

Preparing for Your MSW Graduate Project

**Presented by the Research Faculty
CSUN Social Work Department**



Agenda

1) Introduction

2) What to expect in SWRK 535 and purpose

3) Introduce Grad Project options and what you can do during the break to prepare

4) What to expect in SWRK 635 and purpose

5) What to expect in SWRK 698 and purpose

6) Frequently asked questions

7) Additional information

SWRK 535 Research Methods I

1. Importance of research in practice decisions (evidence-based practices)
2. Quantitative and qualitative research questions and their appropriate designs
3. Review of literature and how to write a literature review
4. Conceptualization and operationalization of variables
5. Measurement including use of standardized tools
6. Data collection strategies including issues of sampling & representativeness
7. Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data
8. Ethics and introduction to IRB (CITI training certificate)

Graduate Project Options

Quantitative Study

Qualitative Study

Program Evaluation

Policy Analysis

Systematic Literature Review

Grant Proposal*

Documentary**

What could I be doing during the breaks (i.e., Summer and Winter)

1. Review the literature to narrow your research focus/topic

2. If wishing to work with a partner start to decide who that person will be

3. Identify grants and a potential agency if you wish to do a grant proposal

4. Practice writing research question(s)

5. Start developing/saving a reference list

6. Identify/connect with faculty to talk through your preliminary graduate project ideas

SWRK 635 Research Methods II

1. Complete a research (graduate project) proposal
 - a. Develop a research question/hypothesis
 - b. Complete an introduction, literature review, proposed methodology
 - c. Revisit research ethics & abuse of research participants
 - d. Obtain approval from CSUN Institutional Review Board (IRB)
2. Learn program evaluation skills to evaluate social work practice
3. Types of graduate projects
 - a. Traditional: Collect data or use secondary data.
 - b. Alternative: Grant proposal, policy analysis, program evaluation, systematic literature review, or documentary.

SWRK 698 Graduate Project

1. Students will be introduced to the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) system via Graduate Studies.
2. Student to collect, analyze and report direct observations; and write a research paper that includes an introduction, method, results, and discussion chapters.
3. The paper must meet Graduate Studies' requirements and APA publication guidelines including formatting.
4. Students will also present a poster in an open community-invited forum. The Graduate Project may include an alternative research project such as a documentary, program evaluation, policy analysis, or grant.

FAQs

1. Who can be on my graduate project committee?

2. Can my graduate project be done in groups or pairs?

3. What if my project partner is not graduating the same semester—can I still work with them?

4. Can I use secondary data sets?

Additional Information

MSW Graduate Project and IRB Handbook

Talk to your SWRK 535 Research Professor

Graduate studies materials at the following website:

<https://www.csun.edu/graduate-studies/thesisdissertation/thesisdissertation>

Preparing for Your MSW Graduate Project

Thank you!

