



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**SWK 370
WRITING AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS
IN SOCIAL WORK**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide the students with a generalist approach to theories, concepts and skills required to develop a methodology for writing and using technology in case management and social work practice in ever changing systems. A continuum of support systems and agency resources will be explored to allow the student to gain insight into the needs of agencies as practice based settings. The students will explore statistical basics, interdisciplinary collaborations and ethical dilemmas, as well as think critically about an array of political, social, institutional and personal issues affecting practice. These issues will be used to develop writing and technology skills that impact the student, employees and clients of Social Service Agencies.

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)

1.5 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:

While this course is an **overview and assessment** of the writing and research methods used by Social Workers, it will build a base for the practical application of the software packages most frequently used in social service agencies. The understanding of research methods and how they are used in developing practice, ethical and practical issues, data collection and preparation, analytical techniques, and introduction to the computer and computer software, and evaluation research are some of the topics to be covered.

This course is intended to introduce the student to the field of quantitative data analysis using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques and writing in the style of the American Psychological Association (APA). The course focuses on types of data that are found in contemporary Social Work research and practice. As such, it is an introduction to the fascinating field of research, writing and statistics. Specific course goals are:

Realizing the basic connection between Social Work theory, research, methodology and statistical analysis in quantitative research students will learn to apply these factors to written text.

1. Overcoming the “fear of writing” many students have by gaining an understanding and appreciation of basic logical deductive principles involved in the analysis of content.
2. Know the information sources available in the library and other sources.
3. Understand and use the library to obtain information from various sources.
4. Have a working knowledge of basic research/statistical terminology and research design and methods.

5. Evaluate published research articles and understand how they impact practice.
6. Develop an understanding of writing a manuscript/narrative using the writing style specified by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
7. Becoming familiar (and comfortable) using computers and statistical programs to aid in data management, data transformations and statistical computation.
8. Begin to develop the ability to interpret the results of statistical procedures and report these results in a clear, concise manner.
9. Develop and complete narrative/writing that is fact based and rich with assessment based on clients strengths and needs.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

TEXT:

Young, D. (2014). *The writer's handbook: A guide for social workers*. Writer's Toolkit Publishing LLC, Ogden Dunes, IN.

Publication manual of the American psychological association (6th edition) (2010)
Washington, DC. American Psychological Association.

Forni, P. M., (2002). *Choosing civility: The twenty-five rules of considerate conduct*. St. Martin's Press, New York, NY.

Students are required to utilize the texts. These texts will be used in many courses during your BSW/MSW education. Students must come to class prepared to discuss and articulate, in detail with critical thinking and analysis, each assigned chapter. Other outside readings will be assigned throughout the course.

GRADING: All students will be required to fulfill the course requirements for a final grade. Each course requirement will be assigned points. Your final grade will be assigned using the following conversion table.

(A=600-540)(B=539-480)(C=479-420)(D=419-360)

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

APA/Literature Review Paper — 200 points Complete a cited manuscript using **APA** as a writing guide. The document must be written using no less than five references and **only one** of those may be from a solely web-based source. You must have at least one book, one journal, one magazine and one web-based reference. The topic is TBD and the paper must contain **research based knowledge** that is reported in the paper. The

paper should be four (4) pages of content **not including** the works cited or cover page. An abstract is not required; however, it must Contain an Introduction, Body of Paper, and a Conclusion.

Power Point Presentation--- 100 points Produce a Power Point based presentation of no less than 10 slides incorporating sound, animation, graphics and pictures. The presentation will be presented to the entire class using **Projector in the CLASSROOM**. Grading will be determined based on a rubric for sound, animation, graphics and pictures. Meeting the basic components of the assignment is worth 70 points. Your presentation MUST be loaded by Flash drive. A late presentation will result in a grade no higher than 80 points. You should load and test your presentation prior to that date to make sure it is ready and compatible with all software/hardware concerns that may be present in the Classroom on the date of your presentation.

Civility Project—100 points--Student will be assigned reading and writing assignments from a common course text. These assignments will be posted to E-College and participation from the class is MANDATORY each week for the grade. Students will post based on the readings and respond to a minimum of two classmates each week and assignment is made. Ten E-College discussions for a total of 100 points.

10 Group Assignments ---100 points Students will be given a scenario from which to create an group discussion that will process the information requested. Students will answer questions on Lecture, APA, Research and other general information provided during class lecture and handouts.

Final Exam---100 points Final will cover all areas discussed in class plus an activity to enable the student's ability to use technology to complete a task. The final exam may be waived based on student performance.

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 late work will be accepted but will be marked down as related to relative excuses. Please follow the Course Schedule for due dates.

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).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Reading(s)	Activities IC =in class OL=on line Tues / Thurs	Assignments Due Dates
1 8/25	Young Ch 1	Review Syllabus and Ch 1	
2 9/1	LABOR DAY	LABOR DAY	LABOR DAY
3 9/8	Young Ch 2	Lecture Ch 1-2/ Discussion	
9/9 Tuesday	BSW STUDENT Assembly	Commerce Student Center	Invited
4 9/15	Young Ch 3	Lecture Ch 3 / Discussion	
5 9/22	Young Ch 5	Lecture Ch 5 / Discussion	Civility
6 9/29	Young Ch 6	Lecture Ch 6 / Discussion	Civility
7 10/6	Young Ch 7	Lecture Ch 7 / Discussion	Civility
8 10/13	Young Ch 8-4	Lecture Ch 8-4 / Discussion	APA Paper Due Civility
9 10/20	NASW TEXAS-No Class	NASW TEXAS	NASW TEXAS Civility
10 10/27	Young Ch 9	Lecture SW Research/ Dis	Civility

11 11/3	Young Ch 10	Group Discussion/ Lecture Civility Book	Civility
12 11/10	Young Ch 11	Group Presentations	Civility
13 11/17	Young Ch 12	Group Presentations	Civility
14 11/24	Young Ch 13	Presentations	Civility
15 12/1	Young Ch 14 -15	Presentations	
16 12/8	Young Ch 16 -17	Presentations	Class Final

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APA style

<http://www.lib.usf.edu/ref/apa.html>

<http://www.apa.org/journals/faq.html>

<http://www.uwsp.edu/acad/psych/apa4b.htm>

http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/libdist/database_info/citing_dbs/dbcites_apa.html

<http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html>

<http://www.lib.usf.edu/ref/apa.html>

Overview of the scientific method

<http://salmon.psy.plym.ac.uk/year1/scimeth.htm> #overview of the scientific method

Research design

<http://spsp.clarion.edu/mm/RDE3/start/RDE3start.html>