

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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SW 383R: Social Work Practice I

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to social work practice methodology and professional use of self from a generalist perspective for social work practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in conjunction with field education.

II. STANDARDIZATION OF COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the students will be able to:

1. Identify and begin to apply social work values and principles of ethical decision making as articulated by the [NASW Code of Ethics](#);
2. Demonstrate an understanding of professional use of self and awareness of personal values in the development and maintenance of purposeful, problem solving relationships with multiple levels of client systems, as well as cooperative and constructive relationships with agency staff, other professionals and community members;
3. Utilize professional communication skills, supervision and consultation in the effective and ethical provision of services to diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of organizational and community context on service delivery through the in depth analysis of the assigned field agency;

5. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical roots and major developments of the social work profession and its commitment to promote social and economic justice for populations at risk;
6. Systematically apply an eco-systems framework to engage client systems in identifying target systems and goals, and in analyzing, implementing and evaluating interventions that enhance client system strengths, capacities, assets and resources in relation to their environment;
7. Recognize the influence of socioeconomic status, age, developmental level, gender, culture, race, ethnicity, physical status, sexual orientation and spiritual beliefs on assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation at all levels of practice;
8. Demonstrate familiarity with basic concepts and methodology related to work with small groups in agency, organization and community settings;
9. Identify the importance of empirically based knowledge to evaluate and improve practice, policy and social service delivery.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This class will be taught using a variety of methods with an emphasis on experiential learning via an active learning-centered model. Teaching methods include role-plays and simulations, case examples, student presentations, videos, class discussions, small group interactions/learning activities, collegial consultation, lectures and guest lectures. To achieve success in learning in this course, you must be willing to participate, risk yourself, stretch your creativity, and be physically and mentally present in class! You are encouraged to ask questions as well as provide the professor with information and feedback throughout the semester to ensure your learning needs are being met.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Required:

Hepworth, D., Rooney, R., Rooney, G., Strom-Gottfried, K., Larson, J. (2016). *Direct Social Work Practice, Theories and Skills, 10e*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole, Inc.

Van Dernoot Lipsky, Laura (2009). *Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koelher Publishers.

Recommended:

Corcoran, K. & Roberts, A. (Ed.). (2015). *Social Workers' Desk Reference (3rd edition.)*. NY: Oxford University Press.

All required readings listed on the class schedule that are not found in the Hepworth/Rooney textbook will be available via Canvas by the second week of class. If readings are added to the reading list after the beginning of the class semester, you will be notified by the professor or teaching assistant generally via email and/or Canvas. Some readings may be provided in class.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Self-Assessment

To begin the practice of both self-evaluating and ongoing assessment, students are asked to examine their own histories, current personality development, and goals. This assignment begins the process of self-assessment as is required in professional use of self and also offers a beginning understanding of the process of assessment which will be an area of study during the Practice I course.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided. **(50 pts)** *Due 9/14*

Agency Analysis and Presentation

The agency analysis and presentation are designed to acquaint the student and classmates thoroughly with the student's field placement.

Objectives of the Assignment:

- a) Collect data in order to facilitate the interns' orientation and integration into the agency;
- b) Determine the social and economic issues addressed by agency programs;
- c) Assess the agency's accessibility for diverse client populations and overall cultural competence;
- d) Understand the policies that impact agency practice;
- e) Analyze the impact of the community context on the agency service delivery system;
- f) Identify the values and culture of the agency;
- g) Examine strengths and challenges of the agency; and
- h) Deliver an effective pitch for resources for the agency.

Emphasis on grading the presentation component of this assignment will be on creativity and engagement of the audience.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided. **(75 pts)** *Due 10/5*

Video Real Play

Each student will select a peer from class and video an interview with that student peer. The video will be reviewed by the professor and a review team, and feedback will be provided to the interviewer by all review team members. Each student will write a critique of his or her beginning interviewing skills based on the video real play, review of the recording, and the feedback provided by the review team.

The goals of this assignment are for students to:

- a) Gather and synthesize relevant data;
- b) Assess a client's present situation;
- c) Demonstrate professional communication skills; and
- d) Practice and receive feedback on relational skills, including the use of verbal and nonverbal social work skills to build rapport and gather relevant information.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided. **(75 pts)**

Video Review Sessions: 10/26 Paper Due: 11/2

Case Assessment

The term ‘case assessment’ refers to the process of collecting and critically evaluating a client’s biopsychosocial data, as well as to the report that describes the worker’s inferences and resulting intervention plan based on the data collected. You will write a case assessment based on work with a client in your field placement. The assessment should be concise yet comprehensive, demonstrating a clear knowledge of the assessment process based on practice experience, class lecture and learning, and guidelines and readings provided. The assessment paper should be written from a strengths perspective and should address cultural diversity and competency issues.

The goals of this assignment are to give students the opportunity to:

- a) Gather relevant client data;
- b) Practice engagement, relational, and interviewing skills;
- c) Assess a client’s past and present situations;
- d) Critically evaluate the material obtained; and
- e) Synthesize pertinent information into a professional report.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided. **(100 pts)** *Due: Final 12/7. A draft is due on 11/30 and will be used for purposes of discussion with and feedback from peers.*

Ethics Application

An assignment will be provided in class which will utilize readings and course material in order for students to analyze ethical dilemmas in client situations. This assignment will examine ethical knowledge, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving ability. **(50 pts.)**
Due 10/12

Class Participation

It is important to arrive at class on time, remain for the entire class, and be actively and meaningfully present for effective learning and demonstration of professional behavior. Because you are graduate-level social work students, it is expected that you will be able to participate on a deeper level in class discussions, taking healthy risks to work outside of your comfort zone. In order to receive the highest level of participation points, healthy risk-taking for increasing self-awareness and professional growth must be demonstrated. Participation points will be determined by attendance, level of interest, respect for others’ learning needs and contributions to classroom discussions and activities. Being prepared for class by reading assigned material is part of this professional expectation as well.
(50 pts)

Evaluation and Grading: All students will be awarded points based on the quality of their work. Assignments will not be given letter grades; instead, a number of points will be awarded for each assignment, leading to the cumulative grade for the semester.

Self Assessment	50 pts
Agency Analysis and Presentation	75 pts
Video Real Play	75 pts
Case Assessment	100 pts
Ethics Application	50 pts
Class Participation	50 pts
TOTAL =	400 points

FINAL GRADE

400-375 = A	279-270 = D+
374-360 = A-	269-256 = D
359-349 = B+	255-240 = D-
348-336 = B	240-0 = F
335-320 = B-	
319-310 = C+	
309-296 = C	
295-280 = C- (class failed, no credit)	

VI. CLASS POLICIES

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Information shared in class about agencies and clients is considered confidential according to the NASW Code of Ethics standards on the sharing of information for educational purposes. However, discussion outside of class with individuals not in the cohort regarding information shared in class about clients, supervisors or agencies is a breach of confidentiality. Breach of confidentiality is grounds for disciplinary action within the School and/or possible expulsion from the program.

Professional Accountability/Conduct in Class

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

Part of professional accountability includes treating others with respect and courtesy. Within the class this entails listening to the opinions and concerns of others with openness, offering suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner, and being willing to promote group cohesiveness in the learning environment. At no time may any part of any class or class-

related meeting be recorded in any way without expressed consent from all parties involved.

In the Practice I and Field I courses, the student is expected to bring any concerns directly to the professor on an individual basis, if the issue is not appropriate to be discussed in class. Students should be prepared to discuss the concern openly, demonstrate willingness to accept feedback, and offer possible solutions.

Use of Computers/Cell Phones in the Classroom

Practice I is a practice course, and class participation is essential to successful learning. Laptop computers are allowed in the classroom for note-taking during lecture only and for utilizing on-line readings. The computers must be put away during class discussion and role play.

Cell phones should be turned off when class begins and remain off throughout the duration of the class. Text-messaging is not allowed during class time unless special circumstances arise, about which the professor has been made aware. These are issues of professionalism and will incur disciplinary action if necessary.

Time Management

Assignments are due in class on the due date in hard copy. Papers turned in after class are considered late. Students will lose 5 points per calendar day that an assignment is late. On subsequent days, assignments must be submitted before 5:00 p.m. to avoid an additional 5 point penalty. Late papers will be accepted in hardcopy to the professor unless arrangements are made with the professor to utilize email.

Attendance

Attendance and participation for the full three hours of class and the additional hour of field seminar is expected for all students. After two absences, the student is responsible for scheduling an office visit with the professor to discuss issues affecting attendance and professionalism.

Participation Points will be deducted per absence in the following manner:

Absence 1: Zero points deducted

Absence 2: Six points deducted

Absence 3: Six points deducted

More than two absences may result in the student being dropped from Practice I and/or Field I. After two absences, it is expected that the student schedule a meeting with the professor to discuss a plan for improving attendance. Being on time for class is expected, and late arrivals will impact the student's class participation score. If a student is late for class on a consistent basis, a meeting with the professor can be expected to discuss a plan for improved timeliness.

Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other class experiential exercises are essential for the students' professional learning and continued development of self awareness. This form of learning cannot be "made up" once missed. Students will be expected to contact their peers to secure any missed notes or handouts. The student may schedule an office visit with the professor if he or she wishes to discuss missed classroom material in more detail. Missed material is the responsibility of the student.

Students are expected to notify the professor prior to class at the designated number if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency or if they are going to be late to class.

Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

APA Guidelines and Crediting Sources

When using information from other sources, references and bibliography should conform to current APA style. Instances of plagiarism will be dealt with according to University policy.

Writing Assignments

Students are expected to produce high quality written work in terms of clarity, appearance, writing style, and content. Points will be deducted for errors, misspellings, incorrect grammar and punctuation, poor organization, insufficient information, and inferior word processing. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the SSW Writing consultant who can be reached at dinittowritingconsultant@gmail.com.

Concerns about Grades

Students with concerns or questions about grades are invited to discuss these with the professor. The professor cannot consider grade revisions beyond two weeks after the assignment is returned to the student.

Students with concerns related to equitable distribution of work on a group project should first give the colleague in question a chance to address the concerns. Discussing the problem with your peer first is requested, using skillful and direct communication provided in a way that can be heard. If concerns remain, the student(s) is/are encouraged to approach the professor during the assignment's completion process, **before** the assignment is due, to discuss strategies for completing the assignment.

Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations *must* obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are hearing-impaired). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit

<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>. No accommodations can be provided without an official letter and a subsequent discussion with the professor about what needs are present and how these might emerge in this course.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently— daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

Email will be a frequently used mode of communication between the professor and students. All students are responsible for checking their email on a regular basis for class updates. Students are also responsible for alerting the professor about any changes to their email addresses. Students can use email to ask the professor questions between class meetings. However, a student will be expected to use sound professional judgment when deciding what is appropriate to discuss in email as opposed to scheduling an office appointment or visiting the professor during office hours.

Use of Class Materials

The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

Use of Canvas in Class

In this class the professor uses Canvas—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give students online quizzes and surveys. Students can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are concerned about the well being of a UT student or employee who may be acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns

about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Unanticipated Distress

Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/.

Title IX

Reporting In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Students who report incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct to faculty, instructors, and/or staff who supervise students, will be provided a list of University resources. If the incident is impacting the academic environment, a report will be provided to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may be found at <https://www.utexas.edu/student-affairs/policies/title-ix>.

Policy on Social Media and Professional Communication

Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, they must assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building.
Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topics	Assignment Due	Readings
	The Foundations of Social Work and Forming Relationships		
8/31	Course and Syllabus Review Perspective Learning Styles/Personality Styles Professionalism History of Social Work		

9/7	<p>Social Work Values and Ethics</p> <p>Generalist Practice</p> <p>Critical Thinking</p> <p>Agency Functioning and Social Work Roles</p> <p>Systems Theory and Ecological Theory</p>	Journal Due	<p>Hepworth: Chapters 1 and 2</p> <p>Canvas: Miley, O’Melia and Dubois, “Human System Perspectives”</p> <p>NASW Code of Ethics</p> <p>Lipsky: Intro and Chapter 1</p>
9/14	<p>Ethical Decision Making</p> <p>Professional Use of Self</p> <p>Confidentiality, Professional Boundaries</p> <p>The Helping Process</p>	<p>Self-Assessment Due</p> <p>Journal Due</p>	<p>Hepworth: Chapters 3 and 4</p> <p>Strom-Gottfried, “Ethical Decision-Making Models”</p> <p>Reamer, “Boundary Issues in Social Work: Managing Dual Relationships”</p> <p>Lipsky: Chapter 2</p>
9/21	<p>Interpersonal Communication</p> <p>Relationship Formation and Engagement</p> <p>Relational Skills Building</p> <p>Organizational Relationships and Analysis</p>	Journal Due	<p>Lipsky: Chapter 3, 4</p> <p>Hepworth: Chapters 5 (pages 89-100) and 6</p> <p>Canvas: Gerdes and Segal, “Importance of Empathy...”</p>

	Assessment and Change		
9/28	Guest Lecturer: Elaine Cavazos, LCSW Mindfulness in Social Work Practice (and more)	Journal Due	TBD
10/5	Assessment Process and Product Multidimensional Skills Building	Agency Analysis Presentations /Paper Due Journal Due	Hepworth: Chapters 8, 9 Canvas: Saleeby, “The Power of Place” SWDR: Austrian, “Guidelines for Conducting a Biopsychosocial Assessment” Lipsky: Chapters 5, 6
10/12	Strengths-Based Practice Goals, Planning and Contracting Problem Solving Process	Journal Due Ethics Application in Class	Hepworth: Chapter 12 (pages 327-355) SWDR: Garvin, “Developing Goals” Canvas: Glicken, Chapter 4
10/19	Working with Groups Group Facilitation Skills Process and Content	Journal Due Process Recording #1 due	Lipsky: Chapter 7 See Canvas for Readings

10/26	Video Reviews – Full Class Does Not Meet Together	Journal Due	Lipsky: Chapters 8-10
11/2	Special Event: Conference Attendance/Assistance Clinical Supervision Conference	Journal Due Real Play Reflective Paper Due	

	Managing the Complexities of Client Relationships and Endings		
11/9	Case Management Advocacy Transtheoretical Model Motivational Interviewing	Journal Due Process Recording #2 due	SWDR: Rothman, “An Overview of Case Management.” Canvas: McLaughlin, “Clinical Social Workers: Advocates for Social Justice” DiClemente and Velasquez, “Motivational Interviewing and the Stages of Change”,
11/16	Cultural Competence Transference and Countertransference Values, Ethics, and My Professional Use of Self Deeper Exploration of Self in Professional Practice	Journal Due	Hepworth: Chapter 18 SWDR: Miller and Garran, “The Legacy of Racism for Social Work Practice Today and What to Do About It.” Canvas: Tervalon

			and Murray-Garcia, “Cultural Humility versus Cultural Competence” Canvas: Dewane, “Use of Self: A Primer Revisited”
11/23	Thanksgiving Holiday – Have a great break!	Journal Due Case Assessment Draft Due	
11/30	Barriers in Working with Clients Termination	Journal Due Process Recording #3 due	Hepworth: Chapter 19 Canvas: Schnitzer, “They don’t come in...” and Shulman, “Endings and Transitions”
12/7	Professional Self Care Our Cohort’s Fall Ending	Case Assessment Due Final Journal Due	Lipsky: Chaps. 11-12 Canvas: Professional Self Care

VIII. Bibliography

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