SOCW4015

Honours Research Thesis

Term Two // 2020

School of Social Sciences // UNSW Arts and Social Sciences

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Elizabeth Fernandez	e.fernandez@unsw.edu.au	By appointment	C20 Morven Brown Room 152	9385 1865 (W) 9661 9467 (H)

School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

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Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

The Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) program provides students the opportunity to demonstrate learning in advanced knowledge and skills required for research in social work or a related health/welfare area. The Honours Research Thesis course SOCW4015 is the central focus of Level 4 Honours in Social Work for those students who select to undertake Honours via a Research Thesis. This course is based on a sustained, in-depth study of research methods and design integrated throughout the BSW (Hons.) program. Students will be individually supported by an academic supervisor to undertake a 12,000 word independent empirical or conceptual research project in their area of interest. The thesis will demonstrate their ability as autonomous researchers and will enable students to proceed to a Professional Doctorate in Social Work or other research degrees.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Formulate a research question for a particular context or research issue and justify the appropriate methodology and research methods
2. Identify and analyse critically the different theoretical perspectives that may influence the research process and area of study
3. Demonstrate awareness of how you have implemented an ethical research process
4. Execute a research project that demonstrates technical skill in research methods and research design or alternatively skill in generating conceptual analyses to reflect on the research issue chosen
5. Construct a thesis which demonstrates scholarly capability

Teaching Strategies

As students are undertaking an independent research project where they will choose their own research specialty area and methodology, they will be individually supervised by an academic supervisor with expertise in either or both of these areas. The supervisor will provide specialist knowledge and skills in the area of research design and implementation and will provide ongoing and comprehensive feedback on drafts of the thesis. Students undertaking the research thesis will also participate in regular seminars designed to support their research process and encourage collegial support between the students in this stream.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Honours Research Thesis	100%	16/10/2020 11:00 PM	1,2,3,4,5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Honours Research Thesis

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 10,000 to 12,000

Details:

Students are required to undertake a 10,000 -12,000-word research project in an area of their interest, related to social work or health/welfare practice. Students will work on this project in Term 2 and part of Term 3.

Students will be allocated an academic supervisor who has expertise in the student's research area and/or chosen methodology.

The thesis mark comprises **100%** of the mark for SOCW4015.

Students will be provided with ongoing feedback on their research project by their allocated supervisor. In addition, students will receive feedback from the convener of SOCW4015 during seminars. Each thesis will be marked by two independent examiners. Students will receive a numerical grade and written feedback from the examiners.

Additional details:

The following options can be considered in relation to methodology:

1. Empirical enquiry : Given the timeframe available for the production of the thesis and the word limit, it will require adequate time to secure the required ethics approval for an original empirical research inquiry, unless the student is planning to analyze an existing data set to address their research question and a variation in an existing ethics approval is possible or the data set is publicly available. Empirical research however is to be considered carefully with due consideration of timeline to submission, and in consultation with your supervisor.

1. Conceptual research exploring or further developing the relationship between concepts or theory that explains or describes the phenomenon being studied and addressing a specific research question. A conceptual project is related to an abstract idea(s) or theory. It is generally used to develop new concepts or to reinterpret existing ones in relation to an area of inquiry or research

question.

1. A Scoping Review or the more detailed process of a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA). A scoping review can be used to determine the range of studies that are available on a specific topic. This 'map' of the existing literature is undertaken with limited resources - particularly time. REAs provide a balanced assessment of what is already known about a policy or practice issue, by using systematic review methods to search and critically appraise existing research. They aim to be rigorous and explicit in method, and thus systematic, but make concessions to the breadth or depth of the process by limiting particular aspects of the systematic review process.

Submission of Thesis

Due date: **16th October 2020 by 11.59pm.** Students must submit an electronic version in **Word format** to the Course Convenor at e,fernandez@unsw.edu.au
Submission of hard copies
In addition, students are required to submit 2 hard copies **in person or by post** to Elizabeth Fernandez, (Room 152, Level 1 Morven Brown Building) on 19th October between 11am – 4pm.

Format of the thesis
Details of the format of the thesis will be available on the Moodle page and will be discussed in seminars.

Late penalties

The thesis must be submitted by the due date and time unless an extension of time has been granted. The penalty for late submission without permission is 5% (of the perfect mark) per day late, including weekends.

Each thesis will be marked by two independent examiners who will provide a detailed report containing feedback alongside the mark for the thesis.
The thesis mark comprises 100% of the mark for SOCW4015.
Student's final mark for SOCW4015 will be the average of the two marks awarded by each Examiner unless there is more than a 8-mark difference at which point a third examiner may be appointed.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

View class timetable

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 1 June - 5 June	Seminar	27th May 10-12 (O Week)
Week 2: 8 June - 12 June	Seminar	10th June 10-12
Week 4: 22 June - 26 June	Seminar	24th June 10-12
Week 7: 13 July - 17 July	Seminar	15th July 10-12
Week 10: 3 August - 7 August	Seminar	5th August 10-12
Week 11: 10 August - 10 August	Seminar	25th September 10-12

Resources

Prescribed Resources

There is no core text for this course although the text for SOCW4011 in Term 1 will definitely be helpful - Martin Webber "Applying Research Evidence in Social Work Practice" (2015) published by Palgrave Macmillan.

You will benefit from becoming familiar with GoogleScholar (http://scholar.google.com) as a key search engine for academic publications and reports. You can set up the preferences to link to the UNSW Library even when you are not on campus.

Go to Google Scholar> settings> library links, and enter 'University of New South Wales' in the box for "Library":

You can sign up for Table of Contents (TOC) Alerts from the homepages of relevant journals, to receive an email whenever new articles are published in that journal. Journal websites will often carry information on the most viewed and most cited articles; these are likely to be interesting and often influential contributions. Google Scholar will also point you to articles that have cited a particular article and hence will be related to the topic.

Recommended Resources

Recommended Research Books

Aidley, D. (2019) Introducing quantitative methods. Red Globe Press, London.

Alston, M. & Bowles, W. (2018) Research for social workers: An introduction to methods. NSW Australia: Allen and Unwin.

Babbie, E. (2007). The practice of social research (11th ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth

Bryman, A. (2012). Social research methods (4th ed.). Oxford University, Oxford England

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2015) Basics of qualitative research. (4th Ed) Sage Publications London UK

Flick, U. (2011) Introducing research methodology: A beginner's guide to doing a research project. Sage Publications, London UK

Holosko, M. J. (2006). Primer for critiquing social research: A student guide. Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.

Kumar, R. (2014) Research methodology: A step by step guide for beginners, (4th ed.) Addison Wesley Longman, Melbourne Australa

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Marlow, C. R. (2005). Research methods for generalist social work. Belmont: Brooks/Cole.

Munford, R. & Sanders, J. (2003). Making a difference in families: Research that creates change. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.

Neuman, W.L. (2013). Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches (6th ed.). GB: Pearson Education Limited.

Neuman, W. L. & Kreuger, L. W. (2003). Social work research methods: Qualitative and quantitative applications. Boston MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Royse, D. (2017). Research methods in social work (7th ed.). Cognella Academic Publishing .

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. R. (2008). Research methods for social work (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.

Smith, R. (2009) Doing social work research. London: Open University Press.

Sarantakos, S. (2005). Social research (3rd ed.). London: Macmillan.

Walker, M. (2013) Social research methods. **:** Oxford University Press ANZ

Walter, M. (Ed.) (2006). Social research methods: an Australian perspective. South Melbourne: Oxford

Yin, R.K. (2009) Case study research: Design and methods. (4th ed.) Sage Publications, London UK.

Yin, R.K. (2012) Application of case study research. Sage Publications, London, UK.

Relevant Journals

Australian Social Work

British Journal of Social Work

Child and Family Social Work

Children and Youth Services Review

International Journal of Social Welfare

International Social Work

Journal of Child and Family Studies

Journal of Social Work Education

Journal of Social Service Research

Qualitative Inquiry

Research on Social Work Practice

Social Work

Social Work Research

Recommended online materials and other useful sources

There is a wide range of journals and resources online as well as a number of specific resources that students may wish to consider for more detailed information and their assessments:

- Introduction to: Rapid Responses - http://www.phcris.org.au/guides/rapid_responses.php
- Rapid Evidence Review Toolkit

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140305122816/http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/resources-and-guidance/rapid-evidence-assessment

- Conceptual Research - http://human-nature.com/rmyoung/papers/concept.html
- Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper: Theoretical Framework

http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/theoreticalframework

Social Work Policy Institute – Evidence Based
Practice http://www.socialworkpolicy.org/research/evidence-based-practice-2.html

Social Research Association www.the-sra.org.uk

Quantitative Research Design - http://www.experiment-resources.com/quantitative-research-design.html

Evidence Based Practice in Health Care - http://www.biomed.lib.umn.edu/learn/ebp/

Program Evaluation and Design - http://managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm

Campbell Collaboration - Systematic Review
http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/resources/training/The_Introductory_Methods.php

The Coalition for Evidence Based Policy http://coalition4evidence.org/help- desk/workshop/videos/

Society for Social Work and Research - http://www.sswr.org/

Social Research Association www.the-sra.org.uk

Quantitative Research Design - http://www.experiment-resources.com/quantitative-research-design.html

Program Evaluation and Design - http://managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm

Course Evaluation and Development

Evaluation and Feedback

Students will be provided with ongoing feedback on their research project by their allocated supervisor. In addition, students will receive peer feedback as well as feedback from the conveners of SOCW4015 during seminars. Each thesis will be marked by two independent examiners who will provide a detailed report containing feedback alongside the mark for the thesis.

The thesis mark comprises **100%** of the mark for SOCW4015. Student's final mark for SOCW4015 will be the average of the two marks awarded by each Examiner, unless there is more than a 8-mark difference between the assessments of both examiners at which point a third examiner may be appointed.

It is anticipated that the thesis produced may also be the basis for submitting your research to a journal for joint publication with the academic supervisor after receiving the final grade and feedback from markers.

This is the fourth time that SOCW4015 has been offered and feedback from students is always welcome. In line with student feedback we have allocated supervisors in Term 1. Further feedback will be gathered periodically using, among other means, UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process and through less formal channels such as email and small group feedback throughout the Seminars. Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements will be made to the course based in part on such feedback.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.
http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.