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SWK 325: Practice with Mezzo Systems

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2021

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Alma Hernandez, JD, LMSW
Office Location: Commerce
Office Hours: 10:45a-12:45p or by appointment
University email address: alma.hernandez@tamuc.edu
Preferred form of communication: email, zoom, then cell
Communication response time: within 48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required (YOU WILL NEED THE TEXTBOOK)

Toseland, Ronald W. and Rivas, Robert F. (2009). *An Introduction to Group Work Practice 8th ed.*. Needham Heights, MA. Allyn and Bacon.

Software Required: Access to MyLeo and MyLeo Apps such as D2L Brightspace, Gee Library Search Engine also word processing programs like MS Word or Google docs. Also Zoom platform.

Optional Texts and/or Materials: Other readings may be assigned throughout this course.

Course Description

This practice course teaches the application of social work skills to work with groups. Students will learn the dynamics of task and process groups and will learn how to apply a systematic approach to the development, implementation, termination, and evaluation

of groups. Prerequisites are Social Work 250, 275, 322, 328, 329, and 370. Concurrent enrollment: SWK 331, 348, and 350. Restricted to social work majors.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

This course focuses on group content that provides further knowledge of human behavior and social systems first presented in courses SWK 275 and SWK 322. The course further introduces students to professional values and ethics, particularly the NASW Code of Ethics that was first addressed in SWK 225, 250 and SWK 329.

PROGRAM GOALS:

1. Prepare students for competent and effective generalist social work practice with diverse client systems.
2. Provide students with a foundation of knowledge for professional development, graduate education and lifelong learning
3. Develop student capability to improve human service delivery systems and promote social justice
4. Socialize student to the profession of social work

CORE COMPETENCIES

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires a competency-based approach to identify and assess what students demonstrate in practice. In social work, this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. Students achieve programmatic goals listed above through demonstration of the following competencies for Advanced Generalist Practice (AGP). Students achieve programmatic goals listed above through demonstration of the following **bolded competencies** for Advanced Generalist Practice (AGP).

Competency 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

Competency 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice

Competency 2.1.3 Apply Critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

Competency 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice

Competency 2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

Competency 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Competency 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

Competency 2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance well-being and deliver services

Competency 2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice

Competency 2.1.10 (a)-(d) Engages, assesses, intervenes and evaluates individual, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Student Learning Outcomes (Practice Behaviors)

Each competency (outlined above) describes the knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes that comprise competency at the Advanced Generalist Practice (AGP) level. While content and activities of each course in the MSW curriculum covertly or overtly addresses each of the nine competencies, identified within each course is a set of specific practice behaviors representing observable components of one for more competencies. Content and Assessment in this course reflect the following practice behaviors:

2.1.1.5 Demonstrates professional demeanor in appearance, behavior and communication

2.1.1.6 Uses supervision and consultation effectively

2.1.10[c].2 Implement prevention interventions to enhance client capacities

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students are expected to be skilled at using and traversing D2L Brightspace, logging on to online chats software (e.g. Zoom), and have knowledge of MS Office programs (Word, Powerpoint, Excel, etc.) and other word processing software.

Instructional Methods

This class will be taught through a combination of face-to-face and virtual technology. This, however, may change depending CoVID-19 situation and University policy.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Student responsibilities are as follow:

- To understand the commitment that you have made to yourself and to this program upon admission, which is to learn the skills required to be an effective social worker
- To attend class regularly, of course, but also to be engaged, alert and committed to its purpose throughout the course and not let distractions interfere with the

learning process. This includes on camera and participating when class is being held virtually.

- To read the textbook as required per the schedule
- To complete assignments on a timely manner and within the standard and instructions set out in the syllabus and by the professor
- To reach out for help when in need of additional guidance
- To not wait until the end of the semester or the day of the deadline to reach out for such help
- To prioritize your education for the time that you are in the program

GRADING

GRADING:

Assignment #1 – Paper	100 points
Assignment #2 - Group Presentation	100 points
Mid Term Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
<u>Engagement</u>	<u>100 points</u>
TOTAL	500 points

A = 450-500 points

B = 399-449 points

C = 348-398 points

D = 297-347 points

F = 297 and below

Assessments

SWK 325 Assignments

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

All assignments will be submitted electronically to D2L Brightspace (unless stated otherwise). Late assignments will receive a penalty and will not be accepted 24 hours after the due date, unless exigent circumstances exist. Proof of these circumstances will be required. Exams must be taken on the stated day(s) and time. **There will be NO MAKE-UP exams** offered if you fail to take an exam by the stated deadline. You are expected to keep track of all due dates and complete/turn in work on time.

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment #1: Students will write a paper using a minimum of 3 Social Work journal articles related to working with groups (group treatment setting) on a social problem or same intervention. The three articles should have a common thread: either treating the same population or using the same intervention to treat different populations. See course schedule for due dates.

As part of this assignment, students will:

- Identify the group's social need/issue
- Identify the group population (age, race, gender, etc.)
- Identify type of group utilized
- Identify intervention theory implemented.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions.
- Include a short assessment/opinion of the journal articles.
- In the Conclusion portion, you must compare and contrast the three articles at length and discuss the differences and similarities and the most effective application of the intervention used or the population that was helped the most.
- Attach the social work articles with information used in the paper.

The paper should be at least five pages long, be in APA format, typed and double-spaced.

Assignment #2: Working in your assigned groups, prepare a class presentation on a selected group work method from assignment #1. There are two parts to this assignment: the presentation and the group activity. The presentation will describe the ideology and application of the method of group work selected. You may use Powerpoint (preferred) or a handout that explains the theory and ideology, as well as the preferred group for the selected treatment method, identify the population, type of group utilized, intervention to be implemented and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

For the second part of your presentation, you will lead the class in a simulated group activity that demonstrates the method of group work on which you have selected and reported on. See the course schedule for due dates. **YOU WILL BE GRADED AS A GROUP (NOT INDIVIDUALLY)**. All group members should be assigned specific tasks (a list stating who did what will be submitted to the professor the day of the presentation). All members are expected to contribute equally to the labor efforts. If there are any issues with group members they are to be brought to the attention of the professor. However, all students are expected to complete their work and conflict should be resolved at the lowest level possible.

ENGAGEMENT:

In order to meet the engagement portion of this course, you are required to be present in class face-to-face or virtually. If attending virtually, in order to get points for engagement, you must attend the whole class (not arrive later than 15 minutes or leave sooner than 15 minutes from the end of class) and have your camera turned on with you being present on camera (not pointed at the ceiling or at a table). You should also engage in interaction with the professor and with your classmates. There may be a need to conduct virtual group sessions and you will also be expected to actively participate in those.

EXAMINATIONS:

This class will have a midterm and final Exam. There are NO MAKE-UP Exams without exigent circumstances. See course schedule for dates.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Instructor will respond to email queries within 2 business days.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun.

Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

Engagement Policy

Final Evaluation and Grade Depends on both Classroom attendance and Participation

Inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment in each class significantly affects students' grades. No matter the course venue, students must engage in a comparable amount of time. Expectations of both Face-to-Face classes and those with Online components include time spent reading and studying course material.

To earn a level of competency within a specific course, students must demonstrate both mastery of content and active engagement.

Mastery of content areas is evidenced by successful completion of course assignments such as written papers, group project deliverables, tests/quizzes and other tangible products designed by instructors to evaluate knowledge and skills.

Additionally, the Social Work Profession is built upon human interactions and building human relationships – which is defined as engagement. Engagement is defined as meaningful involvement in interactions with instructor, peers, outside stakeholders as appropriate (such as contacting a social worker to interview for a required assignment). Within the classroom setting, whether virtual or F2F, students must actively participate in 80% of engagement activities as outlined by individual instructors. These activities can include participation in a live, synchronous virtual classes, attending a Face to Face course when appropriate, interacting with peers in posted discussions and collaborating in group interactive projects.

Students must meet standards for content mastery on tangible assignments and meet the threshold of active engagement 80% of the time during a semester. Instructors are experts in each course content area and set the standards for students to meet for successful completion of the course.

As we enter the Fall semester, we are all working under stresses and strains related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative we communicate consistently and frequently. If, for any reason, you are not able to complete assignments or actively engage in the course, you **MUST** reach out to your instructor and let him or her know.

Student Conduct

Students preparing to become professional social workers must adhere to the *University Code of Conduct*, *Department Code of Conduct* and *National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics*.

University Code of Conduct located in the *Student Guide Book* at

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campuslife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf> (pp 34- 66). On the University Website under Campus Life Documents

To become aware of University policies related to student academic and behavioral expectations for students refer to the Guidebook.

Department Code of Conduct

"Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class/lab/internship practicum or to block access to online courses and may refer offenses to the [Academic and Professional Issues Committee (API)] or to the Department Head. More serious offences by be referred to the University Police Department and/or the Judicial Affairs Office for disciplinary action" (Student Guidebook p 35)

Social Work students conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner.

Closely linked with professional recognition is the social worker's compliance with the profession's ethical standards. It is imperative for professional social workers to be competent and ethical in practice if the profession is to maintain the public trust. It is essential that each social work student gain a thorough understanding of the ethical principles that guide practice and actively demonstrate in behavior, both in and out of the classroom. Student conduct is to reflect the tenets of *NASW Code of Ethics*

(located at <https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>) on the NASW website:
<https://www.socialworkers.org>

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

TENTATIVE SPRING 2021 SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Course Events	Chapter	Notes
1	January 12	Introduction to Groups	1	
	January 14			
2	January 19	Historical and Theoretical Developments	2	
	January 21			
3	January 26	Understanding Group Dynamics	3	
	January 28			
4	February 2	Leadership	4	
	February 3			
5	February 9	Leadership and Diversity	5	
	February 11			
6	February 16	Planning the Group	6	
	February 18			
7	February 23			Paper due on D2L Brightspace
	February 25			
8	March 2	Midterm review		
	March 4	Midterm Exam		Midterm
9	March 9	The Group Begins	7	
	March 11			
10	March 16	Assessment	8	Group Pres.

	March 18			
11	March 23			Group Pres.
	March 25	Treatment Groups: Foundation Methods	9	
	March 30			Group Pres.
12	April 1	Treatment Groups: Specialized Method	10	
13	April 6			Group Pres.
		April 8	Ending the Group's Work	13
14	April 13	Group Pres.		
		April 15	Evaluation	14
15	April 20			
		April 22	Finals review	
16	April 26-30	Finals Week		