

Course Syllabus

[Jump to Today](#)



Department of Sociology, Social Work & Family Science

SWK6006 Social Research Basics

3 Units

Fall 2026

August 31 - December 20, 2026

In-Person

Meeting Days: Thursdays

Meeting Times: 6:00-8:45 p.m.

Meeting Location: Mission Valley, Room 206

Final Exam: (Day/Time): TBD

Indigenous land borrowing/occupying: The
Kumeyaay

Instructor: Kevin Modesto, PhD, MSW, MATS

Email: kmodesto@pointloma.edu

Phone: 619-849-2368

Office Location and Hours: Point Loma Nazarene
University

Rohr Hall rm. 105

3900 Lomaland Drive, San Diego, CA 92106

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send



Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

To this end, the Academic Unit of Sociology, Social Work, and Family Sciences has established Departmental and Program Mission Statements, as follows:

Unit Mission

As followers of Christ, our mission is to nurture servant scholars who critically and empirically evaluate social systems, cultural patterns, and basic human needs to constructively engage as agents of hope with individuals, families, and communities.

Social Work Program Mission

At its core, the purpose of the social work program is to prepare competent social work professionals who are motivated to gracefully serve others as an expression of their faith. In the context of the intersection of the goals of the University and those of professional social work practice, this mission is further articulated:

The mission of the graduate social work program is to develop competent advanced generalist social workers who are committed to serving others through acquisition and integration of the essential knowledge, skills, and values that form the foundation of the social work profession; who will enhance individual, family, group, organizational, and community well-being, celebrate difference, and promote social, environmental, and economic justice for vulnerable populations; who are guided by a Wesleyan perspective who strive for continuous personal development; who are respectfully engaged in the community; who empowers others as the means for relating to God through service by enhancing the quality of life for all people by upholding the traditions, values, and ethics of the social work profession.

[1]

Program Learning Outcomes

Social Work Program Learning Outcomes Students who complete the program in Social Work will be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of integrated body of knowledge required of an advanced generalist practitioner as defined by the Council on Social Work Education.
2. Engage in professional practice that is guided by values and ethics and inspired by faith:
 - Possess a command of the professional values and ethics required of an advanced generalist practitioner.
 - Demonstrate an awareness of the influence of Christian and Wesleyan perspectives on social work practice.



- Demonstrate competence in the concrete practice of professional skills, especially those skills required for an advanced generalist practitioner.
- Demonstrate professional competency as defined by the CSWE competencies.

Program Goals

The goals of the social work program flow from the mission and are related to the development of competent professions; integration of faith and professional practice; service to the community that empowers others; and continuous personal development. The four primary program goals are:

1. To prepare students for beginning advanced generalist professional practice by providing the advanced knowledge, skills, and values and ethics that form a professional foundation for competent practice with diverse populations and systems of any size.
2. To prepare students who are committed to service in the community in a manner that includes an understanding of the intersection of a Christian/Wesleyan perspectives and social work practice.
3. To develop entry level advanced generalist or clinical practitioners who are motivated to promote social, racial, environmental, and economic justice and who employ theory and cultural sensitivity to empower diverse populations and to understand the transactions between social and cultural environments.
4. To foster student involvement in continuing professional development. These core program goals are accomplished through student achievement of objectives that form a professional foundation of knowledge, clearly articulated values and ethics, and acquisition of professional and personal skills.

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with the practical tools of doing social science research, and the theoretical background for critiquing and designing research on social issues. We engage in a wide range of methods throughout the term (including basic statistical analysis, interviewing, and ethnographic observations), and enable students to design a research project that addresses specific and testable questions. This course focuses on assisting students to develop the skills necessary to interpret, critique, and conduct social science research.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be more familiar with the following Council of Social Work Education's (CSWE) EPAS Competencies 4 and 9. Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- Apply research findings to inform and improve practice, policy, and programs; and



- Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work
- Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Exhibit knowledge of major themes, theories, and debates in social research. Successfully design ethical research as determined by PLNU's Institutional Review Board.
- Compare how social scientists choose among qualitative and quantitative social research methods to create and disseminate knowledge.
- Understand and articulate the importance of applied and theoretical research in the social
- Identify research strategies to promote social and economic justice.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Mauldin, R. L. (2020). *Foundations of Social Work Research*. Arlington: Mavs Open Press.

This book is located free of charge at the following link:

<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/> 
(<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/>)

Mauldin, R. L. & DeCarlo, M (2020). *Guidebook for social work literature review and research questions*. Arlington: Mavs Open Press.

This book is located free of charge at the following link:

<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/literaturereviewsforsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-one-beginning-a-research-project/>  (<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/literaturereviewsforsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-one-beginning-a-research-project/>)

Additional readings will be available on an ongoing basis via Canvas.

Resources

1. Owl Purdue APA style guide

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html



2. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

3. PLNU Ryan Library <https://libguides.pointloma.edu/ryanlibrary>

4. Owl Purdue Writing <https://owl.purdue.edu/>

5. University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Writing Center <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/>

Freedom to Challenge: This course introduces concepts and issues beyond the text. You are encouraged to integrate knowledge from their environment, to share insights, and to challenge the materials presented.

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend 112.5 hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

Electronics In the Classroom

As a host of this classroom, I have a policy about phones and laptop computers and devices like them. This policy is to allow you to become more comfortable taking a break from technology, allowing you to be in the present moment and adding to your professional tolerance of being without devices all of the time. 1. I will give you a “tech break” during class - please do not check your phones until that time. If there is a big life circumstance going on, please let me know at the beginning of class and we will talk about your use of your phone. 2. There will be times when I will ask you to take out your laptop and smart devices in the classroom to further our collective learning. Other than that, I strongly recommend NOT using laptops in class. The reasons are threefold:

1. It is hard to not check other things, which impairs your learning. You most likely are not aware of the impairment, but the research is quite clear.

http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2013/05/multitasking_while_studying_divided_attention_and_technological_gadgets.html Links to an external site.

1. Even if it doesn't impair your learning, it impairs others learning.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254> Links to an external site.

2. You write more but learn less. Writing your notes creates synthesis which increases learning.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/> d. It also impairs long-term retention. This new study shows a causal effect with grades being lower by about half a letter grade.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/07/27/class-cellphone-and-laptop-use-lowers-exams-new-study-shows>



Links to an external site. So I am asking you not to use laptops unless you need or strongly prefer a laptop to take notes. In that case talk to me beforehand, and we will make that work.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

Grades will be based on the following distribution and standard grade scale:

Assignment Weight

Graded Assignment	Points	Percentile (%)
Participation & In-Class (or Online) Assignments	300	30
Analysis and Constructive Feedback (every Thursday)	150	15
Final Presentation of Research Proposal	150	15
(FINAL EXAMINATION)		
Scaffolding a Research Project Proposal (7 Submissions total)	300	30
PLNU IRB Application	100	10
	1000	100

Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59



A- 90-92 B 83-86 C 73-76 D 63-66

B- 80-82 C- 70-72 D- 60-62

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Participation & In-Class (or Online) Assignments (30% or 300 points):

You will be responsible for actively participating each time we meet. A significant part of these participation points will be your regular full engagement during your class meetings. Therefore, being physically present, and ready to participate are important components for your success in this course. You will earn 10 points each class meeting or 20 points weekly.

Analysis and Constructive Feedback (15% or 150 points):

Each week we will spend Thursdays reading either articles that the instructor will select and assign or each other work. The goal of these analysis and feedback is for the student to develop a critical thinking and communication skills. Also, it allows for the reader to learn from others' research studies. At the end of class, you will turn in your assignment to the instructor. To receive full credit, you will have to provide a synthesis of what you read, constructive feedback (when applicable) of your classmate's work to your instructor and to each other, and any other tasks assigned for the day. You can earn up to 10 points each week.

Final Presentation of Research Proposal (15% or 150):

A final presentation of your research proposal will count as a final examination. You will have 5 to 7 minutes to present and 3-5 minutes for Q & A. You can be as creative as you want to be as long as it meets the requirements for your presentation. You can create a video, PowerPoint presentation or a skit that presents the key components of your proposal. It is up to you. Nonetheless, you will be graded in the content, management of allotted time, and quality of presentation. Each classmate will have the opportunity to provide you with a score and feedback. Instructor will give the final grade but will consider the scores and feedback of each student evaluation. **Per university policy, successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. Please plan accordingly.**

Research Project Proposal Sections (30% or 300):

Students will create a research project proposal during the course of the semester. This proposal will be divided into 7 individual submissions. This project will then be converted into the final presentation that counts as your final exam. The sections of this proposal are as follows:

- Developing an Empirical Research Question, Aims and Hypothesis (25 points)
- Literature Review (50 points)



- Background (50 points)
- Methods and Theoretical Framework Approach (50 points)
- Work Plan & Timeline (25 points)
- Implications of Study for Practice and Policy (25 points)
- Final Research Project Proposal (75 points)

These papers will allow the research partners to get feedback on these components as they build toward the Final Research Project Proposal (see points distribution above). The purpose of these is to help you develop the research writing skills used by professional researchers, to encourage

you to keep up with the reading, allow the sharing of information and observations with others in the class, and make progress toward the design and completion of your own Research Project Proposal. It is vital that each be completed on time. Further details will be provided on Canvas and in class. These assignments are due at the beginning of class on Thursdays of the assigned week. **See Schedule for specific dates.**

PLNU IRB Application (10% or 100):

Your research project proposal will allow you to be able to put together a PLNU IRB application. At the end of the semester, you will be submitting a complete IRB application to your instructor, but you will not submit this PLNU to the actual IRB board. This is meant as an exercise and learning experience not to be approved for your research project.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Graduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, **no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.**

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include [list topics]. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual



engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include [list topics]. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

General Course Concerns

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Students have one opportunity throughout the semester to submit a late assignment without late penalty. Late assignments that are submitted within the next 24 hours of due date will have a 10% reduction on total points on final grade for the given assignment. Assignments that are submitted after 24 hours of due date **will receive no credit. If you are part of a sport team or know you have a doctor's appointment ahead of time, please submit your work in advance so you will receive all possible points. This requires planning ahead on the part of the student and communication with instructor.**

***Incompletes will only be assigned in **extremely unusual circumstances.** *** **Extra Credit**

I understand that life happens sometimes. Therefore, I will try to provide some extra credit opportunities throughout the semester so you can make up whatever points you have missed.



PLNU Spiritual Care

PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as a whole person. To this end, we provide resources for our Graduate and Accelerated Undergraduate students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. We have onsite chaplains at our different campuses who may be available during class break times across the week. If you have questions or a desire to meet or share any prayer requests with our chaplains, you can find them at the [Chaplain's Page \(https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/chaplains\)](https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/chaplains) via myPLNU.

In addition, the Mission Valley and Balboa campuses have a prayer chapel for use as a space set apart for quiet reflection and prayer.

Student Success

The Center for Student Success supports our Graduate and Professional Studies students throughout their academic journey. We provide student services such as academic advising and planning, resource workshops, and connect students to career services, writing support, tutorial services, and wellness resources. The Center itself is located on the first floor of the Mission Valley Campus. If you have any questions about how to access resources at PLNU, please start by reaching out to the Center for Student Success [by email \(mailto:studentsuccess@pointloma.edu\)](mailto:studentsuccess@pointloma.edu) or by phone at 619-563-2850. Please visit [myPLNU Student Success \(https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/student-success-center\)](https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/student-success-center) for more details. If you are in the School of Education, please contact [SOE Advising \(mailto:soeadvising@pointloma.edu\)](mailto:soeadvising@pointloma.edu).

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.



PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when, in reality, they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course.

For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Graduate Academic and General Policies \(https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/grad-catalog/academic-general-policies/#text\)](https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/grad-catalog/academic-general-policies/#text) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

During the first week of class, you will be asked to submit an Academic Honesty Verification Statement. Submitting the statement is a requirement of this course. By submitting the Academic Honesty Verification Statement, you will be verifying all assignments completed in this course were completed by you. Carefully review the Academic Honesty Statement below.

Statement: "In submitting this form, I am verifying all the assignments in this course will be completed by me and will be my own work."

PLNU Academic Behavior Policy

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student behavior that is disruptive or threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the [Academic Behavior Policy \(https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/grad-catalog/academic-general-policies/#academicbehavior\)](https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/grad-catalog/academic-general-policies/#academicbehavior) in the [University Catalog \(https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/grad-catalog\)](https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/grad-catalog).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor. Please use the following source



guide your citations when using AI. [APA Style: How to Cite ChatGPT](#) 

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center on the PL campus, the first floor of the Balboa campus, and the second floor of the Mission Valley campus. For all students, including the Bakersfield campus, virtual appointments are available. You can reach the Educational Access Center (EAC) [by email](#) (<mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu>) or phone at 619-849-2533. Students can access both requests for and evidence of disability through the Accommodate link off the main page of [OneLogin](#) (<https://pointloma.onelogin.com/portal>). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines approved accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through [Accommodate](#) (<https://pointloma-accommodate.simplicity.com/>).

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC eligibility process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. G  writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities

such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [PLNU's Nondiscrimination webpage](http://www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination) (<http://www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination>).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the [Title IX Office](https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix) (<https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix>). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the [Title IX Office](https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix) (<https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix>).

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact [Counseling Services](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) (<mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu>) or [consult the list of campus pastors](https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix/get-help-now) (<https://www.pointloma.edu/title-ix/get-help-now>).

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](http://www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination) (<http://www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination>).

Course Modality Definitions

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction are fully online.
 1. Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.
 2. Asynchronous Courses: All class meetings are asynchronous.
2. Hybrid Courses: These are courses with class meetings that take place both in the classroom and online synchronously and/or asynchronously.
3. In-Person Courses: These are courses that meet in person with the instructor and students in a physical classroom setting. With approval by the area dean, this may include up to 25% of qu



PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. Therefore, regular attendance and participation in each course are minimal requirements.

If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

Students who anticipate being absent for an entire week of a course should contact the instructor in advance for approval and make arrangements to complete the required coursework and/or alternative assignments assigned at the discretion of the instructor. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor and does not waive attendance requirements.

Refer to [Academic Policies \(https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/aug-catalog/academic-general-policies/\)](https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/aug-catalog/academic-general-policies/) for additional details.

Synchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

For synchronous courses that have specific scheduled meeting times (including in-person, hybrid, and synchronous online courses), absences are counted from the first official meeting of the class regardless of the date of the student’s enrollment. For courses with specific attendance requirements, those requirements are outlined in the course syllabus.

Note: For synchronous courses with an online asynchronous week, refer to the Online Asynchronous Class Attendance policy listed below.

Online Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

Students taking online courses with no specific scheduled meeting times are expected to actively engage throughout each week of the course. Attendance is defined as participating in an academic activity within the online classroom which includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in an online discussion
- Submitting an assignment
- Taking an exam
- Participating in online labs
- Initiating contact with faculty member within the learning management system to discuss course content

Note: Logging into the course does not qualify as participation and will not be counted as meeting the attendance requirement.



Use of Technology

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](https://help.pointloma.edu/TDClient/1808/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=108349) (<https://help.pointloma.edu/TDClient/1808/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=108349>) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

GPS Academic Resources

PLNU offers the following free academic resources virtually for Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) Students. Visit myPLNU through the links below for more information.

- [The GPS Writing Center](https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/writing-center-gps) (<https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/writing-center-gps>) offers:
 - **Zoom Writers Workshops** offered each quad on a variety of helpful topics
 - **One-to-one appointments** with the Writing Coach
 - **Microlearning YouTube Video Library** for helpful tips anytime
- [Research Help Guide](https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/research-help) (<https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/research-help>) to help you start your research
 - The physical office is located on the third floor of the [Mission Valley Regional Center](https://maps.app.goo.gl/CRXui8PJUnSkvokC9) (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/CRXui8PJUnSkvokC9>) off the student lounge
- [Academic Writing Resources Course](https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/64301) (<https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/64301>): Found on your Canvas Dashboard, this course is non-credit with 24/7 access, no time limits, and self-paced content. [Watch a quick video run-through](https://youtu.be/4H8KTZ4BOaY) (<https://youtu.be/4H8KTZ4BOaY>) and take time now to explore!
- [Grammarly](https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/writing-center-gps) (<https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/writing-center-gps>): Students have unlimited FREE access to Grammarly for Education, a trusted tool designed to help enhance writing skills by providing real-time feedback, identifying areas for improvement, and providing suggestions. Grammarly's Generative AI is NOT available with our student accounts.
- [Tutoring](https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/tutoring-gps) (<https://my.pointloma.edu/pages/tutoring-gps>): Students have access to 24/7 live or scheduled subject tutoring through Tutor.com, including a Paper Drop-Off Service with feedback within 12 hours.

Assignments At-A-Glance



The course summary below lists our assignments and their due dates. Click on any assignment to review it.

COURSE CALENDAR

Date	Topic	Requirements
		Required Reading • Chapter 1: Introduction to Research  (https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-one-introduction-to-research/) Required Activities
Week 1	How do we know what we know?	• Begin thinking about your research question. • Get access to your textbook. • Participation and In-Class Activities at the end of each class session. • Constructive Feedback due Thursday at the end of class. • Signed Class Contract and submit. Required Reading • Chapter 2: Linking methods with theory  (https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-two-linking-methods-with-theory/) Required Activities • Participation and In-Class Activities at the end of each class session. Required Reading:
Week 2	Linking Methods and Theory	Required Reading: • Chapter 3: Ethics in Social Work Research  (https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-three-ethics-in-social-work-research/)
Week 3	Research Ethics	



Required Reading

- [Chapters 1, 2, & 3 in Guidebook for social work literature reviews and questions](#) 

Week Conducting
4 Literature Review

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/literaturereviewsforsocialworkresearch/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/literaturereviewsforsocialworkresearch/)

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Analysis due Thursday at the end of class.

Required Reading

- [Chapter 4 in Guidebook for social work literature reviews and questions](#) 

Week Conceptualization
5 and Synthesis of
Lit Review

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/literaturereviewsforsocialworkresearch/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/literaturereviewsforsocialworkresearch/)

- **Second Component of your Research Project Proposal—Lit Review due at the beginning of class on Thursday. Bring a hard copy of your assignment to share with your classmate.**

Required Reading

- a. [Chapter 4: Research Design](#) 

Week Research Design
6

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-four-design-and-causality/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-four-design-and-causality/)

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Analysis due Thursday at the end of class

Week Measurement
7

Required Reading

- [Chapter 5: Defining and Measuring Concepts](#) 

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-five-defining-and-measuring-concepts/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-five-defining-and-measuring-concepts/)

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Analysis due Thursday at the end of class
- **Third Component of your Research Project Proposal—Background Section-** due at the beginning of class on Thursday Please bring an extra hard copy of your assignment to share with classmate.

Required Reading

-

- **Chapter 6: Sampling** 
(<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-six-sampling/>)

Week 8 Sampling

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Critical Feedback of Classmates' Background section due Thursday at the end of class.

Required Reading

- **Chapter 7: Survey Research** 
(<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-seven-survey-research/>)

Week 9 Surveys

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Analysis due Thursday at the end of class.
- **Fourth Component of your Research Project Proposal—Method and**

Theoretical Framework Section- due at the beginning of class on Thursday. Please bring a hard copy to share with your classmate.

Week 10 Experimental Design

Required Reading

- **Chapter 8: Experimental design** 
(<https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-eight-experimental-design/>)



[eight-experimental-design/](#))

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Constructive Feedback due Thursday at the end of class.
- **Fifth Section of your Research Project Proposal --Work Plan & Timeline due at the beginning of class on Thursday. Please bring a hard copy to share with classmate for feedback.**

Required Reading

b. **Chapters 9** ➞

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-nine-unique-features-of-qualitative-research/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-nine-unique-features-of-qualitative-research/) & **10** ➞

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-ten-unobtrusive-research/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-ten-unobtrusive-research/) : **Field Research: A Qualitative Technique**

Week 11 Qualitative and Unobtrusive Research

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Analysis due Thursday at the end of class.

Required Activities

Required Reading

• **Chapter 11: Real World Research** ➞

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-eleven-real-world-research/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-eleven-real-world-research/)

Week 12 Real World Research

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Analysis due Thursday at the end of

Week 13 Reporting Research

Required Reading

Chapter 12: Reporting research ➞

[\(https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-twelve-reporting-research/\)](https://uta.pressbooks.pub/foundationsofsocialworkresearch/part/chapter-twelve-reporting-research/)



[twelve-reporting-research/](#))

Required Activities

- Participation and In-Class Activities due at the end of each class session.
- Constructive Feedback due Thursday at the end of class.
- **Final Research Project Proposal due at the beginning of class on**

Please bring an extra hard copy of your final proposal to share with classmate.

	Final: PLEASE SEE PLNU	Required Activities
Finals Week	SCHEDULE FOR MORE INFORMATION	• Final Presentation of Research Project Proposal.

Class Contract:

I, _____ (name of student enrolled in class), acknowledge that I have read all the sections of this syllabus and understand the commitment required to take this course. I have clarified any questions I have with my instructor. Therefore, I fully comprehend the different tasks and requirements I am expected to fulfill throughout this course. **I also understand that this syllabus is subject to change if needed at any time. I commit to communicating with instructor as soon as there are potential issues that arise out of my control that impact my academic success.**

Student Signature Date

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
------	---------	-----



Date	Details	Due
Thu Sep 3, 2026	 WK1 Research Topic (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356702)	due by 11:30pm
	 Biblical Reflections on Research (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356694)	due by 11:59pm
	 Introducing a classmate (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356697)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Sep 10, 2026	 WK2 Building a Bibliography (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356703)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Sep 17, 2026	 Theory Search (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356701)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Sep 24, 2026	 WK 4 Reading Notes (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356704)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Oct 1, 2026	 WK5 Institutional Review Board Training (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356706)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Oct 8, 2026	 WK 6 Draft Literature Review (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356705)	due by 5:30pm
Thu Oct 15, 2026	 M&M Sample (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356698)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Oct 29, 2026	 Single Subject Design (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356700)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Dec 17, 2026	 Final Presentation (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356695)	due by 5:30pm
	 Final Research Proposal (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356696)	due by 11:59pm
	 Roll Call Attendance (https://canvas.pointloma.edu/courses/88333/assignments/1356699)	

