

196-508 Researching Social Work Practice

Credit Points:	12.500
Level:	Graduate/Postgraduate
Dates & Locations:	2008, This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 2, - Taught on campus. On campus
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: 24 hours (8 x 1 hour lecture, 8 x 2 hour seminars) Total Time Commitment: 24 contact hours 16 hours of class preparation and reading 24 hours of assessment related tasks = 64 hours total time commitment = 8 hours total time per week
Prerequisites:	n/a
Corequisites:	None
Recommended Background Knowledge:	None
Non Allowed Subjects:	None
Core Participation Requirements:	It is University policy to take all reasonable steps to minimise the impact of disability upon academic study and reasonable adjustments will be made to enhance a student's participation in the University's courses. Students who feel their disability will impact on meeting this requirement are encouraged to discuss this matter with the Course Coordinator and the Disability Liaison Unit.
Coordinator:	Dr Lynette Joubert
Subject Overview:	<p>The aim of the subject is to familiarize students with a range of approaches useful for researching social work practice. In this subject "practice" is defined broadly to encompass policy and organizational practice as well as practice with individuals, groups and communities.</p> <p>Social work research methods are used in all aspects of social work practice from describing and attempting to understand the issues with which, and the people with whom we work, to establishing the effectiveness of what we do. There is increasingly an emphasis on evidence-based practice, which necessitates an ability to evaluate and use research evidence to inform practice. Social workers move in increasing numbers and earlier in their careers into roles requiring them to initiate as well as participate in and consume practice based research. The organizations in which social workers work are increasingly promoting a culture of practice research in an attempt to plan and evaluate service delivery in a reflective and thoughtful way.</p> <p>The lectures and seminars will present a range of practice research issues, broadly mirroring the research process in the field. They will also offer examples and identify opportunities for practice research and the challenges confronting practitioners in undertaking it.</p> <p>Subject objectives</p> <p>At the completion of this course students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Draw on relevant secondary research to understand the context of social work practice # Approach research literature in an informed and critical way as a basis for evidence based practice # Formulate research questions arising from social work practice situations including those concerning social policy and program development # Develop a research design and a beginning understanding of implementing the design through appropriate data collection and analysis methods # Be aware of ethical issues involved in social work research # Be aware of processes for engaging service users or consumers in social work research # Be competent in evaluating research evidence as a basis for practice
Assessment:	Group poster and presentation (60%) during semester Written essay 2000 words (40%) due at end of semester

Prescribed Texts:	Friedman, B. (1998). The research tool kit: Putting it all together. Pacific Grove: Brooks Cole Publishing.
Breadth Options:	This subject is not available as a breadth subject.
Fees Information:	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees
Generic Skills:	<p>Students who complete this subject should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # critically analyse texts and practices; # understand recent developments in social work contexts of practice; # link theory to practice; # competently communicate in ways relevant to both academic and practice contexts; # undertake independent research.
Links to further information:	http://www.socialwork.unimelb.edu.au/
Notes:	The disciplines of Nursing and Social Work are now co-managed within the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences. At the time of publication Social Work subjects are under the administrative management of the School of Nursing.
Related Course(s):	Master of Social Work (Advanced Seminars and Shorter Thesis)