

**Assignment #1: Interview Protocol
(Due at the start of class, 2/11/09)**

This exercise is the development of an interview protocol. Although interviews are often associated with qualitative research, quantitative data can also be collected via interviews. The goal of this assignment is to develop a draft of an interview protocol useful to collect data for your hypothetical project. It will also serve as a means to triangulate qualitative data with your quantitative data, i.e., to collect in-depth information necessary to answer your research question in order to compliment the quantitative data you would use to test your hypothesis.

Preparation:

1. Reread ScWk 240/242 research proposal. If you do not have a qualitative component in your research methodology, add one, or pretend you have one for the purpose of this exercise.
2. Please refer to Rubin, Babbie, and Lee (Chapter 18), Creswell (Chapter 7) and other class materials for more information and tips regarding interviewing.

Assignment Format: (10 pages maximum... it's not as long as you think)

1. Research Proposal Title Page (1 page, in APA format)
2. Summary (2 pages maximum, APA style):
 - Write your research statement, "This research examines..."
 - Identify one or two main QUALITATIVE research questions that guide your overall aim of your proposal. These overarching research questions are not necessarily the actual ones you ask in an interview, but they are the ones you must ultimately address in your research from the data you collect using your interview guide.
 - State your population, sampling frame, sampling method, and sample size relevant to a qualitative component in order to identify your hypothetical interviewees.
 - Identify how you will implement your interview, i.e., telephone, face-to-face, focus group, etc. Make sure it is a practical method given your project topic, and one that will net the most useful information to answer your research question(s).
 - Identify what kind of interview you will conduct i.e., structured, informal conversational, standardized open-ended interview, etc.
 - Identify how long the interview will take.
 - Identify and briefly describe your prospective interview site.
 - Briefly explain how you will obtain informed consent from participant(s), as well as other possible ethical considerations.
3. Interview Protocol (6 pages maximum, APA NOT required):
 - Using the provided example or templates your professor provides as a guide, design an interview protocol (including a script when talking with your interviewees, notes to the interviewer, and pertinent instructions about administration) no longer than 6 pages
 - Include at least 5 questions or items (depending on the kind of interview)
 - Allow space between questions to record interviewee responses, your notes, or response choices.
4. Consent Form (1 page, APA NOT required):
 - Using the provided example, draft a consent form applicable to your project.

Grading: 10.0% of your final grade

This assignment is REQUIRED. The spirit of the assignment is to teach you the practical skills of designing a usable instrument.

- 8.0 points - Completeness of components #1, #2, #3, and #4 in the format described above
- 2.0 points - Overall style, clarity, and quality (including APA)

This is an example consent form formatted and ready to be printed on SJSU letterhead if used for a research project.

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator: Ophere Dere

Title of Protocol: Predictors of Life Satisfaction in MSW Students

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating the predictors or factors that might influence the life satisfaction of Master of Social Work (MSW) students.
2. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a series of self-administered paper-pencil tests and a 60-minute, face-to-face, tape-recorded interview in the School of Social Work office or a location of your choice between March 31st and April 15th 2008. The investigator will provide all forms and materials needed for completion of this study. You are also being asked for your permission to audiotape this interview, but if you wish not to be recorded, only notes will be taken.
3. This study will involve minimal risk and discomfort. The probability of harm and discomfort will not be greater than your daily life encounters. Risks may include emotional discomfort from answering questionnaire or interview questions.
4. You will not directly benefit from participating in this study. Indirect benefits will include the promotion of our understanding of what factors influence the life satisfaction and well-being of MSW students.
5. There are no alternative procedures
6. Although the findings of this study may be published, no information that can identify you will be included.
7. There is no compensation for your participation in this study.
8. Questions concerning this research may be addressed to Ophere Dere, (408) 924-5800. Complaints about this research may be presented to Peter Allen Lee, Ph.D., MSW Program Coordinator, (408) 924-5850. Questions about research subjects' rights or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2427.
9. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose to "not participate" in the study.
10. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in the entire study or any part of the study. If you choose to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on your relations with San José State University or any other participating institutions or agencies.
11. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for your records, signed and dated by the investigator.

Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

Date

Interview Protocol

Script

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Ophere Dere and I am a graduate student at San Jose State University conducting my Special Study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work. Thank you for completing the surveys, and this follow-up interview will take about 60 minutes and will include 8 questions regarding your experiences and what might affect your life satisfaction as an MSW student. I would like your permission to tape record this interview, so I may accurately document the information you convey. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the use of the recorder or the interview itself, please feel free to let me know. All of your responses are confidential. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to develop a better understanding of how you and your peers view your life satisfaction and what might influence it. The purpose of this study is to increase our understanding of social work students and to promote their well-being.

At this time I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. I am the responsible investigator, specifying your participation in the research project: Predictors of Life Satisfaction of MSW Students. You and I have both signed and dated each copy, certifying that we agree to continue this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other under lock and key, separate from your reported responses. Thank you.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop, take a break, or return a page, please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

Demographic questions:

[240 and 242 students, remember that this example is an interview protocol that COMPLEMENTS your study. You would rely also on your demographic questionnaire and other instruments to collect data and triangulate information]

1. What year are you in the MSW Program? (check response):

- 1st year Full-Time Program
- 2nd year Full-Time Program
- 1st year 3-Year Program
- 2nd year 3-Year Program
- 3rd year 3-Year Program
- Other (specify): _____

2. Before entering the MSW Program, how many years had you been out of school? (fill in):

_____ years

3. Thinking about your life satisfaction, on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being low and 5 being high, how would you rate your **CURRENT** life satisfaction? (circle response):

1 2 3 4 5

7. Thank you for sharing about these factors and your life satisfaction. Now thinking about your life satisfaction **BEFORE** you entered the MSW program, do you think your life satisfaction was **HIGHER**, **LOWER**, or **ABOUT THE SAME** **BEFORE** you started graduate school? Why do you think there was a difference, or why did it stay the same? Please explain.

8. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

***** If participant wishes to discontinue study, ask if they would be willing to share why:**

Thank the participant for his/her participation.