I. COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to cover the basics of research methodology and statistics. This course will prepare students to move into the doctoral level research courses.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the role of social workers in conducting and consuming research;
2. Understand the role of theory in social work research;
3. Formulate a research question and testable hypothesis;
4. Identify independent and dependent variables and levels of measurement;
5. Identify and address issues that should be considered when conducting research with diverse and vulnerable populations including children, pregnant women, incarcerated or mandated clients, persons affected by cognitive disabilities, members of minority groups, and any subjects who may be different from the researcher;
6. Identify ways to protect at-risk populations when conducting research;
7. Identify and address ethical issues arising during conduct of social work research;
8. Knowledge of descriptive and inferential statistics, when and why they are used and how to interpret them;
9. Learn to use SPSS to enter and analyze data.
III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Required Software

SPSS Graduate Pack – if you already have SPSS from version 16 on you do not need to purchase the latest version. Information about various sites you can purchase is available at [http://www.spss.com/gradpack/](http://www.spss.com/gradpack/)

C. Course Assignments

Students are expected to review all online presentations, complete all readings, and all assignments in a timely manner. Students are expected to communicate with the instructor with any questions that arise in working through the course content.

The assignments will include a series of exercises, short tests, and data analysis assignments.

D. Grading Policy

This course will be Pass/Fail.

E. Course and Instructor Evaluation

NCSSS requires evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form will be sent to you for completion. Once completed you will be directed who to send it to. You will not be sending it directly to the instructor. Additional informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS

F. Scholastic Expectations

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or
adapted from existing sources, adhere to the latest APA format, and should be carefully proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading. Inappropriate referencing, misspelling, or poor sentence structure are considered in grade formulation.

G. **Academic Honesty**  
Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

H. **Accommodations**  
Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) [http://disabilityservices.cua.edu/](http://disabilityservices.cua.edu/) or 202-319-5211, and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

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**Course Content**

**Intro**  
Introduction to the course

**Module 1**  
**Introduction to Social Work Research**  
Sources of knowledge  
Reasons for social work research  
Quantitative and qualitative approach  
Research roles  
**Required Reading:**  
Trochim & Donnelly: Preface; Chapter 1-2 Philosophy of Research; Chapter 6-1a-d Qualitative Measures.

**Module 2**  
**Theory and Ethics in Research**  
Theory and research  
Ethical issues and professional responsibility  
Sensitivity to gender, and ethnic/cultural issues in research  
**Required Reading:**  
Trochim & Donnelly: Chapter 1-3 Ethics in Research

**Module 3**  
**Problem Formulation**  
Formulation of research questions and hypotheses  
Identification of variables  
Conceptualization and operationalization of variables  
Levels of variable measurement  
**Required Reading:**  
Trochim & Donnelly: Chapter 1-1 The Language of Research; Chapter 1-4a Problem Formulation  
Abu-Bader: Chapter 1
Module 4  Introduction to Statistics
Introduction to SPSS
Descriptive vs inferential statistics
Frequency distributions and percentages, graphs
**Required Reading:**
Abu-Bader: Chapter 2; Chapter 3; Chapter 4

Module 5  Univariate Statistics
Measures of central tendency
Measures of dispersion
The normal distribution
z-scores and percentiles
**Required Reading:**
Abu-Bader: Chapter 5

Module 6  Bivariate Statistics: I
Significance level
Substantive vs statistical significance
t-test for one sample, and independent and paired samples
One-way analysis of variance
**Required Reading:**
Abu-Bader: Chapter 8; Chapter 9; Chapter 10

Module 7  Bivariate Statistics: II
Chi-square
**Required Reading:**
Abu-Bader: Chapter 11

Module 8  Bivariate Statistics: II
Pearson correlation
**Required Reading:**
Abu-Bader; Chapter 7

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