



Spring 2026 Course Syllabus
HSAD 5253: Health Services Research
Midwestern State University Gunn College of Health Sciences and Human Services

Instructor:

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Email:

My university email is jessica.fino@msutexas.edu. I may not reply to emails during weekends, or after 5:00 PM, so plan accordingly. Most emails will be returned within 48 hours, except on weekends. Please plan ahead and do not expect an immediate email response at the last minute. If you email me and do not hear from me within 48 hours, just email me again. Sometimes technology doesn't work like we want it to and can cause me to miss your emails.

Course Meetings:

This is classified as an online course. Content of the course will be delivered asynchronously online via D2L.

In-person meeting dates:

The course instructor will meet face-to-face on the following dates listed below to facilitate students studying on F-1 visas or other visa types. International students studying on visas are required to meet in person with the instructor during face-to-face meetings. If the instructor/graduate program coordinator at any point feels the student is neglecting to meet course requirements and “make normal progression towards a program of study,” they would have the authority to require an in-person makeup class day/work and/or dismissal. Lack of in-person attendance will negatively affect student visa status and the global education office will be notified. All other online students enrolled in the course are welcome to attend the in-person meetings but are not required to attend.

Meeting Dates from 1:00-2:00pm in CE 240/Zoom

Monday, January 26, 2026
Monday, February 9, 2026
Monday, March 2, 2026
Monday, March 30, 2026
Monday, April 20, 2026
Monday, May 4, 2026

Course Overview:

This is the beginning research course for all graduate students in the health care administration program. This class is the first of a two course sequence in research. The goal of the course is to familiarize students with research issues and methodology as well as to prepare them to conduct and evaluate research. To achieve this goal, the course will place an emphasis on the designing and developing a research proposal based on each student's interest. During this course students will strive to improve their critical thinking, writing and research skills.

Course Objectives:

- To identify key areas of research which relate to the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of health systems and policy
- To analyze methodologies for studying health service systems and public policies
- To distinguish proper from improperly conducted or concluded research in critiquing health services research and health program evaluations
- To conduct research using proper methodology
- To analyze findings to establish association of data to infer outcomes
- To summarize and critically evaluate major research projects
- To apply theories to actual research

Required Textbooks:

- 1.) Forister, J. G., & Blessing, J. D. (2019). *Introduction to research and medical literature for health professionals* (5th ed). Jones & Bartlett Learning. [ISBN: 9781284153774]
- 2.) American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association. [ISBN: 9781433832161]

Other Materials:

Supplemental readings, information, and PowerPoints may be made available at times during the course in D2L.

Instructional Methods:

Instructional strategies for this class will include assigned readings, participation in discussions, and written assignments which will include independent research.

Weekly Modules:

Modules specific to each course week are posted on D2L. Each module consists of assigned readings and may have a written assignment or a discussion question due. Please follow the instructions for assignment completion posted within each module in D2L. Each module must be completed by the due date specified in the tentative course schedule attached to this syllabus.

Activities and Assignments:

See the Course Schedule in this syllabus, as well as the course calendar in D2L, for specific information about activities and due dates.

If students have technical difficulties, they should use the “Help” link on D2L, contact the MSU Information Systems Support Staff, and send an email to the professor explaining what happened. Waiting until the last minute to ask for help or reporting incidents AFTER a due date or an exam expires may result in a grade of zero, even if it was a failure of D2L.

- All work submitted to the instructor will be considered complete and final, and will be graded as such.
- All assignments must be written at the graduate level and will be graded for accuracy, completeness, quality, spelling, grammar, and integrity.
- Because of the nature of the assignments, late submissions will not be accepted. *It is the expectation of the faculty that you complete work on time.*
- Rubrics are available for all written assignments and can (and should) be viewed by the students prior to submitting any work.

Class Discussions:

Some modules will have a discussion question posted by the instructor. The discussion question will be related to assigned readings for that module. Students are required to read assigned materials and answer the discussion question. In order to obtain full points for the discussion post, you must post an initial discussion answering the discussion question and reply to at least two other threads on the discussion board. The discussion boards will not open and you will not be able to see anyone else’s posts until you have created your original post. **Any initial post which is shorter than 10 sentences and any peer response which is shorter than five sentences will receive partial credit only.** Discussion posts will be graded based on quality of the content, length of the content, and compliance with APA guidelines for citations and references. **Students are encouraged to post both comments and questions and treat the discussion posts as discussions in the classroom.** This is a great platform to share your experiences and thoughts related to weekly topics.

Students must post original posts to the discussion board by **Thursdays at 11:59pm** and response posts must be posted by **Sundays at 11:59pm** on the week of the discussion assignment. This ensures all students have equal opportunity to engage in discussion and read everyone’s post. It is also the students’ responsibility to facilitate discussion within their own post if classmates have questions or comments. If students wait until the deadline to complete original posts, or fail to facilitate discussion, it is not fair to peers and defeats the purpose of the discussion. Failing to adhere to these policies will result in a loss of credit for the discussion board assignment.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- For all written assignments and discussion board posts, students are expected to follow APA 7th edition formatting guidelines.
- No discussion posts, assignments or exams will be accepted later than the due date. All assignments that are submitted after the due date will receive an automatic zero unless permission was given prior to the due date. Requests to turn work late must be submitted

in writing at least ONE week prior to the submission due date. These requests will only be granted under extreme circumstances.

If students have technical difficulties, they should use the “Help” link on D2L, contact the MSU Information Systems Support Staff, and send an email to the professor explaining what happened. Waiting until the last minute to ask for help or reporting incidents AFTER a due date or an exam expires may result in a grade of zero, even if it was a failure of D2L.

- All work submitted to the instructor will be considered complete and final, and will be graded as such.
- All assignments must be written at the baccalaureate level and will be graded for accuracy, completeness, quality, spelling, grammar, and integrity.
- Because of the nature of the assignments, late submissions will not be accepted. It is the expectation of the faculty that you complete work on time.
- Rubrics are available for all written assignments and can (and should) be viewed by the students prior to submitting any work

Grading:

Final Grades will be calculated with total points obtained in class. Weighting of assignments for purposes of grading will be as follows:

Assignments	Grade Percentage of Final Grade
Discussion Posts (Combined)	15%
Topic Selection	5%
Research Question Approval Form	15%
CITI Training	15%
Survey Development	15%
Readmission Rates Data Analysis	15%
Final IRB Proposal	20%

Grade percentages (GP):

(90% or More)	A
(80%-89.99%)	B
(70%-79.99%)	C
(60-69.99%)	D
(Below 60%)	F

Any student who receives two grades of C or less, or one F will be administratively removed from the program the term following the second C or D or the one F. The student in the master's or the graduate certificate programs may repeat one course in which a grade of C or lower has been earned with the approval of the department's academic review committee. **A 3.0 overall grade point average is required for graduation, and students must have a grade of B or better in all courses in the major. Students who are seeking the graduate certificate must earn a grade of B or better in each of the courses to be awarded the certificate.**

Class Participation:

Since this is a distance learning course, your discussion posts will be counted as your participation in the class. So, communicating through discussion posts is critical.

Online Computer Requirements:

Taking this class with an online component requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. *Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings. Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center.

***Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into D2L.

Instructor Class Policies:

Students are required to participate in class in a respectful manner whether or not the interactions are online or face-to-face. All course assignments must be submitted to D2L in Microsoft format including, Word documents and Power Point. For students without Microsoft software, Microsoft offers students a free download of Office 365.

Disability Support Services:

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable adjustments in its policies, practices, services, and facilities to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational programs and activities.

The Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) provides information and assistance, arranges accommodations, and serves as a liaison for students, instructors, and staff.

The DSS has assistance devices such as books on tape, recorders, and adaptive software which can be loaned to qualified individuals. A student/employee who seeks accommodations on the basis of disability must register with the Office of Disability Support Services in the Clark Student Center Room 168 or call 940-397-4140 for more information. Documentation of disability from a competent professional is required.

Individuals with grievances related to discrimination or lack of accommodation on the basis of a disability are encouraged to resolve the problem directly with the area involved. If the matter remains unresolved, advice and/or assistance will be provided by the Office of Disability Services for resolution. The grievance procedure may be found in the Student Handbook and Activities Calendar.

The ADA Coordinator may be contacted at (940) 397.4140, or 3410 Taft Blvd., Clark Student Center Room 168.

College Policies

- **Campus Carry Rules/Policies**

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

- **Smoking/Tobacco Policy**

Refer to: [Smoking and Tobacco Policy](#)

- **Alcohol and Drug Policy**

Refer to: [Alcohol and Drug Policy](#)

Student Handbook:

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick

Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MSUTexas&layout_id=6

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit <https://msutexas.edu/titleix/>

Conduct/Honesty/Honor System:

This course adheres to the MSU Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty, however small, creates a breach in academic integrity. A student's participation in this course comes with the expectation that his/her work will be completed in full observance of the MSU Code of Student Conduct. A student should consult the Student Handbook for answers to any questions about the code.

Students are encouraged to take full advantage of many resources available including Internet sites, handouts, other textbooks & journals, faculty, and peers. This interactive collegial learning environment is conducive to life-long learning. The components of this course are designed to represent the efforts of each student individually and are NOT to be shared. Submitting someone else's work as your own or improperly cited work constitutes plagiarism. Please see the Midwestern State University Catalog for further discussion of plagiarism. Plagiarism will constitute in an F for the course and the student will be referred to administration for further action. When students submit their efforts for grading, they are attesting they abided by this rule.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or completing other assignments; or (3) the acquisition of tests or other academic materials belonging to the university faculty or staff without permission.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: the use of, by paraphrase or direct quotation without correct citation in the text and on the reference list, the published or unpublished works of another person. Students may not submit papers and assignments that they have previously submitted for this or other courses. The use of materials generated by agencies engaged in "selling" term papers is also plagiarism. Plagiarism also includes using artificial intelligence sites to generate or paraphrase papers. Students are encouraged to review the tutorials and suggested websites for more information about plagiarism. By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a limited right in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The limited right shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes.

Note: The contents of the syllabus are as accurate as possible. The instructor reserves the right to make any changes necessary to the syllabus and course material. Every effort will be made to inform students about the changes in the syllabus, however, its student's responsibility to know what changes have been made and complete the course requirements. There are no extra credit opportunities in this course. ***Below you will find a tentative schedule for the semester. The professor does hold the right to make changes and modification as needed.**

HSAD 5253 Health Service Research Syllabus

Module	Topics & Readings	Additional Resources	Assignments: All are due by 11:59pm CST
Module 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus Review Chapter 1: Introduction 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Intros Due 1/25
Module 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2: Regulatory Protection of Human Subjects in Research 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: IRBs Due 2/1
Module 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3: The Research Problem Choosing a Topic Link 	How to Write a Research Proposal Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment: Topic Selection Due 2/8
Module 4	NA	Developing a Research Question Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment: Research Question Approval Form Due 2/15
Module 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APA Formatting Chapter 15: References 	APA 7 th Edition Videos Reference Page Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: APA Due 2/22
Module 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plagiarism and Synthesizing 	Plagiarism and Synthesizing Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment: CITI Training
Module 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4: Review of the Literature Chapter 5: The Systematic Review 	Writing a Literature Review Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
Module 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6 Methodology Chapter 7: Survey Research Chapter 8: Qualitative Research 	Research Design Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment: Survey Development Due 3/29
Module 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 9: Community-Based Research Chapter 10: Clinical Investigations 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
Module 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 11: Data Analysis Chapter 12: Exploring Statistics 	Data Analysis Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Stats Due 4/12
Module 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 13: The Results Section Chapter 14: The Discussion Section 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment: Readmission Rates Data Analysis Due 4/19
Module 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IRB Information & Links from MSU IRB Checklist Consent Form IRB Guidance IRB Application 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA
Module 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 16: Writing and Publishing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Publishing Due 5/3
Module 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment: IRB Proposal Due 5/10

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Module	Topics & Readings	Additional Resources	Assignments: All are due by 11:59pm CST
Module 15	NA	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Evaluations