

**Region 2 Locations and Contact Information:**

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***Course Syllabus: SOCI 380 Methods of Social Research***

***Buena Vista University Mission Statement: We develop students for lifelong success through innovative and imaginative academic and professional preparation.***

**Course Information:**

Type of Course: \_X\_\_ Face-to-Face \_\_\_\_ Hybrid \_\_\_\_ Online

Department: Social Work and Sociology

College Credits: 3

Course Meeting Time: 8:10pm-10:45PM on Mondays and Thursdays, Aug. 25- Oct 16

% Face-to-Face: 100%

% Online or Online Components:

Academic Term and Year: Term 1 Fall 2015

Instructor Title and Name: Tim Heller, LMSW

Instructor Information: (515) 573-9270 (cell)

Instructor Contact Information: heller@bvu.edu

**Course Resources:**

Text Information:

Required

Title: *Research Methods for Social Workers*,

Author: Yegidis, B. L., Weinbach, R. W., & Myers, L. L.

Date: (2012).

Edition: 7th Edition

Publisher: Boston: Allyn & Bacon

ISBN number:ISBN: 978-0-205-82011-5

Additional Resources Needed: Additional readings and material will be available from the instructor or through ANGEL.

**Course Description:**

Students engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research as theylearn to utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation. They critique and apply knowledge to understand the person and environment. Research concepts, designs, and analysis procedures are introduced. Students develop knowledge and theory of research problems relevant to social work and sociology by designing and conducting a research project. Students develop competence in various analysis and evaluation methods. Same as SOCI 380. *Prerequisite: SCWK 200 or permission of the instructor.*

**Course Objectives:**

1. Complete effective searches of professional literature and identify relevance to research questions.
2. Identify and articulate a research problem and hypothesis.
3. Identify possible resources for data collection (e.g., community databases, group survey, etc.) and design an appropriate methodology.
4. Evaluate implications of statistical results.
5. Use correct APA formatting.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to demonstrate competency in the following objectives through your Research Proposal and Exams:

1. Differentiate between qualitative and quantitative research approaches and the uses and values of both.
2. Evaluate and critique research that is published in professional social science journals.
3. Apply the scientific method of inquiry to social science questions.
4. Consider issues of discrimination, oppression, and populations-at-risk when developing research studies and when using research to evaluate practice.
5. Apply social work ethical standards when developing, carrying out, and evaluating research.

**Program Objectives**

In addition, this course is intended to meet these overall program objectives for a major in Social Work. The objectives above should work together to help you achieve the following major objectives for the entire program:

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
2. Respond to contexts that shape practice.

In addition, this course is intended to meet these overall program objectives for a major in Human Services.

1. Students will demonstrate and apply knowledge in social research processes and methodologies.

**BVU Objectives**

In addition to the above objectives, the following BVU objective is also applicable in this course.

1. Students will be able to communicate effectively.

**Course Policies:**

Make up Policies**:**  Students are expected to attend class. Missing out on lecture and class activities will have adverse effects on student’s grades. Students are expected complete course work by the date that it is due. Please notify me if there is a problem before the quiz or assignment is due. Emergencies are always an excuse and student should notify instructor at the earliest opportunity. There is automatically a -5 point reduction in grade for any quiz that is taken late unless permission has been granted before the quiz deadline and an alternative date has been rescheduled.

Attendance/Tardiness**:** Since these classes are in a compacted time and lecture is over 2 hours per class, it is imperative that students attend class. Students are expected to attend class. Missing out on lecture and class activities will have adverse effects on student’s grades. Attendance points will be kept. If a student misses a class entirely, these points can’t be made up. Students are expected to be on time for class. If the student is less than 15 minutes late there will be no deduction in attendance points. If the student is more than 15 minutes late, but less than an hour late 25% will be deducted from the attendance points for that day. If the student is more than an hour late, but less than 1½ hours late 50% will be deducted from the attendance points for that day. If the student is more than an 1½ hour late, but less than 2 hours late 75% will be deducted from the attendance points for that day. If a student is more than 2 hours late the student will not receive attendance points that night.

Class Participation**:** Students are expected to participate in class. Through lecture, group activities, and open class discussion, students are expected join in and offer their opinions. Students are encouraged to share opinions, but students are also respect other’s opinions even if they are different from their own. Civil discourse, characterized by mutual respect for individuals and for opposing viewpoints, is an inherent responsibility of all members of the University community. Free speech and expression does not include illegal activity or activity that endangers or threatens to endanger the safety of any member of the community, or any of the University’s physical facilities, or any activity that disrupts or impedes the functions of the University or threatens such disruption or hindrance. Offensive expression on matters including but not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation is inappropriate in the BVU community and will be treated as harassment. Students enjoy freedom of speech and research, of legitimate classroom discussion, and of advocacy of alternative opinions to those expressed in the classroom. Students will be evaluated on knowledge and academic performance and not on the basis of personal or political beliefs.

Grading Policies**:** Students are expected to attend class. Missing out on lecture and class activities will have adverse effects on student’s grades. Students are expected complete course work by the date that it is due. Please notify me if there is a problem before the quiz or assignment is due. Emergencies are always an excuse and student should notify instructor at the earliest opportunity.

There is automatically a -10% point reduction in grade for any assignment or quiz that is taken late unless permission has been granted before the quiz deadline and an alternative date has been established.

These course policies are designed to support your learning. When you join this course, we expect you to be committed to your own learning and the learning of the others in this course "community." Due dates are firm, not for arbitrary reasons, but because the learners in this class are depending on feedback and review of these assignments and may be the subject of discussion in the class.

**Grading Scale:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | = | 93% | - | 100% |
| A- | = | 90% | - | 92% |
| B+ | = | 87% | - | 89% |
| B | = | 83% | - | 86% |
| B- | = | 80% | - | 82% |
| C+ | = | 77% | - | 79% |
| C | = | 73% | - | 76% |
| C- | = | 70% | - | 72% |
| D+ | = | 67% | - | 69% |
| D | = | 63% | - | 66% |
| D- | = | 60% | - | 62% |
| F | = | 59 and below | | |

**Daily/Weekly Schedule of Readings and Activities:**

SUGGESTED TIMETABLE THE COURSE IS SELF DIRECTED STUDY.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Activities, Assignments, Tests, Papers |
| 8/24/15 | Introduction of class – review syllabus, review of major assignments. |
| 8/27/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 1 and 2. Chapter 1 and 2 summaries due. |
| 8/31/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 3. Chapter 3 summary due. |
| 9/03/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 4. Chapter 4 summary due. |
| 9/07/15 | NO CLASS – Labor Day |
| 9/10/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 5. Chapter 5 summary due and ***Assignment #1: is due*** |
| 9/14/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 6. Chapter 6 summary due. |
| 9/17/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 7. Chapter 7 summary due. |
| 9/21/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 8. Chapter 8 summary due. |
| 9/24/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 9. Chapter 9 summary due. |
| 9/28/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 10. Chapter 10 summary due and ***Assignment #2: is due*** |
| 10/01/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 11. Chapter 11 summary due. |
| 10/05/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 12. Chapter 12 summary due. |
| 10/08/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 13. Chapter 13 summary due. |
| 10/12/15 | Lecture and class discussion over Chapter 14. Chapter 14 summary due. |
| 10/15/15 | ***Assignment #3: is due*** Final Draft Research Proposal must be submitted and presented by this date. Review for Final Exam – FINAL EXAM |

**Assignments**

***Participation and Attendance 30%***  300

Students are expected to attend class and participate. Missing out on lecture and class activities will have adverse effects on student’s grades.

***Chapter Summaries - 20%***  200

Reading each chapter and then presenting a 1-page typed (12 font, double spaced) paper summarizing what the student read and learned about from that chapter.

***Research Paper OR Research Project 40%*** 400

Students will have to turn a research paper in at the end of class. This is broken down below to help the student understand the research process better.

***Research Paper Assignments***

***Assignment #1: Developing Research Questions*** 50

The purpose of this project is to guide you through the process of developing a sound research question.  It should be 1-2 page typed (12 font, double spaced) discussing the following:

1. Select a social issue/problem that you are really interested in.  Examples include substance abuse, domestic violence, or poverty.  State this issue clearly, and state why it is important to you.
2. Write at least five research questions related to the topic you’ve selected, Be sure to include qualitative and quantitative questions.
3. Choose one of those questions you would like to investigate. State why you picked this questions and state why you believe it would be a good social work research question. Be sure to include any ethical issues that might be related this question.
4. Do a literature search on your question. List at least 8 resources that you believe will be relevant to your question; be sure to list title, author, source, page numbers etc. (APA) Choose the article that you believe most closely relates to your question. Write a summary of the article. After you have read the article would you make any changes to your question? If so what would they be?

***Assignment #2: Scholarly Article Review***  50

As social workers we often are “consumers” of the research. We need to be able to read a scholarly article and apply it to our practice. For this assignment you will need to acquire a scholarly quantitative research article. It should be 2-3 pages typed (12 font, double spaced) and you need to include the following in your review.

1. What is (are) the research question(s)? Try to state the problem as concisely as possible.  If it is not evident state that as well.
2. What are the major concepts (definition of the problem) in the research? Are they clearly defined? How? Are there any limitations in the conceptualization of key concepts?
3. How are the concepts operationalized? Do the measurements (survey, questionnaires, etc.) seem to be valid and reliable? Do the authors try to establish the validity and reliability of their measures?
4. Are any hypotheses stated? Are these hypotheses justified in terms of theory or previous research?
5. What are the dependent and independent variables? Do these variables adequately reflect the concepts of interest? Are any other variables identified as potentially important?
6. Is the study design experimental or non-experimental?
7. Describe the sampling procedures used in the study. What suggestions might you offer to improve the sampling procedure?
8. Are the limitation of the study clearly stated, what are they. Did you see others that the author(s) did not mention? If so what were they?
9. Be sure to use APA style for the paper.

***Assignment #3: Research Proposal Review***  300

Expand on the question that you developed in assignment #1 by preparing a short research proposal to be completed at the end of the class. Be sure to work on this during the entire class. The proposal will contain the following sections:

1. Introduction (including the research hypothesis) (1 page)
2. Literature review, keep in mind you have developed a list of sources in assignment #1to begin your work on this section. A review of Chapter 3 in the text will help to guide this section. This section should be a narrative that summarizes and synthesis the material, not simply a list of the literature. (2-5 pages)
3. Methods section, be sure to include operational definitions and the methods to be used and the type of analysis that might be used to answer this question. Chapter 6-12 of the text will help you in the process of completing this section. (3-5 pages)
4. Limitations of the study, this will include any weaknesses in the study in any of the other sections that you might discover. In this section also remember to include any ethical dilemmas that this project might uncover. (1-2 pages)
5. Results-what might you expect to find and the possible significance for social work practice. (1-2 pages)

***FINAL TEST 10%***  100

Students are expected to take a final test. Questions will be a review of material from the lectures and material from the book.

Academic Policies: From the current BVU Academic Catalog:

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Buena Vista University believes that personal integrity and academic honesty are fundamental to scholarship. We strive to create an environment where the dignity of each person is recognized and an atmosphere of mutual trust exists between instructors and students. Accordingly, honesty in all academic matters is expected from all students. Actions contrary to academic integrity will not be tolerated. Any attempt to cheat, misrepresent someone else’s work as one’s own, receive credit for work one did not do, obtain an unfair advantage over other students, or aid another student to do the above will be considered a breach of academic integrity. The faculty have confidence in the integrity of students and encourage students to exercise good judgment in fulfilling this responsibility. Activities that have the effect or intention of interfering with learning or fair evaluation of a student’s work or performance are considered a breach of academic integrity.

For complete information regarding the Academic Honesty, please refer to the current BVU academic catalog.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Buena Vista University provides reasonable accommodations through an organized process. Students desiring accommodations must follow the University's process.

Forms are available at: [http://www.bvu.edu/departments/academicaffairs/cae/studentaccommodations sl.asp](http://www.bvu.edu/departments/academicaffairs/cae/studentaccommodations%20sl.asp) . Please contact your Advisor or Donna Musel, Director of the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE), to begin this process.

\*\*\* The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this tentative schedule. The students will be informed of changes as will the Academic & Program Development Manager.

**Additional Considerations:**

**Tutoring Services** — As a BVU student, you have free access to SMARTHINKING online tutoring services. You are strongly encouraged to use this service to improve your academic skills. You can submit things electronically or set up a time to meet with one of the tutors. To begin using SMARTHINKING, simply go to the CANVAS Home page, at the top of the third column, click the **Go To SMARTHINKING** button.

**BVU Support Desk:**  **Web Form:**  [BVU Support Desk](http://www2.bvu.edu/LiveTime/WebObjects/LiveTime.woa/) — Any BVU-related question is fair game – from login issues to financial aid questions. You will be notified of progress in resolving the incident via email to your BVU Outlook account. Log in to the BVU Support Desk using the same username and password as for CANVAS.

**2FIX** — Contact the 2FIX Help Desk for technical help.

* + **Phone:**  1-712-749-2FIX (2349)  
    **Toll Free:**  1-800-248-4462
  + **Email:**  [2fix@bvu.edu](emailto:2fix@bvu.edu)
  + **Web Form:**  [BVU Support Desk](http://www2.bvu.edu/LiveTime/WebObjects/LiveTime.woa/)
  + **Website:**  [http://2fix.bvu.edu](http://www2.bvu.edu/departments/businessservices/infoservices/2fix/)

**Severe Weather Policy:** If the Community College closes due to weather then BVU sites are automatically closed. Check the BVU website for any site cancellations due to weather and watch your BVU email account. Courses delivered via Collaborate may still meet if the site closes. Students are expected to check their BVU Email and CANVAS accounts for instructions.

**Fire, Tornado, & Other Emergency Procedures:** Follow the Emergency Procedures of the Community College on which you are located.