TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY COMMERCE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SWK 275: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I

Section 001: Hen. H 302, T/TH 9:30 – 10:45
Section 002: Hen. H 304, T/TH 11:00-12:15

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INSTRUCTOR: Lyndsey L. Norris, LMSW
 OFFICE: HH 317; MPLX Social Work Office
OFFICE HOURS: **MPLX: Mondays 4-5 p.m.** (or by appointment)
Main Campus: T/Th 1:00-3:00 p.m
W 10-12 noon (or by appointment)
OFFICE PHONE: 903-468-3009 (cell : 903-316-3837)
E-MAIL: lyndsey.norris@tamuc.edu

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines biophysical, psychological, and behavioral domains of human development. Individuals and families' interactions with the environment are emphasized during each phase of the life cycle: infancy and early childhood, adolescence and young adulthood, middle adulthood, and the later years. Major theories to underpin assessment and interventions with individual and family client systems are presented, within the broader context of a systems approach. Prerequisite: Concurrent enrollment with SWK 250 (3 semester hours).

GOALS & COMPETENCIES:

1. Prepare BSW graduates for entry-level professional social work practice that reflects generalist social work knowledge and skills. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

    1.1 Apply critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
    1.2 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research
     (2.1.6)
    1.3 Apply knowledge of HBSE to practice (2.1.7)
    1.4 Apply knowledge of policy to practice (2.1.8)
    1.5 Apply change strategies with all levels of systems (2.1.10)

2. Enable BSW graduates to practice ethically and apply social work values to promote equality and justice. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

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

3. Provide meaningful contexts through which BSW students engage in leadership, service, and professional excellence. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:
     3.1 Identify and respond as a professional social worker (2.1.1)
     3.2 Respond to professional contexts that shape practice,
       demonstrating qualities of leadership for the profession. (2.1.9)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The goal of this course is to promote understanding of human behavior through two perspectives: (1) the social systems perspective in which human behavior occurs within the context of individual interactions with other individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations, and (2) the perspective of a dynamic process in which human needs, tasks, and milestones occur sequentially and predictably over an individual's life span. The objectives leading to this goal include the following:

1. To introduce students to a system paradigm for incorporating knowledge, theories, and methodologies for practice with persons at different stages of life span development.

2. To assist students in synthesizing biological, psychological, and social interactions of individuals in the processes of human growth and development.

3. To identify the interdependence of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities on the processes of human growth and development.

4. To emphasize the impact of age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender roles and sexual orientation on interactions within the environment.

5. To enhance students' awareness of social work values and ethics in relation to assessment and intervention strategies with diverse populations, especially populations at risk.

6. To assist students in analyzing the research base of theories and knowledge presented in the course content.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, students will demonstrate:

1. The understanding and application of systems theory and social systems theory, as it applies to social work practice.
2. Insight into one's own values and beliefs, and how to uphold social work values and ethics.
3. Understanding and growth in the knowledge of social work values and ethics, and one's own experiences
4. Knowledge and skills in the interrelationship between human development and behavior in the realms of biological, psychological, and social processes along the human lifespan (infancy to late adulthood and death)
5. Understanding and assessment skills in the areas of racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of discrimination and oppression, and the effects on human behavior.
6. Understanding and assessment skills in cultural diversity and cultural competence.
7. Skills in obtaining, synthesizing, and integrating research data and critical thinking into social work practice.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES: This HBSE I course serves as a foundation course in the program, and precedes HBSE II. It builds upon the generalist social work foundation, including Introduction to Social Work.

TEXT:

Zastrow, C. & Kirst-Ashman, K. (2013). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (9th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Publishing.

GRADING:

Assignments:

Values & Ethics paper	100 points
Erikson paper	100 points
Research paper	100 points
Four Exams (Quizzes)	400 points (4 @ 100 points each)
Attendance/Participation	50 points
Total points possible	750 points

Grading Scale:
A= 90 - 100% of the total points
B= 80 - 89%
C= 70 - 79%
Less than 70%: Student must retake the class

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Text
1	1/14	<u>Course Introduction</u>	
	1/16	**Pre-Test (not graded)** <u>Introduction to HBSE and Systems Theory</u>: theory, concepts, and model.	Chp 1
2	1/21	<u>Social Systems.</u> Explore how social systems assumptions, concepts, and theories differ from perspectives of other disciplines. Biological, psychological, and social perspectives of human behavior are introduced. Examples and drawings will be used to demonstrate individual, family, agency, and community system interactions.	Chp 1
	1/23	<u>Development During Infancy and Early Childhood</u>: Discussion of *biological* systems and their impacts on prenatal and early childhood development. Discussion of social systems impact, such as family, on early development.	Chp 2
3	1/28	<u>Development During Infancy and Early Childhood</u>: (Continued) Discussion of *biological* systems and their impacts on prenatal and early childhood development. Discussion of social systems impact, such as family, on early development.	Chp 2
	1/30	<u>Development during Infancy and Early Childhood</u>: Discussion of major *psychological* perspectives on early development. Discussion of social systems impact, such as family, on early development.	Chp 3
4	2/4	<u>Development during Infancy and Early Childhood (continued)</u>: Discussion of major *psychological* perspectives on early development. Discussion of social systems impact, such as family, on early development.	Chp 3
	2/6	**Values and Ethics Paper Due** <u>Development during Infancy and Early Childhood (continued) & Family Life:</u> Discussion of *social* systems impact, such as family, on early development. The family is introduced as an institution or system whose values and authority shape individual emotions and thoughts. New family forms and roles are discussed.	Chp 4
5	2/11	**Quiz on Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4**	
	2/13	<u>Ethnocentrism and Racism:</u> Discussion of causes of prejudice, discrimination and oppression. Cultural competency imperatives in social work, and implications for social work practice will be explored.	Chp 5
6	2/18	Film	
	2/20	<u>Adolescence and Young Adulthood:</u> Discussion of *biological* and psychological changes associated with puberty and young adulthood. Issues of identify formation.	Chp 6
7	2/25	<u>Adolescence and Young Adulthood:</u> *Psychological* development and issues during adolescence.	Chp 7
	2/27	<u>Adolescence and Young Adulthood:</u> *Psychological* development and issues during adolescence.	Chp 7
8	3/4	<u>Adolescence and Youth Adulthood:</u> *Social* interactions of adolescents with families, peers, and the community	Chp 8

	3/6	**Quiz on chapters 6, 7, and 8**	
9	**3/11 & 3/13**	**No Class SPRING BREAK!!**	
10	3/18	<u>Gender Roles and Sexism:</u> Discussion of the development of gender roles and issues of sexism.	Chp 9
	3/20	<u>Sexual Orientation and Homophobia:</u> Discussion of aspects of sexual orientation and effects of homophobia on the development of gays and lesbians. Implications for social work will be explored.	Chp 13
11	3/25	**Quiz on chapters 5, 9, and 13**	
	3/27	**In-Class Assignment** on Discrimination and Oppression	
12	4/1	<u>Young and Middle Adulthood:</u> Discussion of the *biological* impacts on growth & development during middle adulthood	Chp 10
	4/3	<u>Young and Middle Adulthood:</u> Discussion of the *psychological* and significant *social* systems and impacts on middle adulthood.	Chp 11
13	4/8	<u>Young and Middle Adulthood:</u> Discussion of the psychological and significant *social* systems and impacts on middle adulthood.	Chp 12
	4/10	**Quiz on Chapters 10, 11, and 12**	
14	4/15	**Research Paper Due** <u>Later Adulthood:</u> *Biological* impacts on growth & development during later adulthood	Chp 14
	4/17	<u>Later Adulthood:</u> *Psychological* impact on growth & development during later adulthood	Chp 15
15	4/22	<u>Later Adulthood:</u> *Social* impacts on growth & development during later adulthood.	Chp 16
	4/24	<u>Later Adulthood:</u> *Social* impacts on growth & development during later adulthood.	Chp 16
16	4/29	**Quiz on Chapters 14, 15, and 16**	
	5/1	**Post-Test**	

Updated version 12.12

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

All written assignments should be **typed (12-point font), double-spaced, with one inch margins, a title page and stapled**. Students are encouraged to submit written work that has been **spell-checked and is free of grammatical errors**. Students are expected to use **APA style when citing reference materials**. Students are advised that points will be deducted if these criteria are not met.

Assignment #1 – Values & Ethics Paper (100pts)

Students are asked to write a paper on the core social work values found in the NASW Code of Ethics. The paper should be between 3-5 pages long and should include the following:

1. Identify and explain the core values found within the NASW Code of Ethics.
2. Discuss how these values are similar to or may differ from your personal values.
3. Discuss your views about persons of a different gender, ethnicity, national origin, social class, religion, physical or mental ability, race, and sexual orientation.
4. Discuss how you will uphold professional values and apply ethical standards in your work with clients who differ from you.

Assignment #2 – Application of Developmental Theory/Erickson Paper (100pts)

The purpose of this assignment is to apply Erikson's theory of development to the adolescent stage of the student's development. The paper should be approximately 3 pages in length, in addition to the cover page. Be sure to cite the text on the reference page as well as any other sources of information used. The paper should be specific, descriptive and well organized. The following outline is suggested:

I. Introduction
  1. Purpose of the Paper
II. Application of Theory
  1. Include a brief overview of Erikson's theory of development.
  2. Provide two-three specific examples from your adolescence and early adulthood which exemplify or illustrate Erikson's theory (refer to text).
III. Conclusion
  1. Include conclusions and insights gained from this assignment.

Assignment #3 – HBSE Research Paper (100pts)

The purpose of this assignment is to enable students to research a topic of interest related to the content in Chapters 5, 9, or 13 (i.e, ethnocentrism, racism, gender roles, sexism, homophobia, and sexual orientation). Students are expected to demonstrate the skills necessary for writing a basic research paper. The paper should be 5-6 pages in length, in addition to the cover and reference page. The paper should include at least 3 journal articles from scholarly publications. **Use of website based or Internet articles must be in addition to 3 journal articles**. Topics for

your paper should be relevant to course, i.e. human behavior in the social environment. Students are encouraged to talk with the instructor if they have questions about their chosen topic.

EXAMINATIONS:

There will be four exams throughout the semester. Examinations will focus on pertinent information discussed in class, lecture materials and **course readings**. Exam questions will consist of short answer, multiple choice, and true/false. Specifics of each exam will be discussed in class prior to the examination date. **Students who miss a regularly scheduled exam will be given an opportunity to take a comprehensive final during finals week.**

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to attend class, reflecting responsibility which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. Roll will be taken regularly. Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student's professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. Tardiness (or early departure) of more than 15 minutes will count as .5 absence (2 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 or more minutes early or does not come to class.
The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

Weekly	Up to 2 absences No penalty	3 absences 1 letter grade drop	4 absences Class grade of "F"	
Bi-weekly	Up to 3 absences No penalty	4 absences 1 letter grade drop	5 absences 1 letter grade drop	6 absences Class grade of "F"
Summer 10-week	Up to 1 absence No penalty	2 absences 1 letter grade drop	3 absences Class grade of "F"	

ONLINE OR WEB-ENHANCED CLASSES: Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via eCollege, students must log in and complete assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to eCollege (which can be monitored by the instructor) and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION. You have access to the university's computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs.
If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate 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 feedback if problems are evident.

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates indicated in the course schedule. Late assignments will result in 10% score reduction for each calendar day late. Students are encouraged to plan ahead and duplicate all work onto an alternative electronic device to avoid technological problems or loss of information. Electronic copies enable students to access their assignments on one of the campus computers should their personal computer become inoperable.

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 literacy 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).

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