

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
FALL 2012
GENERALIST PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS,
FAMILIES, AND SMALL GROUPS
SWK 501-410
Thursday: 6:00pm to 9:00 p.m.
Mesquite Metroplex Center**

Instructor: Benjamin T May, PhD, LCSW, BCD
Office: Henderson – 303 Commerce
Office Hours: Wed 9:30am-2:30pm Commerce /Monday & Thursday, Mesquite 4-6pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This practice course provides students with an understanding of and experience with social work practice skills, values, and knowledge within the context of a strengths perspective. Students will learn problem-solving skills, empowerment based practice skills, relationship building, and data gathering skills as they relate to all client systems, but particularly individuals, families, and small groups. Content on diversity and working with populations at risk will be presented throughout the course. Role play, video tapes, and written assignments will be utilized. Prerequisite: Admission to the MSW program.

GOALS AND COMPETENCIES:

F 1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

- F 1.1 Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
- F 1.2 Demonstrate research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)
- F 1.4 Engage in change strategies with individuals, families, groups, organizations & communities (2.1.10)

F 2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

- F 2.2 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
- F 2.3 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
- F 2.4 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

F 3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

F 3.1 Engage as professional social workers (2.1.1)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- A. The ability to understand and develop social work professional relationships and how they are advanced by mutual participation and respect for client strengths.
- B. The ability to critique and apply the theoretical and empirical literature relevant to intervention situations.
- C. The ability to select, evaluate, and use explanations of human behavior for specific practice situations, i.e., the interventions appropriate for specific conditions and clients.
- D. The understanding of intercultural counseling techniques, as relevant to minority groups, and the relevance of generalist practice activities to the social work profession and to social justice.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- 1. Students will become socialized to the language and scope of the social work profession
- 2. Students will begin to apply and understand social work professional ethics
- 3. Students will begin to develop and build professional relationships
- 4. Students will write an assessment of a client
- 5. Students will write a treatment and termination plan utilizing current evidence-based research
- 6. Students will learn to write an ecomap, culturagram, and genogram in client assessment

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

This course teaches foundation content that provides knowledge of human behavior and social systems. It introduces students to professional values and ethics, particularly the NASW Code of Ethics.

This course will also introduce the student to the use of eCollege, an online tool that is used to teach via the Internet. During the last week few weeks of the semester, students will be introduced to beginning issues related to the field internship.

TEXTS:

Required Texts:

Sheafor, B.W., & Horejsi, C.R. (2012). *Techniques and Guidelines for Social Work Practice* (9th ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Sweitzer, H.F. & King, M.A. (2009). *The Successful Internship: Transformation and Empowerment in Experiential Learning* (3rd ed). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole—Thomson Learning.

Supplemental Texts:

Fong, R. and Furuto, S. (Eds.) (2001). *Culturally Competent Practice: Skills, Interventions, and Evaluations*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Selected journal articles.

I understand that money is often limited for graduate students. However, you will be using the Publication Manual of the APA in almost all of your social work courses, and I would highly recommend you purchase this manual. When I write for publication I always have this manual available to look up information on citing references, the use of headings, proper documentation of references on the reference page, etc.

GRADING:

You will be able to keep track of your grades through the Gradebook option on eCollege. Please do not email the professor and ask about your average. This information is readily available on eCollege. The maximum points a student may earn in the course are as follows:

Assessment	100 points
culturagram, ecomap (60 pts. each)	120 points
Treatment and Termination Plan	100 points
Article review and presentation	80 points
eCollege discussions (5 @ 10 points each)	50 points
Quizzes (5 @ 10 points each).	<u>50 points</u>
	500 points

Class grade will be based on the following points:

A = 500-450
B = 449--400
C = 399-350
D = 349-300
F = 299-0

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. **First Written Assignment, Due September 27, 2012:** Write an intake assessment using the class handout for your outline. Select a client with whom you have worked or select a case study. Describe the presenting problems from the client's point of view. Write a ecomap, and culturagram for your client. Assess your client across the following dimensions:
- (1) physical,
 - (2) emotional,
 - (3) cognitive,
 - (4) social/interpersonal/environmental,
 - (5) spiritual (values/moral development).

The Intake Assessment must be submitted to the professor via the Dropbox in eCollege and labeled September 27. Follow the directions found under the assignment tab for September 27. The Intake Assessment will not be accepted any other way. PLEASE submit the assignment under the September 27 heading by 4:00 p.m. One mistake in submission will be overlooked. However, if there is a second submission mistake, the assignment will not be accepted and you will not receive any points for the assignment.

The ecomap, and culturagram will be handed to the professor at the beginning of class on September 27. Late assignments will not be accepted, resulting in the loss of all points for the assignment.

- B. **Second Written Assignment, Due October 25, 2012:** Write a client treatment and termination plan using the class handout provided by the professor. From the many presenting problems, pick the two problems the client wants to work on first. Set short-term goals describing who will do what, when, and how. Support the use of the intervention chosen through evidence-based practice literature. Focus on the strengths perspective. Include a follow-up plan. Include any considerations for populations-at-risk or different cultural backgrounds and the options for follow-up that are available.

The Treatment and Termination Plan must be submitted to the professor via the Dropbox in eCollege labeled October 25. Follow the directions found under the assignment tab for October 25. The Plan will not be accepted any other way. PLEASE submit the assignment under the October 25 heading by 4:00 p.m., otherwise the Plan will not be accepted and you will not receive any points for the assignment.

- C. **Third Written Assignment, Due: December 6, 2012:** Select an article from a professional journal that relates to one of the topics covered in class. Write a summary of the major points and critique the article.
- (1) The summary should discuss the article and should include the author's major points and findings.
 - (2) Critique should tell how the article relates to class readings and discussions. Write what you think about the article and how it fits with your perceptions and beliefs. Discuss the author's position and any ethical complications. Be specific.

- (3) Your critique should refer to other articles or readings discussed in the class. References should be in APA style)

Your critique is due at the beginning of class on December 6, and the article you read must be attached to your critique. Critiques will not be accepted at any other time.

- D. **Presentation, In-class, November 29 & December 6, 2012:** Present a summary of your third written assignment to the class. This presentation is your opportunity to demonstrate your ability to communicate information effectively. The presentation should relate to the course content. You will be allowed ten minutes.
- E. **Discussions:** You will record thoughts as you are exposed to the values, ethics, and practice of social work. Through the Discussion link on eCollege you will discuss how these differ or are similar to other experiences in your life. Discussion assignments will be given for various weeks, and along with your postings you will also respond to the postings of one other student. You will receive a maximum of 5 points for your posting and a maximum of 5 points for your response to one other student's postings. The discussions are designed to open for your postings and close on specific times and dates. Follow the directions for each separate posting. If you post after the posting deadline you will not receive any points. If you respond before the response time begins you will likewise not receive points. In order to make the discussions more manageable for such a large class you have been placed in a small group with 4-5 other students. The group names are: Social Justice, Integrity, Competence, Strengths, and Diversity. On the weeks when the class engages in discussions through eCollege, your group name will appear under the date, and by clicking on your group name you will be directed to the week's discussion question. You will only be responding to a posting from a student in your group. You will know which group you are in since it will be the only link that opens for discussions. For a complete listing of the membership of all groups, click on the Important Documents Tab on the left of your screen.
- F. **Short quizzes:** Quizzes will be given at various times throughout the semester through the use of eCollege. Dates are noted on the class schedule. Format for the quizzes will be multiple choices and are intended to help students begin preparing for the Texas Licensing Exam after graduation. The quizzes will cover the required weekly readings. There will be no make-up quizzes given, you cannot stop a quiz or put it on hold, and students will not be allowed to re-take a quiz. The quizzes are set on a timer. You will be allowed 20 minutes to take the first quiz, and if you have not finished the quiz in that length of time the quiz will close. You will receive your score immediately after finishing the quiz. The second quiz is set for 15 minutes, and the same rules described above apply. Each subsequent quiz will be set for 12 minutes which approximates the time allotted per question on the actual licensing exam. The quizzes are also designed to open for your access and close on specific times and dates. You will find this information on the Course Checklist. Please do not share any of the quiz questions with others in the class. Doing so only hurts your grade while improving their score.

Written assignments: Papers will be graded for quality of application, observations, content, grammar, and spelling. One-fourth of the grade for all written assignments will be

based upon a student's correct use of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc. All papers must be typewritten or printed from computer on 8½-inch x 11-inch, white paper, with one-inch margins, and 12-point font. All written assignments must be completed on time and must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of class on the date they are due. No late assignments will be accepted and a student will receive zero points. Any ideas you use in your written assignments that you take from another source must have a citation documenting where they are from. Documentation must take the style described in the most recent edition (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association Style Manual. Any use of another person's ideas without proper documentation is called plagiarism and will result in a grade of F for the course and possible dismissal from the MSW program and the university.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Class attendance and participation are mandatory. Student class attendance is essential to achieving the course goals. Role will be taken at the beginning of each class. It is your responsibility to notify the instructor if you arrive late; however, students who miss more than half of class will not be given credit for attendance. Students will be allowed 2 excused absences for any reason. A third absence will result in one letter grade drop from the final average. Anyone who misses 4 or more classes will automatically be given a failing grade. Excused and unexcused absences present the same problems to your success in this class.

Class participation has three components: (1) appropriate verbal and non-verbal interactions with classmates, (2) attentiveness, and (3) active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation is based on instructor observation. Students will be given verbal feedback if problems are evident.

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Anything turned in late will not be graded and will result in zero points. Do not ask for an exception to this policy.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another

class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In”) to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS:

The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* to guide social workers’ conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department’s Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES :

It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University’s commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).

COURSE OUTLINE:

- A. Introducing generalist practice: The generalist intervention model
- B. Micro practice skills: Working with individuals
- C. Mezzo practice skills: Working with groups
- D. Macro practice skills: Working with organizations and communities
- E. Engagement and assessment in generalist practice
- F. Planning and contracting in generalist practice
- G. Intervention including the use of evidence-based practice and the strengths perspective
- H. Evaluation, termination, and follow-up in generalist practice
- I. Understanding families and working with families
- J. Values, ethics, and the resolution of ethical dilemmas
- K. Guidelines for working with vulnerable populations and culturally competent practice
- L. Data Collection
- M. Recording in generalist social work practice
- N. Techniques for sustaining social work practice

X. COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment						
1	August, 2012		Class introduction. Review of course syllabus and assignments. Overview of class subject matter. Introduction of class members.	Please be prepared to discuss your interest and motivation for this class					
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2	September, 2012		Generalist intervention model. Video: Charles Kuralt – <i>What Do Social Workers Do?</i>	Survey of student practice experiences. The domain of social work practice. Sheafor, & Horejsi Ch. 1					
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3	September, 2012		Overview of the ecosystems perspective. Micro practice skills. Increasing self-awareness of values within a cultural context; emphasis on cultural sensitivity. Mezzo practice skills. Ethics and personal use of Social Networking Sites	NASW Code of Ethics. Apply ecosystems concepts. Explore cultural differences among students. Merging person with the profession. Develop individual student codes. Sheafor, & Horejsi Ch.2- 3. Quiz # 1 eCollege					
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4	September, 2012		Clarifying the strengths perspective. Macro practice skills. APA writing style <i>Strengths-Based Social Work Assessment.</i>	Identify preconceived ideas about helping process. Case examples to demonstrate strengths dimensions. Building blocks of practice. Develop strengths tenets. Discussion of Strengths perspective literature. Sheafor, & Horejsi Ch. 4 Quiz # 2 eCollege					
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PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING POLICIES (And Do No Request an Exception):

1. No assignments may be rewritten once they have been graded.
2. No extra credit is provided in this class.
3. All assignments must be turned in on time. **Late assignments are not accepted.**
4. The professor does not read assignments and provide feedback before they are due.
5. One-fourth of the grade for all written assignments will be based upon the correct use of the American Psychological Association (APA) style manual for citations and references, as well as the correct use of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, etc.
6. You must provide correct citations within the body of each paper when you use any information that you have taken from any source, even if you put the information in your own words. Then each of the references used in the body of the paper must appear on the reference page, in APA style, at the end of the paper. Failure to cite information taken from other sources may result in a grade of zero on the paper, an F in the course, dismissal from the MSW program, and/or dismissal from the university.
7. If you have any problems with eCollege contact the Help Desk. **Do not contact the professor for help since he does not have technical knowledge of eCollege.**
8. You must submit your assignments under the stated dropbox. You will be allowed one error in submission under the wrong dropbox date. If there is a second error your assignment will not be graded. This policy is necessary so I don't have to search for your assignments. Please understand this and please cooperate.
9. I have certain expectations of graduate students. My expectations include the following:
 - a. The ability to write complete sentences.
 - b. The ability to spell words correctly.
 - c. The ability to organize an assignment and follow directions.
 - d. The ability to use grammar correctly.
 - e. The ability to think critically.
 - f. The ability to overcome personal values and beliefs that conflict with the values and ethics of the profession as stated in the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics and the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners' Code.

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