

SOCW4015

Honours Research Thesis

Term 3, 2022



Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Abner Poon	w.poon@unsw.edu.au	By appointment	Morven Brown Building, Room 169	9065 2315

Lecturers

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Tim Wong	tim.wong@unsw.edu.au	By appointment	SOSS	

School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

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Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.



Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous [UNSW's Indigenous strategy](#)

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Summary of the Course

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

Course Learning Outcomes

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

Teaching Strategies

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

Assessment

Refer to SOCW4015 Honours Thesis Handbook in Moodle for information.

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. Honours Research Thesis	100%	25/11/2022 05:00 PM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assessment 1: Honours Research Thesis

Assessment length: 10,000 - 12,000 words

Due date: 25/11/2022 05:00 PM

Students are required to undertake a 10 -12,000 conceptual or empirical research project in an area of their interest, related to social work or health/welfare practice. Students will work on this project in either term 2 year 4 (or dual degree equivalent) concurrent with the Fourth Level Placement.

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

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

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

Additional details

Due date: 25th November 2022 by 5.00pm.

Electronic Submission: Students must submit an electronic version in Word format to the Course Convenor at w.poon@unsw.edu.au

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

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

Examination of Theses: Each thesis will be marked by at least one independent examiner who will provide a detailed report containing feedback alongside the mark for the thesis. Moderation will be conducted by a separate examiner or panel of examiners.

Thesis Mark: The thesis mark comprises 100% of the mark for SOCW4015.

Attendance Requirements

Partnerships and collaboration between students and educators are particularly important in social work learning. As well, to maintain our accreditation as a provider of social work education, it is important that each student finds themselves in an environment where they are able to experience all content to a high level of depth and engagement. For this reason, active participation and commitment to attendance is expected of all students.

Compassion and concern for student welfare is what we strive for in our provision of social work education and this is enabled by two-way communication. Communication is especially important when a student is experiencing learning barriers, particularly those which affect class attendance and completion of independent learning tasks.

To ensure that student learning and wellbeing is at the forefront of all decisions made, we encourage all students to communicate any barrier to attendance to your course convenor, lecturer or tutor as soon as possible, so a collaborative plan can be developed to work around these barriers.

If your attendance is affected for a limited period of time, we will refer you to selected alternate tasks we have created to promote your access to vital content in this course. These alternative tasks can also be completed by students whose attendance is exemplary and who wish to extend their learning. We will expect you to take full responsibility and initiative for completing these alternate tasks and to ensure that in completing them you develop a good working knowledge of the content missed.

Our aim is to foster an environment where students feel comfortable coming forward regarding concerns about their learning and attendance. Based on experience, if your attendance drops below a certain level it is unlikely you will have the skills and knowledge to effectively achieve the learning outcomes of this course; which is why we highly encourage active attendance and participation. With effective communication and planning we endeavour to avoid situations where students feel they have not adequately engaged with the course, and therefore strongly encourage students to communicate any concerns as early as possible. We want to again emphasise the importance of collaboration and communication, and acknowledge the unique circumstances students may find themselves experiencing.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
0 week: 5 September - 9 September	Seminar	Seminar 1 Honours Thesis Structure, Research Plan, and Supervision 3 June 2022 10:00 to 12:00, Mathews 107 Seminar 2 Literature Review and Library Resources 1 July 2022

		10:00 to 12:00, Mathews 107
Week 1: 12 September - 16 September	Seminar	Seminar 3 Writing the thesis Part 1 16 September 2022 10:00 to 12:00, Quad G025
Week 4: 3 October - 7 October	Seminar	Seminar 4 Features of a Social Research Thesis 7 October 2022 10:00 to 12:00, Quad G025
Week 7: 24 October - 28 October	Seminar	Seminar 5 Writing the thesis Part 2 28 October 2022 10:00 to 12:00, Quad G025
Week 9: 7 November - 11 November	Seminar	Seminar 6 Completing the thesis 11 November 2022 10:00 to 12:00, Quad G025

Resources

Prescribed Resources

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

You will benefit from becoming familiar with UNSW Library Services and Databases. Review services for Honours students here: <https://www.library.unsw.edu.au/study/services-for-students> and Book a research consultation service here: <https://www.library.unsw.edu.au/research/support-for-your-research/research-consultation-service>.

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

Go to Google Scholar> settings> library links, and enter 'University of New South Wales' in the box for "Library": You can sign up for Table of Contents (TOC) Alerts from the homepages of relevant journals, to receive an email whenever new articles are published in that journal. Journal websites will often carry information on the most viewed and most cited articles; these are likely to be interesting and often influential contributions.

Google Scholar will also point you to articles that have cited a particular article and hence will be related to the topic.

Recommended Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Relevant Journals

Australian Social Work

British Journal of Social Work

Child and Family Social Work

Children and Youth Services Review

International Journal of Social Welfare

International Social Work

Journal of Child and Family Studies

Journal of Social Work Education

Journal of Social Service Research

Qualitative Inquiry

Research on Social Work Practice

Social Work

Social Work Research

Recommended online materials and other useful sources

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

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

Rapid Evidence Review Toolkit <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140305122816/http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/resources-and-guidance/rapid-evidence-assessment>

Conceptual Research - <http://human-nature.com/rmyoung/papers/concept.html>

Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper: Theoretical Framework
<http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/theoreticalframework>

Social Work Policy Institute – Evidence Based

Practice <http://www.socialworkpolicy.org/research/evidence-based-practice-2.html>

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

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

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

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

Campbell Collaboration - Systematic Review

http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/resources/training/The_Introductory_Methods.php

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

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

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

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

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

Course Evaluation and Development

SOCW4015 has been offered for several years now, and feedback from students is always welcome.

In line with student feedback we have undertaken consultations with students and linked the preparation for the course more closely with assignments completed in SOCW4011. Students were guided to suggest a single research question or topic to enable suitable allocation of supervisors in Term 1. Content of seminars is enriched by student feedback about topics they would find helpful to cover

including developing a research plan, thinking about their positionality or standpoint in the research, and managing competing demands during their candidature. Further feedback will be gathered periodically using UNSW's MyExperience survey and through less formal channels such as email and small group discussion.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au

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

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, alternative submission details will be stated on your course's Moodle site. For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle:

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Late Submission Penalty

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per calendar day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five calendar days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request [Special Consideration](#) as early as possible before the deadline. Support with [Time Management is available here](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

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

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.
- Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items. UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW, but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided).

Please see: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines> for essential student information relating to:

- UNSW and Faculty policies and procedures;
- Student Support Services;
- Dean's List;
- review of results;
- credit transfer;
- cross-institutional study and exchange;
- examination information;
- enrolment information;
- Special Consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;

And other essential academic information.

Image Credit

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