This year-long seminar is designed to develop research competence in applied issues of aging. The seminar is primarily designed for pre- and post-doctoral fellows from the NIA project on Social Research Training on Applied Issues of Aging. Other participants are welcome after prior consultation with one of the instructors.

A major theme of the training program, (2000-2005), is the substantive and theoretical issues involved in examining the social and behavioral influences on health and health care in the following areas: socioeconomic status, extreme old age, racial/ethnic variation, mental health and stress and coping.

During 2001-2002, the primary focus of the seminar will be on substantive and research issues in relation to racial/ethnic minority status and health. During the fall term, we will examine the following arenas in the health and health care of various racial/ethnic groups: the environment and quality of life, health and mental health, spirituality, and service needs. In order to facilitate this process, we will focus on a recent needs assessment of elderly people living in Detroit, most of whom are African American. During the winter term, participants will have an opportunity to work on a project of their choosing or on developing an abstract using the needs assessment data for inclusion in a GSA symposium presentation to be submitted in April 2002 for the annual meeting in November, 2002. This will occur within a seminar structure that provides detailed feedback from colleagues and that is designed to assist all participants in improving their conceptualization and writing of professional materials.

The fall seminar is organized to provide a variety of educational experiences. Class sessions will be led by the course instructors, guest speakers, and seminar participants. The
instructors will provide an overview of each of the substantive foci related to this course. The guest speakers will address various aspects of a needs assessment, The Hannan Study of Older Adults in Detroit's Central City. The seminar participants will present findings based on analyses of the Hannan Study data that are relevant to each of the substantive foci of the course.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS

1.) All participants are expected to read the materials provided prior to each seminar and to be prepared to discuss them. During selected meetings, we will critique key articles which are indicated by an asterisk (*) in the reading list in relation to the key questions and evaluation issues listed in items 4 and 5, below.

Two copies of all readings are provided in the marked file drawer located in the main project office, 3807. Feel free to make xerox copies of any article you want a copy of, following instructions about use of 2nd floor xerox machine that will be provided. If you remove any article from the file drawer to take out of 3807, please do so for only short periods and leave a note about where you are and/or when you will return it in case another fellow needs to use that article in the interim.

2.) Each NIA Fellow is expected to participate in a group seminar presentation. Fellows will select one of the substantive areas addressed in this seminar (i.e., environment and quality of life, health and mental health, spirituality, and service needs), analyze relevant data from the Hannan Study's needs assessment of Detroit's elderly, and present their findings to the seminar.

3.) Pre-doctoral students who are enrolled in the seminar to meet doctoral program requirements or MSW requirements are expected to: register for 3 credits; and to prepare a critical review of the literature on an aspect of one of the substantive foci of the seminar and the impact of racial/ethnic minority status on that issue. The goals of the paper are to identify key theoretical and empirical knowledge, identify gaps in theoretical and/or empirical knowledge, identify methodological limitations in available knowledge, and to point toward future directions for research an/or theory development. Discuss the topic for the paper with the appropriate instructor by November 7. The paper should be 20-30 pages double spaced. Submit a copy to each instructor by Dec. 13. The paper's topic
should be related to the specific program requirement the
student is meeting by the seminar¹.

4) KEY QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED IN SEMINAR MEETINGS:

a) What are the applied issues that have been explored
   and that remain to be explored as they are related to
   racial/ethnic minority status and health?

b) What are the key theories or theoretical concepts that
   have been proposed to explain particular applied
   issues? Have these theories or concepts adequately
   taken into account racial/ethnic minority status and
   health?

c) What aspects of the theories have not been tested with
   persons holding any racial/ethnic minority status or
   with specific racial/ethnic minorities?

d) What other theories or theoretical concepts might be
   useful in examining particular applied issues among
   persons with racial/ethnic minority status?

e) What are the limitations in the research designs, data
   collection methods, statistical methods that have been
   used in researching particular applied issues among
   racial/ethnic minorities? Are these limitations
   related to the applied issues under investigation or
   racial/ethnic minority group(s) being studied?

f) What alternate designs and methods might improve the
   research on particular applied issues among
   racial/ethnic minorities?

g) What are the limits on the generalizability of the

¹ The seminar meets distribution requirements in the Doctoral Program in the curriculum area of
Research Methods for Practice and Policy and counts toward the five-course requirement. For
doctoral students simultaneously enrolled in the MSW program, the seminar may also meet
requirements in the curriculum area of Research and Evaluation without special permission.
Alternatively, with permission, it may meet MSW requirements in the areas of: Human Behavior
and the Social Environment or Fields of Service (Social Welfare Policies and Services for the
Aging Practice Area). Fellows desiring to use the seminar to meet either of these requirements
should discuss with the instructors early in the semester how the paper should be adapted and get
their approval for the form and content of the paper.
findings on particular topics that have been studied in the area?

h) What theoretical and/or empirical questions were raised by attention to health and racial/ethnic minority status as a key context for particular applied issues? Do these questions suggest revisions in approaches to particular applied issues for non-minority individuals or groups?

i) How might the findings on the applied issues under investigation be used to improve health services for racial/ethnic minority elderly?

5) KEY ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN EVALUATING RESEARCH ARTICLES:


PROBLEM

1. Clarity of study’s purpose.
2. Adequacy of literature review— are relevant studies cited and described? Are gaps in the literature identified?
3. Clarity of study’s potential contribution to addressing the gaps in the literature.
4. Clarity of statement of research questions and/or hypotheses.
5. Clarity of theoretical foundation for research questions and/or hypotheses.
6. Clarity of specification of independent variables.
7. Clarity of specification of dependent variables.
8. Appropriate specification of confounding variables.

METHODS

1. Clarity about how data were collected.
2. Adequacy of sample— size and representativeness.
3. Clarity of statement of research design.
4. Adequacy of the research design given the purposes of the study.
5. Clarity of the operational definition of measures.
6. Appropriateness of measures in relation to the purposes of the study.
7. Degree of validity of the measures.
8. Degree of reliability of the measures.
FINDINGS

1. Appropriateness of statistical procedures.
2. Clarity in presentation of specific findings.
3. Extent to which authors’ conclusions about hypotheses or answers to research questions are consistent with the data.
4. Degree to which alternative explanations of the data were dealt with.

DISCUSSION

1. Appropriateness of summary of results.
2. Adequacy of relating findings to previous literature.
3. Adequacy of relating findings to theoretical issues.
4. Appropriate attention to generalizability of the study findings.
5. Extent to which the primary study purpose was achieved.

A more detailed analysis is in the original article.

GRADING

Participants enrolled to meet program requirements will receive regular letter grades upon completion of seminar requirements. Other enrolled participants will receive a grade of Satisfactory, based upon their participation in the seminar.

REGISTRATION FOR NIA PREDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Because of limited tuition funds available from NIA, Predoctoral fellows should register for the fall seminar only under the following circumstances; if none of the following conditions apply, please do not register for SW835 for the fall term.

a. You are taking the seminar to meet a MSW or PHD program requirement, in which case you should register for 3 credits.

b. You are registering as a full-time student (9 credits or more to take other courses), in which case you should register for 1 credit for the seminar.

c. You need to maintain a certain level of credit enrollment because of external requirements such as holding off the payment of student loans, in which case you should register for 1-3 credits, depending on your circumstances.
d. Candidate-level Predoctoral fellows who need to enroll as a Candidate for the Fall term should enroll for Augmented Candidacy and elect SW835 as their “free” course for 1 credit. If Candidate-level pre-Doctoral fellows wish to elect an alternate course as their “free” one, consult with the instructors prior to registration. PLEASE NOTE: Most Candidates do not need to enroll to maintain library or computer privileges so those fellows should not enroll at all, for Candidacy or for SW835. If you are in doubt about whether you need to enroll, please contact the Doctoral Office and/or the instructors.

REGISTRATION FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

PostDoctoral fellows have available to them tuition only for enrollment in one summer workshop/course offered through ICPSR or SRC programs in survey research and statistical methods. Regular university courses can be informally audited with permission of the instructor. Do not enroll for SW835.

FALL SEMINAR SCHEDULE

SEPT 5 Overview of Course

SEPT 12 Substantive Issues: Environment and Quality of Life


SEPT 19 Substantive Issues: Health and Mental Health


SEPT 26 Substantive Issues: Spirituality


OCT 3 Substantive Issues: Service Needs/Use


OCT 10 Conducting a Needs Assessment: Coalition Building
Center for Healthcare Effectiveness Research (2001), The Hannan study of older adults in Detroit’s Central City, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Chapters 1-4


OCT 17 Conducting a Needs Assessment: Instrument Design


OCT 24 Conducting a Needs Assessment: Interviewing Respondents


OCT 31 Conducting a Needs Assessment: Data Analysis


NOV 7 Conducting a Needs Assessment: Translation of Data


NOV 14 No Class: Gerontological Society of America

NOV 21 Data Presentations: Environment and Quality of Life
Center for Healthcare Effectiveness Research (2001), The Hannan study of older adults in Detroit’s Central City, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Chapters 5 and 7.

NOV 28 Data Presentations: Health and Mental Health
Center for Healthcare Effectiveness Research (2001), The Hannan study of older adults in Detroit’s Central City, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Chapter 6

DEC 5 Data Presentations: Spirituality
Center for Healthcare Effectiveness Research (2001), The Hannan study of older adults in Detroit’s Central City, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Chapters 8

**DEC 13 Data Presentations: Service Needs**

Center for Healthcare Effectiveness Research (2001), The Hannan study of older adults in Detroit’s Central City, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Chapter 9.