SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SWK 511: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I
(This is a tentative syllabus)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This foundation course in Human Behavior in the Social Environment is designed to provide foundation students with an understanding of the bio-physical, psychological, and behavioral aspects of human development from before birth through adolescence. Content in this first course covers interactions between individuals, families, and their relationship to the social environment. Systems theory is the underlying context use to underpin all other major theories of individual and family development. Life stages will be considered in diverse frames of reference, e.g. different cultures/ethnicity/races, gender and sexual orientation, poverty, and physical or mental disabilities. In addition to theory, practical skills in parenting, communications, self-esteem and relationship building will be explored. As you know, adults learn differently than children and do not respond well to lecture-only formats, note learning, or memorization. For that reason, this class will incorporate various learning venues to include group discussion and activities, outside speakers (when available) and audio-visual presentations as much as possible to supplement course assignments and readings.

GOALS & COMPETENCIES:

F 1.   Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

   F 1.1 Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
   F 1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of HBSE and its application to practice (2.1.7)

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F 2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

      F 2.2 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
      F 2.3 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
      F 2.4 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

F 3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

      F 3.1 Engage as professional social workers (2.1.1)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
This course is designed to provide first semester foundation students with an understanding of the biophysical, psychological and social systems aspects of human development. Content in this course in human behavior covers interactions between individuals and their environments and between families and their environments. It covers the lifespan from conception through adolescence. Systems theory is the underlying context used to underpin all other major theories of individual and family development. In addition, the course addresses issues of diversity including ethnocentrism, racism and physical/intellectual ability.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. Students will demonstrate in writing and through class participation the formulation of an ecological frame of reference for describing human behavior which is based on foundation of systems theory.
2. Students will demonstrate through objective evaluation (exams) basic knowledge of the ecological factors stemming from biological, psychological, and sociological origins that affect the functioning of individuals, families, groups, organization and communities;
3. Students will demonstrate through objective evaluation and class participation the ability to synthesize information regarding specific human diversity factors (i.e. memberships in racial and ethnic groups, gender issues, and sexual orientation) which have influence from infancy through adolescence and can affect an individuals' ability to cope with difficulties or changes in his/her environment.
4. Students will demonstrate through class participation, written assignments and objective evaluation an understanding of the relationship between individual growth and development and the larger systems in which it occurs, particularly families, groups, neighborhoods and communities.
5. Students will explain multi-determinants of social functioning including biological, psychological, spiritual, and socio-cultural factors that contribute to the make-up of the whole person.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:
This course is an integral part of the foundation sequence in the program. It is the first exposure to systems theory, which is essential to an understanding of the generalist and advanced generalist

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courses, as well as field practicum courses.

PRACETICE BEHAVIORS

Competency 2.1.7	Competency Benchmark	Practice Behavior
Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment		**7.1 Is knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course**
		7.2 Is knowledgeable about the range of social systems in which people live
		7.3 Is knowledgeable about the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being
		7.4 Is skilled at applying theories and knowledge about biological variables, social variables, cultural variables, psychological variables, and spiritual development
		7.5 Is skilled at utilizing conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation

TEXTS :
Zastrow, C.H. & Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2007). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment.* 9th ed. Belmont CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomas Learning.
Additional articles and handouts will be given throughout the semester to enhance the students' knowledge base.

GRADING :
Grading will be done on a contractual, graduated grading scale. Each student will have the opportunity to map out his/her destination by opting for a tract leading to an A or B. The student is to notify the instructor by the third class week of his/her decision.

A	B
Participation Activities	Participation Activities
Self-Reflection Paper	Mid-Term Exam
Mid-Term Exam	
Final Exam	Final Exam
Article Review	Article Review
Research Paper	Self-Reflection Paper
Total Possible Points	Total Possible Points
550	450
550 to 495 = A	450 to 405 = B
494 to 440 = B	404 to 360 = C
439 to 385 = C	

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EXAMINATIONS:
All students are expected to take two examinations: a midterm and final examination. Exam dates are noted on the syllabus Course Outline. The midterm will cover the information from readings, lectures and class discussion prior to the test date. The Final exam will cover the materials in the second half of the course. ***Each exam is worth 100 points.***

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

CLASS PARTICIPATION (50 points)
Over the course of the semester there will be five class activities or opportunities for participation. Each activity will be worth 10 points. A student will receive full credit for active participation and contributing to the subject. (*these are essentially free points simply for being involved in class).*

REACTION PAPER 1: SELF REFLECTION PAPER (100 points)
Reflect upon your life including your experiences from birth through adolescence and your reasons for becoming a social worker. This is not a full self-revelation of all of your life experiences, but look at key factors that led you to this career.

Using the introductory course materials we have read so far (chapter 1), what influenced your life course? Identify, define and apply 4 theories/perspectives and 8 concepts that can help you further understand your previous life stages that brought you to where you are now. Underline the applied concepts and theories.

Explore the concerns/issues you faced as a teenager. Incorporate, as appropriate, any possible impact on culture, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, physical/cognitive/developmental factors, socio-economic status, spirituality or other aspects of the human condition which impact your worldview.

Paper should be 2-3 pages in length. Minimum of 3 peer reviewed journal references. The first reaction paper should be written in first person.

REACTION PAPER 2 (beginning of Research Paper): 50

1. You need to pick a subject significantly different from yourself. Interview and write a case study of a life event on a child or adolescent during one of Erikson's, stages of development (referred to as the "subject" or you may make up a fake name with parenthesis around the name for the first use). (20pts).
2. Examine the NASW Code of Ethics that relate to human diversity with regard to the worth and dignity of all persons. (20pts)
3. Please describe in a paragraph your experience interviewing your subject and examining the code of ethics as it related to him/her. (10pts)
4 Format: Third Person. No need for a cover page and 1-2 pages, double-spaced 12-point font – Graded on spelling, grammar and completion and clarity of each section (# 1, 2 & 3) You paper should be organized and should have three distinct sections as instructed in number 1-3. For example you sections could be titled: Case study, NASW Code of Ethics, human diversity and dignity of all, and How I applied the Code of ethics during my interview

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ARTICLE REVIEW (50 points)

Find an article in a professional journal about an aspect of childhood or adolescence and/or a psychological theory of development related to your upcoming case study and upcoming research paper. Write a review of the article. The paper should be approximately 2-3 pages in length and typed, double-spaced. The paper should include three separate sections: reference, summary, and critique.

- The reference should be at the top of the first page and should be in APA style

- A concise summary of the major points, statements, or facts of the article

- The critique should contain how this article relates to your case study and research paper, class readings and discussions and your personal opinion about the article. Include what you think about the author's position and how the article fits in with your personal beliefs. What future research regarding this topic needs to be done or would be helpful.

Research Paper (100 points):
A 10-15 page paper to be written utilizing an ecological perspective for analyzing the potential effect of a life event on a child or adolescent during one of Erikson's, stages of development. References required are 8-10 peer reviewed journal articles, you can use no more than 2 electronic references. The purpose of this paper is to add to the student's understanding of how Erikson theory and ecological perspective applies to an in-depth analysis of a client. Also it is intended to add to the students' knowledge in assessing the impact of the micro, mezzo and macro levels on client functioning or potential functioning. The text should be focused on the following issues:

☐ Characteristics of the client (e.g. memberships in a racial group, ethnicity, gender age etc).
☐ Describe a major event in a client's life.
☐ Select and identify the issues of the stage when the major event occurred.
☐ What will happen if this stage is traumatized? Describe the consequence of pathology for that stage in general terms, and secondly, illustrate how you subject will demonstrate this pathology.
☐ How will the trauma event ripple through subsequent stages? While this is speculation, use the subsequent conflicts as described by Erikson to defend your speculation. Also, discuss the relationship of this event and its potential to produce social and economic oppression as well as other continuing risk factors for the individual.
☐ Finally, discuss any specific cultural issues and how these may have impacted the client.

   Examples
☐ A five year old African-American child looses a parent in an automobile crash
☐ A thirteen year old witnesses a school shooting at his/her middle school

**** If you would like to do a research paper utilizing a different approach or subject, review with the instructor. Once you have chosen your topic inform the instructor of your subject.

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GUIDELINES FOR ALL WRITTEN WORK
Written work for this class must be in *APA style using 12-point font*. Grading criteria for written work includes: thoroughness, logical development of points, clarity of written expression, application of scholarly research and appropriateness of information presented as it relates to topic chosen (See Rubrics for Grading Expectations). This is a graduate level course and
expectations are considerably higher than those at an undergraduate level. It is important to demonstrate your ability to do research at the library, to critically analyze various positions, comparing and contrasting strengths and weaknesses, and presenting facts in a manner persuading the reader to his/her own conclusions. Citations from course texts, the internet (unless accessing an on-line journal or government document), popular magazines or handouts given by the instructor do not represent scholarly research and should be used sparingly.

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.

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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:

Promptness in completing assigned tasks and readings is a requirement of this course. **ASSIGNMENTS SUBMITTED AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASS PERIOD ON WHICH THEY ARE DUE WILL AUTOMATICALLY HAVE 5 POINTS DEDUCTED FROM THE GRADE. AN ADDITIONAL POINT PER DAY WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR EACH DAY THEREAFTER.** Assignments will NOT be accepted more than one week after the assigned due date and a "0" will be given for the grade. If students do not turn in all required assignments, they will be ineligible for any grade higher than a "C".

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:

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"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

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library- Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Reading(s)	Assignment/Activities	Link to Comp.	SLO
1 09/01-09/07	Review Syllabus, Class Introductions, etc. **Chapter 1:** Introduction to Human Behavior and the Social Environment			
2 09/08-09/14	**Chapter 1:** Introduction to Human Behavior and the Social Environment	Due: REACTION PAPER 1: SELF REFLECTION PAPER (100 points) **Due in the Dropbox by 09/14 at 11:59pm**	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7, 2.1.8, 2.1.9, 2.1.10	1-5
3 09/15-09/21	Chapter 2: Biological Development in Infancy & Childhood		2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10	1-5
4 09/22-09/28	Chapter 3: Psychological Development in Infancy & Childhood	**Identify Adolescent/Family and potential questions for Interview	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.7, 2.1.9, 2.1.10	1-5
5 09/29-10/05	Chapter 4: Social Development in Infancy & Childhood	**Due: REACTION PAPER 2 (beginning of Research Paper)** **Due in the Dropbox by 09/29 at 11:59pm**	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7, 2.1.10	1-5
6 10/06- 10/12	Continuation/Review—Infancy & Childhood			
7	Chapter 5: Ethnocentrism &		2.1.2, 2.1.4,	1-5

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10/13-10/19	Racism		2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10	
8 10/20-10/26	Continuation/Review—Ethnocentrism & Racism	**Mid-Term Exam**		
9 10/27-11/2	Chapter 6: Biological Development in Adolescence Thanksgiving		2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7, 2.1.8, 2.1.9 2.1.10	1-5
10 11/03-11/09	Chapter 7: Psychological Development in Adolescence	**Due: ARTICLE REVIEW (50 points)**	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7, 2.1.8, 2.1.9, 2.1.10	1-5
11 11/10-11/16	Chapter 8: Social Development in Adolescence		2.1.2, 2.1.7	1-5
12 11/17-11/23	Chapter 9: Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexism		2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.8, 2.1.10	1-5
13 11/24-11/30	Continuation/Review—Adolescence	**Research Paper Due**		
14 12/01-12/07	**Wrap-up/Review**			
15 12/08-12/10		**Final Exam—Online**		

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