



***SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK***

**SWK 348: Promoting Mental Health across Populations**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides students with knowledge about strengths based social work practice with diverse populations at risk of social and economic injustices and is inclusive of Mental Health. Populations studied will include economically disadvantaged clients and communities; persons with severe and persistent mental illness; people of color; gay, lesbian and transgendered individuals; and abused and neglected children and will require students to understand the Mental Health issues related to the groups indicated.. Students will learn how to complete strengths based assessments, to plan interventions based on individual and group strengths, and to build personal awareness of the significance of diversity as it affects individual and group opportunities for success and well-being with varied client populations.

**GOALS AND 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:**

**2.1.1 - Identify as a professional social worker and conduct one's self accordingly**  
Professional Behavior – 1.7 Attends well to professional roles and boundaries

**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:**

**2.1.2 - Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice**  
Professional Behavior – 2.3 Recognizes and manages personal values to guide practice (e.g., on such issues as abortion and gay rights); 2.5 Is able to apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions

**2.1.3 - Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments**

Professional Behavior – 3.3 Is skilled in using critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity; 3.4 Has good assessment skills; 3.5 Has good problem-solving skills; 3.6 Has good data gathering skills; 3.7 Analyzes complex material well; 3.8 Is skilled at appraising and integrating multiple sources of knowledge and practice wisdom

**2.1.4 - Engage diversity and difference in practice**

Professional Behavior - 4.4 Has sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will learn the significance of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability and crises as they impact individual and group opportunities for achievement and well-being in this country.
2. Students will learn a strengths perspective for guiding individual, group, organization, and community assessments and interventions.
3. Students will learn to critically analyze individual and group strengths based on respect for and appreciation of cultural differences.
4. Students will learn to identify policy issues which perpetuate prejudice and discrimination.
5. Students will build awareness of social injustices and of how to empower individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
6. Students will learn the history of social work's commitment to and efforts on behalf of diverse populations.
7. Students will learn why the DSM-IV-TR is an important assessment tool for working with at risk populations.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** *Measurements of Competencies*  
**(CSWE EPAS Practice Behavior Measurements):**

**Assignment – Experience Paper** measuring Competency 2.1.1 with Practice Behavior 1.7; Competency 2.1.2 with Practice Behavior 2.3; and Competency 2.1.4 with Practice Behavior 4.4

Assignment requires the student to explore, in-depth, the student's personal experiences with mental illness including their perceptions of problems and strengths from a personal and professional standpoint.

Rubrics' Key

5	Excellent
4	Above Expectations
3	Met Expectations
2	Minimum expectations were met
1	Minimum expectations were not met

	Measurable Behaviors	E	AE	ME	MM	MNM
2.1.1.7	Student was able to demonstrate and understanding of professional roles and boundaries	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.2.3	Student was able to recognize and manage personal values to guide practice (e.g., on such potentially controversial issues such as abortion and gay rights)	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.4.4	Student demonstrates sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups	5	4	3	2	1

**Assignment – Comprehensive Paper** measuring Competency 2.1.2 with Practice Behavior 2.5; and Competency 2.1.3 with Practice Behaviors 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8

Assignment requires the student to explore in-depth one of the DSM diagnoses studied in this course to develop a deeper understanding of the issue as it relates to strengths and barriers, integration in society, and response, both public and private, to the diagnosis.

Rubrics' Key

5	Excellent
4	Above Expectations
3	Met Expectations
2	Minimum expectations were met
1	Minimum expectations were not met

	Measurable Behaviors	E	AE	ME	MM	MNM
2.1.2.5	Student was able to apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3.3	Student was skilled in using critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3.4	Student was able to present presents good assessment skills.	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3.5	Students was able to present good problem-solving skills	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3.6	Student was able to present good data gathering skills	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3.7	Student was able to analyze complex material well	5	4	3	2	1
2.1.3.8	Student was skilled at appraising and integrating multiple sources of knowledge and practice wisdom	5	4	3	2	1

**TEXTS:**

Corcoran, J. & Walsh, J. (2009). *Mental Health in Social Work: A Casebook on Diagnosis and Strengths-Based Assessment*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN:978-0-205-05504-3.

Can be rented from <http://www.ecampus.com/mental-health-social-work-casebook/bk/9780205055043>

Walls, Jeanette. *The Glass Castle*. ISBN 978-0-743-24754-2

**GRADING**

Grades will be based on the following point system:

Comprehensive Paper on one diagnostic area	104 points
Experience paper	30 points
(13) chapter quizzes (4 points each)	52 points
(3) discussion board responses (30 points each)	90 points
Book analysis paper	44 points
Group project	<u>80 points</u>
Total	400 points

**FINAL GRADES**

Grades will be determined according to the following:

400-360	= A
359-320	= B
319-280	= C
279-240	= D
< 239	= F

**OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Comprehensive Paper:** This paper is due near the end of the semester. You are to pick one of the chapters discussed throughout the course and develop a comprehensive discussion of the diagnostic issue(s) based on research with individuals, at least one agency, one example of media coverage and three peer-reviewed research articles. Complete assignment instructions are available in the Doc Sharing online portion of the course. The paper is due on April 24th and **must be submitted** via the dropbox in eCollege.

2. **Experience Paper:** Very few people are untouched by mental illness. This paper has two purposes. First, it is designed to get you familiar with how a paper is written for me, and the expected level of professional writing generally. Second, its purpose is for you to connect with your own perceptions, biases, and experiences as they related to course material and to what you will encounter professionally. Professional use of self is an integral part of social work.

3. **Chapter Quizzes:** These quizzes are pencil and paper given at the start of class for which the chapter reading is due. They will be closed book, five minutes long (or less), and

consist of four questions each. They are designed to assure that you have done the reading for class. If you miss class that day, there is no make-up for the missed quiz. You are expected to come to class prepared for that day's discussion.

4. **Discussion Board.** Three times during this semester, there will be no in-person class. In lieu of class that week, you will have a discussion board topic that you are expected to complete. There are three discussion assignments throughout this course. They are worth 30 points each. To get full points on every discussion assignment you must do all of the following:

a. Post your initial response to the discussion by 12 noon on Thursday of the week in which the discussion is listed (see class schedule).

b. Your initial post must be a true discussion of your understanding of the topic assignment and must be a minimum of 15 sentences.

c. You must post at least one comment to three other student posts after 12:01 p.m. on Thursday but prior to the Sunday due date. These comments must be a minimum of five sentences and must add to the discussion. Though you are free to say things like "Interesting thought" or "Nice discussion," these comments and those similar are not counted as part of the five sentences.

d. Proper grammar is expected. I highly recommend typing your thoughts and comments in a file on a word processing program and check for spelling and grammatical errors. Professionalism and professional presentation is an expectation and not an option. Points will be taken off for sloppy spelling and writing.

5. **Book Analysis Paper:** You will read the book, *The Glass Castle*, by Jeanette Walls, and write a 4-page analysis paper based on the mental health issues you identify and their corresponding impact and implication. Part of the grade for this paper includes a discussion of the issues in class following the due date of the paper.

6. **Group Project:** Students will be expected to complete a group project somewhere after the mid-term of the course. All groups will be assigned and will utilize online connections. Group members will consist of members from both classes. Group work is an important part of social work, as much work done in the field is collaborative. Portions of this assignment will be completed as the course progresses, with the final project being an online presentation accessible to all class members. All assignment instructions are available under Doc Sharing in the eCollege portion of this class.

### **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:** Quizzes cannot be made up. Later papers are accepted and will be scored one grade down from what the original grade would be for every day the paper is late. Late papers must be submitted via email and not via the dropbox. Late papers are eliminated from the privilege of rewriting to improve a grade. Late initial posts to the discussion board are accepted up to the total assignment due date (Sunday at midnight). They will be scored with 2 points off of the original grade for the posting. Early comment posts are not accepted, and will be scored as missing posts.

**POLICY ON PAPER RE-WRITES:** The following assignments are part of the re-write process for better learning. If you submit any of these papers on time and are not satisfied with the grade you received, you may re-write the paper, *utilizing the feedback provided in your*

*paper*, and re-submit it for a complete re-grade. Note: This means you have the potential to do worse. However, more likely if you incorporate the feedback, you have the potential to get an A paper. All re-write grades are final, and the re-write must be submitted within one week of the original due date. For example: the paper is due on Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>. You will have the grade within 3 days (by Jan 26<sup>th</sup>). You may submit a re-write (via email, **not dropbox**) with the subject line – Rewrite of ... [name of assignment] – no later than midnight on Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>. No paper re-writes are accepted after one week of the original due date.

Assignments eligible for re-writes: Experience paper; Book analysis paper; Comprehensive paper.

### **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 SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Reading(s)	Activity	Due
1	Jan 14	Syllabus	Class introduction; syllabus review	
	Jan 16		Lecture/Activity on writing for this class	
2	Jan 21		Lecture/Activity on writing	
	Jan 23	Chapter 1	Lecture/Activity on diagnosis in the social work profession	<b>Paper on MH experience; Quiz on Chap 1</b>
3	Jan 28	Chapter 2	Lecture/Activity on risk, resilience, and strengths	<b>Quiz on Chapter 2</b>



	Jan 30		Lecture/Activity on risk, resilience, and strengths	
4	Feb 4	Chapter 3	Lecture/Activity on Autistic Disorder	<b>Quiz on Chapter 3</b>
	Feb 6		Beginning Group Activity – Meet in SWK Library (videography)	
5	Feb 11	Chapter 4 & 5	Lecture/Activity on ADHD/ODD/CD	<b>Quiz on Chapter 4 Quiz on Chapter 5</b>
	Feb 13		Lecture/Activity on ADHD/ODD/CD	
6	Feb 18	Chapter 6	Lecture/Activity on Alzheimer's	<b>Quiz on Chapter 6</b>
	Feb 20	Chapter 7	Lecture/Activity on Substance Use Disorders	<b>Quiz on Chapter 7</b>
7	Feb 25		Next Group activity – meet in Gee Library video room (Camtasia)	
	Feb 27	Chapter 8	Lecture/Activity on Schizophrenia	<b>Quiz on Chapter 8</b>
8	Mar 4		Online Discussion Board – no class	<b>Opens Mar 3rd</b>
	Mar 6		Online Discussion Board – no class	<b>Initial post, due 12 noon; Comments posts begin 12 noon and due by midnight on March 9th.</b>
9	Mar 11		Spring Break – No Classes!	
	Mar 13		Spring Break – No Classes!	
10	Mar 18	Chapter 9 & 11	Lecture/Activity on Depressive/Anxiety Disorders	<b>Book Analysis Paper Quiz on Chapter 9 Quiz on Chapter 11</b>
	Mar 20		Discussion of <i>The Glass Castle</i>	
11	Mar 25	Chapter 10	Lecture/Activity on Bipolar Disorder	<b>Quiz on Chapter 10</b>
	Mar 27		Next Group Activity – Creating scenarios – Meet in SWK Library	
12	Apr 1		Online Discussion Board – no class	<b>Opens Mar 30th</b>
	Apr 3		Online Discussion Board – no class	<b>Initial post, due 12 noon; Comments posts begin 12 noon and due by midnight on Apr 6th.</b>
13	Apr 8	Chapter 12	Lecture/Activity on Eating Disorders	<b>Quiz on Chapter 12</b>
	Apr 10		Lecture/Activity on Integrating/Co-occurring issues	
14	Apr 15	Chapter 13	Lecture/Activity on Borderline Personality	<b>Quiz on Chapter 13</b>

	Apr 17		Class Review/Discussion for final projects	
15	Apr 22		Viewing Video Projects in class	<b>Group Video Project</b>
	Apr 24		Cont'd (if necessary) Video projects/final discussion of Mental Health in Social Work	<b>Comprehensive Paper</b>
16	Apr 29		Online Discussion Board – no class	<b>Opens Apr 28th</b>
	May 1		Online Discussion Board – no class	<b>Initial post, due 12 noon; Comments posts begin 12 noon and due by midnight on May 4<sup>th</sup>.</b>
Finals	Week of May 5		There are no finals due. When you reach this point – you are done!	

## Bibliography

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