

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Generalist Social Work Practice: Skills, Knowledge, & Values  
(Required Course – BSW Program)**

<b>Course Number:</b> SW 312	<b>Instructor:</b> Sharon Lee, LCSW
<b>Unique number:</b> 61560	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:snl225@utexas.edu">snl225@utexas.edu</a>
<b>Semester:</b> Spring 2015	<b>Office Room:</b> 3.112 (doctoral lounge)
<b>Meeting Time:</b> M/W 9:30am-11:00 am	<b>Office Hours:</b> Wednesdays 11:30-2:00 pm or via appointment
<b>Meeting Place:</b> SSW 2.112	

### 1. STANDARLIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the first course in the practice methods sequence, in which students are introduced to the fundamental values and ethics, skills, and knowledge relevant to generalist social work practice. Areas covered include the NASW Code of Ethics and Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice; the development of observation, communication, interviewing and assessment skills utilizing the problem-solving approach. Experiential learning is emphasized, including a **45-hour service learning component** in which students have direct client contact.

### 2. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

**EP 2.1.1-Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. (PB)**

Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development, including attending to professional roles and boundaries. (PB) Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.

**EP 2.1.2-Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. (PB) Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide work. (PB) Make ethical decisions by applying strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.**

**EP 2.1.3-Apply critical thinking in practice. (PB)** Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice. (PB) Demonstrate effective oral and written communications

**EP 2.1.4- Incorporate and enhance diversity and difference in practice. (PB)** Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values shape life experiences as well as oppress. (PB) View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

**EP 2.1.5-Advocate for and advance human rights and social and economic justice. (PB)** Identify forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination. (PB) Articulate how to engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

**EP 2.1.6-Utilize research processes to inform practice.** (PB0 Recognize how practice experience informs scientific inquiry. (PB) Recognize how research evidence informs practice.

**EP 2.1.7-Utilize and apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.**

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Explain the major dimensions of generalist social work practice and the planned change/problem-solving process with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
2. Apply Social Work knowledge, values, and skills to their participation in the learning environment.
3. Demonstrate skills in observation, communication, interviewing, assessment and problem solving.
4. Demonstrate the ability to differentially use basic social work skills to reflect the needs of clients of diverse groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, class, gender, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical or mental abilities, and national origin.
5. Identify ethical issues and recognize when client, societal, and/or personal values conflict emphasizing understanding, affirmation and respect for human diversity and social justice in the practice of social work.

### 3. TEACHING METHOD

This class uses a seminar format. This course is designed to provide you with a meaningful learning environment through use of multiple methods of instruction (e.g. discussion, lecture, and group exercises); experiential learning (e.g. service learning, role playing, & active learning) will be emphasized. You are expected to complete assigned readings prior to each class period. You are expected to participate in class. Class attendance and participation is required and essential for successful completion of this course. This course will use an electronic Canvas site. Canvas will be used for communication between students, the instructor, and the TA. Some materials, grades, and attendance will also be posted online. To reach your class site on Canvas, please go to <http://courses.utexas.edu> or go to the Social Work web page and click on Canvas. To access the course website, you must have an internet connection and computer access. You will need a UT EID and password. The Help Desk available through the UT home page ([www.utexas.edu/its/help](http://www.utexas.edu/its/help)) can assist you with your computer and Canvas questions. You can also call them at 475-9400. Additionally, the Learning Resource Center at the SSW has computers and computer assistance.

### 4. REQUIRED TEXT

Birkenmaier, J., Berg-Weger, M., & Dewees, M. P. (2013). *The Practice of Generalist Social Work, Third Edition* (3 edition.). Routledge.

### 5. REQUIRED COURSE WORK

Service Learning Experience (SLE):	40 points
Group project presentation:	20 points
Final exam:	30 points
Class attendance & participation:	<u>10 points</u>
	100 points

## 6. COURSE POLICIES

**1. Conduct and Civility:** Social work students adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their conduct. Scholastic honesty and integrity are to be consistent social work values. The instructor will comply with University guidelines regarding scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Social work practitioners respect others; therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected. Students will help create and support a learning environment that does not interfere with the learning of fellow students.

**2. Readings and Preparatory Assignments:** Students are expected to be active participants in the classroom community. Students are also expected to complete readings and preparatory assignments prior to class. Failure to demonstrate comprehension of the readings will be considered when assigning the final grade. Students are responsible for the material in the assigned readings whether or not the material is covered in class. Professor reserves the right to conduct quizzes should there be a pattern of students not demonstrating that they have completed the readings and are not prepared to engage in thoughtful discussion. Failure to submit a paper or being unprepared to discuss your paper or reading for the week will result in a grade of zero being recorded for that week's work.

**3. Class Attendance Policy:** Punctuality and timeliness are important for social work practitioners. Class attendance is required at all in-class sessions for the entire class period. It is your responsibility to sign the weekly attendance sheet. Attendance may be checked. The instructor should be notified in advance of any planned absence and as soon as possible in the case of an unforeseen, serious emergency. More than three unexcused absences may result in not passing this class.

**4. Professional Communication and Interactions:** Refrain from private conversations during class or other disruptive behavior. Class participation is required. Speak up and contribute to class. Disrespectful behavior is against the University Honor Code and will not be tolerated.

**5. Assignments and Grades:** Assignments should be turned on the date they are due at the start of class (by 9:30 am), barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have a legitimate and documented emergency. If this is the case, please discuss the situation with this instructor. These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. There is no guarantee that I will extend a due date. If accepted, late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of five (5)% each day late.

**6. Writing Style:** The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Sixth Edition (APA) is the style manual to be used by all students.

**7. Use of Canvas:** The instructor uses Canvas; a Web-based course management /collective workspace. If you do not have a personal computer with personal Internet access, there are computers available for your use at the SW Learning Resource Center (LRC), the Flawn Academic Center, campus and public libraries.

**8. Course Modification:** To ensure achievement for course objectives, the professor reserves the right to make modifications to any part of this syllabus related to schedule and assignment due dates. Should any modifications be made, students will be notified in class and modifications will also be posted to Canvas. Students should check their email and Canvas frequently. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on the Internet may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

## 7. UNIVERSITY NOTICES AND POLICIES

**1. 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.

**2. Professional 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 sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism. **Please do not use laptops, cell phones, text messaging or send or read emails during class.**

**3. Classroom Civility:** A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues.

**4. 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 instructor. The instructor 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 can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at [512-471-3515](tel:512-471-3515) or online at [www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/](http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/).

**5. 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, please 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 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.

**6.Scholastic dishonesty:** While scholastic dishonesty is not anticipated, students should be familiar with The University of Texas at Austin's policy on this subject found in *General Information 2004-2005*. If you do not know an appropriate referencing style, now is the time to learn. Be especially careful about giving due credit to other authors in writing your papers. Be sure to indent direct quotes of 5 lines or more; use quotation marks for shorter, direct quotes; and also give due credit for indirect quotes. Failure to do so will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Scholastic dishonesty in this class may result in a grade of F for the course and reporting to the Undergraduate Program Director, Dean of the School of Social Work or the school/college in which you are enrolled, and Dean of Students or Dean of Graduate Studies. 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, refer to the web site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs>).

**7. 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.

**8. 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 deaf or hard of hearing). 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/>.

**9.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.

**10.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>.

**When emailing please include SW 312 in your subject line.**

**11.Safety:** As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community or attending meetings or events at off-campus locations. 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 practice related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

**12.Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL):** If students are worried about someone who is 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>.

**13.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.

## 8. EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTOR

Students will have two opportunities to evaluate the instructor. At mid-term, I will use my own form for obtaining your views on the course to date, and at the end of the term, I will use the official Course Instructor Survey (CIS) of the University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work. Completion of these evaluations is, of course, voluntary, but they are helpful to the instructor. I am also available during office hours and at other mutually agreeable times to discuss the course with you.

## 9. COURSE AGENDA

This schedule is intended as a guide. Students should complete the readings as they are outlined, in order to space them evenly throughout the semester. This is especially important since the exams will cover the required readings for that period of time. ***The student is responsible for all readings whether the material is covered as lecture material or not.***

\* Extra credit: If you have read the syllabus, please email this instructor by 1/26 Monday 11:59 pm to receive extra credit (1 point of total grade).

### Course Grading:

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C

70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

**10.DETAILED COURSE SCHEDULE**

Wk	Date	Topic	Readings * See Canvas	Due
1	M 1/21	Introductions Review syllabus		
2	M 1/26	Review class assignments (Service Learning Experience (SLE), Group case project) Canvas orientation		
	W 1/28	Understanding general social work practice	Ch 1., pp 1-11	
3	M 2/2	Human services perspectives: Ecosystems, Strengths, & Human services	Ch 1., 24-36	<b>SLE Agency form (form1); SLE Educational contract</b>
	W 2/4	Values and ethics in social work practice I	Ch 2., pp 39-64	<b>Group assignment submission form (end of class)</b>
4	M 2/9	Values and ethics in social work practice II		
	W 2/11	Boundaries	*	
5	M 2/16	Process: Engagement	Ch 3., pp 67-99	
	W 2/18			
6	M 2/23	Process: Assessment I	Ch 4., 103-133	<b>SLE Reflection paper #1 (submit via Canvas)</b>
	W 2/25			
7	M 3/2	Process: Assessment II	Ch 4., 103-133	
	W 3/4			
8	M 3/9	Process: Intervention I	Ch 5., pp 173-201	
	W 3/11			
9	M 3/16	<i>No class: Spring break</i>		

	W 3/18			
10	M 3/23	Self-care	*	
	W 3/25			
11	M 3/30	Process: Intervention II	Ch 5., pp 173-201	<b>SLE Self-care plan</b>
	W 4/1			
12	M 4/6	Process: Termination	Ch 5., pp 208-232	
	W 4/8			
13	M 4/13	Working with families	Ch 6., 235-281	
	W 4/15		Ch 7., 285-321	
14	M 4/20	Working with groups/organizations	Ch 12, pp 494-521	<b>SLE Reflection paper #2 (submit via Canvas)</b>
	W 4/22	<i>No class: Group project day</i>		
15	M 4/27	<b>Group project presentations</b>		
	W 4/29	<b>Group project presentations</b>		
16	M 5/4	Final exam review		<b>SLE 45hr log (form2); SLE Student evaluation (form3); SLE Agency evaluation (form4)</b>
	M 5/6	Last day of class: <b>Final Exam</b>		

### 11.REQUIRED COURSEWORK CHECKLIST

Assignments	Points	Due date	Check
SLE Agency form (form1)	C/I	M 2/2	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE Educational contract	5	M 2/2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group assignment submission	C/I	W 2/4	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE Reflection paper #1	10	M 2/23	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE Self-care plan	5	M 3/30	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE Reflection paper #2	10	M 4/20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group project presentations	20	M 4/27 or W 4/29	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE 45hr log form (form2)	10	M 5/4	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE Student evaluation (form3)	C/I	M 5/4	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLE Agency evaluation (form4)	C/I	M 5/4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Final Exam	30	W 5/6	<input type="checkbox"/>



