

WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MASTER SYLLABUS

Social Work 3510 - HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT (3 credits)

I. Course Domain and Boundaries

The purpose of this course is to introduce the social work student to knowledge of human development as a base for social work practice. Human problems are viewed within their environmental context. Individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities are in constant transaction with each other in the physical and social environmental context. Thus, people and environments reciprocally affect one another, and adequate assessments of human problems and plans of intervention must consider the reciprocal impact of people and a range of environmental systems.

Life span development from conception to very old age is examined. The course focuses on theories and knowledge related to biological, sociological, psychological, spiritual and cultural processes and development across the life span. It addresses the environmental conditions that support or inhibit individual and family growth; and variations arising from ethnicity, class, cohort, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, and other differences. Particular attention is given to factors that contribute to persons being at risk and the issues and concerns of multi-cultural, urban populations.

II. Knowledge and Skill Objectives

A. Knowledge Objectives.

By the end of the semester, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of:

1. The ecological person-in-environment perspective.
2. Social systems theory as a way of thinking about the units and levels of interactions.
3. Theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological and spiritual development across the life span, including attachment theory, role theory, cognitive theory, learning theory, and theories of moral development.
4. Individual and family developmental stages calibrated with such variables as family structure gender biophysical processes, culture, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social change.
5. The contribution of human behavior theories to understanding human diversity
6. The consequences of oppression and discrimination on human development and behavior
7. Individual and family functioning in the context of groups, organizations and communities.

B. Skill Objectives.

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Use the ecological perspective and other theoretical models to describe and assess the development of individuals and families.
2. Apply theory and knowledge of life span development (individual and family) to social work practice.
3. Evaluate theories of human behavior with an understanding of their implicit value base and their relevance to social work practice.
4. Recognize the role research plays in generating, supporting and revising theories and concepts of human behavior.
5. Distinguish between personal and professional values pertaining to human behavior.
6. Apply basic social work purposes and values to the study and analysis of human behavior in the social environment.

III. Performance Criteria

Students are to demonstrate comprehension of the course content and acquisition of the expected knowledge and skills through a variety of assignments. Students are expected to develop their competence in oral and written communication. Papers which do not adhere to college-level standards for scholarly writing will be down-graded. Students are also expected to work to master the recommended style of the American Psychological Association (APA) as delineated in the most recent edition of the APA's publication manual (4th), including orderly presentation of ideas, grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, reducing bias in language, abbreviations, headings, subheadings, quotations, and referencing (in-text as well as bibliographic). Students cognizant of the need for ongoing development of their writing skills are strongly urged to make use of the University Writing Center.

IV. Course Text

Required Text

Ashford, J. B., LeCroy, C. W., & Lortie, K.L. (2006). *Human Behavior in the Social Environment: A Multidimensional Perspective* (3rd ed.). Belmont CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Additional Readings

Students are encouraged to study selectively in areas related to relevant class topics. The bibliography of reading that accompanies this syllabus is intended to serve as a guide.

V. Organization of the Course

This course is structurally comprised of an organizing framework, the ecological/social system perspective. Students are introduced to concepts of person-in-environment transactions. Human diversity is stressed throughout material on life span development.

VI. Role of Student and Instructor

Students are expected to attend all class sessions; absences from class may affect the student's grade, particularly excessive absences and tardiness. For further details about your role as a student, see the University's Statement of Obligations of Faculty and to the Instructional Process in the Wayne State University Graduate Bulletin.

More than three absences will result in students being asked to withdraw from the class. Students are expected to arrive for class on time and stay until the end of the class session. Students are expected to be prepared at class time for discussions pertaining to assigned readings.

In order to be courteous to classmates, I ask that cell phones use be restricted to vibrations—no rings. Please limit beeper use to emergencies only.

Academic Honesty: All students are expected to submit their own original work. The presentation of another's words or ideas as your own, without giving credit to the source, is regarded as plagiarism. Plagiarism is the same as lying and stealing. Any work that is submitted in this class and found to contain portions that are plagiarized will receive a ZERO.

VII. Course Outline

Session	Date	Topic/Activity	Readings
1		Introduction and Overview of Course What is human behavior? Why do social workers study human behavior? How does human behavior relate to social work practice?	
2		A Multidimensional Framework for Assessing Social Functioning Dimension of Human Behavior and Social Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ecological Perspective</i>• <i>Systems Theory</i>• Multidimensional Framework• Life-span versus Life-Course Perspectives on Human Development	Ashford et al., chapter 1
3		Biophysical Dimension for Assessing Social Functioning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biological Theories	Ashford et al., chapter 2

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological Growth and Development • Biochemical Systems in the Neurons Systems 	
4		<p>Psychological Dimension for Assessing Social Functioning</p> <p><i>Psychodynamic Theory</i> <i>Erikson's Psychosocial Development</i> <i>Learning Theory</i> <i>Social-Learning Theory</i></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jean Piaget's Structural Approach to Cognition <p>Information Processing</p> <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nature and Functions of Attitudes • <i>Theories of Attitudes and Their Change</i> 	Ashford et al., chapter 3
5		<p>Social Dimension for Assessing Social Functioning</p> <p>Social Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological Systems Theory • <i>Modern Functionalism Theory</i> • <i>Conflict Theories</i> • <i>Postmodernism and Theories of Society</i> <p>Families and Groups</p> <p>Support Systems, and Communities</p> <p>Multicultural and Gender Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial and Ethnic Considerations • Gender and Sexism • Homophobia 	Ashford et al., chapter 4
6		<p>Pregnancy, Birth, and the Newborn</p> <p><u>Biophysical Dimension</u></p> <p>Biophysical Growth and Development</p> <p>Biophysical Strengths and Hazards</p> <p><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <p>Social Cognition and Regulation</p> <p>Psychological Strengths and Hazards</p> <p><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <p>Families, Groups Support Systems, and Communities</p> <p>Multicultural and Gender Considerations</p>	Ashford et al., chapter 5

		Social Strengths and Hazards	
7		<p style="text-align: center;">Infancy</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimension</u></p> <p>Biophysical Growth and Development Biophysical Strengths and Hazards</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piaget’s Sensorimotor Stage <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attachment Theory</i> <p>Social Cognition and Regulation Psychological Strengths and Hazards</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <p>Families and Groups Support Systems and Communities Multicultural and Gender Considerations Social Strengths and Hazards</p>	Ashford et al., chapter 6
8		<p style="text-align: center;">Early Childhood</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimensions</u></p> <p>Biophysical Growth Biophysical Strengths and Hazards</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piaget’s Preoperational Stage <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression <p>Social Cognition and Regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Esteem vs. Competency <p>Psychological Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic and Assessment Issues • Anxiety Disorders • Childhood Depression <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <p>Families and Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting • Nontraditional Families 	Ashford et al., chapter 7

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects of TV on Preschool Children Support Systems and Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool Environment Multicultural and Gender Considerations Social Strengths and Hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Abuse 	
9		<p style="text-align: center;">Middle Childhood</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimensions</u></p> Biophysical Growth Biophysical Strengths and Hazards <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> Cognitive Development and Information Processing Communication Attitudes and Emotions Psychological Strengths and Hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p> Families and Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Relationship and Discipline Support Systems, and Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power of Peers Multicultural and Gender Considerations Social Strengths and Hazards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marital Conflict and Divorce 	Ashford et al., chapter 8
10		<p style="text-align: center;">Adolescence</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimensions</u></p> Biophysical Growth and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puberty Process Biophysical Strengths and Hazards <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> Cognitive Development and Information Processing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial Differences and Intellectual Ability Identity <i>Moral Development Theory</i> <i>Developmental Theory</i> Psychological Strengths and Hazards	Ashford et al., chapter 9

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delinquency <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <p>Families and Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Autonomy: • Peers Pressure, Conformity and Friendships <p>Support Systems and Communities</p> <p>Multicultural and Gender Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heterosexuality & Homosexuality <p>Social Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbirth: • Sexually Transmitted Diseases • Alcohol and Other Drug Use 	
11		<p style="text-align: center;">Young Adulthood</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimensions</u></p> <p>Biophysical Growth and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproductive System • Effect of Hormones on Women <p>Biophysical Strengths and Hazards</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Post formal Thought <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love/Isolation and Loneliness • <i>Levinson's Eight Stages of Adult Development</i> <p>Psychological Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious Mental Illness <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <p>Families and Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homosexual Relationships • Transition to Parenthood • Childless Couples: Voluntary and Involuntary <p>Support Systems and Communities</p> <p>Multicultural and Gender Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blending Religions • Gender Roles: Equal? and Consequences. <p>Social Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of Child with a Disability • Divorce • Sexual Harassment 	Ashford et al., chapter 10

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape and Sexual Assault • Domestic Violence 	
12		<p style="text-align: center;">Middle Adulthood</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimensions</u></p> <p>Biophysical Growth and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menopause <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midlife Crisis <p>Psychological Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and Drug Addiction • Codependency <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p> <p>Families, Groups, Support Systems, and Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended Families or Stepfamilies • Relationships with their Children and Aging Parents • Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren <p>Multicultural and Gender Considerations</p> <p>Social Strengths and Hazards</p>	Ashford et al., chapter 11
13		<p style="text-align: center;">Late Adulthood</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Biophysical Dimensions</u></p> <p>Biophysical Growth and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexuality <p>Biophysical Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic Health Problems • Alcoholism in Late Adulthood <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Psychological Dimension</u></p> <p>Cognitive Development and Information Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Processing, Memory, and Learning <p>Attitudes and Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grief and Loss <p>Psychological Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alzheimer's Disease • Depression/Suicide <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Dimension</u></p>	Ashford et al., chapter 12

		<p>Families and Groups Support Systems, and Communities Relationships with Family, Couples, Children, and Friendships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion and Spirituality • Hospice • Retirement <p>Multicultural and Gender Considerations Social Strengths and Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder Abuse • Discrimination 	
14		<p>Review for final exam Student evaluations Class responsibility</p>	

VIII. Assignments and Grades

- A. Ethnographic study of one's family of origin (100 points).** Each student will write a case report about his/her family of origin. Students are to study and cite relevant literature related to their family's culture(s), ethnicity(ies), and development (at least 3 references must be cited). Ethnographic research techniques are also to be used (study of family artifacts, documents, photo albums, observations and interviews). You may choose to explore factors that led to crises and challenges for the family, and the typical styles of coping and adaptation are to be considered. Other characteristics that the student may choose to explore are migration patterns, family organization, child rearing practices, religious beliefs, approach to eating, secrets, rituals, attitudes toward illness and death, help seeking behavior, attitudes toward other cultures and deviance, family and gender roles. Finally, how might your cultural identity influence your work as a social worker? How might your cultural identify influence your values as a social worker? If more than one culture comprises the culture of origin, ways that these differences were negotiated should be discussed. (5-6 typed pages, plus attachments). Use APA guidelines for writing style and format. **Due October 26th. Late papers will be reduced by 4 points per calendar day.**
- B. Quizzes (70 points).** Students will take periodic quizzes (7) throughout the semester over readings. Quizzes will be given in varied formats (multiple choice, short answer, essay) but will primarily be given on Blackboard. Quizzes will be geared to ensuring that class materials are read. All quizzes **must** be turned in on the day the material is covered in class. I will not accept quizzes via email. I will not accept quizzes if you do not attend class.

- C. Adolescent Paper (100 points).** Write a paper reviewing your experiences during adolescence. Your paper should address significant issues and life events that you experienced during adolescence and the effect these events and issues had on you at the time and may currently still have. (Issues that should be addressed include sexuality, drugs, peer pressure, body image and family dynamics.) How did issues of diversity affect your adolescence? Discussion of at least 3 theories must be integrated into your paper. Show how the theories can be used to explain your behavior. For example, you may want to discuss how social learning theory may explain your involvement with certain friends. The paper should be 6-8 typed pages. References should be used in regard to your discussion of theories. Use APA style of referencing. A reference list must be included.
- D. Oral Research Report (30 points).** In the first class, students are to sign up for one session in which they will make an oral report on related behavioral science research study reported in scholarly journals. This may be selected from the selected bibliography attached or located by the student in a current journal (published since 1995). Students should base their report on at least 2 scholarly articles related to the topic. Students will have a maximum of 10-15 minutes for their presentation. The presentation will be made on the class day that the topic is covered on the syllabus. A handout summarizing the 2 articles read and listing key information of utility to social workers should be provided to each class member (1-2 pages). Students are encouraged to work from an outline and not read their report, to practice and time their presentation carefully. The research studies should be summarized and critiqued. Presentation skills will be considered when grading this assignment.
- E. Final Exam (100 points).** Students will choose to complete an in-class or take home final exam. The final exam will focus on how biological, psychological social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions influence human development. **The in-class exam is December 21st. Take home exams are due December 20th 10am. All late take home exams will be reduced 4 points per calendar day.**
- F. Class Responsibility (25 points).** Class responsibility entails regular class attendance, class preparedness and active class participation with consideration for others. When students participate actively in class discussions, learning is enhanced. To be able to participate actively and with relevance to the course subject matter, it is important that you complete reading assignments prior to each class session. It is the student's responsibility, whether present or absent, to keep abreast of assignments. Each student and the instructor will assign portions of the grade. Honest self-evaluation is a critical component to social work practice. Missing classes and repeated tardiness will affect a student's grade in the course. You will use the class responsibility form attached to this syllabus to complete the assignment at the end of the course—**in class. Any student missing more than 3**

classes will be asked to drop the course or could receive a failing grade for the course.

G. Grading Criteria.

Adolescent Paper.....100 points
Oral Research Report.....30 points
Quizzes.....70 points
Ethnographic study of one's family of origin.....100 points
Final Exam.....100 points
Class Responsibility25 points

Letter grades will be calculated as follows:

Percent	Points	Grade
95.0-100	403-425	A
90.0-94.9	382-402	A-
87.0-89.9	369-381	B+
83.0-86.9	352-368	B
80.0-82.9	340-351	B-
77.0-79.9	327-339	C+
73.0-76.9	310-326	C
70.0-72.9	297-309	C-
67.0-69.9	284-296	D+
63.0-66.9	267-283	D
60.0-62.9	255-266	D-
<59.9	<254	F

A grade of “A” indicates excellent/outstanding performance in all expected areas; a grade of “B” indicates that a student has done good work and satisfactorily met the course objectives; etc.

CLASS RESPONSIBILITY

Class responsibility allows students to complete a self-evaluation relative to their class attendance, preparation, and participation. This will be completed in class on December 9th. Please do not complete prior to this time. Please respond honestly when evaluation yourself.

1. Attendance: It is expected that students attend each class session. In the event that a student is unable to attend a session due to illness, emergency or special circumstances, he or she is expected to notify the instructor. If at all possible, notification should occur prior to the particular class session the student will be missing. Students should arrive to class on time. Arriving and departing early is disruptive to the class.

- 1) How many sessions have you been absent? _____
 - a) In how many of these sessions did you notify the instructor prior to the session in? _____
Which you were absent? _____
- 2) How many sessions did you arrive late for class? _____
- 3) How many sessions did you depart early from class? _____

2. Preparation: It is expected that students will complete reading assignments and be sufficiently prepared to discuss readings in class. Students are encouraged to discuss readings with peers, classmates, and instructor. Students are encouraged to consult additional readings and read recommended articles when time allows.

- 4) I completed all of the assigned readings prior to each session approximately (check one):
____ 100% of time
____ 99-90% of time
____ 89-80% of time
____ 79-70% of time
____ less than 70% of time

- 5) I felt adequately prepared to discuss the readings at each session (check one):
____ all of the time
____ most of the time
____ some of the time
____ rarely
____ never

- 6) In order to prepare for class sessions, I typically (check all that apply):
____ Reread required materials more than once
____ Read recommended materials
 Identify materials: _____
____ Read supplemental materials other than recommended ones
 Identify materials: _____

- Read notes from prior class sessions
- Made written note of any questions I had

7) Consulted with instructor:

- about every week
- about 5-10 times
- about 3-4 times
- 2-3 times
- never

8) Approached consultation with instructor in a prepared manner. I prepared an outline or made notes in advance of questions and possible resolutions to questions.

- all of the time
- most of the time
- some of the time
- rarely
- never
- not applicable

3. Participation: It is expected that students will contribute to the maintenance of a healthy learning environment. It is expected that all course participants (students and instructor) would respect the dignity of one another. It is expected that students actively participate in class discussions and exercises.

9) I actively participated in classroom discussions (check one):

- all of the time
- most of the time
- some of the time
- rarely
- never

Briefly describe your classroom discussion participation efforts: _____

10) I was respectful and supportive of the rights of participation of my student peers in the class:

- always
- almost always
- occasionally
- rarely

11) I was respectful and supportive of the rights of participation of the instructor in the class:

- always
- almost always
- occasionally
- rarely

12) I feel I contributed to a healthy classroom learning environment (check one):

_____yes

_____no

Briefly provide some key examples that support your response:

On at least one occasion, I detracted from a healthy classroom learning environment (check one):

_____yes

_____no

If yes, briefly describe how you detracted (on at least one occasion) from a healthy classroom learning environment:

SUMMARY:

1. Attendance: Based upon your responses to items (1) through (3), enter a number 0 and 10 as your score for attendance: _____

Briefly justify this score: _____

2. Preparation: Based upon your responses to items (4) through (8), enter a number between 0 and 10 as your score for preparation: _____

Briefly justify this score: _____

3. Participation: Based upon your responses to items (9) through (13), enter a number between 0 and 10 as your score for participation: _____

Briefly justify this score: _____

4. Enter your total score (add the 3 scores above) _____

IX. Selected Bibliography

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- development: Bases for preventive and interventive help* (pp. 40-50). New York: Macmillan.
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