

## Course Syllabus and Outline

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

# Research for Clinical Social Work Practice I-II SLWK 706-707

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Course Blog: <http://blog.vcu.edu/slwk706/>  
Course e-list: [SLWKResStud-1@lists.vcu.edu](mailto:SLWKResStud-1@lists.vcu.edu)  
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■ **COURSE DESCRIPTION: SLWK706. Research for Clinical Social Work Practice I.** 3 credits. Prerequisites: SLWK 609 and concentration year MSW program standing. First of two one-semester courses that further develop critical thinking skills in using empirical literature related to social work practice, translating research findings into practice principles, and measuring outcomes of clinical practice. Review of statistical inference and decision-making using univariate and bivariate techniques, introduction to computer applications for quantitative data and methods of analysis of qualitative data. Application of ethical standards for research involving human participants.

■ **COURSE DESCRIPTION: SLWK707. Research for Clinical Social Work Practice II.** 3 credits. Prerequisites: SLWK 609, 706 and concentration year MSW program standing. 2<sup>nd</sup> of two one-semester courses. Further development of critical thinking skills for translating research findings into practice principles and measuring outcomes of clinical practice introduced in SLWK 609 and 706. Data collection, data analysis, presentation of visual and statistical techniques for qualitative and quantitative research methods, and utilization of findings for improving clinical social work practice. Continue application of statistical inference and decision-making. Emphasizes integration of empirical research findings into a knowledge base for clinical social work practice, translating research findings into practice principles, and measuring outcomes of clinical practice.

■ **COURSE OBJECTIVES – SLWK706:** During or upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Critically evaluate empirically based research materials related to social work practice and understand the differences and appropriate applications of empirical and non-empirical professional literature.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the implications of empirical outcomes of social work practice and the appropriate application of the findings for culturally competent practice.
- Apply research principles to the development of each stage of the research process, including the research questions, measurement, study design, sampling and assignment, and data collection.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical standards of research with human participants and the issues related to informed consent especially as these apply to diverse and oppressed populations.
- Demonstrate an understanding of probability, statistical inference, and statistical decision-making.
- Use the computer to perform appropriate univariate and bivariate analyses of quantitative data and interpret the results of these analyses.
- Demonstrate a beginning understanding of approaches to qualitative data analysis.

■ **COURSE OBJECTIVES – SLWK707:** During or upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Plan and implement appropriate qualitative, quantitative or mixed method data analysis.
- Apply research principles to the measurement *of* outcomes of clinical social work practice and use findings to improve practice across a range of clients and practice situations.
- Translate findings from empirical research into social work practice principles and evaluate practice principles and techniques for their empirical base.
- Demonstrate a beginning ability to apply the principles of meta-analysis to evaluate results of empirically based research related to social work practice.
- Organize and present empirical research findings to a variety of stakeholder audiences.

■ **MAJOR COURSE UNITS – SLWK706:**

- 1) Unit I: Differential Use of Empirical and Non-Empirical Professional Literature
- 2) Unit II: Ethical Standards of Research with Human Participants of Diverse and Oppressed Populations (The Institutional Review Board Process)
- 3) Unit III: Applying Research Principles to the Development of Each Stage of the Research Process: A Review
- 4) Unit IV: Strategies for Quantitative Data Analysis
- 5) Unit V: Using SPSS to Perform Quantitative Data Analysis - Statistical Topics Include – descriptive and univariate statistics, bivariate (cross-tabs and simple regression)
- 6) Unit VI: Strategies for Qualitative Data Analysis

■ **MAJOR COURSE UNITS – SLWK707:**

- 7) Unit I: Identifying and Measuring Clinical Social Work Outcomes across a Range of Clients and Practice Situations
- 8) Unit II: Planning for Data Analysis
- 9) Unit III: Implementing Qualitative, Quantitative, or Mixed Method Data Analyses
- 10) Unit IV: Evaluating Research in Academic Journals
- 11) Unit V: Meta-Analysis of Empirically Based Research for Clinical Social Work Practice
- 12) Unit VI: Organizing and Presenting Empirical Data to Diverse Audiences

## **SLWK 706-707/UNIVERSITY RULES, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES**

### **COURSE MEETING INFORMATION:**

**SLWK 706** is scheduled to meet on Mondays from 4pm – 6:40pm in Business 2114. Class meeting dates are: 29 August; 5, 12, 19, 26 Sept; 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Oct; 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov; 5 Dec 2005.

**SLWK 707** is scheduled to meet (tentatively) same time and place. Class meeting dates are: 23, 30 January; 6, 13, 20, 27 February; 6, 20, 27 March; 3, 10, 17, 24, April and 1 May 2006. Spring Vacation is 12 -19 March.

**CHANGING COURSE SECTIONS:** SLWK706-707 is considered a one year course. Therefore, unless there are exceptionally extenuating circumstances, students will not be allowed to switch between sections. As the different instructors will not be teaching in lock step with each other, be forewarned that switching can cause you to be out of synch in the course and therefore at a disadvantage.

**COURSE WEBSITE:** I have created a website for this course. This website contains all of the important information concerning this course. The course syllabus, week-by-week course material, software downloads, and all related links can be found there. As part of the course requirements, you are expected to regularly check in on the website. In particular, you should always check at the end of the week (Friday/Saturday) to see if anything has been added for the upcoming Monday. The web address for the course website is

<http://www.vcu.edu/csbc/slwk706/> .

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires VCU to provide academic adjustments or accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. Students seeking academic adjustments or accommodations must self-identify with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. After meeting with the Coordinator, students are encouraged to meet with their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss their needs. Details on the Office of Disability Support Services may be found at

<http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/rg1access.html>

Student responsibility rests in informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:** Students in this course are expected to abide by the policies of the VCU Honor System. These policies are published annually in the University Resource Guide (<http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/>, which contains the student conduct guide) and can be found at:

<http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/honor.html>

The fundamental beliefs that underlie and are reflected in the Honor Code are:

- 1) That mutual trust is the positive force that makes an environment honorable
- 2) That the educational community should be free from the injustices caused by any form of intellectual dishonesty
- 3) That the honesty and integrity of all members of the VCU community contribute to the search for truth

- 4) That those who fail to live up to the stated expectations will be identified, sanctioned, and educated as to the appropriate and expected behavior to exist within the VCU and academic community.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, collusion, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Discipline may include removal from the class, removal/suspension from the program or expulsion from the university. There have been amendments to the Rules and Policies Procedures detailing Rights and Prohibited Conduct. This information can be found at

<http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/pdf/ResourceGuide2005-Policies.pdf>

■ **PLAGIARIZING:** Students in this course are expected to abide by the VCU Honor Code. Plagiarizing is not acceptable.

**Definition of Plagiarizing:** Representing orally or in writing, in any academic assignment or exercise, the words, ideas, or works of another as one's own without customary and proper acknowledgement of the source.

Examples of plagiarizing include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Submitting material or work for evaluation, in whole or part, which has been prepared by another individual(s) or commercial service.
- 2) Quoting another person, whether actual words, phrases, complete sentences or paragraphs, or an entire piece of written work without acknowledgment of the sources through customary or proper citation.
- 3) Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theory, even if it is completely paraphrased in one's own words without acknowledgement of the source.
- 4) Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials that are not clearly common knowledge without acknowledgement of the source.

Students are strongly urged to consult with individual faculty members, academic departments, or recognized handbooks in their field if in doubt regarding issues of plagiarism. Plagiarism is treated very seriously. It can result in your failing the class and even being expelled from VCU.

■ **SIGNING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE CONTRACT:** Students in this course are expected to abide by the policies of the NASW when it comes to discussion of shared personal classroom material and its subsequent discussion outside of the classroom. In order to create a safe learning environment, students are expected to treat the information content of any personal conversations that occur in the class as confidential, just as you would if you had the person as a client. You are being asked to sign the Social Justice contract to affirm your agreement of confidentiality and mutual respect. The contract is available for download on the home page of the class website <http://www.vcu.edu/csbc/slwk706/>. Please bring the signed contract with you to class. You should review the ethics policies of the National Association of Social Workers. The code of ethics can be found at <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

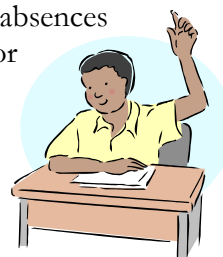
■ **PAGERS, BEEPERS, AND CELL PHONES:** If you carry a cell phone or a beeper, please set them to vibrate mode before you enter the class.




■ **FOOD:** You may eat in class as long as it is quiet food and as long as you make sure to clear your garbage.



■ **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** You are expected to attend each class, arrive on time, and remain for the entire class. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to ask questions on the scheduled topic material. However, if you are unable to attend a class, please inform the class instructor in advance, if possible. You are responsible for arranging to make up missed content. Attendance and participation is an important requirement for this class. However, attendance is not part of your grade. Because there is much learning to be had, both in class and in the lab experiences, any student missing more than two classes may see their absences reflected in their final grade. Circumstances often occur where an absence, planned or sudden, happens. The instructor understands this. In cases of planned absence, please make sure the instructor is aware – in advance – of this fact as it can lower your participation grade if you do not inform the instructor (see section on Grading below). In the case of unexpected absences, please inform the instructor as rapidly as possible. Late entry to class can be disturbing. Please remember to enter quietly.



■  **EMAIL REQUIREMENT:** All students in SLWK706-707 are required to have a valid email address during the entire period of the course. VCU offers student email addresses. To obtain a student email account visit:

[https://aurora.vcu.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/atucs/new\\_accts/new\\_acct.cgi](https://aurora.vcu.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/atucs/new_accts/new_acct.cgi)

You are expected to abide by the Student Email policy found at:

<http://www.at.vcu.edu/policies/webemail.htm>

The instructor will automatically add your email address to the course e-discussion list [SLWKResStud-l@lists.vcu.edu](mailto:SLWKResStud-l@lists.vcu.edu). This is an online discussion list for the course. It will allow you to communicate directly with all of the other students in the class. Do not unsubscribe from this list as I use it to communicate with the class. I will be sending out materials via this list, email reminders and notices, and answers to questions that come up during class or on this list. It is set to digest mode. This means that you should receive just one email a day that contains all of the dialogue for that day. You can change your preference by going online and resetting the preferences as indicated in the e-welcome letter you received when you were automatically subscribed. Don't throw that email away.

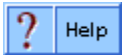
■ **COURSE BLOG:** All students in SLWK706-707 will have access to the course BLOG. For those of you who do not know what a BLOG is, it is a web-log/diary/dialogue that serves as a place to comment on the class, to provide help to people, to ask questions, and to distribute things electronically. For those of you who have used the VCU Blackboard system before, it is similar to Blackboard (only a great deal better). The BLOG is located at

<http://blog.vcu.edu/slwk706/>

You can also access the BLOG through the course web page. In order to post to the BLOG, you will need to be authorized. I will authorize the class after the first class meeting. You do not need to be authorized to read the BLOG. You may use the BLOG immediately.

■ **ELECTRONIC HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND THREATENING POLICY:** All students are expected to abide by Virginia Commonwealth University policies concerning the use of electronic forms (email, blog, e-list or other) for bullying, threat or harassment purposes. The instructor will have a zero tolerance policy towards the use of electronic media (email, distribution lists, course blog) to harass, bully or threaten other members of the course or the instructor. VCU's regulations concerning this subject may be found at the following web address:

[http://www.cepi.vcu.edu/newsletter/2004-2005/2005\\_Feb\\_Bullying\\_in\\_school.html](http://www.cepi.vcu.edu/newsletter/2004-2005/2005_Feb_Bullying_in_school.html)



■ **INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY:** The instructor wants to be available to students outside the classroom as well as during class sessions. I want you to do well in this class. Having myself been a student in this program, I intimately understand the complexities of juggling all of the demands made upon you and I want you to be successful. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours or at other arranged times to (a) ask questions about the course material or assignments, (b) review graded work, (c) obtain suggestions for further supplemental support/information readings, (d) review work before final submission, and (e) discuss other topics related to the course or to the social work profession in general. Times for tutoring can be arranged with the group. It is not necessary to make an appointment during office hours, although students who do make appointments will have priority if conflicts should arise. Many students will find that much of their out-of-class communication with the instructor can be accomplished conveniently via email, course blogging, or by telephone. Evening conversations should be kept brief (for example, a great time to make an appointment to meet for tutoring or calling to clarify a homework assignment) and should not occur after 10pm. Students are encouraged to use the class e-discussion list [SLWKResStud-1@lists.vcu.edu](mailto:SLWKResStud-1@lists.vcu.edu) or the course blog <http://blog.vcu.edu/slwk706/> to also ask questions.



## COURSE DETAILS

### ■ REQUIRED TEXTS:

- 1) Frankfort-Nachmias, C. & Leon-Guerrero, A. (2002). *Statistics for a diverse society*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press (ISBN 0761987436)
- 2) Kirkpatrick, L.A. & Feeney, B.C. (2006). *A simple guide to SPSS for Windows for version 12.0 & 13.0*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth (ISBN 0495090360)



■ **RECOMMENDED/SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:** Supplemental readings will be determined, as needed, throughout the length of the course. Readings will be posted on the course website, so please check the course website on a regular basis. Most readings will be posted as “pdf” files. This requires you to have installed Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer. This is a free download. Please go to the Software Section of the course website to find the download link or go directly to <http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/main.html>. Recommended additional textbooks are listed below. You are not required to purchase these books. I recommend them as further references for you, should you need additional reference materials. If you do not have access to the APA publication manual, you should consider purchasing it as we will use it as our style guide throughout the whole course year.



- 1) APA. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: APA Press.
- 2) Lipsey, M. W. & Wilson, D. B. (2001). *Practical meta-analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- 3) Monette, D.R., Sullivan, T.J. & DeJong, C.R. (1994). *Applied social research: Tool for the human services* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, N.Y.: Rinehart & Winston
- 4) Montcalm, D. & Royse, D. (2002). *Data analysis for social workers*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 5) Neuman, W. L., & Kreuger, L. W. (2003). *Social work research methods qualitative and quantitative applications*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 6) Nurusis, M. (2002). *SPSS 11.0 Guide to data analysis*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: 07458.
- 7) Pyrczak, F. (2003) *Success at Statistics: A Worktext with humor* (2nd edition). Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing.
- 8) Szuchman, L. & Thomlinson, B. (2004) *Writing with Style: APA for Social Work* (2nd edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- 9) Weinbach, R., & Grinnell, R. (2004). *Statistics for Social Workers*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- 10) Yegedis, B & Weinbach, R. (2002) *Research Methods for Social Workers*. (4th edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

■ **LIBRARY READINGS:** You may be asked to do library work such as read a section of a book or obtain certain articles on-line. An excellent resource for this is the VCU Libraries web page. The VCU Libraries website can be found at the following internet address:

<http://www.library.vcu.edu/>

Library resources for undergraduate and professional students can be found at:

<http://www.library.vcu.edu/profile/undergrad.html>

A detailed discussion of methods to perform on-line literature searching will occur in class.

■ **COURSE SUPPLIES/SOFTWARE:** You will need the following items: some CD's and/or zip-disks for program storage and work. Other supplies may become necessary depending upon the choices of projects that you make throughout the semester. You will need to have regular access to the internet and you will need access to the following software programs and supplies:

- 1) SPSS 13 – For course statistical work
- 2) Adobe Acrobat Reader – for reading pdf files (free download)  
<http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/main.html>
- 3) PowerPoint – for presentation development
- 4) Word – for assignment writing
- 5) Excel – for spreadsheet data entry
- 6) Colored pencils – at least 3 different colors
- 7) Handheld Math calculator – should have all the basic math functions like square root, powers, exponentials, etc. You can also download a free calculator (if you use Windows) from the “Links” section on the course website. The calculator is called Allercalc. Calculators will be needed for in class exercises so please make sure to bring them with you for each class.



Some people find that a spreadsheet program is helpful for entering large amounts of data into SPSS. While we will use MS Word and PowerPoint/Excel for our work in class, there is no requirement to use them as long as you provide files that are accessible to the instructor. Some people like to use WordPerfect as their general document environment. That is fine as long as you export the program to “rtf” format so that MS Word can read it. If you are a Mac Geek and you wish to use OpenOffice software, that is also acceptable. I can read just about every format available. You are not required to purchase SPSS. It is available on the machines in the School of Social Work Laboratory. However, there is a student discount if you are interested in having a copy. You can either, go to the computer store in the Student Commons and purchase the software there or you can download it over the internet from the Academic Technology website located at

[http://www.at.vcu.edu/faq/soft/list\\_all.html](http://www.at.vcu.edu/faq/soft/list_all.html)

Given how much you will use SPSS in the course, I recommend that you download it via the VCU internet Academic Technologies website above (save yourself the money for the media).

■ **LECTURE FORMAT:** A heavy emphasis will be placed on integrating your research interests with the material presented in this course. It is expected that students will attend each class, remain for the entire class period, and be prepared to discuss weekly readings and to ask questions as needed. No question is considered stupid in this class. Help a neighbor, ask your question. It is also expected that students will come to class having read the materials for the class. This does not mean that you will be expected to understand the material. It means that you will have a degree of awareness of the material and that you will know what it is that you need help with. Lectures may deviate from the schedule or may contain material not necessarily covered in any of the readings. Class lectures and discussion may not cover all of the assigned readings, as the instructor will attempt to respond to the particular needs of the





students as a group in focusing classroom activity. We will all work together to ensure that our classroom comments reflect sensitivity to the needs, circumstances, and comments of our classmates (see section on Social Justice). The assigned readings and the dates that they will be

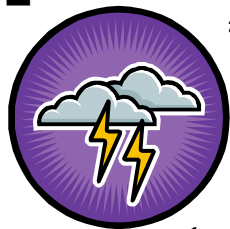
discussed are provided in the course lecture-by-lecture outline. Please note that these dates and topics may fluctuate somewhat during the semester. An assignment for the next class will usually be made at the end of each class session. In addition to the primary lecturer, there may be invited speakers who will lecture on special topics. Class meetings will consist of (a) instructor presentations, (b) in-class exercises, (c) computer lab participation and assignments, and (d) discussions of the readings and/or homework assignments as well as (e) ancillary related discussions on course matter.

■ **DEFINING A WORK DAY:** A work day is not a vacation day. These days are designed to coincide with the days you hand in your examinations. On a work day you will come to class, hand in your examination and then be free to meet with the instructor or to work on your research project. Make use of this time to advance your research. As we are giving you this time, complaints of insufficient time to complete projects or to meet deadlines for handing in materials will be considered with a highly jaundiced eye by the instructor.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE

■ **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:** Students are expected to attend all classes/computer labs, to complete all required readings, homework assignments and examinations on schedule, and to participate in class/computer lab discussions and exercises. Successful students are competent writers. The ability to effectively communicate your thoughts and ideas through writing is essential to your professional career and your professional development. Written assignments will be evaluated for accomplishment of objectives of assignment, organization and clarity of discussion, demonstration of the ability to integrate and critically apply course content, and yes – correct spelling, grammar, and accurate use of APA style. Expected formats will be discussed as assignments are given out. Be warned, if you like using spell-checking, you are in for a surprise. They do not catch all of the mistakes. For example, “What is going on over their,” will be seen as a correct spelling of the word “their” even though you meant “there.” Please carefully proof-read your manuscripts before you hand them in.

■ **HANDLING INCLEMENT WEATHER:** If the university is closed for inclement weather, all due dates and other requirements for a given lecture will be adjusted as needed. Students will be contacted via the email distribution list and the course blog as to how to handle any particular issues. Because the coursework and lecture notes are available online, unless your internet access is out, you should still be able to review the course material for a given lecture and read the textbook, even if the school is closed. Due to the large amount of material needing coverage and the tight timelines we have with which to work, inclement weather days are not viewed as “holidays.” You will be expected to read the lecture notes and chapter materials, work on any computer exercises, assignments, and to progress towards completion of your IRB proposal (Fall Semester) and your final project (Spring Semester). To find out about VCU inclement weather status, go to <http://www.vcu.edu/alert/>.



■ **CLASS PARTICIPATION:** 5% of the course grade will be determined by the instructor’s perception of the student’s preparation for and contribution to class discussion and in-class exercises for both **SLWK 706** and **SLWK 707**. Different students will participate and contribute in different ways. Some will have an easy time with spontaneous interactions and others will be most comfortable making a planned statement about a key idea from the readings. Both types of contribution are valued. Students will always be given an opportunity to share and contribute in class. The instructor welcomes this valuable interaction. In addition, we will work in small groups to apply some of the concepts learned in class. Class participation grades will be determined, in part, by your contribution to these exercises. Unexcused absences will lower the participation grade. More than three such absences will result in a grade of F for participation. Part of class participation is also asking questions. No question, no matter how stupid you might think it, is a bad or stupid question. I encourage questions.



■ **DUE DATES AND DELIVERY OF ASSIGNMENTS:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date due. Grades on late assignments, *i.e.*, those not handed in to me at the beginning of class on the date due, will be reduced by 5% per day for each day that they are late. This includes the time after the start of class on the date due and weekend days as well. Papers will not be accepted beyond one week of the assignment due date unless prior arrangements have been made (in writing/email) with the instructor. The instructor may find it necessary to change exam dates and due dates for

papers depending upon the rate at which the material is covered. Please do not leave papers or examinations under the instructor's office door or taped to the door. Assignments must be handed directly to the instructor.

■ **TEAM EFFORTS:** I have no problem with team efforts. In fact, I encourage teaming up with someone else in the class. It is an excellent way to really learn the material. I will expressly discourage teams of more than two people. Typically, teams of 3 or more tend to lead to more problems than benefits.



■ **EXTRA CREDIT:** I don't give extra credit out because it philosophically and artificially skews the grading scheme of the class. If you are having trouble with any part of the class or computer laboratory, please come and see me during office hours or set up an appointment. You may also stop by my office and, if I am in, you may inquire if I have time to work with you. I am more than happy to bend over backwards to help you learn the class material and to get a good grade. However, you must make the effort to come for help. Of course, you should also use your classmates, the library, and the Internet for help as well.

■ **MAKEUP AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** It is always difficult to deal with makeup assignments. While I wish to be just to everyone in the class, it is often difficult to decide whose excuse is justified and whose is just an excuse to obtain more time to complete an assignment. Consequently, I will be adhering to the following rules.



- 1) Sickness must be justified with a doctor's note.
- 2) Assignments handed in late, without prior permission from the course instructor, will be reduced as per the late assignment discussion under grading.
- 3) Assignments greater than one week late will not be accepted and will receive and F.

Hence, it behooves you – if you know that you are going to be late – to come and discuss the situation with me before you are actually late.

■ **GRADING CRITERIA:** Each assignment has specific elements that will be assessed in the grading process. In the case of straight problem assignments, standard mathematics grading will be used (see grading scale below). In the case where there are paper assignments and presentations, the following principles are used in the grading process.

- A All requirements are met and all or most parts of the work are outstanding, in that the student not only responds fully to all parts of the assignment but also goes beyond the required work in some substantial or creative manner.
- B All content requirements are met and the overall quality is very good.
- C Most (or even all) content requirements are met, but some of the aspects of the assignment are not adequately developed. A "C" is also assigned when a student fails to complete a part of the assignment without prior discussion and permission from the instructor.

D-F Major content areas of the assignment are not addressed, and/or many of them are not adequately developed

### GRADING SCALE:

- [SLWK 706]** – The grading scale is 91.6-100% = A, 79.6-91.5% = B, 69.6-79.5% = C, 60-69.5% = D, and below 60% is failing. The weighting of the various course assignments is as follows: IRB Citi Training = 10%, Research Proposal = 35%, Examinations = 40%, Weekly Dilemma and Weekly Lecture Evaluation = 5%, Class Participation = 5%, Homework = 5%. At the end of the semester, the overall average will be calculated as follows. Each component will be averaged and grade carried to two decimal places. All three components will be added together and rounded up to one decimal place. Final grades will be assigned according to the rounded final number.
- [SLWK 707]** – The grading scale is 91.6-100% = A, 79.6-91.5% = B, 69.6-79.5% = C, 60-69.5% = D, and below 60% is failing. The weighting of the various course assignments is as follows: Research Project = 45%, Examinations = 45%, Weekly Lecture Evaluation = 5%, Class Participation = 5%, Homework = 5%. At the end of the semester, the overall average will be calculated as follows. Each component will be averaged and grade carried to two decimal places. All three components will be added together and rounded up to one decimal place. Final grades will be assigned according to the rounded final number.



**VCU GRADE REVIEW POLICY:** A copy of the VCU grade review policy can be found at the following web address

<http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7grades.html>

**WEEKLY HOMEWORK:** No material can be absorbed without some practice problems. In order to facilitate your learning experience, there will be two types of weekly assignment; statistics problems from the test or from handouts and computer lab assignments/exercises. These assignments will not be graded for correctness. A completed homework assignment is one in which all problems have been reasonably attempted. It is up to the instructor's discretion as to whether or not an assignment has been reasonably attempted. One point will be earned for each completed homework assignment. No points will be earned for late or incomplete assignments. This is worth 5% of your final grade for both **SLWK706** and **SLWK 707**. You may team up on the statistics problems. However, if you choose to team up, then each person's name must appear on the cover page of the homework assignment. I will strongly discourage teams of 3 or more individuals. Additionally, on the cover page of your team homework assignment, the following statement must appear, along with each individual's full signature: *"I have contributed to all aspects of this homework assignment from problem-solving through the final write-up. Moreover, I am prepared to publicly defend/explain all solutions in this homework assignment."*



■ **COURSE EXAMINATIONS:** There will be two take-home examinations. The examinations will be averaged as follows  $(2 \times \text{Best Score} + \text{Other Score})/3$ . Scores are calculated to 2 decimal places and rounded to 1 decimal place. This final score will represent 40% of your **SLWK706** grade. For **SLWK 707**, the same algorithm will be followed except that the final score will represent 45% of your final grade. Examinations are scheduled as per the course schedule. However, these dates may change as a result of the pace that we move through the material, weather-related factors, *etc.*



■ **WEEKLY DILEMMAS:** There will be a weekly dilemma posted to the course website every week. This will be a problem that you could possibly face as a researcher. You will be asked to write a brief response to the dilemma and submit it via e-mail. This must be completed by 3pm on the day of class. 100% will be awarded for a reasonable attempt, 0% for failure to submit the weekly response or for a poor attempt. The instructor reserves the right to judge the reasonableness of the attempts. This will constitute 5% of your **SLWK 706** grade. There will be no dilemmas in **SLWK 707**.



■ **LECTURE EVALUATIONS:** After each class you will be expected to return to the course website and submit your lecture evaluation for that week. This evaluation process will take approximately 5 minutes. This is also done via email. It must be completed by the Sunday following the Monday class that week. There are no correct or incorrect answers to the questions on this evaluation. Constructive criticism and commentary and respectful responses are expected. 100% will be awarded for completing the weekly evaluation, 0% will be awarded for failure to submit the weekly evaluation or for incomplete or poor attempts. The instructor reserves the right to judge the reasonableness of the attempts. This will constitute 5% of your **SLWK 706** grade and 5% of your **SLWK 707** grade for each semester's respective responses.

■ **IRB/CITI EXAMINATION – SLWK 706:** At VCU, and most other research institutions, only faculty and staff may serve as principal investigators (PI's) on an IRB protocol. One reason for this policy is so that an established individual is the contact person and takes the responsibility for the IRB submission and conduct of the research. Another reason is for faculty to provide guidance to students who are unacquainted with the research process and the function of the IRB (something we will discuss more in the course). In order to be a PI on an IRB that involves animals, humans and a number of other monitored areas, you must be certified to work in those areas. Human subjects protection training is a requirement of all PI's and key personnel. Because you will be acting as a PI on your individual research projects and interacting with human subjects or their data, you are required to take the training and to pass it by a specific point in the class (see course schedule). Details about the training are located at <http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/education.htm> and the actual test is located at <https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp> . You will receive a certificate of successful completion of the CITI course approximately 10 (ten) days after completing the online training and examination. You must submit this original certificate to me by the specified syllabus date. Make sure to keep a copy of the certificate for your records. The successful completion of this examination comprises 10% of your **SLWK 706** final grade and is necessary for you to continue towards the course completion. You will receive 100% for passing or a 0% for failure or non-completion. Given the fact that you will not be meeting the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of class, the first two weeks of class would be a great time to make a real head start on the CITI examination. I encourage you all to take advantage of this time to move forward on completing the CITI.

■ **RESEARCH IRB PROPOSAL – SLWK 706:** The goal of this yearlong course is for you to complete a research project on a topic of interest/importance to you or your field placement agency. It is expected that this project will be of professional quality (understanding that this is a first time for most of you). You will complete this project in two steps. In **SLWK 706** you will complete an IRB research proposal (35% of your grade for the fall semester). In **SLWK 707** you will carry out the proposed research, you will analyze your data, you will then prepare a presentation and a paper on the results of your research (45% of your grade for the spring semester). Due dates for all of the components of the proposal are found in the attached course syllabus and reiterated in the weekly postings of the lectures on the course website. Be Warned! This is an extremely time-consuming process and will require you to remain extremely focused on meeting targeted deadlines. Missing these deadlines could cost you significant time and even your project if you do not make the deadlines for IRB submission. We will discuss this further in class. Be Further Warned! Many agencies have internal IRB requirements that must be passed before they will allow you to use the agency as part of a research project. It is critical that you speak with your agency supervisor to ascertain whether or not you will need to also meet agency IRB requirements. If you do have to meet agency requirements, you must remember to allow yourself the extra time and prepare to accelerate your schedule of deadlines.

■ **RESEARCH PROJECT – SLWK 707:** The final research project will consist of two distinct parts; a written research paper and an oral presentation. The written report must be completed in APA format. For those students working in groups, each member of the group will submit their own individual written report of their study. Additional discussion regarding the detailed requirements of this assignment will be provided at a later point. Your individual final written report will be evaluated in conjunction with the final oral presentation grade and will comprise 45% of your **SLWK 707** final grade. The two components of the final research project will comprise the total research project grade as follows. 65% of the research project grade will be based upon the written component and 35% of the research project grade will be based on the oral presentation. Due dates are found in the syllabus and on the course website but are subject to change.

■ **RESEARCH PROJECT – ORAL PRESENTATION COMPONENT – SLWK 707:** The final oral presentations will be presented in the last sessions of the class (final exam day, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester). Each group/individual will present their research findings to the class. Presentations will include an overview of the topic, student questions/hypotheses, a description of the research methodology, a summary of results, study limitations, and a discussion of study implications for social work practice and research. Presentations should be in Powerpoint or OpenOffice format. A copy of the presentation should be burned to a CD, labeled with your name, year, and project title and given to the instructor at the time of your presentation. Prepare a handout for the class so that the class can follow along and take notes. Additional information regarding the detailed requirements of this assignment will be provided at a later point. Due dates are found in the syllabus and on the course website but are subject to change.

■ **FINAL ORAL PRESENTATION STRUCTURE:**

- a) Presentation format is 15/5. This means you will have 10 minutes to present your work and you must leave 5 minutes for questions. The talk should cover the basics of any good paper.
  - i) Statement of the problem and hypotheses guiding the study
  - ii) Background material
    - Why is your problem important/of interest? What is its relevance to Social Work?
    - What does the previous research in the field tell us?
  - iii) What did you do with your research effort?

- Discuss the methods you used and why you chose to attack the problem as you did.
- Make sure to state the following information
  - ⇒ Study design and setting. Justify study design.
  - ⇒ Data collection design and procedures
  - ⇒ Sample sizes and justify why you chose the sample sizes you did
  - ⇒ Statistical methods used and why. Relate tests to type of variables being analyzed.
  - ⇒ Operational definitions of dependent and independent variables
  - ⇒ If you used instruments, make sure to address known reliability and validity of your instruments
- iv) Present your major research findings as related to each question/hypothesis
  - Show the statistical results upon which you base your findings
    - ⇒ Make sure to show any statistical significances, etc.
- v) What conclusions can you derive from these results?
- vi) What are the implications for Social Work Practice
- vii) How would you critique your work?
  - Discuss potential weaknesses, flaws, and inconsistencies
  - Present possible alternative methods and conclusions
  - Discuss any diversity-related confounding factors.

### ■ FINAL PAPER STRUCTURE:

When the time comes, we will discuss the paper formatting and structure in greater detail. This information is supplied for you so that you can get started. Your paper should follow the standard paper format for submission to the Journal of the National Association of Social Workers (JNASW). You are also restricted to a total of 25 pages. This total does not count the cover page, abstract page, and references, tables, and figures pages. You will have 1 point deducted for each page you go over the limit. Manuscripts need to be double-spaced throughout. 1 inch margins all the way around. No footnotes or endnotes. 12 point Times Roman font. A sample paper will be provided later on in class. Paper structure is as follows:

- 1) Cover page
  - a) Top of page. Left justified. Type a line called Running Head. This is a no more than 10 word phrase used at the top of the page when the article is published. It identifies the article.
  - b) Approximately 5 lines down, centered, type your title (all in caps). Use no more than two lines.
  - c) Skip down 3 lines, centered, type your name, new line course and section number, new line, date
  - d) Bottom of the page, insert the page number, centered
- 2) Abstract Page
  - a) Approximately 10 lines down, centered, type the word Abstract
  - b) Skip 2 lines
  - c) In no more than 50 words tell me about your paper. Summarize the research problem, what you did and the most essential results. I will read this first and it will tell me whether or not I am interested in your paper. So the Abstract is important.
  - d) Skip 5 lines, left justified, type the word Keywords. Follow this with no more than 10 keywords that will be used to look up your paper if I were to search for it in the literature. These are the search words that will be the most essential if I were to look for your paper. They should be in alphabetical order and separated by semi-colons.
- 3) Background and Introduction

- 4) Methods
- 5) Results
- 6) Discussion
- 7) Closing Thoughts and Conclusions
- 8) References
- 9) Acknowledgements
  - a) Make sure to thank anyone who helped you on this project. If you received financial support or other organizational support, make sure to acknowledge this as well.

**DETAILED COURSE SYLLABUS SLWK 706**

Week	General Topic Area	Details	Research Target
29 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Administrative matters</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Overview of course material</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Introductory remarks</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Introduction to Computing at VCU</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collect Social Justice forms</li> <li>▪ Go over Syllabus</li> <li>▪ Introductions all around</li> <li>▪ Introduction to basic computing facilities to get you started with the work               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ VCU Library – My Library</li> <li>○ E-journals</li> <li>○ Highwire, Silver Platter</li> <li>○ Google, Google Scholar</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
5 Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>School closed</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beginning Your Research Projects               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ VCU Library – My Library</li> <li>○ E-journals</li> <li>○ Highwire, Silver Platter</li> <li>○ Google, Google Scholar</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CITI Exam information is located at <a href="http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/education.htm">http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/education.htm</a></li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment</u>: Identify websites relevant to your research work and submit them to <a href="mailto:twitten@vcu.edu">twitten@vcu.edu</a> Formulate 3 research questions that you might like to investigate. Prepare to bring them to class. Explore the above websites and familiarize yourself with web search tools. Answer the research dilemma. Read Chapter 1 of FN &amp; LB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Download IRB forms and look them over</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Begin CITI exam</b></li> </ul>
12 Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Overview of Research</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Types of Research</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Problem Formulation</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Literature Review</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to Research               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ways of knowing (Culture/Diversity)</li> <li>○ What is research?</li> <li>○ Formulating a research problem</li> <li>○ Types of research problem</li> <li>○ How to review the literature</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment</u>: Make sure to download the Article Review Guidelines or bring your syllabus with you to class. You will need the Article Review Guidelines for our work today. Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire. Review the material in Chapter 1 of FN &amp; LB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue CITI exam</b></li> </ul>

19 Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ethical Issues in Research</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ History of Ethical Issues</li> <li>▪ Human Subjects/Special Populations</li> <li>▪ IRB and the VCU IRB Protocol</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment</u>: Revisit the following websites  <a href="http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/index.htm">http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/index.htm</a>  <a href="http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/activities.htm">http://www.research.vcu.edu/irb/activities.htm</a>  <a href="http://www.research.vcu.edu/forms/vcuirb.htm">http://www.research.vcu.edu/forms/vcuirb.htm</a></li> <li>▪ <u>Download</u>: Preparing the IRB Packet handout from the course website and bring to class or bring your course syllabus. You will need the handout/syllabus for our work today. Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue CITI exam</b></li> <li>▪ <b>SPSS downloaded and installed</b></li> </ul>
26 Sept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Organizing and Presenting Information</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Databases, Spreadsheets, SPSS, and Graphics</li> <li>▪ Scientific Data Plots and Data Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pie charts, bar charts, stat maps, histograms, scattergrams, and more</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Software (SigmaPlot, SAS Graph, IDL, Origin, etc)</li> <li>▪ Scientific Visualization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Dimensional Data</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Visualization Tricks and Traps</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment</u>: Read FN&amp;LB Chapters 2 &amp; 3 Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> <li>▪ <u>Warning</u>: IRB Proposal STEP 1 due to be handed in to instructor next week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue CITI exam</b></li> </ul>
3 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>What is a Distribution?</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Measures of Central Tendency (clustering)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is a distribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Distribution types, shapes and properties</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Frequencies, percentages and proportions</li> <li>▪ Summation Notation</li> <li>▪ How do we quantify distributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clustering measures (mean, median, mode, percentiles, frequencies and groups)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment</u>: Read FN&amp;LG Chapter 4 Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>IRB proposal STEP 1 due</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Continue CITI exam</b></li> </ul>

10 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>What is a Distribution?</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Measures of Variation (dispersion or spread)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More on what is a distribution</li> <li>▪ How to we quantify distributions             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dispersion measures (IQV, range, interquartiles, coefficient of variation, variance, standard deviation, standard error, skewness and kurtosis)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Read FN&amp;LG Chapter 5 Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> <li>▪ <u>Warning:</u> CITI exam completion due in 2 weeks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue CITI exam</b></li> </ul>
17 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>First Exam Handed Out</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exam Review and Problem Solving Session</li> <li>▪ Review of Materials for IRB Step 2 Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>CITI exam passed by next week</b></li> </ul>
24 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Measures of Association</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to Cross Tabulations             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bivariate relationships</li> <li>○ Marginals and tables</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Measures of Association for Nominal and Ordinal Variables</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Read FN&amp;LG Chapters 6&amp;7. Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> <li>▪ <u>Warning:</u> IRB Step 2 due in 2 weeks. Bring the Preparing the IRB Packet handout from the course website to class or bring your course syllabus. You will need the handout/syllabus for our work today.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Hand in exams at beginning of class</b></li> <li>▪ <b>CITI exam completed &amp; passed</b></li> </ul>
31 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Bivariate Regression and Correlation - 1</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Halloween Fun (yes, you can come to class in a costume if you want)</li> <li>▪ Scattergrams again</li> <li>▪ What is Correlation?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Correlation vs. Causation</li> <li>○ Calculating correlation</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Linear relationships and prediction</li> <li>▪ What is Regression?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Just because it looks like a straight line, does that mean that it is?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Covariance</li> <li>▪ Nonlinear relationships</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Read FN&amp;LG Chapter 8. Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> <li>▪ <u>Warning:</u> IRB Step 2 document due next week</li> </ul>	

7 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Bivariate Regression and Correlation - 2</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continuation of Bivariate Regression and Correlation.</li> <li>▪ Pearson correlation</li> <li>▪ Calculating the regression equation (Least Squares Method)</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Re-read FN&amp;LG Chapter 8. Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>IRB STEP 2 due</b></li> <li>▪ <b>CITI exam certificates due</b></li> </ul>
14 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Second Examination Handed Out</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exam Review and Problem Solving Session</li> <li>▪ Review of Materials for IRB Step 3</li> <li>▪ <u>Warning:</u> IRB Step 2 due in 3 weeks. Bring the Preparing the IRB Packet handout from the course website to class or bring your course syllabus. You will need the handout/syllabus for our work today.</li> <li>▪ Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	
21 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Qualitative Research and Data Analysis</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is qualitative research?</li> <li>▪ Methods for analyzing qualitative data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Traditional ethnography</li> <li>○ Narrative analysis</li> <li>○ Grounded theory</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Use of computers</li> <li>▪ Ethics in qualitative research</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Hand in exams at beginning of class</b></li> </ul>
28 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Sampling</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issues of sampling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sample size</li> <li>○ Recruitment (inclusion/exclusion)</li> <li>○ Sampling methods</li> <li>○ Power</li> <li>○ Sampling flaws</li> <li>○ Sampling distribution of the mean</li> <li>○ Random number tables</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Read FN&amp;LG Chapter 11. Answer the research dilemma. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> <li>▪ <u>Warning:</u> IRB Step 3 due next week</li> </ul>	
5 Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Closing Review</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Administrative Matters</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Instructor Meetings for Step 3 edits</b></li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Review of semester <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Topics covered</li> <li>b) Methods discussed</li> <li>c) Take home message</li> </ol> </li> <li>(2) Course evaluation</li> <li>(3) IRB Step 3 due – meet with instructor</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>IRB STEP 3 finished and ready to hand in</b></li> </ul>

<b>Final Exam Day</b>	▪ <b>IRB Signoff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Students visit with instructor for final IRB signoff at instructor's office.</li><li>▪ Cover letter from instructor issued</li><li>▪ Copies made for IRB submission</li><li>▪ IRB documents delivered to IRB Office</li></ul>	▪ <b>IRB packet</b> <b>Cover letter issued and delivery to IRB Office</b>
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### DETAILED COURSE SYLLABUS SLWK 707

Week	General Topic Area	Details	Research Target
23 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Administrative matters</li> <li>▪ Overview of course material</li> <li>▪ Introductory remarks</li> <li>▪ Introduction to Computing at VCU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collect Social Justice forms</li> <li>▪ Go over Syllabus</li> <li>▪ Introductions all around</li> <li>▪ Introduction/review to/of basic computing facilities to get you started with the work</li> <li>▪ IRB status reports/Research project updates</li> <li>▪ Open items from last semester</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Address any IRB problems that have come up</li> <li>▪ Address any unsubmitted IRB proposals</li> </ul>
30 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of Statistical Methods from Last Semester - 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review Measures of Association</li> <li>▪ Review Measures of Dispersion</li> <li>▪ Review Correlations and Causation</li> <li>▪ Review Regression</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Reread FN&amp;LG Chapters 8 &amp; 9. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	As IRB proposals are approved, you will be notified that you can begin your research project
6 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of Statistical Methods from Last Semester - 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue Regression Review</li> <li>▪ Review Sampling</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Reread FN&amp;LG Chapters 8, 9, &amp; 11. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	As IRB proposals are approved, you will be notified that you can begin your research project
13 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the Normal Distribution - 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Binomial Distribution</li> <li>▪ What is the “Normal” distribution?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Area under the curve</li> <li>○ z-score, t-score</li> <li>○ Using the z and t-tables</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Basic calculations using the normal distribution</li> <li>▪ What do we do if the sample is too small for the normal distribution?</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Reread FN&amp;LG Chapters 8, 10, and 11. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	
20 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduction to the Normal Distribution – 2</li> <li>▪ First Examination Handed Out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued Discussion on the “Normal” distribution               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Area under the curve</li> <li>○ z-score, t-score</li> <li>○ Using the z and t-tables</li> <li>○ More on the z and t-tables</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Central Limit theorem</li> <li>▪ Problem-solving review for first examination</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Reread FN&amp;LG Chapters 8, 10, and 11. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	

27 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Work Date</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hand in examinations.</li> <li>▪ Meet with instructor to review project status and to address any project problems</li> <li>▪ Work on project research (library work as needed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use the time to create your research paper introduction and literature review as well as your bibliography</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Hand in exams at beginning of class</b></li> </ul>
6 Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Estimation</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is Estimation</li> <li>▪ Methods of Estimation</li> <li>▪ Estimating Confidence Intervals for Population Parameters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mean, proportion, standard deviation, sum/difference</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Reread FN&amp;LG Chapter 12. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	
20 Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Hypothesis Testing - 1</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is hypothesis testing</li> <li>▪ How do we test hypotheses? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Null vs. alternative hypothesis</li> <li>○ Type 1 and Type 2 errors (<math>\alpha</math> vs. <math>\beta</math>)</li> <li>○ Levels of significance</li> <li>○ Testing 1 vs. 2-tail</li> <li>○ Special tests</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Read FN&amp;LG Chapter 13. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	
27 Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Hypothesis Testing - 2</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hypothesis testing continued</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Reread FN&amp;LG Chapter 13. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	
3 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Chi-squared</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Why chi-squared (<math>\chi^2</math>)?</li> <li>▪ Observed vs. theoretical frequencies</li> <li>▪ Definition of <math>\chi^2</math></li> <li>▪ Significance tests</li> <li>▪ Contingency tables</li> <li>▪ Simple formula</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Read FN&amp;LG Chapter 13. Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	
10 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Review of Chapters 12-14</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Second Examination Handed Out</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exam Review and Problem Solving Session</li> <li>▪ <u>Assignment:</u> Submit your response to weekly lecture evaluation questionnaire.</li> </ul>	

17 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Work Date</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hand in examinations.</li> <li>▪ Meet with instructor to review project status and to address any project problems</li> <li>▪ Work on project research (library work as needed)</li> <li>▪ Use the time to continue to work on your research paper.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Hand in exams at beginning of class</b></li> </ul>
24 Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Introduction to Meta-Analysis and Evidence-based Analysis</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be determined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Final research papers due next week</b></li> </ul>
1 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Closing Review</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Administrative Matters</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Course Evaluation</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Topics covered</li> <li>○ Methods discussed</li> <li>○ Take home message</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Course evaluation</li> <li>▪ Final project papers due</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Final research papers due</b></li> </ul>
<b>Final Exam Day</b>	<b>Final Project Presentations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Bring CD with presentation</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Bring handouts for class</b></li> </ul>

## ARTICLE REVIEW GUIDELINES

As part of the defining of your research project, you will be reading various articles in the literature. Part of your training in this course is to develop a scientific approach to evaluating the content of an article or a text. This ability will not just help you towards managing your final project research but will also help you in your practice. How so you say? Very simply, in either policy or clinical practice, you will be required to evaluate documents (other people's professional research writings). You need to develop skills to assess the importance of those documents not just to your immediate practice, but to your organization or to political change. One of the critical goals of this course is to assist you in fine-tuning that ability. Towards that end, the following is a set of things to keep in mind as you read your articles. Remember, these topics are the identical topics you will be required to address in your IRB proposal and to present in your final end-of-the year research presentation. Keep this sheet with you as a checklist when you read.

### 1) Citation

- a) Become familiar with the APA citation rules. You will have to have all of your literature references cited correctly. Practice with the articles that you read. It is also good to keep an on-going bibliography. Your final paper and your IRB proposal will need to cite the literature. You will need to keep track of what you have read.

### 2) Rationale and Purpose

- a) What is the rationale for this study? What social conditions are under study? Can you state the basic research problem in one sentence?
- b) What in the literature has created interest in such a study? Is the cited literature relevant? Does the literature review appear to be complete/thorough/up to date? Have any relevant articles/studies been omitted?
- c) Is the study important to social work?
  - i) How so?
  - ii) If not, why not?
- d) Is the purpose of the study explanatory, evaluative, descriptive or multi-purpose?
- e) What is the research question(s) and/or hypothesis(es) of the study? How did the author(s) explain the importance of the research problem? Do you feel that it was a justifiable explanation? Is this problem related to practice or to policy or to both? Explain your reasoning.
- f) Is there a theoretical framework presented? What is it? Are there alternative frameworks? Are the stated hypotheses justifiable within the theoretical framework?
- g) What do the researchers intend to accomplish with this study? What are the independent, dependent, proxy, and confounding variables addressed in the study? How are they operationalized? Are they operationalized adequately? Do you believe that they are operationalized correctly? Could some be operationalized differently?
- h) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the study?
  - i) Strengths
  - ii) Weaknesses

### 3) Methods and General Procedures

- a) IRB approval stated?

- i) Does the article state it has IRB approval for the study?
  - If not, why not?
- ii) Does the article mention any respect for subject rights?
  - If not, why not?
- b) Do the authors present a study design? How well do you feel the design is described? Does it fit the study? If not, why not? What is the study design (cross-sectional study vs. longitudinal study)? Why do you think the authors chose this study design? Does the choice of study design eliminate alternative hypotheses? If so, how?
- c) Have the authors addressed the issues of internal and external validity of the study? If so how? Do you see any problems in these areas?
- d) What are the units of analysis? What types of data are being collected?
- e) Sample Population
  - i) Type of sample (probability vs. non- probability)
  - ii) What specific type of sampling method was used? How is it justified?
  - iii) Size of sample and size of samples in all subgroups in the study
  - iv) Recruitment of sample/sampling methods
  - v) Selection
    - Inclusion criteria
    - Exclusion criteria
  - vi) Sample appropriate for study? How representative of the entire population is the sample? Are all appropriate sub-populations represented in the study? Have the authors explained why certain groups were either eliminated or included? What do you think?
  - vii) What is the likelihood of generalizability of the findings to other populations based upon the sample and study design?
    - Not enough people per group?
  - viii) Careful delineation of variables of importance. How are variables operationalized by the authors? Are operational definitions adequate? What are the units of analysis? Were they appropriate for the research question and the hypotheses? Are the arguments open to fallacious reasoning? If so how?
    - Independent variables
    - Dependent variables
    - Covariates
    - Level of measurement
  - ix) Do the choices of variables fit within the framework of the study and the theoretical construct of the study? Was a direction of association hypothesized? Do you think appropriate relationships were conceptualized?
  - x) Measurement instruments used in the study
    - Are they standardized instruments or not?
      - (a) If not, why not
    - What is the reliability/validity of the instruments? How was it established? Could more have been done to establish the validity/reliability of the instruments? Were the populations used to validate the instrument appropriate for/relevant to the current study?

- Is this a qualitative, evidenced-based, or meta-analysis study? Address criteria used. What form of qualitative study, what were the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the meta-analysis, etc.
  - What is the rationale for selecting specific instruments
  - Are the selected instruments appropriate for the study?
  - How was the study conducted?
    - (a) Were there control groups?
    - (b) Were there study groups?
    - (c) What did the participants have to do?
    - (d) Were participants given informed consent?
      - ⇒ If yes, why? If not, why not?
    - (e) Did the study address minorities?
      - ⇒ If yes, which ones? If not, why not?
      - ⇒ How inclusive was the study?
  - Is the study design cross-sectional or longitudinal or both? If it is longitudinal, what type of design is it? Could it have been improved in any way by collecting a different form of data or more of the data that the authors already collected? If it was cross-sectional, could the research problem have been more effectively addressed as a longitudinal study?
  - Were any causal assertions made or implied in the hypotheses?
  - Should any other variables be measured or controlled for? If so, which ones and why?
  - Did the study design eliminate alternative explanations and how did the design do this?
    - (a) What is the setting for the study? Does the setting limit the study in any way?
    - (b) How were the data collected? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this particular method of data collection?
- f) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the study protocol and design?

#### 4) Statistical Methodology and Data Presentation

- a) What statistical tests were used to analyze the data?
- b) What software was used?
- c) What significance levels were set?
- d) Were the tests and levels appropriate for the type of hypothesis(es) being tested?
- e) Could other tests have been used that were more appropriate?
- f) How was data presented graphically? Was it understandable? Relevant to the discussion? Did the presentations “trick or trap” the reader?

#### 5) Study Results

- a) What was the response rate/participation rate in the study? Is there a potential bias based upon respondent type? What about the group that did not respond?
- b) What are the findings? Did the authors present them adequately?
- c) Were there significant findings found between/among the variables of interest?
  - i) Are the findings statistically significant?

- ii) Are they clinically significant? Findings can be statistically significant and useless from an application perspective.
- iii) Were any causal assumptions made or implied. Did the data support these assumptions/hypotheses? Should other variables have been measured/controlled?
- d) Are there other ways to interpret the results? If so, what ways and what do they yield that is different from what is being reported by the authors?
- e) Strengths and weaknesses
- f) Future directions for research. Do these results yield new/additional insights extending the literature in the field?
- g) Implications for Social Work practice and policy

## 6) Discussion

- a) Were the conclusions and discussion presented adequately? Were they well-grounded in the study findings or did they appear to be spurious?
  - i) Can you think of any other interpretations of the findings?
  - ii) How do the results of this study compare to the results of other studies in the same area?
  - iii) In what ways was this study more or less adequate than other studies in this area?
- b) Implications
- c) Strengths and limitations
- d) Answer the “so what” question

## 7) Ethics

- a) Is the study ethically consistent?
- b) Was there a tradeoff between ethical guidelines for different groups? What about a tradeoff between ethics and scientific rigor?
- c) Based upon the information provided, could you replicate this study?

## PREPARING THE IRB PROPOSAL PACKET

You will prepare the IRB package in three steps.

**STEP 1:** First, you must identify a research topic. We will discuss the most common types of research project during the first few weeks of class (qualitative, quantitative, secondary data analysis, meta-analysis, measurement development and validation, instructor-based research project). Most people choose something relevant to either their field placement or to an area of practice/policy of interest to them. You will be spending the first few weeks of the course focusing on defining a topic. This is not an easy chore and you need to dedicate some time to thinking about it. This means reading articles/books, searching the literature, looking out on the web, consulting with individuals at your field placement, *etc.* Your goal, upon receipt of this syllabus is to immediately begin this definition process. Feel free to discuss your project with me at any time. I am also happy to pre-review any draft documents, as time allows, before you hand in your final documents.

To assist you in this definition of research topic step, you will have to complete a research proposal outline by the due date indicated in the course syllabus. The proposal outline will be handed in to the instructor for critical commentary. It will not be graded but will be seen as part of the final overall grade for the IRB proposal. The research proposal outline is specified as follows. Cover page plus at least 10 double-spaced pages of text discussion with 1" left and right margins and 1.5" top and bottom margins. Reference pages do not count towards the total number of pages. Font size is 12 point font. Please use Times Roman Modern font (or its near equivalent). Cover page must include your name, date, course number. Page numbers should be placed in the upper right hand corner of the page. Please staple in upper left hand corner. The content of the text should address all of the following items as indicated.

- 1) **Statement of the Problem** – Provide a clear statement of the problem you are proposing to study, the specific research question, the purpose/aims of the research, and the significance to the study of Social Work.
  - a) What is the problem to be studied?
  - b) What is the history of the problem?
  - c) What are the most significant aspects of this problem's theoretical and empirical academic literature?
  - d) Rationale for why this is an important issue to study
  - e) What is the purpose of this study?
  - f) Statement of the research question(s)/hypothesis(es)
  - g) Are there unanswered questions? What are they?
  - h) What research method do you propose to use?
  - i) What is the relevance of this topic to Social Work policy/practice/research?
  - j) What are possible implications for Social Work policy/practice/research?
  
- 2) **Review of the Literature** – You cannot reinvent what has already been done. Therefore you need to review the literature. A review of the literature is a description of relevant research already done on your research topic. You do not have to have an exhaustive review, although your instructor expects that you will research the literature back at least

25 years. When citing the literature on your topic, group references together when they have something in common. This will help you when you write your IRB proposal and your final paper. Point out conflicts that might exist in the literature. You should also indicate the results of the research that you are citing in addition to the research methodologies used. Remember, this is not just a series of article summaries. I am looking for you to use your own analysis of the topic based upon what you have read. You should try to raise significant questions and suggest issues that need further investigation.

- a) Literature review should have a minimum of 10 scholarly sources (not web unless they are in online free journals)
- b) You may use an additional 5 references to web resources
- c) Use literature relevant to the research question you are addressing
- d) Use proper APA citation format

### 3) **Presentation of the Proposal**

- a) APA format style throughout the paper
- b) Organize paper according to the above headings
- c) Check grammar, spelling and style

Upon completion of the Research Proposal Outline and approval of the instructor, you will move to Step 2 of the preparation process. In Step 2 you will formalize your research proposal by providing greater detail. This step will enable you to very rapidly complete Step 3, completing the IRB forms and proposal packet.

**STEP 2:** In this step you will be formalizing your research study so that it can be evaluated by the instructor and subsequently by the IRB review board. At this point, you have already had the lecture on IRB protocol and have downloaded the IRB forms necessary for your study. You should also have completed or be about to complete and pass the CITI examination. If you have not done so by this point, you need to make sure that you are done. Not passing the CITI examination means that you cannot submit an IRB proposal as a PI. The formal proposal outline will be handed in to the instructor for critical commentary. It will not be graded but will be seen as part of the final overall grade for the IRB proposal. The formal research proposal is due by the date given in the course syllabus. The formal research proposal outline is specified as follows. Cover page plus 10-20 double-spaced pages of text discussion with 1” left and right margins and 1.5” top and bottom margins. Reference pages do not count towards the total number of pages. Font size is 12 point font. Please use Times Roman Modern font (or its near equivalent). Cover page must include your name, date, course number. Page numbers should be placed in the upper right hand corner of the page. Please staple in upper left hand corner. The content of the text should address all of the following items as indicated. You are encouraged to keep the Article Review Guideline (supplied in this Syllabus) with you as a reference while you write this paper. Feel free to discuss your project with me at any time. I am also happy to pre-review any draft documents, as time allows, before you hand in your final documents. In the preparation of your Step 2 proposal, please make sure to order the items as indicated in the order below and to refer to the IRB proposal form as you go along. This will facilitate your completion of Step 3.

- 1) **Title** – You now need to define a title for the project. Try not to exceed three lines of text.
- 2) **Statement of the Problem** – Provide a clear statement of the problem you are proposing to study, the specific research question, the purpose/aims of the research, and the significance to the study of Social Work policy/practice. You must be able to articulate the specific aims in terms of a null and an alternative hypothesis.
- 3) **Background and Significance** – In this section you take your work from Step 1 and turn it into a discussion providing the background and significance of the project.
  - a) What is the problem to be studied?
  - b) What is the history of the problem?
  - c) What are the most significant aspects of this problem's theoretical and empirical academic literature?
  - d) Rationale for why this is an important issue to study
  - e) What is the purpose of this study?
  - f) Are there unanswered questions? What are they? What aspect will you focus on?
    - i) Make sure to state your questions and hypotheses (2-4 is more than enough).
  - g) What is the relevance of this topic to Social Work policy/practice?
- 4) **Literature Review** – In this section you take the material from Step 1 and you provide a literature review for the reader. The literature review should cover what has been done in the areas applicable to your work. It does not have to be exhaustive, but should contain from 10-20 applicable relevant references. You may include an additional 5 should be web-based references.
- 5) **References** – List your references in alphabetical order and in APA format.
- 6) **Preliminary Progress/Data Report** – Enter the phrase, Not Applicable.
- 7) **Research Design and Methodology** – Provide a concise description of how the study is to be conducted. Readers of this section should be able to conduct the study by themselves from this description.
  - a) **Research Design** – Identify the specific research design and provide details. Describe, in detail, the research design you will use. Will you use group experiment, survey, single-system, *etc.* Provide a projected timeline of the data collection, data entry and data analysis activities.
  - b) **Sample** – Identify the target population; to whom will this study apply? Describe, in detail, the sampling procedure. Discuss such things as probability *vs.* non-probability sampling approaches. Identify the study site. Identify any potential additional approval problems at your study site and how you will handle the additional approvals needed. Identify the projected number of subjects. If you are using multiple sites (discouraged) you must repeat this information for all sites. Justify the sampling approach and the sample sizes chosen. Identify potential problems in procuring and keeping subjects. Inclusion/exclusion rules. Address how you will solve those problems. Describe recruitment and selection process of subjects. Address any feasibility issues in sampling or other areas of the study.
  - c) **Measurement** – Identify 1-3 independent variables and 3-5 dependent variables of interest in your study. Describe how the variables are operationalized and how they will be measured.
  - d) **Instrumentation** – Describe research instruments to be used. Why did you choose these particular instruments? Specify reliability and validity of instruments. Address any multicultural factors that need to be addressed with respect to the applicability of the instruments. If you are not using instruments, provide details concerning how

you intend to gather the data discussed in (2c). You may use existing instruments or develop your own. In either case, include complete copies of the instruments you will use. These will need to be attached to the IRB application packet and will need to be pre-approved by your instructor. If you are designing your own instruments, discuss your reliability/validity concerns and how you plan to address these. Include a plan for pre-testing any measures you develop.

- e) **Human Subjects Considerations** – Describe (keeping in mind what the IRB form asks for) procedures to be taken to protect research subjects. Identify areas of potential harm/risk and specific measures to ameliorate harm/risk. Remember, harm/risk can come in a variety of different ways: physical, emotional, mental, financial, social/political, and economic. Identify how you will store your data and protect others from accessing it. How do you propose to destroy the data when the study is done? Discuss any issues around other individuals at your field placement or other locations wanting access to the data and how you will address that problem. Discuss the use of any identified populations such as prisoners, children, etc. and how you intend to deal with issues associated with that group or groups. Include any necessary consent forms or agreement letters needed to conduct the study. These are required for the IRB packet.
  - f) **Ramifications** – Address the potential limitations of your study with respect to multi-culturalism, generalizability, and the socio-political, and economic arenas.
- 8) **Statistical Analysis** – In this section you describe the software and methods you will use to analyze the data you obtain from the study.
- a) **Statistical Analysis and Data Presentation** - State that you will be using SPSS version 13 as your statistical analysis package. Also state that you will be using standard descriptive statistical methods, regression and correlation methods, chi-sq methods to analyze your data. If you intend to use other software and methods, you will need to provide that information here.
- 9) **Data Safety and Monitoring** – In this section you will discuss how you plan to deal with protecting the study participants' rights to privacy by protecting and securing your data.
- a) **Data Entry** – Who will enter the data? Does the data conform to CDC single cell rules and HIPAA regulations on identifiability? Will individuals be able to be identified from the data? If you intend to publish/present your work in a public domain journal or in an in-house document, how will you make sure to guarantee anonymity of the findings presented?
  - b) **Data Safety and Storage** – Where will the datasheets and all other study-related material be kept? Will it be locked away? Where? Who will have access to the data? When data is taken out of the protected environment, how will the participants' security be protected? How will data be stored? Will it be left on a computer? If so, who has access to that computer? How will privacy be protected? If clients are identifiable, how will anonymity be preserved? Why kind of coding key scheme will you use? Who will know the master code/decode key? Where will it be kept? Who will have access to it?
  - c) **Data Quality and Accuracy** – How will you assure that the data is accurately entered? How will you handle ambiguous responses, unclear or indecipherable responses, incorrect responses, and missing data? If you have qualitative data, how will you handle that? Will you separate it from the spreadsheet data? If so, where will you keep it and how will you match it to the demographic data in the spreadsheet?

- d) **Data Destruction** – Upon completion of the data analysis and subsequent presentation of your research, what will happen to the data? Will it be destroyed? Does someone want copies of it? If so, do they have appropriate permissions to obtain copies of it? How will you destroy paper, CD, and computer file copies of your work?
- 10) **Human Subjects Instructions** – In this section you describe all of the aspects of the study as related to human subjects.
- a) **Description** – In this section you discuss the overall details of the sampling design. You provide sampling sizes, sampling methodology, type of design (anonymous, etc), who the sample will be and how it will be drawn. Will you randomize by age (for example)?
- b) **Research Material** – In this section you indicate how you will use the results of the study. Will you publish it? Will you present it at an open presentation such as an office meeting, a scientific meeting, or a policy meeting? If so, will there be problems with anonymity and how will you handle them?
- c) **Recruitment Plan** – In this section you indicate how subjects will be recruited. Is there a consent problem? If so, how is it handled? If there is no consent problem, explain why.
- d) **Potential Harm/Risks** – What harms or risks could come as a result of your research? Could subjects' anonymity be compromised? Could there be mental harm? Physical harm? Make sure to cover all possible bases here.
- e) **Risk Reduction** – If there are potential risks/harm, what have you done to minimize/reduce the risks? Detail is important.
- f) **Risk/Benefit** – If there are risks, but there are potentially large societal benefits, discuss the risk/benefit ratio and how that impacts the perception of the research project.
- g) **Compensation Plan** – Is there compensation for the study participants? If so, how much? Where is the money coming from? How will compensation potentially bias subject recruitment and subject response? How will they be paid? Will it be at the end, throughout the participation process, some in the beginning some in the end?
- h) **Consent Issues** – Is consent required? Are you working with groups that require consent? If so, detail your consent plan and provide consent documents.

Clarity of argument and statement, grammar and punctuation, proper citation, critical analysis and professional presentation are essential to the successful completion of Step 2. Once you have been approved on Step 2, you may begin Step 3 – Preparation of the final IRB packet.

**STEP 3:** In this step you will be formalizing your research study for review by me and then by the VCU IRB panel. You many not proceed to this step without having passed the CITI examination and handing in your proof of CITI certification. At this point, you should be intimately familiar with the VCU IRB forms necessary for your study, as you will have been keeping them by your side as you have worked through Steps 1 and 2 of this sequence. We will discuss Step 3 in class.

To begin this process you will have needed to do the following beforehand.

- (1) Identify what type of study (Exempt, Full, Expedited, *etc.*) you are submitting and then

(2) Download the VCU IRB forms you will need for that type of study. You will also have to make sure to

(3) Fill out the Submission Checklist

(4) Download and fill out the conflict of interest form

You are expected to complete the VCU IRB forms by the given dates in the course syllabus and to make the appropriate changes as suggested by your instructor. You will then make the required number of copies of your IRB (plus a copy for the instructor and a copy for yourself) and bring the completed packet to the instructor for final check and attachment of instructor's IRB submission cover letter.