

WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MASTER SYLLABUS 2005

SW 7040 Methods of Social Work Practice I (3 credits)

I. Course Domain and Boundaries

This is the first of three Core year practice courses which familiarizes students with the profession of social work and to the methods of social work practice. The course introduces students to the systems ecological framework as the overarching framework for organizing and conceptualizing social work practice. Students will review the history of social work practice and its commitment to oppressed and disenfranchised populations. Perspectives on the evolution of practice theory and on current conceptualizations of practice with individuals and families will be examined.

The principles, methods, and skills of generalist social work practice with diverse individuals at various stages in the life cycle and with families will be emphasized in this course. Students will become familiar with basic interviewing skills, e. g., active and reflective listening, empathy, focusing, probing, structuring the interview for information gathering, and assessment. Skills involved in the problem solving process will be addressed. Professional documentation (process recording, summary recording, progress note) and its significance will be described. The importance of self-awareness and the professional use of self will be underscored throughout the course as well as the values and ethics of the social work profession. The components of culturally-sensitive social work practice will be highlighted. The constructive use of social work supervision as a means to further one's professional development will be emphasized.

Basic methods in crisis intervention and brief treatment, contracting, referral and use of environmental and social support networks will be emphasized. The course will examine the unique concerns of populations-at-risk in the metropolitan, urban environment.

II. Specific Knowledge and Skill Objectives

Knowledge Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will demonstrate knowledge of:

1. The history, development, and models of social work practice with individuals and families with an emphasis on social work's historical commitment to the oppressed and disenfranchised:

2. The values and ethics integral to social work practice with individuals and families;
3. The significance of the professional use of self and self-awareness in social work practice;
4. Practice theories and change strategies used by social workers.
5. Cultural competence in practice with client groups relative to race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, religion and physical and mental status;
6. The rationale for evaluation of practice and methods to evaluate practice.

Skill Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will demonstrate skill in:

1. Professional documentation and process recording;
2. Basic interviewing techniques and social work roles with individuals of varying ages and with families;
3. Psychosocial assessment and treatment planning;
4. Identifying appropriate empirically-based intervention strategies in the problem solving process with sensitivity to interventions/strategies that support social and economic justice;
5. Methods to evaluate practice with individuals and families.
6. Cultural competence related to human diversity and how religion/spirituality, age, gender, culture, ethnicity, SES, and sexual orientation influence work with individuals and families;
7. The application of the strengths perspective in work with clients.

III. Performance Criteria

Demonstration of achievement of the above objectives will be made through a number of written assignments and may include: an analysis of a process recording and a psychosocial assessment, a quiz and class participation (relevant comments that reflect knowledge of the assigned reading material, familiarity with the concepts presented, application to field work and engagement in class exercises).

Texts

The required texts for this course are:

Kadushin, A. & Kadushin, G. (1997). *The social work interview (4th Ed.)*. Columbia University Press: New York.

or

Compton, B. R., Galaway, B., Cournoyer, B. R. (2005). *Social work processes*. (7th Ed.) Belmont, CA: Brooks-Cole.

And

Thomlison, B. (2002). *Family assessment handbook*. Brooks-Cole. :Pacific Grove, CA.

Additional Required Readings:

NASW Code of Ethics (download from the NASW webpage)

Course Pack available at the University Copy and Printing Center, 115 West Warren, 313-831 1170.

Organization of the Course

The course is divided into five units. Changes in this format may occur to meet the combined needs of the students and the instructor.

Primary attention is given to social work practice with individuals of varying ages (with some attention to families) in their environments.

Unit 1 begins with an orientation for students to the profession, the School, its curriculum, and to social work practice. Highlighted is the ecological systems perspective as the organizing framework for understanding social work practice; the initial identification of vulnerable populations and the problem situations requiring social work service. Social work values and ethics are examined and emphasized.

Unit 2 focuses on the beginning phase of social work practice with emphasis on the nature of professional relationships, the professional use of self, interpersonal communication skills/interviewing, and recording. Exercises sensitizing students to culturally competent social work practice will be included.

Unit 3 addresses data gathering and initial assessment with individuals and families. Students will become familiar with treatment planning principles.

Unit 4 concentrates on the problem solving process in the middle and ending stages of treatment along with an overview of strategies used by social workers in the evaluation of practice.

Unit 5 provides an overview of the prominent theoretical approaches to conceptualizing practice and the social worker's responsibility to use and refine frameworks which are most effective, given the problem situations faced by their clients. The principles of crisis intervention and brief therapy will be presented.

VI. Role and Responsibilities of the Student

See University Statement of Obligation of Students and Faculty Members of the teaching-learning process. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to be punctual in arriving at class on time and to promptly return from breaks. Students who arrive late to class more than twice during the semester will lose participation and attendance points for their tardiness (½ point for every late arrival). Students who are absent from class **more than once** during the semester will lose two participation points for every class missed after the first. Consideration will be given to students who have significant life emergencies that interfere with their class attendance. Students who miss more than 3 classes during the semester will receive an "X" in the course if they do not drop the course.

Incompletes, i. e., "I" grades are only given in extreme circumstances. The instructor must be apprized of the circumstances that prohibit the student from completing course assignments as outlined in the syllabus. These situations must be discussed well in advance of the end of the semester. The instructor reserves the right to determine if the circumstances are sufficient to justify an incomplete in the course. Any student who receives an incomplete in this course cannot enroll in SW 7050 until requirements for SW 7040 are complete.

Students will be expected to consult with the **Blackboard Course Home Page** for updates on the course.

VII. Course Outline

* Denotes required professional reading material in the Course Pack.

Unit 1 Orientation to Social Work Practice: Overview of Core Year and the Profession; Evolution of Social Work Practice; The Ecological Systems Perspective; Ethics and Cardinal Values of the Profession.

*Hepworth, H. L., Rooney, R. H., & Larsen, J. (2002). *Direct social work practice*. (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole, Ch. 1, The Challenges of Social work, Ch. 2, Direct Practice: Domain, Philosophy, and Roles, and Ch. 4, Operationalizing the Cardinal Social Work Values.

NASW Code of Ethics

*Maguire, L. (2002). *Clinical social work practice: Beyond generalist practice with individuals, groups, and families*. Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth, Ch. 3 (Systems Interventions with Individuals).

*Hodge, D. R. (2000). Spiritual ecomaps: A new diagrammatic tool for assessing marital and family spirituality. *Journal of marital and family therapy*, Apr, 26 (2), 217-228.

Unit 2 Beginning Phase of Social Work Practice: Professional Relationships and Practice Settings; Interpersonal Communication Skills; Professional Use of Self; Professional Writing/Recording. Principles of culturally-sensitive social work practice.

Kadushin, A. & Kadushin, G. *The social work interview (4th Ed.)*. Columbia University Press: New York, Ch 14, The Competent Interviewer; Ch. 12, Cross-Cultural Interviewing; Ch.1, The Interview in Social Work; Ch. 11, Nonverbal Communication; Ch. 9, Developmental Phase: Questions and Questioning Techniques; Ch. 2, The Interview as Communication; Ch.3, Listening: A Basic Communication Tool; Ch. 4, Introductory Phase; Ch. 5, beginning the Interview: First Phase-establishing a Relationship.

*Applegate, J. S. (1997). The holding environment: An organizing metaphor for social work theory and practice. *Smith college studies in social work*, 68 (1), 7-29.

*Saleebey, D. (2005). *The strengths perspective in social work practice. (4th Ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, C. 1, Power in the People and Ch. 2, Learning to practice from a strengths perspective.

*Appleby, G.A., Colon, E.& Hamilton, J.(Eds.) (2001). *Diversity, oppression and social functioning*. Boston: Allyn & bacon, Ch. 3, Dynamics of Oppression and Discrimination and Ch. 13, Affirmative Practice with People who are Culturally Diverse and Oppressed.

*Abramson, J. (1999). Exercise 13: “Hanging in There” when differences between client and worker are at issue. In K. Strom-Gottfried, *Social work practice: Cases, activities and exercises* (103-113). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

*Dane, B. O. & Simon, B. L. (1991). Resident guests: Social workers in host settings. *Social Work*, 36 (3), 208-213.

*Brodsky, S. L. & Lichtenstein, B. (1999). Don’t ask questions: A psychotherapeutic strategy for treatment of involuntary clients. *American journal of psychotherapy*, 53 (2), Spring, 215-220.

*Webb, N. B. (2003). *Social work practice with children (2nd ed.)* New York: The Guilford Press: Ch. 2, Necessary Background for Helping Children and Ch. 3, Building Relationships with all Relevant Systems.

Thomlison, B. (2002). *Family assessment handbook*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole, Ch. 1, The Context of Helping Families; Ch. 2, Getting started; Ch. 3, The Family System.

Unit 3 Data Gathering and Initial Assessment with Individuals and Families. Treatment Planning Principles.

Kadushin & Kadushin, Ch. 6, Problem Exploration Phase.

*Woods, M. & Hollis, F. *Casework: A psychosocial therapy (5th Ed.)* (2000). New York: McGraw-Hill, Ch. 11, Assessment and Diagnostic Understanding and Ch. 12, Choice of Treatment Objectives.

*Webb, N. B. (2003). *Social work practice with children*. New York: The Guilford Press: Ch. 4, The Biopsychosocial Assessment of the Child.

Thomlison, B. (2002). *Family assessment handbook*, Ch. 4, Family Assessment.

Unit 4 Middle and Ending Stages of the Problem Solving Process; Evaluation of Practice.

Kadushin & Kadushin, Ch. 7, Developmental Phase: Problem-Solving Interventions; Ch.8, Developmental Phase: More Problem-Solving Interventions; Ch.13, Some Problematic Interviews: the Involuntary Adult Client and the Sexually-Abused Child; Ch. 10, Termination, Recording, and Evaluation.

Thomlison, Ch. 5, Family Interventions; Ch.6, Measuring and Evaluating Family Change.

*Sheafor, B. W. & Horejsi, C. R. (2003). *Techniques and guidelines for social work practice. (6th ed.)* Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Ch.1 4, Evaluation and Termination.

Unit 5 Frameworks for and Challenges in Social Work Practice: Determination of Appropriate Practice Modalities; Methods for Evaluating Practice. Crisis Intervention and Brief Therapy: Practice Principles.

*Sheafor, B. W. & Horejsi, C. R. (2003). *Techniques and guidelines for social work practice. (6th ed.)* Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Ch. 6, Practice Frameworks for Social Work.

*Greenstone, J. L. & Leviton, S. C. (2002). *Elements of crisis intervention. (2nd ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole, Ch. 1, Approach to Crisis Intervention; Ch. 2, Procedures for Effective Crisis Intervention.

VI. Assignments

Two major paper assignments are required for this course. Students may also be asked to complete an in-class quiz at the end of the semester. Each student will complete an interviewing assignment that focuses on the examination of the professional use of self and the evaluation/critique of one's skills.

For the second paper assignment, students will complete a psychosocial assessment. Details of the two assignments follow.

Paper Assignment #1

Interview Analysis: This first assignment should be 5-6 pages and will comprise 40% of your grade in this course. This assignment is due **Week _____** at the beginning of the class period (8:30 AM). The student will interview a class member and tape record (audio) the interview. In the interview, the student will role-play a member of an at-risk populations This interview should be between 30-50 minutes in length. The focus of the interview should be comparable to that of an initial interview with a client: relationship development and data collection.

After the interview, each student is asked to analyze the tape of the interview and choose three (3) effective and three (3) ineffective interventions. **These must be six different interventions related to six different interchanges between you and your interviewee. Prepare a verbatim transcript from your audio tape only of that dialogue that illustrates the three effective and three ineffective interventions. For the interventions you select, you must include the worker's comments (yours) and your interviewee's responses both before and after the intervention.** For each intervention, explain it and its benefit at this point in the interview. Then, clarify your rationale for why it was effective or ineffective. Refer to class readings to support your rationale for your assessment of your interventions. These references must be integrated in your paper, demonstrating your efforts to apply course material to practice. (Students who do not refer to course readings will lose points on their paper)

Include in your paper the efforts you made to:

- a. Identify the unique challenges the interviewee may face given the interviewee's status as a member of an at-risk group; and
- b. Clarify interventions you used to demonstrate sensitivity to the unique challenges faced by the interviewee.
- c. identify the cardinal values of social work you demonstrated in the process of conducting the interview. Give specific examples of how you demonstrated these.

Note: Students are expected to submit the tape recording with their paper.

All papers are graded on content and writing skills. Problems with sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, or other writing mechanics will lower the grade achieved on the assignment by 10%. Students who fail to follow time guidelines provided will lose one half grade for each day late.

Paper Assignment #2

PSYCHOSOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Use the assigned case as the basis for your psychosocial study. Use a person-environment as the framework for your assessment and incorporate the following content in your paper and follow this outline in your paper. Include an eco-map of the client with your paper.

1. Briefly describe the demographic characteristics of the client. (2-3 sentences)
2. Briefly identify the presenting problem (s). Clarify what events or behaviors have precipitated the problem.(2-3 paragraphs).
3. Briefly describe pertinent Background History (childhood experience, family system, educational and occupational history, social functioning, health/physical status, economic factors, substance use/abuse, previous treatment). (1 to 1 1/2 pages)
4. Describe the client's ego functioning/defensive structure (see the Woods & Hollis handout). This should be synthesized, not written as discrete capacities. Provide evidence, i. e., examples of behavior to support your analyses. Identify the stressors/environmental challenges faced by the client, e. g. poverty and how these may impact the individual's psychosocial functioning.
5. Provide a diagnostic formulation (Your interpretive diagnostic understanding of the client based on the integration of points 1, 2, 3, 4).
6. Develop a tentative diagnosis. Clarify if the basis of the client's problem primarily reflects life role/developmental stage issues, situational stress/trauma, ego impairments/difficulties, and/or resource deficits.
7. Include a treatment plan. (Clarify major treatment goals and objectives).
8. Identify methods you would use to evaluate your treatment plan, applying content from Sheafor, B. W. & Horejsi, C. R. (2003). *Techniques and guidelines for social work practice*. (6th ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Ch.1 4, Evaluation and Termination.
9. Discuss any ethical or value dilemmas presented during the interaction with the client system, including solutions to these dilemmas. (2-3 paragraphs).

Your assessment (a 4-5 page, double-spaced, 12 pt font) will be evaluated based on writing mechanics, accuracy and organization of the material, incorporation and integration of all the key points listed in the assignment. Papers are **due Week 11** at the beginning of the class period (8:30 AM). Papers handed in late will be graded down (½ half grade per day late) unless arrangements have been made with the instructor due to a significant personal emergency.

All papers must be consistent with APA Guidelines.

VII. Grading

Assignment #1 (Interviewing Skills)40 points

Assignment # 2 (Assessment) 40 points

Final Quiz 15 points

Attendance and Participation 5 points

Total

100 points

Grades will be assigned as follows:

95-100	A	Outstanding Performance
90-94	A-	Excellent Performance
	B+	Very Good Performance
	B	Good Performance
	B-	Less than expected for Graduate School
	C	Poor Performance
69	F	Failure in the course

Students who do not officially withdraw from the course before the drop deadline will receive a grade of 'X'.

COURSE OUTLINE

*Reading from the coursepack

Week Content Readings

Profession, Curriculum. History of Social Work Practice. Orientation to the Course, School,

NASW Code of Ethics

Week 2

NASW Code of Ethics

***Maguire chapter**

Ecological Systems Perspective

***Hepworth et. al` chapters**

***Hodge article**

K & K, Ch. 14, 12, 1

Week 3

Values, Recordings, Communication

***Saleeby Article**

***Appleby et al chapters**

**Activity: “Hanging in There” When Differences Between Client and Worker Are at Issue.
An exercise in sensitivity to racial and age/life stage dynamics in social work interviews.**

Week 4/

Overview of the Helping Process;

K & K, Ch.11

*Interpersonal Communication Skills*Applegate article
(Verbal and Nonverbal) and Documentation*

Week 5 and 6/

*The Beginning Phase of the Helping Process; K & K, Ch. 2, 3, 4,5,9
The Initial Interview with Individuals (Adults & Children) *Webb, Ch. 2
Involuntary Clients and Rapport Building*

***Dane article**

***Brodsky article**

Thomlison, Ch. 1, 2, and 3

Week 7 and 8/

Assessment with Individuals

K & K, Ch. 6, 12

***Woods & Hollis, Ch. 11**

Assignment # 1 due

Week 9

*Assessment with Children and Families
Treatment Planning & Principles*

Thomlison, Ch. 4

***Webb, Ch. 4**

Week 10 and 11/

Middle Stage: Problem Solving Intervention

K & K, Ch. 7, 8, 13, 10

Thomlison, Ch. 5

Week 12

Termination and Evaluation of Practice

K & K, Ch. 10

***Sheafor & H**

Thomli

*Principles of Crisis Intervention & Brief Therapy
Theoretical Frameworks*

***Sheafor & Horejsi, Ch. 6**

***Greenstone & Leviton**

Week 14/

*Theoretical Frameworks
Final Quiz*

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