The University of North Texas College of Health and Public Service **Department of Social Work**

SOWK 3870 (Section 001) Social Work Research and Practice (3 credit hours) Classroom: Chilton Hall, Room 255 Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 2:00-4:50 p.m. Fall 2025

Instructor Contact Information

Name: Joseph Frey, PhD, MSSW

Pronouns: he/him/his

Office Location: Chilton Hall, Room 390G

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9:30–11:00 a.m. or by appointment (Face-to-Face or Zoom)

Email: joseph.frey@unt.edu

Communication Expectations: Connect with me through university email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my email inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives that students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates may occur, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please set up a meeting with me to discuss your concerns.

Course Description

Social scientific methods for social work practice and its evaluation, including quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and designs, data sources, and analysis.

Competencies & Practice Behaviors

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) approved updated Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for accredited programs in 2022. This course emphasizes social work competencies and practice behaviors as indicated in the following table:

Core Competency	Course Objectives (Practice Behaviors)	Assessment
Competency 1:	1. Students will make ethical decisions by applying	EBP Paper; EBP Article
Demonstrate Ethical	the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics,	Review Tables;
and Professional	relevant laws and regulations, models for	Worksheets; APA
Behavior	ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of	

Core Competency	Course Objectives (Practice Behaviors)	Assessment	
	research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.	Assignments; APA Quiz	
Competency 4: Engage in Practice- Informed Research and Research- Informed Practice	Students will apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs.	EBP Paper; EBP Article Review Tables; Worksheets; Research Quizzes	
Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	3. Students will critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.	EBP Paper; EBP Article Review Tables	

Course Structure & Success

This is a face-to-face course that encompasses brief lectures; in-class assignments and activities; individual work and occasional small group work; extracting research study elements from published research studies; an academic paper; and online quizzes. To succeed in this course, you must attend class, complete readings and assignments on time, and engage with the course content as we move through the semester. Additionally, this course relies on the UNT learning management system (i.e., Canvas) for multiple course functions. In this course, Canvas is used for communication purposes, providing course documents and resources, submitting and returning assignments, online quizzes, and tracking grades. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the content of the course Canvas site.

Academic Success Resources

UNT strives to offer you a high-quality education and a supportive environment, so you learn and grow. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can be successful at UNT, go to unt.edu/success and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

None

Required/Recommended Materials

Required Textbook:

Mauldin, R. L. (2020). Foundations of social work research. Mavs Open Press.

Note: This textbook is an open educational resource (OER) thus it is free for use. The textbook is available in various formats (i.e., online, PDF, EBook, and XML) from:

https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/foundations-of-social-work-research

Additional Required Journal Article Readings (linked in Canvas):

- Branco, M.S.S., Altafim, E.R.P., & Linhares, M.B.M. (2022). Universal intervention to strengthen parenting and prevent child maltreatment: Updated systematic review. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 23(5), 1658–1676. https://doi-org.libproxy.library.unt.edu/10.1177/15248380211013131
- Crisp, B. R. (2015). Systematic reviews: A social work perspective. Australian Social Work, 68(3), 284– 295. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2015.1024266
- Henriquez, K. L., Lorenzo-Blanco, E. I., Martin Romero, M. Y., & Stein, G. L. (2024). Latinx/Hispanic youths' experiences of cultural stressors, emotional reactions, and coping within the family context. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology. Advance online publication. https://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000664
- Padgett, D. K. (2012). Qualitative and mixed methods in public health. Sage. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483384511

Note: In the Padgett text, only Chapter 9, Strategies for Rigor will be assigned reading. The ebook that contains this reading is available via the UNT Libraries and is linked in Canvas.

Thai, H., Davis, C. G., Mahboob, W., Perry, S., Adams, A., & Goldfield, G. S. (2023). Reducing social media use improves appearance and weight esteem in youth with emotional distress. Psychology of Popular Media. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000460

Additional Required Web Readings (linked in Canvas):

American Psychological Association. (2025). APA style. https://apastyle.apa.org/

Purdue Online Writing Lab. (n.d.). *General format*.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research and citation/apa style/apa formatting and style guide /general format.html

Suggested Reading for Writing and Framing Health Equity:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). Resources & style guides for framing health equity & avoiding stigmatizing language. https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/php/toolkit/resources-styleguides.html?CDC AAref Val=https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Resources.html

Technology Requirements

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System and UNT Library resources (e.g., database searching), as well as access to and skills related to the use of Microsoft Word. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to

be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at Learn Anywhere (https://online.unt.edu/learn).

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. At UNT we have an Information Technology Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UNT Help Desk (https://aits.unt.edu/support/)

Check online for available support hours.

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu **Phone**: 940-565-2324

Chat: https://aits.unt.edu/support/chat.html

Walk-in: Sage Hall, Room 130

Course Assignments

Assignment	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
EBP Paper	250	25%
EBP Article Review Tables (3 at 80 points each)	240	24%
Worksheets (6 at 40 points each)	240	24%
Research Quizzes (3 at 50 points each)	150	15%
APA Assignments (2 at 25 points each)	50	5%
APA Quiz	50	5%
EBP Planning Documents (2 at 10 points each)	20	2%
Total	1000	100%

Brief Assignment Descriptions (Full assignment descriptions are provided in Canvas; due dates are provided in the "Course Outline" at the end of this syllabus and in Canvas):

EBP Paper

- One (1) EBP Paper will be assigned this semester.
- See assignment overview and grading rubric (in Canvas) for detailed information.

EBP Article Review Tables

- Three (3) EBP Article Review Tables will be assigned this semester. Each table will correspond to one of the three (3) peer-reviewed research articles that you locate; the tables allow you to organize key research elements and information from each article.
- See assignment overview and grading rubrics (in Canvas) for detailed information.

Worksheets

- Six (6) in-class worksheets will be assigned this semester.
- Worksheet content reinforces key research concepts from readings and lectures, as well as promotes application of concepts and reading of research articles.
- Worksheets may be completed individually or in small groups; open book/open note.

Research Quizzes

- Three (3) Canvas-based quizzes will be given this semester.
- These quizzes cover the main research concepts from course readings and lectures.
- Completed individually; open book/open note; untimed.

APA Assignments

- Two (2) in-class APA Assignments; one focuses on formatting of student papers in APA 7, and the other focuses on formatting and use of references and in-text citations.
- Completed individually.

APA Quiz

- One (1) Canvas-based quiz will cover APA 7 Writing Style.
- Completed individually; open book/open note; untimed.

EBP Planning Documents

- Two (2) documents completed in class over two class meetings.
- These documents involve brainstorming topics for the Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) assignments and developing search strategies to locate the research articles that will form the basis of your Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) assignments.

Grading

Final course grades will be assigned on the basis of the following point system:

A = 900-1000 points

B = 800-899 points

C = 700-799 points

D = 600-699 points

F = < 600 points

Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system at UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course. Your feedback is important to me, as I work to continually improve my teaching. The SPOT survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester.

Course Policies

Attendance

As a student enrolled in this course, you are responsible for regular and punctual attendance and are expected to participate in course activities. Attendance is taken in this course and it is your responsibility to make sure that you are counted as present when you attend class. If you are more than fifteen minutes late, or leave more than fifteen minutes early, you will be counted as absent for the day unless approved by the professor.

Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful. You should attend every class meeting unless you have a "University excused absence" in accordance with UNT Policy 06.039 Student Attendance and Authorized Absences. According to this UNT policy, absences excused by the University are (see policy for additional details):

- a. religious holy days;
- b. participation in official university functions;
- c. required military service;
- d. pregnancy and parenting under Title IX; and
- e. when the University is officially closed.

If you are requesting an excused absence for one of the above reasons, you are responsible for requesting this in writing to your professor within 10 business days of the absence, and for providing satisfactory evidence to substantiate an excused absence.

However, it is understood that illness, emergencies, and unexpected events may arise. Therefore, each student is allowed up to two absences during the semester without penalty. These two absences can be used at your discretion and do not require the submission of documentation.

Any additional absence beyond the two allowed will negatively impact your grade unless the absence is due to documented, exceptional circumstances; is discussed with your professor in a timely manner (within 10 business days of the absence); and is approved as an excused absence by your professor. Each unexcused absence beyond the two allowed will result in a 25-point deduction from your total points earned in the class.

If you know you are going to miss a class or are going to be significantly late, contact your professor via e-mail in advance to alert them of your situation. "In advance" means before the class period starts, not during class or after the class is over. Using a classmate to inform the professor that you will not be in class is not appropriate or sufficient.

If you must miss class, you are responsible for staying up to date on class materials, announcements, and assignments by reviewing the course syllabus and Canvas.

Assignment & Examination Policy

All coursework is due by the date and time described in the "Course Outline" provided at the end of this syllabus and in Canvas. Late assignments will not be accepted unless arrangements prior to the due date/time were made between the student and the professor.

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the professor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the professor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940-565-2324 and obtain a ticket number. The professor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

All guizzes are open book/open note (unless otherwise specified) and must be completed independently.

Turnitin software (i.e., Turnitin plagiarism review, AI writing detection) will be used to assure academic integrity for assignment submissions.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this Course. Students shall not use "AI tools" (collectively referring to AI text generators and other AI-based assistive resources, such as ChatGPT) to assist in completion of course assignments, including quizzes.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

ADA Accommodations

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access). You may also contact ODA by phone at 940-565-4323.

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012) to learn more.

Access to Information – Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect: Eagle Connect (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14, and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email spot@unt.edu.

Survivor Advocacy

If you are a survivor of relational or sexual violence, there is support for you. There are on- and offcampus resources available to survivors at no cost. Counseling and Testing Services can provide confidential mental health counseling. They are in Chestnut Hall 311. You may also call 940-565-2741 to schedule an appointment. Denton County Friends of the Family is a community agency that offers free counseling and 24/7 crisis hotline services to survivors. Contact them at 940-387-5131. The UNT Survivor advocate can assist in reporting options, arrange for academic and housing accommodations, schedule appointments and help connect students to UNT and other community resources; they are located in University Union 409 and can be contacted at 940-565-2648. To report sexual misconduct to Equal Opportunity & Title IX, visit report.unt.edu. The UNT Police Department can be contacted at 940-565-3000.

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g., software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Student Support Services

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-andwellness-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- UNT Records
- UNT ID Card
- Legal Name

*UNT euIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.

Pronouns

Pronouns (e.g., she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can add your pronouns to your Canvas account so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- o What are pronouns and why are they important?
- o How do I use pronouns?
- o How do I share my pronouns?
- o How do I ask for another person's pronouns?
- o How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?

Additional Student Support Services

- Registrar (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
- Financial Aid & Scholarships (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
- Student Legal Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
- Career Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
- Center for Belonging & Engagement (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/center-for-belonging-andengagement)
- UNT Food Pantry (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/desresources/programs/foodpantry/index.html)

Academic Support Services

- Online Student Resources (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
- Academic Success Center (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- UNT Libraries (https://library.unt.edu/)
- UNT Writing Center (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)
- Math Lab (https://math.unt.edu/mathlab)

COURSE OUTLINE, READINGS, & ASSIGNMENTS

It is expected that readings will be done **prior** to class meetings. The professor reserves the right to modify the schedule, as course needs dictate.

Class	Course Topics	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 Aug 20	 General introductions & discussion Course introduction & syllabus review 		
Week 2 Aug 27	 Introduction to Research EBP assignment discussion and planning Review of three types of research articles 	Mauldin, Ch. 1	Document 1; Due Friday, August 29 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 3 Sept 3	 Linking Methods with Theory Ethics in Social Work Research EBP assignment discussion 	Mauldin, Ch. 2 Mauldin, Ch. 3	Worksheet 1; Due Friday, September 5 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 4 Sept 10	 Journal article searching using UNT Library resources EBP assignment planning Design & Causality Mixed methods Quantitative research article review 	Mauldin, Ch. 4 Article: Thai et al. (2023)	EBP Planning Document 2; Due Friday, September 12 (11:59 p.m.) Worksheet 2; Due Friday, September 12 (11:59 p.m.) Research Quiz 1; Due Friday, September 12 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 5 Sept 17	 Experimental Design Quantitative research article review Assessing quantitative research APA (Part 1) EBP assignment time 	 Mauldin, Ch. 8 Article: Thai et al. (2023) Review Purdue Online Writing Lab website APA Video 	APA Assignment 1; Due Friday, September 19 (11:59 p.m.)

Class	Course Topics	Readings	Assignments
Week 6 Sept 24	 Defining & Measuring Concepts Quantitative research article review Assessing quantitative research APA (Part 2) EBP assignment time 	 Mauldin, Ch. 5 Article: Thai et al. (2023) Review Purdue Online Writing Lab website △ APA Video 	APA Assignment 2; Due Friday, September 26 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 7 Oct 1	 No in-person class Independent EBP quantitative article searching 		APA Quiz; Due Friday, October 3 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 8 Oct 8 (Semester Midpoint Oct 10)	 Sampling Survey Research Quantitative research article review Assessing quantitative research EBP assignment time 	Mauldin, Ch. 6 Mauldin, Ch. 7 Article: Thai et al. (2023)	Worksheet 3; Due Friday, October 10 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 9 Oct 15	 Guest speaker: Dr. Cassidy Baker, Department of Social Work Unique Features of Qualitative Research Qualitative research article review EBP assignment time 	☐ Mauldin, Ch. 9 ☐ Article: Henriquez et al. (2024)	☐ EBP Article Review Table 1 (quantitative study); Due Friday, October 17 (11:59 p.m.) ☐ Research Quiz 2; Due Friday, October 17 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 10 Oct 22	 More Qualitative Research Qualitative research article review Assessing qualitative research EBP assignment time 	Book chapter: Padgett (2012) Article: Henriquez et al. (2024)	Worksheet 4; Due Friday, October 24 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 11 Oct 29	 Unobtrusive Research Review Articles: Systematic Review & Meta-Analysis Systematic Review article review EBP assignment time 	☐ Mauldin, Ch. 10 ☐ Article: Branco et al. (2022) ☐ Article: Crisp (2015)	EBP Article Review Table 2 (qualitative study); Due Friday, October 31 (11:59 p.m.)

Class	Course Topics	Readings	Assignments
Week 12 Nov 5	 Review Articles: Systematic Review & Meta-Analysis SR/MA research article review Assessing review articles EBP assignment time 	☐ Article: Branco et al. (2022) ☐ Article: Crisp (2015)	Worksheet 5; Due Friday, November 7 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 13 Nov 12	 Reporting Research Developing practice and EBP recommendations EBP assignment time 	Mauldin, Ch. 12 Article: Branco et al. (2022) Article: Henriquez et al. (2024) Article: Thai et al. (2023)	EBP Article Review Table 3 (systematic review or meta- analysis article); Due Friday, November 14 (11:59 p.m.)
Week 14 Nov 19	Real-World ResearchEvaluation as research	Mauldin, Ch. 11	Worksheet 6; Due Friday, November 21 (11:59 p.m.)
	Thanksgiving Bre	eak – No Class (Novemb	er 24–30)
Week 15 Dec 3	Research review (extra credit)		Due Thursday, December 4 (11:59 p.m.) Research Quiz 3; Due Thursday, December 4 (11:59 p.m.)
Final Exams Dec 6–12	No Final Exam; No Assignments Due		