



School of Social Work

FACULTY OF ARTS

The UBC School of Social Work acknowledges that we are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x̣ẉməθḳẉəỵ ɛm (Musqueam) people. The School logo designed by Ray Sims, a member of the Musqueam Nation, depicts Raven transforming into a human child. Raven is seen to be the most magical of all beings with the ability to shapeshift into anything at will. The most frequent form Raven takes is that of a human. Through adventures, Raven creates much of what we have around us. Humans learn much and acquire much knowledge of life and living through learning the orals associated with Raven's adventures and misadventures, for Raven intentionally, as well as inadvertently, has created much by making mistakes.

School Vision: *Building upon a foundation of social justice and an ethic of care, we are a community of learners actively engaged in the development of critical, transformative knowledge for social work practice.*

School Mission Statement: *Based on a commitment to fundamental social work values and a vision of social justice, UBC's School of Social Work prepares social work students for generalist and advanced professional practice. We promote the scholarly generation of critical transformative knowledge through research and study relevant to social work theories, practices, social development and social administration.*

BSW Mission

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program addresses issues of power and issues of discrimination based on age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, class and culture. The educational objective of the BSW curriculum is to provide students with the knowledge, values and skills necessary for an initial level of professional practice, focusing on the interface between personal problems and public issues. Critical thinking and structural analysis are central to the learning experience offered by the School and to the promotion of social justice and human well-being.

COURSE INFORMATION

Year/Term/Dates	2023 Winter, Term 1, September 5 - December 7, 2023
Course Title	SOWK 420: Introduction to Social Work Research
Course Value	3 credits
Course Schedule	Tuesdays, 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Course Location	MATH 102 - Mathematics Building, Room 102

Instructor	Office Location	Office Phone	Email Address
Daniel Ji			daniel.ji@ubc.ca
Office hours	By appointment		
Teaching Assistant	Office Location	Office Phone	Email Address
Rita Andrew			ab123rit@student.ubc.ca
Office hours	By appointment		

Pre-requisites

There are no pre-requisites for this course.

Course Description

Theory and conduct of social research as applied to social welfare and social work practice. Development of social work research questions and design of studies.

Course Structure and Learning Activities

Discussions: Read assigned readings and review power point presentations and other assigned videos prior to attending each session. Slide decks are stored on Canvas, video links are in the syllabus, as are assigned readings for each week.

Small group activities: Students are assigned to small groups to work on activities and assignments together. Students will meet in their small groups in-person following discussion. Weekly small group activities will vary and involve individual and group exercises, discussions, and supporting each other to conduct and complete assignments. Individuals are assigned randomly under the “people” tab in “small groups” on Canvas.

Learning Outcomes

1. Define and appropriately apply to practice basic terms, concepts, and processes of research.
2. Define and argue the logic of various research designs, data collection, and basic data analytic techniques.
3. Critically evaluate research methodologies, data analyses, and interpretation of findings in relation to research questions.
4. Demonstrate ways in which research can inform social work practice.

Required Textbook(s) and Learning Materials

Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Kleinknecht, S. (2023). *Social research methods* (6th Canadian ed.). Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press (available at UBC Bookstore)

Jamovi open-source statistical software (<https://www.jamovi.org/>)

Jamovi quick guide (<https://www.jamoviguide.com/>)

Additional resources are indicated in the schedule below or on CANVAS.

Course Schedule

SESSION 1:	September 5
TOPIC:	Why do we do social work research? Course introduction
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the CASW Code of Ethics (p. 8: competence in professional practice) at https://www.casw-acts.ca/en/what-social-work/casw-code-ethics/code-ethicsBell et al., chapter 1 VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas
SESSION 2:	September 12
TOPIC:	Approaches to social work research: developing research questions
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: Bell et al., chapter 1 VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas
SESSION 3:	September 19
TOPIC:	Linking research questions to designs and methods
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: Bell et al., chapter 2 VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas
SESSION 4:	September 26
TOPIC:	Research ethics
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: Bell et al., chapter 3 VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas

SESSION 5:	October 3
TOPIC:	Quantitative research: Using surveys and observations
READING:	READ: Bell et al., chapter 4, 5, and 6 VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas
SESSION 6:	October 10
TOPIC:	Validity and reliability evidence for measurement
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	<p>READ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell et al., pp. 87-93 • Russell, M. (2022). Clarifying the terminology of validity and the investigative stages of validation. <i>Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice</i>, 41(2), 25-35. • Kane, M. (2010). "Errors of measurement, theory, and public policy." Recorded at Princeton, New Jersey, November 19, 2008. https://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICANG12.pdf (pp. 26-30 section on errors, social consequences, and validity). <p>VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas</p>
SESSION 7:	October 17
TOPIC:	Sampling; linking samples to design Creating data files, documentation of data files (codebooks)
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	<p>READ: Bell et al., chapter 7 VIEW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point slides in Canvas • Data entry in Excel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rcBQ9OwM9PM • If you like cats: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4J6xYoKwAo
SESSION 8:	October 24
TOPIC:	Descriptive statistics Visual presentations of numerical data
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: Bell et al., pp. 177-187 VIEW:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point slides in Canvas • To import a data file into Jamovi for data analysis, see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0uE4LIHeac • To create visual reports (charts and diagrams) in Excel see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjDaNnlYT3s • To use Jamovi to run descriptive or univariate statistics see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srqNCux0ijY • You can also use Jamovi to create charts with descriptive statistics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGtGAlSq4kA https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10oomNrNe6w
SESSION 9:	October 31
TOPIC:	Examining associations between variables
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	<p>READ: Bell et al., pp. 187-201 VIEW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point slides in Canvas • Chi-square: https://www.discoveringstatistics.com/statistics-hell-p/egestes-predicting- categorical-outcomes/chi-square-test/ and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsrj647Tb3g • Correlation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5kZ4erx8QE
SESSION 10:	November 7
TOPIC:	Introduction to qualitative research Interviewing in qualitative research
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	<p>READ: Bell et al., chapter 9, chapter 11 (pp 249-262) VIEW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point slides in Canvas • Question development: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0HxMpJsm0l&t=18s&ab_channel=Yale_University • Overview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uapR0qiN6s&ab_channel=GlobalHealth_withGregMartin
NOVEMBER 14: MIDTERM BREAK (NO CLASS)	
SESSION 11:	November 21
TOPIC:	Qualitative data analysis
TO DO BEFORE	READ: Bell et al., chapter 13

THIS SESSION:	VIEW: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point slides in Canvas • Basics/coding: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opp5tH4uD-w • Examples of approaches to analyzing qualitative data: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9A3ceOBihM&ab_channel=GradCoach
SESSION 12	November 28
TOPIC:	Writing up and displaying research results
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: Bell et al., chapter 15 VIEW: Power point slides in Canvas
SESSION 13	December 5
TOPIC:	Wrapping up
TO DO BEFORE THIS SESSION:	READ: Bell et al., chapter 14 Prepare a summary (brief, no longer than 2 minutes) of your research project to share verbally with the class.

Assignments (Rubrics on Canvas):

Assignment 1 (10%):

Due September 19

Creation of research question for Research Project

Your research project involves you as the sole research participant. Select for yourself a goal for either improving or maintaining your learning in social work. Develop a research question or hypothesis as to how the goal will be improved or maintained.

1. Begin your paper with a paragraph that introduces the reader to the topic of your study.
2. Generate a rationale for the research question or hypothesis that is founded upon theory and prior research on the topic. The rationale should be no longer than two paragraphs.
3. Articulate the research question or hypothesis for your project.

Research Project design and rationale

Develop the design of your Research Project. Assign how and when data collection will occur and how often it will occur.

1. Begin your paper with the introduction to the topic of your study.
2. Provide the rationale for your research question.
3. State the research question or hypothesis that will guide the project.
4. Describe, in one paragraph, the design of your research. You may also include a graphic display of the design (optional). Your data collection should extend for several time points ranging from 7 to 14 days. Describe your justification for the frequency and spacing of intervals of data collection.
5. Describe, in one paragraph, how the design is appropriate for answering the research question or hypothesis.

Ethics Module and reflection

Submit to Canvas a certificate of successful completion of the TCPS tutorial. The tutorial is accessed at <http://tcps2core.ca/welcome>

This assignment is aligned with TCPS guidelines and UBC ethics review boards' expectations that all people applying for ethical review and working with data complete the tutorial. A certificate is provided upon successfully completing this tutorial. Log into the system so that a certificate is created upon completion of the module. Submit the certificate to Canvas for documentation of completion. (3%)

After completing the tutorial, write a paper (2 pages) reflecting on the items or questions in the tutorial and the experience of being tested in this way. Ensure that your paper includes a reflection on each of the following (2%):

1. The experience of reading the question and finding the answer that best fit your understanding of the issue.
2. The experience of being 'tested'.
3. Your understanding of how your answers are used to calculate your score.
4. Any information that you think is important but wasn't captured by the questions asked.
5. Summary: reflect on how this experience might be similar to research participants being asked to complete a survey.

Creation of a measure(s) for Research Project

Identify the construct(s) in your research question or hypothesis. These construct(s) will need to be measured. Find existing measures or create your own for your study.

1. Begin your paper with the introduction to the topic of your study.
2. Provide the rationale for your research question.
3. State the research question or hypothesis that will guide the project.
4. Define each of the constructs stated in your research question or hypothesis using definitions in the research literature (e.g., time use, mindfulness practice, physical exercise). If you include an intervention in your study, identify the independent variable and the dependent variable.
5. Explain, for each measure, your rationale for the type of measure you are using (i.e., observation, scale, physiological assessment). Use the text to help you identify the type of measure and utility.
6. Explain how the measures reflect the constructs stated in your research question or hypothesis.
7. In an appendix, provide a description and display this first version of your measure. If your measure is not in written format (e.g., survey or questionnaire) show a prototype via photograph or model or drawing.

Pause writing. Create some interview questions that will help you collect feedback from colleagues about your measure(s). Check the text for ideas about developing interview questions. Collect feedback from 2 to 3 colleagues in your class about your measure(s).

1. Summarize the interview questions you asked to elicit the feedback on your measure.
2. Summarize the feedback you received from colleagues. Note any potential edits to the measure(s) that arise from feedback. Note any ideas or changes suggested by colleagues that you hesitate to include. Explain all of your decisions (to include, discard ideas, maintain what you originally designed).
3. The interviews with colleagues are related to validity evidence. Explain how the feedback provided you with validity evidence.
4. Summarize your paper.
5. In an appendix provide a description and display the final version of your measure. If your measure is not in written format (e.g., survey or questionnaire) show a prototype via photograph or model or drawing.

Creation of research question for qualitative analysis.

This assignment is about constructing a research question that would guide a qualitative study.

Generate a research question in relation to the topic.

1. Begin your paper with a paragraph that introduces the reader to the topic of your study. Why do you need to ask a qualitative question for this question? Hint: Think describing.
2. Generate a rationale for the research question that is founded upon theory and/or prior research on the topic. The rationale should be no longer than two paragraphs. Literature?
3. Articulate the research question or hypothesis for your project.

Develop a qualitative interview protocol

In this assignment, you will write an interview protocol for a qualitative project that would help you collect data for your research question (1 page). What would your interview protocol look like if you were to collect data using an interview method to address the research question you asked in assignment 5? A good interview protocol is informed by theory and contains questions that are open enough to gather a breadth of useful information but also directed enough to generate relevant and meaningful responses from participants (see chapter 11).

1. Articulate the research question for your project
2. Describe and rationalize your interview protocol (i.e., how does it connect to your research question and how will it generate rich data) (1-2 paragraphs)
 - a. What type of interview did you choose and why?
 - b. What types of questions did you choose and why?
3. In an appendix, display your interview protocol.

Research Project: Written report

This report summarizes your Research Project. Use the design you proposed for Assignment 2 and the measure(s) from Assignment 4.

As soon as you receive instructor feedback on your measure(s) (Assignment 4), begin collecting data. Once you have collected data, compile the data in a spreadsheet using a software such as Excel.

Following the writing guide in Bell et al. (chapter 15) generate a report per guidelines in class discussions.

Report the following information in your report.

1. The introduction to the topic of your study
2. The rationale for your research question or hypothesis
3. The research question or hypothesis that guided the project
4. The “Methods” section will have subsections for:
 - a. The design of your research with rationale for the design, frequency and spacing of intervals of data collection
 - b. “Sample”: yes, describe you without revealing your identity
 - c. “Measures”: each measure has its own heading and description
 - d. “Procedures”: how you collected data (e.g., Did you collect every day? What time of day did you collect the data?)
5. Under the “Results” section, document:
 - a. The amount and frequency of data you collected. Note if there is any missing information (e.g., you forgot to fill in your daily diary one day) or any information that is not usable due to technical problems or any other reason
 - b. How you condensed/summarized the data you collected (e.g., did you create an average, or summarize in a graph?)
 - c. Display visually the results in graph, table, or text
6. Under “Conclusions”
 - a. Interpret your findings
 - b. Describe the limitations of your study
 - c. Describe the implications for future research

Late Assignments

Assignments must be submitted on CANVAS by midnight of the due date. 10% will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late. Within the context of research and professional social work practice, I encourage students to treat assignment deadlines like expectations in the workplace. As such, please reach out to the instructor in advance of assignment due dates if needed. Students must complete all assignments indicated for this course to receive a final grade.

SCHOOL/COURSE POLICIES

Learning Resources

UBC Learning Commons has a variety of tools and information such as: borrowing equipment, academic integrity (**APA Citation Guide**), writing support, skills for class, skills for life and academic support to assist students in their learning. <https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/>

Academic Integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work; nor should you help others to do the same. For example, it is prohibited to: share your past assignments and answers with other students; work with other students on an assignment when an instructor has not expressly given permission; or spread information through word of mouth, social media, websites, or other channels that subverts the fair evaluation of a class exercise, or assessment.

Academic Concession

To determine if you're eligible for an Academic Concession, you can check the criteria outlined in the [UBC Calendar](#). This includes [Medical circumstances, Compassionate grounds, or Conflicting responsibilities](#). Some examples include sudden illness, injury, death in the family, or mental health crises. You should first contact your instructor to apply for an Academic Concession. Alternatively, and as may be required, you can contact the Program Advisor, Christine Graham. If you need to request concurrent academic concessions for multiple courses, you should request them directly from Christine Graham. If you require more information about concessions, please don't hesitate to contact Christine Graham (Christine.Graham@ubc.ca).

Accommodation of Students

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Centre for Accessibility. Students, who will require accommodation for attendance due to disability, are encouraged to inform the instructor and, if necessary, to contact the Centre for Accessibility, preferably not later than the first week of class. The School of Social Work also permits accommodations for religious observances and Indigenous cultural duties requested by students

(see [UBC Policy J-136](#)). Students are expected to inform their instructor if they require accommodation on such grounds. Students who wish to be accommodated for unavoidable absences due to varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments must notify their instructors in writing at least two weeks in advance, preferably earlier. This reflects expectations for professional social workers in their place of employment.

Attendance

The School considers class attendance to be an essential component of integrated learning in professional social work education. Therefore, regular attendance is *required* in all social work courses. Instructors may count repeated late arrivals or early departures as an absence, and a meeting should be set up to discuss this with the student. ([Student Handbook](#)).

Other school policies can be accessed through the [School of Social Work student handbook](#).

Names and Gender Pronouns

At the School of Social Work, we are committed to providing an inclusive learning environment for all our sexual and gender diverse students, faculty, staff and community members. If you are comfortable sharing with us, please provide the pronouns you would like to use in this space. If you have questions or need support, please also be aware that *the Equity & Inclusion Office at UBC* can provide information and advocacy to ensure that all of your instructors use the name/pronouns you use. For more information: <https://equity.ubc.ca/>

Equity and Respect

In May 2013, the UBC School of Social Work Council approved an Equity Action plan aimed at an equitable learning and working environment and the creation of accountability measures for monitoring the implementation of this plan. A key element in attaining this goal is ensuring that instructors and students are committed to maintaining a classroom environment free of discrimination and racism and welcoming and respecting different worldviews, ways of knowing and social locations.

University Policies

Support: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available at: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>

Retaining Assignments

Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should also retain their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to view their marked examinations with their instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

Learning Analytics

Learning analytics includes the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. This course will be using Canvas. Canvas can capture data about your activity and provide information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this course, I plan to use analytics data to: view overall class progress; review statistics on course content being accessed to support improvements in the course; assess your participation in the course.

Copyright

All materials of this course (course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline. It is not permitted to record classes, unless permission has been granted by the instructor.

GRADING CRITERIA

Letter Grade	Percent Range	Mid-Point	
A+	90-100	95	Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization and style are all at a high level. Student demonstrates excellent research and reference to literature where appropriate. Also, student uses sound critical thinking, has innovative ideas on the subject and shows personal engagement with the topic.
A	85-89	87	
A-	80-84	82	
B+	76-79	77.5	Represents work of good quality with no major weaknesses. Writing is clear and explicit and topic coverage and comprehension is more than adequate. Shows some degree of critical thinking and personal involvement in the work. Good use of existing knowledge on the subject.
B	72-75	83.5	
B-	68-71	69.5	
C+	64-67	65.5	Adequate and average work. Shows fair comprehension of the subject, but has some weaknesses in content, style and/or organization of the paper. Minimal critical awareness or personal involvement in the work. Adequate use of literature.
C	60-63	62.5	

C-	55-59	57	
D	50-54	52	Minimally adequate work, barely at a passing level. Serious flaws in content, organization and/or style. Poor comprehension of the subject, and minimal involvement in the paper. Poor use of research and existing literature.
F	0-49		Failing work. Inadequate for successful completion of the course or submitted beyond final date of acceptance for paper.