

**University of Arkansas - Fort Smith**  
**5210 Grand Avenue**  
**P. O. Box 3649**  
**Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649**  
**479-788-7000**

**General Syllabus**

**SOWK 4613 Research Methods in Social Work**

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory: 0

Prerequisite: Admission to the BSW program and STAT 2503 Probability and Statistics I or  
PSYC 2513 Introduction to Behavioral Statistics

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

**I. Course Information**

**A. Catalog Description**

Prepares students to develop an understanding of the approaches, techniques, and challenges of conducting social work research and to read, critically evaluate, and use the research of others to select interventions that are based on evidence. Enables students to be competent and discerning consumers of research in the social work literature.

**II. Student Learning Outcomes**

**A. Subject Matter**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Apply the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics to research in the discipline. <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/CODE/Default.asp>
2. Analyze and discuss the fundamental steps of scientific inquiry and show how they parallel the basic steps of social work practice.
3. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
4. Evaluate research topics in relation to policy and practice issues.

**B. University Learning Outcomes**

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

**Analytical Skills**

**Critical Thinking**

Students will incorporate existing research (research-informed practice) and conceptualize, operationalize and design applied research efforts (practice-informed research) to address social work practice problems.

**Communication Skills (written and oral)**

Students will communicate in a parsimonious yet professional manner in both oral and written documentation appropriate to social work research practices.

**Ethical Decision Making**

Students will identify potential and existing ethical dilemmas in research, affected parties, and apply ethical frameworks to resolve or prevent.

**Global & Cultural Perspectives**

Students will reflect upon cultural differences and their implications in practice/applied research, recognizing how this may bias research processes and findings.

**III. Major Course Topics**

- A. Scientific method
- B. Ethics in behavioral research
- C. Descriptive and inferential statistics
- D. Experimental, quasi-experimental, and single-subject designs
- E. Development of surveys and questionnaires
- F. Implementation of a research project
- G. APA style writing