grade</i>)
Article Review #1	15 points (<i>weighted as 2% of final grade</i>)
Article Review #2	15 points (<i>weighted as 2% of final grade</i>)
Paper 1 Draft	1 point (<i>weighted as 1% of final grade</i>)
Paper 1	15 points (<i>weighted as 20% of final grade</i>)
Write a Test: Variables and Measurement	15 points (<i>weighted as 2% of final grade</i>)
Quiz #1	15 points (<i>weighted as 5% of final grade</i>)
Write a Test: Sampling	15 points (<i>weighted as 2% of final grade</i>)
Quiz #2	15 points (<i>weighted as 5% of final grade</i>)
Test 1	15 points (<i>weighted as 15% of final grade</i>)
Write a Test: Research Design and Threats...	15 points (<i>weighted as 2% of final grade</i>)
Quiz #3	15 points (<i>weighted as 5% of final grade</i>)
TA Consultation #2	1 points (<i>weighted as 1% of final grade</i>)
Test 2	15 points (<i>weighted as 20% of final grade</i>)
Paper 2 Draft	1 point (<i>weighted as 1% of final grade</i>)
Paper 2	15 points (<i>weighted as 15% of final grade</i>)
Spiritually Strengthening Assignment	10 points (<i>weighted as 10% of final grade</i>)

Class Schedule

The professor may change the class schedule as professional or class-specific circumstances arise.

Date	Due	During Class	Homework for Next Week
D1: 9/9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The purpose of a BYU education - Course overview - How to succeed in this course - Complete data use agreement - Types of research articles - Data - Codebook - Research Questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete CITI Training - Choose a research topic using two variables from a dataset (what is the relationship between [<i>variable 1</i>] and [<i>variable 2</i>]). Identify the corresponding problem. Consult with your assigned TA regarding your research question. - Read 3 peer-reviewed basic science original research articles aligned with your research question, and complete Article Review #1 for one of them.
D2: 9/16	<p><u>Citi Training Certificate</u></p> <p>TA Consultation #1 (The TA you meet with will mark you down as having met with them).</p> <p>Article Review #1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research question - APA formatting and general writing tips - Writing a literature review (review Paper #1 template) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an outline of your introduction section with at least three references for each subsection. - Read 3 peer-reviewed basic science original research articles aligned with your research question, and complete Article Review #2 for one of them. - Write draft of paper #1. - Spiritually Strengthening Assignment proposal
D3: 9/23	Article Review #2	- In-class writing day.	Visit the writing center with a completed draft of paper #1.
D4: 9/30	<p>Submit Paper 1 Draft by midnight.</p> <p>The Writing Center will send me a report of who visited with them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer reviews of introduction section. - Begin new content. 	- Complete paper #1
D5: 10/7	Paper #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construct operationalization. - Measurement reliability and validity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the <i>Write a Test: Variables and Measurement</i> assignment on Learning Suite - Read E&S Chapters 4 (<i>optional</i>)
D6: 10/14	Write a Test: Variables and Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quiz #1 - Sampling and generalizability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the <i>Write a Test: Sampling</i> assignment on Learning Suite - Work on Paper #1 revisions as needed - Read E & S Chapter 5 (<i>optional</i>)

D7: 10/21	Write a Test: Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quiz #2 - Review for Test #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare for Test #1 - Work on Paper #1 revisions as needed
D8: 10/28		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Paper #1 revisions as needed
D9: 11/4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ind, Dep, and Control variables - Threats to internal validity - Causation and experimental design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the <i>Write a Test: Research Design and Threats to Internal Validity</i> assignment of Learning Suite - Work on Paper #1 revisions as needed
D10: 11/11	Write a Test: Research Design and Threats to Internal Validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quiz #3 - Review for Test #2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare for Test #2 - Touch base with your assigned TA - Work on Paper #1 revisions as needed
D11: 11/18	TA Consultation #2 (The TA you meet with will mark you down as having met with them).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test #2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on Paper #1 revisions as needed
11/25	No Class: Thanksgiving Break	Thanksgiving Break	Thanksgiving Break
D12: 12/2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing the Method section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write draft of Paper #2. - Visit the writing center with a completed draft of paper #2. - Spiritually Strengthening Assignment
D13: 12/9	<p>Submit <u>Paper 2 Draft</u> by midnight.</p> <p>The Writing Center will send me a report of who visited with them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer review of Method section - Individual consulting as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporate TA feedback and prepare final version of Paper 2.
D14: 12/16	<u>Paper 2</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optional individual consulting with Dr Limb or TA (set up an appointment) 	

Assignment Details

CITI Training Certificate and Data Use Agreement

Completion of CITI training ensures that students are aware of ethical research standards. This training is available at <https://irb.byu.edu/citi-training>. If you have not taken the training before, you should select the Social and Behavioral Research Best Practices module. If your certificate has expired, CITI will require you to take a booster session. Students need to upload a copy of their CITI Human Subjects online training to Learning Suite.

Article Reviews

Article reviews help students learn to consume research papers. They encourage critical thinking, and model how reading an article should be approached. The purpose is not to ensure you understood everything you read, but rather to help you know what to look for. Each question should be answered.

Quizzes

Regular quizzes help students understand whether they are learning and retaining the most important material in class and help them prepare for tests. Quizzes will take place at the beginning of class and cannot be taken outside of class. If you arrive late, you will not have an opportunity to make it up for credit. Quiz questions will cover material presented in class since the start of the semester.

Write a Test

There are three *Write a Test* assignments throughout the semester. These assignments help you review and master the material by thinking about the content as a teacher instead of as a learner. For each assignment, you will be asked to write a few test questions. You will also be asked to provide an answer key. Questions should be uniquely your own, and not based on examples used in class, discussions with classmates, or online resources.

Test 1

This test will cover all class lectures, discussions, and assignments up to the time of the test. It will likely be composed of true/false, multiple choice, and various short answer questions (test format and details are subject to change at the professor's discretion).

Test 2

This test will cover all class lectures, discussions, and assignments up to the time of the test. It will likely be composed of true/false, multiple choice, and various short answer questions (test format and details are subject to change at the professor's discretion).

Paper 1: Introduction

This assignment is the beginning of a research paper that you will write over the course of your first year in the BYU MSW program. You will choose a research topic based on the variables available to you in the dataset provided by the instructor (or a dataset of your choosing that has been approved by the instructor). See the Paper 1 Template on Learning Suite for instructions and expectations. If you are not listed on the report of individuals who went to the Writing Center by the date outlined on our course schedule you will be unable to receive full credit for this assignment.

Paper 2: Method

This assignment builds on Paper 1 by adding a *Method* section with two subsections. See the Paper 2 Template on Learning Suite for instructions and expectations. If you are not listed on the report of individuals who went to the Writing Center by the date outlined on our course schedule you will be unable to receive full credit for this assignment.

Spiritually Strengthening Assignment

The point of this assignment is to stretch and strengthen yourself spiritually. This assignment has two parts: Part 1 is due by the end of the day on Week 3. You will turn in a proposal for what you will do to increase your spirituality this semester. This proposal should include specific activities, your proposed time commitment, and how this will be a stretch for you to draw closer to the Savior. The expected time commitment is a minimum of one hour a week but should be adjusted to fit your needs. Example activities include prayer, meditation,

scripture study, temple attendance, Come Follow Me, family history, spiritually themed books or talks, etc. You are welcome, if during the semester your plan is not working, to update it. Simply email the instructor with the update plan. Part 2 is due at the end of the semester. During class on Week 13, you will give yourself a grade on how well you achieved your proposed goal. This will account for 10 points toward your overall grade. This assignment helps meet course outcome 4 and BYU AIM- Spiritually Strengthening.