



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SWK 322-410 – Human Behavior in the Social Environment II

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the theoretical basis for understanding groups, organizations, & communities. Emphasis is placed on providing students with theoretical knowledge which can then be applied to assessing and intervening with mezzo and macro client systems. Systems theory is utilized as a framework for understanding interactions between and among social units. Prerequisites: SWK 225, 250, 275, and Soc 111. Concurrent enrollment in SWK 328, 329, and 370 required; ANTH 114 may be taken prior to or concurrently with this course. This course is restricted to social work majors and social welfare minors (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

1. To reintroduce students to a systems paradigm for incorporating knowledge, theories, & methodologies for practice with groups, organizations, and communities.
2. To present an overview of major theories related to groups, organizations, and communities to support macro practice.
3. To assist students in synthesizing their understanding of social interactions within groups, organizations, and communities.
4. To emphasize the impact of age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender roles, & sexual orientation on interactions within & between groups, organizations, and communities.
5. To enhance students' awareness of social work principles, values, & ethics in relation to assessment and intervention strategies with diverse, disadvantaged, & oppressed populations in groups, organizations, & communities.
6. To assist students in analyzing the research base of theories & knowledge presented in the course content to enhance their critical thinking skills.
7. To encourage students' awareness of their own attitudes & behaviors within their personal & professional environments.
8. To promote knowledge of current human resource systems that is integral to the delivery of human services.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Define and explore the macro social environment.
2. Learn concepts involving values that characterize generalist practice.
3. Explain major theoretical perspectives on groups.
4. Identify basic concepts inherent in interpersonal group dynamics.
5. Define task groups formed to meet client, organization, and community needs.
6. Demonstrate the application of ecosystems concepts to organizations and social agencies.
7. Understand the impact of social and economic forces on social service organizations.
8. Describe the importance of power in organizations and identify its various types.
9. Explain problems frequently encountered by and in social service organizations.
10. Understand the concept of community.

11. Describe the importance of citizen participation and social support networks.
12. Define neighborhoods and examine how they provide a vital context for human behavior.
13. Describe how populations-at-risk can be empowered in the micro environment.
14. Define human rights and understand the significance of concepts for international social work practice.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

TEXTS

Kirst-Ashman, K. (2014). *Human behavior in the macro social environment: An empowerment approach to understanding communities, organizations, and groups (4th Ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

GRADING

Evaluation of course grades will be assessed according to the following:

Quizzes (5 @ 20 points each)	100 points
Social Problem Paper	150 points
Community Group Presentation	150 points
<u>Test</u>	<u>100 points</u>

Total: 500 points

Grades will be determined based on the following point distribution:

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

Grading criteria for written work include spelling, using complete sentences and grammar, thoroughness, logical development of statements, clarity of writing, use of APA style, use of headings, and application of readings from the course.

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Social Problem Paper: (150 points)

This paper (8 – 10 pages) will address a specific social problem that impacts human development and/or social functioning and includes a major macro component. The paper is due **11/3/2014**. Possible topics include:

- Unemployment
- AIDS
- Teenage pregnancy

- Working poor
- Homeless families or general homelessness
- Poverty
- Domestic violence

Once you have decided on a topic and received instructor permission: use the following as a guide to completing the paper:

- I. Using statistical data and scholarly literature, define the nature and parameters of the social problem and the populations most impacted by the problem, including information about the nature of the any consequences.
- II. Using a Conceptual Framework or Theories Concerning Groups (field theory, social exchange theory, learning theory, cognitive-behavioral theory, psychoanalytic theory, systems theory, empowerment theory, and feminist theories), explain how the specific social problem is created and/or maintained by communication, interpersonal interaction, norms, group cohesiveness, power and status, leadership, and the social, economic, political, media, religious and any other macro level institutions or social arrangements in our society.
- III. Explain the social injustices and the oppressive forces that are implicated in the problem.
- IV. Suggest some social work strategies for prevention of and intervention with the problem at the macro level including family, community and institutional levels.
- V. Papers should include at least 5 appropriate sources. Sources can include one website; the other sources must be scholarly books, chapters in books, or articles from academic journals.
- VI. If possible, you should attend a community event/activity related to your topic. Your experience at the community event and information gleaned from the event should be included in your paper.
- VII. You can include handouts or information from the community event in an appendix.
- VIII. You will need a brief introduction at the beginning of the paper; this introduction explains what the paper is about. Then you will need headings for the rest of the paper, as described below.
- IX. Use the following headings to write your paper. Failure to use headings will result in a grade of zero for the assignment.
 - a. Nature and Parameters of the Social Problem
 - b. Theoretical Approach
 - c. Social Injustice and Oppression
 - d. Prevention and Intervention
 - e. Community Event/Activity (if appropriate)
 - f. Summary

- X. You will need a cover page and a reference page that conform to appropriate APA style. These pages do not count in the total number of pages required for the paper. Do not put the paper in a folder. Just staple the top left corner.

B. Community Organization Group Presentation: (100 Points)

Students will form groups of 4 or 5 and provide class presentations regarding a specific community or organization. Group members will be assigned by the professor and are to work collaboratively to thoroughly assess a community or organization, including strengths and areas of possible improvement. Students will be graded on their individual contribution to the final group product as well as the quality of the completed project. Each group member will conduct a confidential evaluation of the work of all other group members. The evaluations will be used by the professor to partially determine the grades of individual students. Group members who do not fully participate in the project will also incur a lowered project grade. Students must be present during all of the class presentations to receive the points from their Group Presentations. Presentation dates are: **12/1 and 12/8.**

Each member of the group will cover a specific element within the community or organization. Each group should provide the professor with a typed outline that includes information to be presented by each group member. Using APA style, cite sources of information utilized in the writing and presentation of the paper. Group members must include the following information when writing the paper.

- A. **Introduction.** Include a detailed description of the community or organization.
- B. **Assessment.** Present a detailed assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- C. **Capacity Building.** Focus should be placed on how to increase the leadership and organizational skills of people for the purpose of strengthening the community or organization. Give a brief summary of the community's or organization's assets. What outside assets are available? What individual and group capacities exist?
- D. **Implications for Social Work Practice.** Discuss a viable plan and implementation strategy that will release individual capacities and empower the community or organization. Does community or organization empowerment include policy changes? How would a social worker form new alliances and cooperation between existing groups within the organization or agencies within the community? How would social workers educate the community or organization members about the plan? How will the plan be evaluated? In other words, how will the social worker empower the community or organization to make changes for the better?
- E. **Summary/Conclusion.** Present a brief summary of the ideas presented in the paper.

Each group member will be responsible for writing one of the sections listed in "A" through "D" above. This responsibility includes the writing of the specific section for the paper, citing sources in the body of the paper according to APA style, including a reference page of all sources used, according to APA style, and presenting of the section to the entire class. Group members should work as a team in preparing the paper so it does not read as four separate papers pasted together to make one paper. On December 1, each group member will turn in her/her original section, and the group will provide the enhanced (cohesive) paper which must include headings "A" through "E" above. If headings are not used the group paper will Master Syllabus as of Fall 2011

be given the grade of zero. Group members must decide the most creative way of presenting their paper, rather than just reading it to the class.

C. Quizzes: (100 total points)

Six (6) short, unannounced quizzes will be given at various times throughout the semester. The quizzes will consist of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and/or matching. Only the five highest grades will be counted. All quizzes must be taken when given, and there will be no makeup quizzes. If you miss a quiz your grade will be recorded as a zero. Each quiz will be worth 20 points. The quizzes will be given at the start of class, and 15 minutes will be allotted for the quiz. If a student arrives after the quiz has begun, he/she will have whatever time is left from the 15 minutes to take the quiz. For example, if the student arrives after the quiz has been going on for 10 minutes, the student will have 5 minutes to take the quiz. The quiz will cover questions from the assigned reading for that week. For example, if a quiz is given on October 13th, it would include questions from Chapter 8 in the textbook.

D. Test: (100 points)

A comprehensive test will be given, reflected content from the covered course material. The format may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions. Questions may also come from any past quizzes. The date of the exam is **11/24/2014**.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

All written assignments must demonstrate acceptable writing style, the use of Standard English, acceptable grammar, and the correct use of the American Psychological Association (APA) style of reference citation.

DO NOT REQUEST THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTRA CREDIT. The professor may give ALL students the opportunity to earn extra credit during the semester, but there will be no extra credit for an individual student.

Part of the grading process will include an evaluation of presentation, including clarity, coherence, logic and organization of the assignment. All assignments must be typewritten, using double-spacing and standard margins. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the paper is in the possession of the instructor by the designated time. Any papers left in the mailbox or any other place are not the instructor's responsibility. **All assignments must be turned in on hard copy, no electronic papers.** At the discretion of the instructor, it may be required to submit written assignments via "turn-it in", a program utilized to determine instances of plagiarism. If "turn-it-in" is used, follow-up to ensure that the professor has received your paper by the date assigned. The professor will not read an assignment and provide feedback before an assignment is due. Once an assignment has been graded, students will be given the opportunity to rewrite the paper for a higher grade.

Below is a partial list of factors that are addressed in the grading process:

- Any error in APA reference or citation format from the 7th edition
- Lack of quotation marks at the beginning and end of all direct quotes

- Extra or missing punctuation (i.e. commas, semi-colons, colons, periods)
- Incomplete sentences (i.e., sentences without a verb)
- Run-on sentences (i.e., sentences that run together without appropriate punctuation and capitalization delineating each sentence)
- Incorrect spelling
- Inappropriate and inconsistent verb tense
- Lack of noun-verb agreement
- Incorrect use of capitalization (e.g., social work is generally not capitalized)
- Incorrect use of possessives (examples of correct use are Shawn’s book, the parents’ child)
- Any contractions (e.g., I’m, can’t, won’t), except in direct quotes from another source)
- Lack of neatness (e.g., hand written corrections, uneven indentions)
- Papers that are not typewritten
- Use of a size other than #12 fonts
- Lines not double spaced
- Margins that are less than or wider than 1 inch
- Failure to indent the first line of a paragraph
- Incoherent sentences

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:

All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the date they are due. No late assignments will be accepted. Do not ask for an exception to this policy.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

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

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In™) to identify plagiarism.

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

ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the

basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student's Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

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

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

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

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

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (Adjusted if Needed):

Week	Reading(s)	Assignment/Activities	Link to Comp.	SLO
8/25		Intro & Overview of Class		
9/1	Chapter 1	HBSE in the Macro Environment	1.3; 1.4; 1.5	1
9/8	Chapter 2	Values & Principles	2.1	2
9/15	Chapter 3	HBSE in Groups	1.5	3, 4, 5
9/22	Chapters 4 & 5	Types of Groups	1.5	3, 4, 5
9/29	Chapters 5 & 6	Theories and Organizations Social Service Settings	3.1 1.4	6, 7
10/6	Chapter 7	Organizational Structure	1.5	8
10/13	Chapter 8	Management and Empowerment	3.2	9
10/20	Chapter 9	Communities	1.5	10
10/27	Chapter 10	Geographic Communities	1.5	11
11/3	Chapter 11	Neighborhood Empowerment Social Problem Paper Due	3.2	12
11/10	Chapter 12	Diversity, Populations-at-Risk, and Empowerment	2.2	13
11/17	Chapter 13	Global Social Justice	2.3	14
11/24		Test		
12/1		Student Presentations	1.1; 1.2; 1.3	1-14
12/8		Student Presentations Review and Closure	1.1; 1.2; 1.3	1-14

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