

CUA



**SSS 740**  
**Ethical Issues in Contemporary Social Work**  
**(3 credits)**  
**Spring 2015**

*Instructor: Lynn Mayer, Ph.D.*

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**I. COURSE PURPOSE**

There is an increasing concern about the ethical quality of professional life, evidenced in the growing interest in professional ethics; the revisions of the NASW Code of Ethics (2008); the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Ethics and Principles (2004); in national and international debates on policy issues, such as immigration, the economy, health care, discrimination, end of life care and global issues; and in the ethical issues that shape the direct practitioners ability to engage, assess, and intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. These include attention to informed consent, boundary issues, confidentiality, and self-determination.

The purpose of this course is to help students become more effective in identifying and dealing with the increasingly complex ethical questions in professional social work practice. Because of the multi-focused nature of social work practice, this course addresses the ethical issues in direct practice as well as social policy, managerial, and programmatic issues which confront social workers in various settings. Advances in technology and social networking, an environment of economic constraints, shifting social policies, changing organizational structures (managed care and practice in for-profit settings), and cultural diversity are creating complex moral issues that require special ethical competencies. Since direct practice is profoundly influenced by social and organizational policies, direct service workers need ethical sensitivity and knowledge to engage these issues; while managers, community developers, and policy practitioners need insight into micro level concerns in order to provide adequate leadership in these areas. That is, all social work practitioners have ethical responsibility and accountability not only for direct practice but also for influencing policies that affect direct client service. Increased emphasis on service outcomes, evidence-based practice as well as the use of social networking and information technology raises questions about the moral implications of the means selected to achieve targeted ends. The emergence of ethics review processes as a tool for risk management in both

for-profit and non-profit settings affirms the need for the profession to engage in ethics risk management at all levels of practice.

Class sessions are designed to increase student awareness of their personal value systems with respect to the ethical dimensions of policy, organizational, and practice issues. It provides ethical tools needed to translate ethical principles, including philosophical worldviews, contemporary social justice perspectives and human rights principles into social work practice behaviors. A model for ethical decision making, comprised of basic components for ethical reflection and analysis of conflict situations, is provided. Competency in ethical decision making is needed to deal with rapidly shifting social needs and practice requirements which call for social workers who are creative, self-directed and technically and ethically competent in professional practice yet able to tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts. Case studies, class dialogue and debate, and analysis of student experiences in the field of social work will be utilized.

## II. COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

More specifically, the course prepares students with knowledge, values and skills needed to demonstrate an advanced understanding of the ethical dimensions of the following competencies identified as core by the Council on Social Work Education (2007).

<u>Competency</u>	<u>Clinical Practice Behaviors</u>	<u>Combined Practice Behaviors</u>	<u>Social Change Practice Behaviors</u>
<b>Competency #1 Professional Identity:</b> Identify as a clinical social worker & conduct self accordingly.	Social workers demonstrate professional use of self across all practice settings.  Develop, manage, and maintain therapeutic relationships with clients within the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives.	Social workers demonstrate professional use of self across all practice settings.  Develop, manage, and maintain therapeutic and professional relationships with clients within the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives.	Social workers demonstrate professional use of self across all practice settings.  Develop, manage, and maintain professional relationships with clients within the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives.
<b>Competency #2 Ethical Practice:</b> Apply social work ethical principles to guide clinical practice.	Social workers recognize and manage personal biases in practice settings.  Social workers recognize and negotiate the complexities that can arise when organizational policies/procedures interact with competing professional standards for	Social workers recognize and manage personal biases in practice settings.  Social workers recognize and negotiate the complexities that can arise when organizational policies/procedures interact with competing professional standards for	Social workers recognize and manage personal biases in practice settings.  Social workers recognize and negotiate the complexities that can arise when organizational policies/procedures interact with competing professional standards for

	<p>ethical social work practice.</p> <p>Social workers apply ethical principles through the use of an ethical decision making model that helps in the resolution of an ethical dilemma.</p>	<p>ethical social work practice.</p> <p>Social workers apply ethical principles through the use of an ethical decision making model that helps in the resolution of an ethical dilemma.</p>	<p>ethical social work practice.</p> <p>Social workers apply ethical principles through the use of an ethical decision making model that helps in the resolution of an ethical dilemma.</p>
<p><b>Competency #3 Critical Thinking:</b> Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.</p>	<p>Social workers engage in reflective practice.</p> <p>Social workers evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple theoretical perspectives and differentially apply them to client situations.</p>	<p>Social workers engage in reflective practice.</p> <p>Social workers evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple theoretical perspectives and differentially apply them to client situations.</p>	<p>Social workers engage in reflective practice.</p> <p>Social workers evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple theoretical perspectives and differentially apply them to client situations.</p>
<p><b>Competency #4: Diversity in Practice:</b> Engage diversity and demonstrate awareness of the complexities regarding identity differences and how they play out in clinical practice.</p>	<p>Social workers use their self-awareness to understand the influence of their personal biases and values in working with others.</p>	<p>Social workers use their self-awareness to understand the influence of their personal biases and values in working with others.</p>	<p>Social workers use their self-awareness to understand the influence of their personal biases and values in working with others.</p>
<p><b>Competency #5 Human Rights &amp; Justice:</b> Advance human rights through understanding how social and economic justice factors impact clinical practice.</p>	<p>Social workers practice with the understanding that societal structures and values may oppress, marginalize, and alienate, or create, enhance, and privilege different cultural groups within a society.</p>	<p>Social workers practice with the understanding that societal structures and values may oppress, marginalize, and alienate, or create, enhance, and privilege different cultural groups within a society.</p>	<p>Social workers practice with the understanding that societal structures and values may oppress, marginalize, and alienate, or create, enhance, and privilege different cultural groups within a society.</p>
<p><b>Competency #9 Practice Contexts</b> Respond to contexts that shape clinical practice.</p>	<p>Social workers assess the current political, economic, social, and cultural climate as it affects the most vulnerable members of society.</p>	<p>Social workers assess the current political, economic, social, and cultural climate as it affects the most vulnerable members of society.</p>	<p>Social workers assess the current political, economic, social, and cultural climate as it affects the most vulnerable members of society.</p>

### III. FURTHER EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. distinguish between the inter-related concepts of moral values, ethical principles, ethical theory, and ethical standards;
2. identify and clarify their own personal ethical orientation, and the process through which one's ethical choices are made;
3. utilize ethical theories drawn from professional ethics, organizational ethics, social ethics, multi-cultural and trans-temporal ethics, and bioethics in reaching and justifying ethical positions in social work practice;
4. identify the uses and limitations of the Codes of Ethics with respect to ethical dilemmas involving clients, practitioners, professionals, and society; and,

### IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Required Texts and Readings:** Required texts may be purchased at the CUA bookstore and can be accessed through the Mullen Library. Periodical readings can be accessed through the Electronic Journal Title Finder and the Electronic Journal Collections located on the WEB.

Code of Ethics (Revised 2008). Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers. <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

Cooper, D. E. (2004). Ethics for professionals in a multicultural world. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2009). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.) Monterey, CA: Books/Cole Cengage Learning.

Manning, S. (2003). Ethical leadership in human services: A multi-dimensional approach. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

- B. **Recommended Readings** (Use selectively based on Concentration and topical interest.)

Barsky, A.E. (2010). Ethics and values in social work: An integrated approach for a comprehensive curriculum. NY: Oxford University Press.

Beauchamp, T. L. and Childress, J. F. (2008). Principles of biomedical ethics. (6<sup>th</sup> ed). NY: Oxford University Press.

Biestek, F. (1957). The casework relationship. Chicago: Loyola University Press.

- Bluhm, W. T. & Heineman, R.A. (2007). Ethics and public policy: Methods and cases. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.
- Corey, G., Corey, M. S., & Callanan, P. (2005). Issues and ethics in the helping professions. ( 8thed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
- Freeman, S. (2000). Ethics: An introduction to philosophy and practice. Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth Press.
- Guttmann, D. (2006). Ethics in social work: A context of caring. NY: Haworth Press.
- Judah, E. & Joseph, M. V. (1989). Ethics in contemporary social service: Theory and practice. Alexandria, VA: Charties USA. Catholic Charities U.S.A.
- Joseph, M. V. Ethical issues in contemporary social work: A book of readings, Vol. 1 & 2. Prepared for NCSSS.
- Kelly, J.J. & Clark, E. J. (2009) Social work speaks 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- NASW (2009). Current controversies in social work ethics: Case examples. DC: NASW.
- Reamer, F.G. (2009). The social work ethics casebook: Cases and commentary. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- Reamer, F.G. (2001). Tangled Relationships: Managing boundary issues in the human services. NY: Columbia University Press.
- Reamer, F.G. (2001). The social work ethics audit: A risk management tool. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- Reamer, F.G. (2006). Social work values and ethics. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.) New York: Columbia University Press.
- Rothman, J. (2004). From the Front Lines: Student cases in social work ethics. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Strom-Gottfried, K. (2007) Straight talk about professional ethics. Chicago, Illinois: Lyceum Books.
- Strom-Gottfried, K. (2008). The ethics of practice with minors. Chicago, Illinois: Lyceum Books.

**C. Other Recommended Resources and Media:**

JOURNALSEthicsEthics and BehaviorHastings Center ReportJournal of Social Work Values and EthicsKennedy Institute of Ethics JournalProfessional Business EthicsThe Journal of Medicine and PhilosophyThe Journal of Religion and Spirituality: Social ThoughtJournal of Religious EthicsWEBSITES

University of San Diego, Ethics Matters

<http://ethics.sandiego.edu/>

Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University

<http://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/>

Ethics Resource Library--Free

[www.ethicsshare.org](http://www.ethicsshare.org)

- D. Course Assignments: Assignments should be related to your concentration and field of practice.** All assignments should be completed using the APA Style.

**Assignment #1: Ethical Dilemma****DUE: Class 4**

Describe the practice situation and the ethical dilemma that will be the focus of the paper. Sections 1 and 2 on the paper guideline.

**Assignment #2: MID-TERM PAPER****DUE: Class 9**

Describe the background information, including literature, values, standards, ethical theories and perspectives. Sections 3, 4, and 5 on the paper guideline.

**Assignment #3: FINAL COMPLETED PAPER****DUE: Class 14**

Sections 1 through 5 of the Ethical Model Paper are corrected, edited, and/or revised based on mid-semester feedback and sections 6 through 8 of the paper are completed. The entire paper is submitted. Suggested length: 12 to 15 printed pages. The completed Ethical Model Paper may be submitted as one of the student's Scholarly Papers required for graduation.

**N.B. A Bibliography should be included in the preliminary paper as well as the final assignment.**

**Class Participation:** Class sessions will be set into learning modules which will include lecture-discussion, group discussion, and experiential content drawn from student field experiences, case materials, class presentations, and role plays. Each participant is asked to share relevant knowledge, experience, and ideas. Students are encouraged to draw upon their experience and that of others in the field and to think creatively in terms of current problems and future directions.

**Class Presentation:** Students will participate in planning the class presentations- particularly the experiential component, with the instructor. This process allows for meaningful student participation and class content that has specific relevance to the group's learning needs. Small groups of students will select a class session of interest to them. **The group should meet with the instructor at least one week in advance of their presentation** to structure the content of the session they will facilitate. Student facilitation will be considered an essential part of class participation. A sign-up sheet will be posted for this purpose.

**Learning Contract:** The student's goals for the course will be discussed and formulated in a brief written statement (See Learning Contract Form attached). The direction for the semester will be set within the framework of the learning needs of the students and course curriculum. It should be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the **second** class session.

- E. **Grading Policy:** The university grading system will be utilized (see policy in bulletin). The grade will be based upon the extent to which the student meets the course objectives as demonstrated by class participation and the two NCSSS required papers.

Attendance and Class Participation	15%
Presentation/Session Facilitation	15%
Assignment #1: Ethical Dilemma	10%
Assignment #2: Midterm Paper	30%
Assignment #3: Final Paper	30%

F. **Attendance and Participation**

1. Students are expected to attend all class sessions, to arrive at classes on time, and to conduct themselves in an ethical and scholarly fashion. In the event that it is necessary for a participant to miss a class session or come late, s/he is expected to notify the instructor in advance. Students are responsible for obtaining any class notes or other materials distributed when they are absent. Unexcused or multiple absences may result in a reduction of the final grade.
2. The use of laptops or other devices should be used in such a manner that they do not disturb or distract other students. Recording devices should only be used with the permission of the instructor and should be turned off at the request of the instructor or class participants when requested in the event that personal or confidential information is being discussed.
3. Students are expected to read all required readings for each class session and be prepared to participate in classroom discussions and exercises.
4. The course combines the formats of didactic lectures and participatory seminars. Students and the instructor will endeavor to draw on their own experience including professional practice experience, relevant literature and analytic thinking about the course

content. Each student is expected to participate actively in class discussions and to come prepared to share current knowledge, ideas, and relevant experiences as appropriate. Students and the instructor will view each other as resource persons.

**G. Course and Instructor Evaluation:**

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at <http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations> using your CUA username and password. Additional informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to special requests. These evaluations will serve as a basis for ongoing course revisions.

**V. CLASS EXPECTATIONS**

**Scholastic Expectations:**

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should demonstrate communication ability consistent with graduate level performance, reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

**Academic Honesty:**

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and Appropriate Program Handbooks.

**Accommodations:**

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other challenges wishing to request accommodations must identify themselves with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. Once you have documented a disability, DSS will establish whether any accommodations or academic adjustments are required. If so, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.



## CLASS SCHEDULE

### Class **COURSE OVERVIEW AND PLANNING**

- 1 Overview of the course and planning  
 State of the art in social work ethics  
 The social context and the ethical imperative  
 General ethics, social ethics, organizational ethics, and social work ethics.

#### **Required Readings**

Code of Ethics (Revised 2008). Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers. <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code.asp>

Cooper, D. E. (2004). Ethics for professionals in a multicultural world. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall. Chapter 1, Communication, social pluralism, and universal morality, pp. 1-41.

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.) Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning, Chapter 1, Ethical choices in the helping professions, pp. 1-18.

Manning, S. (2003). Ethical leadership in human services: A multi-dimensional approach. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. Chapter 1. The essence of ethical leadership, pp. 3-18.

### Class **2. THE ROLE OF VALUES IN THE TRANSACTIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WORKER AND THE CLIENT SYSTEM**

Values and ethical principles differentiated  
 Value typologies; Value exercise  
 Framing ethical dilemmas: conflicts of values, rights, responsibilities  
 Examining a social work ethical dilemma

#### **Required Readings:**

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.) Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning, Chapter 2, Values and Professional Ethics, pp. 19-41; Chapter 7, Value Neutrality and Imposing Values, pp. 112-122.

Manning, S. (2003). Ethical leadership in human services: A multi-dimensional approach. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. Chapter 5. Starting points: Where a leader begins with ethics, pp 103-128; Chapter 6. Ethical resources: Traditions and tools to develop ethical awareness and feeling, pp. 128-152.

Class **WORLD VIEWS AND SOCIAL WORK ETHICS**

- 3 Orientation to the person and the universe  
 Western perspectives  
     Consequentialist and Principle-based approaches  
     Virtue Ethics  
 Eastern perspectives  
 Introduction to Multi-cultural and trans-temporal ethics

**Required Readings**

Cooper, D. E. (2004). Ethics for professionals in a multicultural world. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall. Chapter 2. Moral Agents, Situational Control, & Professionalism; Chapter 3. Muddle, Drift, Banality, & Subjectivism versus Morality, pp. 42-102; Chapter 6. Metaethical search for moral rationality, pp. 165-199; Chapter 8. Consequentialist theories versus natural rights theory, pp. 229-256; Chapter 9. Nonconsequentialist alternatives to natural rights theory, pp. 257-287.

Jennings, B. et al. (1987). The public duties of the professions. In The Hastings Center Report, Special Supplement, pp. 1-20.

Visit: U. of San Diego, Ethics Matters—<http://ethics.sandiego.edu>

Class **CODES OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM**

- 4 The professionalization of social work  
 The significance of codes of ethics and essential components  
 NASW Social Work Code of Ethics (Revised 2008): purpose and limitations  
 The International Code of Social Work Ethics  
     <http://www.ifsw.org/f38000032.html>  
 Malpractice issues  
 NASW adjudication process

**Required Readings**

Cooper, D. E. (2004). Ethics for professionals in a multicultural world. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall. Chapter 7. Moral autonomy, account ability, and lifestyle choice, pp. 198-228.

Freud, S & Krug, S. (2002). Beyond the Code of Ethics, Part I. Complexities of ethical decision making in social work practice. Families in Society, 83, pp 474-483. (Also, see Part II in December issue.

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8thEd.) Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making: Concepts, Approaches, and Values, pp. 42-58; Chapter 4 Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making, pp 59-74.

NASW Adjudication Process can be found on the WEB at:  
<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/procedures.pdf>

Strom-Gottfried, K. (2000). Ensuring ethical practice: An examination of NASW Code Violations, 1986-97. Social Work, 45 (3), 251-262.

Class **A PROCESS MODEL FOR ETHICAL DECISION MAKING**

- 5 Rationale for a model for ethical decision making  
 Phases in the Process of ethical decision making  
 Justification of an Ethical Decision  
 Discussion of the process used in the Applewhite & Joseph article

**Required Readings:**

Applewhite, L. W. & Joseph, M. V. (1994). Confidentiality: Issues in working with self-harming adolescents. Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal. 11 (4), 279-294.

Cooper, D. E. (2004). Ethics for professionals in a multicultural world. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall. Chapter 10. Theory of implementation: The best means, pp. 288-319.

Joseph, M. V. (1983). Ethical decision-making in clinical practice: a model for ethical problem solving. In C. B. Germain (Ed.) Advances in clinical practice. Silver Spring, Maryland: National Association of Social Workers, pp. 207-217.

Manning, S. (2003). Ethical leadership in human services: A multi-dimensional approach. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. Chapter 7. Ethical resources: Traditions and tools to develop ethical wisdom and action, pp. 152-173.

Class **SOCIAL ETHICS: Global Issues and Human Rights**

- 6 Human rights and the global community  
 Competing theories of social justice  
 Poverty and other economic and social issues

**Required Readings**

Beauchamp, T. L. and Childress, J. F. (2009). Chapter 6, Justice. In Principles of biomedical ethics, pp. 240-287.

Manning, S. (2003). Ethical leadership in human services: A multi-dimensional approach. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. Chapter 12. Ethical Leadership for the Future: Contributions to the Common Good, pp. 257-300.

- Morris, P. M. (2002). The capabilities perspective: A framework for social justice. Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 83 (4), 365-373
- Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8thEd.) Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning, Chapter 8, Equality, Inequality, Limited Resources, and Advocacy, pp. 100-111; Chapter 10, Organizational and Work Relationships, pp. 162-179.

Class **ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT OF SOCIAL WORK: PRACTICE AND**  
7 **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Organizational context of agency- institutional practice  
Bureaucratic-professional systems' tensions  
Ethical considerations of policy practice, managerial ethics, and programmatic responsibility and accountability  
Malpractice and risk management

**Required Readings**

- Joseph, M. V. (1983, Fall/Winter). Ethics of organizations: Shifting values and ethical dilemmas. Administration in Social Work, 7; also in Ethical issues in contemporary social work practice. Hyattsville, MD: Pen Press.
- Manning, S. (2003). Ethical leadership in human services: A multi-dimensional approach. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. Chapter 2. Human service organizations: The context for ethical leadership, pp. 21-48. **(Macro and combined concentrators should give particular attention to Part Three of this book.)**
- Reamer, F. G. (2000). The social work ethics audit: A risk management strategy. Social Work, 45 (4), 355-366.
- Reamer, F.G. (2005). Documentation in social work: Evolving ethical and risk-management standards. Social Work, 50 (4), 325-334.
- Scalera, N.R. & Portwood, S.G (2003). Client violence against social workers: From increased worker responsibility and administrative mishmash to effective prevention policy. Administration in Social Work, 27 (4): 41-59.

**ETHICS REVIEW PROCESSES IN ORGANIZATIONS**

Ethical issues in multi-disciplinary settings  
Ethical processes: case consultation, policy formulation, education

**Required Reading**

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8thEd.) Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning, Chapter 13. Whose Responsibility are Professional Ethics?, pp. 218-226.

**COMPASSION FATIGUE AND BURNOUT: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SOCIAL WORKER TO SELF AND OF THE AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION TO SOCIAL WORKERS**

Compassion fatigue and burnout defined; sources of burnout: multiple roles and organizational pressures

Ethical responsibility for supports: personal and programmatic to prevent and/or intervene in staff burnout

**Required Reading:**

NASW Policy Statement on Self Care

<http://naswdc.org/nasw/memberlink/2009/supportfiles/ProfessionalSelf-Care.pdf>

Class **THE DIRECT SERVICE SITUATION: BALANCING ETHICAL**  
8 **RESPONSIBILITIES: THE CLIENT SYSTEM AND THE AGENCY**

Worker competency and ethical consideration for responsible practice

Dual Relationships, boundary blurring, and boundary violations

**Required Readings:**

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrington, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8thEd.) Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning, Chapter 5, Confidentiality and Informed Consent, pp. 77-99; Chapter 6. Client Rights and Professional Expertise, pp. 100-111; Chapter 9. The Professional Relationship: Limits, Dilemmas, and Problems, pp 138-161; Chapter 11. Social Work with Selected Client Groups, pp. 180-198.

**Select at least two readings from the references below.****DUAL RELATIONSHIPS/BOUNDARY ISSUES**

DeJulio, L. M. & Berkman, C. S. (2003). Nonsexual Multiple Role Relationships: Attitudes and Behaviors of Social Workers. Ethics and Behavior, 13 (1), 61-79.

Dietz, C & Thompson, J. (2004). Rethinking boundaries: ethical dilemmas in the social worker-client relationship. Journal of Progressive Human Services, 15 (2), pp. 1-24.

- Galambos, D. (2005). Maintaining confidentiality in dual relationships. Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics. [www.socialworker.com/jswve](http://www.socialworker.com/jswve)
- Mattison, D.; Jayarantne, S.; Croxton, T. (2002). Client or former client? Implications of ex-client definition on social work practice. Social Work, 41, pp. 55-64.
- Mayer, L. (2005). Professional boundaries in dual relationships. Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics. [www.socialworker.com/jswve](http://www.socialworker.com/jswve)
- Reamer, F.G. (2003). Boundary issues in social work: Managing dual relationships. Social Work, 48 (1), 121-134.
- Reamer, F.G. (nd) Eye on ethics: Novel boundary challenges—Social networking. Social Work Today. [http://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe\\_111309.shtml](http://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe_111309.shtml)

Class **THEORIES OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICE APPROACHES**

Kohlberg's and Gilligan's theories of moral development

9 Selected practice models and related ethical issues

The ethics of power and manipulation

Case illustrations and group discussions

**Required Readings**

- Cooper, D. E. (2004). Ethics for professionals in a multicultural world. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall. Chapter 4. Cognitive & moral development, pp. 103-132; Chapter 5. The role of voice in ethics, with the focus on gendered interpretations of morality, pp. 133-164.
- Reamer, F. G. (2006). Nontraditional and unorthodox interventions in social work: Ethical and legal implications. Families in Society, 87 (2), 191-197.

**Practice Situations**

Managed care

Private and public agencies: Ethical issues around policies and procedures

Ethical issues around practice models

**Select at least two readings from the references below.**

- Bondeson, W.B. and Jones, J.W. (2002). The ethics of managed care: professional integrity and patient rights. Boston: Kulwer Academic Publishers.
- Joseph, M. V. and Conrad, A. P. (Eds.) (1991) Case study: the family secret becomes an ethical dilemma. Social Thought, 17, (4), 53-57.
- Kearney, E. (1998). Ethical dilemmas in the treatment of adolescent gang members. Ethics and Behavior, 8 (1), 49-58.

Shapiro, D.E. & Schulman, C.E. (1996). Ethical and legal issues in e-mail therapy. Ethics & Behavior, 6 (2), 107-125.

Steinberg, D.M. (2006). The art, science, heart, and ethics of social group work: lessons from a great teacher. Social Work with Groups, 29 (3), pp. 33-45.

## **SELF-DETERMINATION**

### **Select at least two readings from the references below.**

Furlong, M.S. (2003). Self determination and a critical perspective in casework. Qualitative Social Work, 2 (2), 177-196.

Geaulieu, N. L. (2006). Ethical and psychosocial issues raised by the practice in cases of mistreatment of older adults. Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 46 (3/4) 161-170.

Moody, H. R. (1998). The cost of autonomy, the price of paternalism. Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 29 (2-3), 111-128.

Regehr, D. & Antle, B. (1997). Coercive influences: Informed consent in court-mandated social work practice. Social Work, 43 (3), 300-306.

Rothman, J. et. al. (1996). Client self-determination and professional intervention: striking a balance. Social Work, 41 (4), 396-405.

Rothman, J. (1989). Client self-determination: untangling the knot. Social Service Review, 63 (4), 598-612.

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

### **Select at least two readings from the references below.**

Kerkorian, D. et al (2007). Understanding the African American research experience: Implications for HIV prevention. Social Work in Mental Health, 5 (3/4), 295-312.

Kombarakaran, F.A. (2006). A practitioner's response to the new health privacy regulations. Health and Social Work, 31 (2), 129-136.

Manning, S. S. & Gaul, C.E. (1997). The ethics of informed consent: a critical variable in the self-determination of health and mental health clients. Social Work in Health Care, 25 (3), 103-117.

- Palmer, N. & Kaufman, M. (2003). The ethics of informed consent: implications for multicultural practice. Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work., 12 (1), 1-26.
- Starin, A.C. (2006). Clients role choices: unexplored factors in intervention decisions. Clinical Social Work Journal, 34 (1), 101-119.
- Summers, A. B. (1989). The meaning of informed consent in social work. Social Thought, 15, (3,4), 128-140.
- Torczyner, J. (1991). Discretion, judgment, and informed consent: ethical and practice issues in social action. Social Work, 36, (2), 122-128.
- Zayas, L.H., et al (2005). Capacity to consent in psychiatric research: development and preliminary testing of a screening tool. Research on Social Work Practice, 15 (6), 545-556.

Class **ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SOCIAL WORKER TO**  
10 **THIRD PARTIES**

Responsibility to significant others in the client's social environment  
Third party liability: Agency and practitioner considerations  
Consideration of specific ethical conflicts in responsibilities to third parties--  
protective service, marriage counseling, etc.  
The doctrine of informed consent and implications for social work

**REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE DUTY TO WARN**

**Required Readings:**

- Bergeron, L. R. and Gray, B. (2003). Ethical dilemmas of reporting suspected elder abuse. Social Work, 48 (1), 96-106.
- Huprich, S. et al (2003). Divergent ethical perspectives on the duty-to-warn principle with HIV patients. Ethics and Behavior, 13 (3), 263-279.
- Reamer, R.G. (2005). Ethical and legal standards in social work: Consistency and conflict. Families in Society, 86 (2), 163-169.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The right to privacy and the principle of confidentiality:  
The ethics of secrets  
Student case situations



**Required Reading**

Saxon, J. (2001). Confidentiality and social services. Social Services Law Review (30), University of North Carolina.  
<http://www.sog.unc.edu/pubs/electronicversions/pdfs/sslb30.pdf>

**Select at least two readings from the references below.**

Beauchamp, T.L. & Childress, J. (2009). Chapter 8. Professional-patient relationships. In Principles of biomedical ethics. (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). NY: Oxford University Press, pp.288-332.

Biestek, F. (1975). Principle 7: Confidentiality. In The casework relationship. Chicago: Loyola University Press.

Dickson, D. T. (1998). Confidentiality and privacy in social work. NY: Free Press.

Goldberg, J. E. (1989). Aids: Confidentiality and the social worker. Social Thought, 15 ((3/4),116-127.

**THE ETHICS OF SUPERVISION**

Ethical issues in supervisory practice  
 Worker and supervisory responsibility  
 The principles of direct and vicarious liability

**Required Reading**

Conrad, A.P. (2006). Ethical competence in social work supervision: Key considerations for ethical practice. Social work supervision in health care. Petersburg, Va: The Dietz Press, 31-48

Reamer, F. G. (1989). Liability issues in social work supervision. Social Work, 34 (10), 445-448.

**PRIVATE PRACTICE      MANAGED CARE**

Private practice defined  
 Ethical issues identified and clarified  
 Private practice versus agency-based practice  
 Managed care issues

**Required Reading**

Gibelman, M. & Mason, S. E. (2002). Treatment choices in a managed care environment: A multi-disciplinary exploration. Clinical Social Work Journal, 30 (2), 199-214.

Class **CULTURE, RELIGION, AND SOCIETY: MACRO AND MICRO ETHICAL ISSUES**

- 11 Multicultural and trans-temporal ethics  
 Religion/spirituality and social work practice in social policy, organizational, and clinical social work contexts  
 Functional and dysfunctional aspects of religion in practice  
 Ethical issues related to faith-based communities

**Required Reading**

NASW Standards for Cultural Competence. See NASW Website

Linzer, N. (2006). Spirituality and ethics in long term care. Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Social Work, 25 (1), 87-106.

Meer, D. & VandeCreek, L. (2002). Cultural considerations in release of information. Ethics and Behavior, 12 (2), 143-157.

Class 12. **THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN**

Human Rights

Children's rights: Well being vs. autonomy

Considerations of the limits and boundaries of the rights of children

Child welfare policy issues, such as transracial issues, family preservation, family rights vs. best interests of the child

**Required Readings**

Gewirth, A. (2001). Confidentiality in Child Welfare Practice. Social Service Review, 75 (3), 479-489. For examples of on-going ethics dialogue, be sure to see responses by Reamer and Gewirth's response to Reamer in the same issue.

Herrmann, K. J. (1991). Social workers and the united nations convention on the rights of the child. Social Work, 36 (1), 102-103.

Loewenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrisgton, D. (2012). Ethical decisions for social work practice. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole CENGAGE Learning. Chapter 6. Clients rights and professional expertise, pp. 100-111.

Reamer, F. G. (2005). Update on confidentiality issues in practice with children: Ethics risk management. Children and Schools, 27 (2), 117-120

Class **CONSULTATION**

13

Class **BIO-ETHICAL ISSUES AND PRINCIPLES**

- 14 Overview of life and death issues  
 Life sustaining technology at the beginning and later stages of life  
 Issues related to suicide, AIDS, and genetics

**Required Readings**

Beauchamp, T. L. and Childress, J. F. (2009). Chapter 4, Respect for autonomy (pp. 99-148); Chapter 5, Nonmaleficence (pp. 149-196); Chapter 6, Beneficence (pp. 197-239). In Principles of Bio-Medical Ethics. NY: Oxford University Press

Lowenberg, F. M., Dolgoff, R. & Harrisgton, D. (2012). Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice. (8thEd.) Monterey, CA: F. E Peacock Publishers, Inc., Chapter 12, Changing World/Changing Dilemmas, pp. 199-217.

O'Donnell, P, Farrar, A, BrintzenhofeSzoc, K., Conrad, A, et al. (2008). Predictors of ethical stress, moral action, and job satisfaction in health care social work. Social Work and Health Care, 46 (3), 29-51.

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE ETHICAL MODEL PAPER**

**(Papers presented in this format may be submitted as one of the Scholarly Paper requirements for graduation.)**

**Focus:** The objective of this assignment is to provide a framework through which you can demonstrate your ability to utilize a process for structuring, defining, and making ethical decisions in social work. This model can be applied to an ethical dilemma at the macro, organizational, or direct practice levels. An important emphasis in the paper is on the methodology, that is, how you arrived at your ethical choice--the ethical solution to the issue/problem selected. This includes logical analysis, self-awareness, and clarity of the reflective process. Each step is essential to the process, builds on the previous step, and moves toward a solution and implementation plan. The justification, or set of reasons/arguments for the ethical position taken, should be clearly stated.

The Ethical Model Paper is submitted in three parts: Ethical Dilemma, The Preliminary Ethical Model Paper, and the Final Ethical Model Paper as follows:

- a) The **Ethical Dilemma** is the first part of the paper. It describes the professional practice issue and clarifies the ethical dilemma that is being processed. It is submitted at Class 4 and covers sections 1 and 2. Suggested page length is 2 pages.
- b) The **Preliminary Ethical Model Paper** is submitted mid-semester at the beginning of the particular class session specified by the Instructor. It covers sections 3 through 5 of the Guidelines presented below and includes a reference list. Suggested page length should be approximately six to eight text pages using APA style. Students receive written feedback from the Instructor on the quality of the Preliminary Paper.
- c) The **Final Ethical Model Paper** integrates any needed modifications, revisions, or additions to the preliminary work and goes on to complete sections 6 through 8 of the Guidelines. The complete paper is submitted at the end of the semester at the beginning of the class session specified by the Instructor. Suggested page length is 12 to 15 text pages and reference list.

### **Outline of the Paper**

1. The paper should begin a) with a brief **introduction** to the ethical issue that will be processed, b) a brief statement of the purpose of the paper, and c) an overview of what will be covered. *(Use subheadings throughout the paper.)*
2. **Practice Situation and the Related Ethical Issues**

This section should include: a) a brief description of the practice **setting** in which your dilemma is embedded. Briefly explain the purpose, sponsorship, and mission of the organization or the specific department/service related to your dilemma. b) Clearly identify the specific **situation** you have chosen to process. It may be a direct practice case, an organizational policy or a social policy dilemma. Explain all relevant facts of the ethical dilemma. And, c) explicitly state the **central ethical dilemma(s)** involved.

That is, frame the dilemma in terms of a conflict of values, rights, or responsibilities. In complex dilemmas, you may also choose to briefly discuss any related ethical issues.

The practice situation should be related to your area of concentration. It may be one of direct practice, program management/development, or social policy related to your concentration. In other words, the ethical issue may be related to any of the contexts OR systems in which a social worker carries professional responsibility.

Focusing the dilemma - Ethical dilemmas, like all dilemmas, present the decision-maker with competing perspectives which are of proportional or similar worth. The choice that needs to be made is between two or more alternative goods or the avoidance of alternative harms. If the claims of one side are much stronger than the claims of the other side of the dilemma, it is not a true dilemma because the choice is then clear. In order to focus the situation, you need to state the dilemma you are processing in ethical terms. This means, in terms of a conflict of *values*, a conflict of *rights*, or a conflict of *responsibilities*; for example, children's rights to privacy/confidentiality vs. parents rights to know, OR the responsibility of the organization to provide services consistent with its mission vs. the responsibility of the organization to engage in practices of fiscal restraint, OR worker's responsibility to the client vs. responsibility to the employing agency. This formulation, then, is the central focus of the ethical dilemma you are processing.

### **ETHICAL DILEMMA PAPER SHOULD BE COMPLETED THIS FAR**

#### **3. Background: Research or Literature Directly Related to Your Ethical Dilemma**

You need to present a careful literature search that examines **both** sides of your issue from a theoretical, empirical, and ethical perspective, as appropriate. This review should include a thorough, objective discussion of the ethical dimensions of the situation, pro and con. Consider the interrelationships of variables that influence the situation, the ethical principles/perspectives involved, any legal aspects of the dilemma, and the multiple causes and related ethical issues involved. Focus should be on the issues, not on the affect around the issues, unless this is referred to objectively as an issue. In addition to library research, it is often useful to consult your agency policy manual, talk with workers in agencies similar to yours, explore community resources, and talk with your supervisor and agency director. This can provide you with some guidance as to current practice and your agency's experience with the dilemma you are processing.

#### **4. Clearly identify the values and salient ethical theories and principles surfaced in your literature review and professional experience search, including professional social work values/principles against which to consider possible solutions. This is essential because ethical decisions are made from values and the related principles that are drawn from them. Specific values, such as freedom may support one or both sides of your dilemma, but may be applied differently depending on the principles that are drawn from them, such as client self-determination or the principles of the least restrictive environment. The values/principles section of your model paper should include the following:**

- a) Begin with a discussion of the general values derived from society, such as freedom, well-being, privacy, etc., and point out how these are related to your issue.
- b) If possible, consider the specific values of your client/client system as they relate to the situation.
- b) Consider the ethical theories and principles against which to judge the possible options or solutions that may arise, such as the greatest good for the greatest number or the lesser of two evils.
- c) Discuss the legal and regulatory mandates that should be considered, including any relevant agency policies.
- e) Now, consider how the particular standards of the Social Work Code of Ethics apply to this situation? Cite the specific Standard(s) that are relevant, such as Section III, B, and discuss the alternative and sometimes conflicting considerations raised by reflection on various Standards in the code of ethics.
- f) Based on the above information, develop a **single** values hierarchy relevant to the ethical dilemma you are processing. (This is not a further review of literature, but your summarization and prioritization of the explicit and implicit values/principles noted in your background research and consultation on the situation). This values hierarchy will become an essential touchstone by which you will evaluate the possible courses of action you surface in the next ethical decision making step.

5. **Clearly identify and consider your own personal values and initial ethical stance.**

What is your own value/ethical stance at this point in the ethical reflection process? What biases may spring from your current point of view? Attempt to clarify and objectify the situation as much as possible.

Are you aware, at this point, of any personal biases or preferences you hold or have become aware of during the course of this process that may interfere with reaching a well thought-out course of action? Are you aware of the basis for this bias, if any? (You do not have to discuss personal reasons for any bias; the concern here is on your own self-awareness).

**PRELIMINARY PAPER SHOULD BE COMPLETED THIS FAR**  
*Be sure to include references for your work.*

**6. Identification and Evaluation of Ethical Options or Ethical Choices**

Consider the range of ethical options or ethical alternatives/ courses of action available to you and their possible consequences. This portion of the process synthesizes the various dimensions of the dilemma presented in #1 with the research presented in #2, and with the values and principles identified in #3. In other words, you need to:

- a) Identify and elaborate the possible alternative solutions that apply directly to the problem situation you have posed. The possible courses of action might stem directly from one or the other side of your dilemma; or your process of reflection may present you with mediating courses of action that combine values/principles from both sides of the dilemma. Be realistic about the alternatives you consider.
- b) Evaluate each potential solution using components from the model and your values hierarchy to ethically justify. Consider how the various values and ethical principles you have identified in #3 would be maximized or minimized in each alternative. Consider the possible consequences that could occur as a result of each possible course of action.

**7. Your Ethical Position**

After completing the above process, you must make a choice of action to resolve the dilemma and present your justification for the ethical position you have taken.

- a) State which action alternative you have chosen to resolve the ethical dilemma. It should be explicit and clearly stated.
- b) Provide justification for your position; that is, present the philosophical reasons or theoretical arguments for your position. Your argument should show how you arrived (in logical sequence) at your conclusion. What were the specific values and set of criteria that guided your judgment and action decision. Which ethical principles are most applicable to your position and which ethical theory(ies) support your chosen course of action.

**8. Implementation Plan**

- a) Discuss how your decision can best be implemented. What interpersonal skills, relationships, and sensitivity to all parties must be considered?
- b) Careful ethics risk management requires that you carefully document the process by which the decision has been formulated and implemented. Which ethics risk management provisions are most appropriate for the setting you described?

***The paper will be graded on the quality of the content including its organization, comprehensiveness, and explicit use of ethical theory and principles as well as on the clarity and the conciseness of the writing, and the inclusiveness of documentation and reference list.***

## LEARNING GOALS

### Purpose:

A very brief statement of the following information will help the instructor to understand your practice background, your professional interests, and your learning expectations for this course. It is due to the instructor by the second class session.

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_ (field) \_\_\_\_\_

e-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print clearly)

2. Concentration:

3. Field Placement Experience:

Foundation Placement (please include the types of practice experience you have had)

Concentration Placement (please include the types of practice experience you have had)

4. Learning Goals (Briefly discuss your areas of interest in relation to this course, your specific learning goals, and your expectations of the course)

5. Learning Style (Provide an indication of your learning style, the ways you seem to learn best.)