THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work Practice Organizations and Communities -SW 334-

Course Number: SW 334 Instructor's Name Steve McKee, MSSW, LCSW

Unique Number: 63285 **Office Number:** SSW 3.104A

Semester: Spring 2013 **Phone:** 232-0641

Meeting Time/ T-Th 12:30-2:00 Email Address: sdmckee@austin.utexas.edu

Classroom: SSW 2.116 Office Hours: By appointment

I. Course Description

This course examines the organizational context within which social services are delivered: how funding, mandate, and organizational arrangements influence service delivery, and factors to consider in efforts to modify existing organizational arrangements. The course emphasizes the interlocking and complex nature of culture and personal identity with content on populations-at-risk, examining the factors that contribute to and constitute being at risk. It introduces the student to the obligation that social services meet the needs of groups served and are culturally relevant. This includes equipping students with skills to recognize diversity within and between groups that may influence assessment, planning, intervention, and research. Students learn how to define, design, and implement strategies for effective practice with persons from diverse backgrounds. The course also includes an overview of the development of the community in America and the interaction between communities and service organizations. Attention is given to particular elements of organizational and community dynamics affecting diverse gender and ethnic groups.

II. Course Objectives – please refer to p. 13 for further description (By the end of the course the student should be:)

- 1. Familiar with the major concepts and dynamics of formal organizations and their influence on social work practice; (PB11, 27)
- 2. Familiar with the impact of the organizational mandate, funding sources, and other constituencies on problem definitions and goal formulation; (PB27)
- 3. Able to identify major concepts in organizational theories and to explain how such concepts relate to social work practiced at individual, family, organizational, and community levels, each as a focus of social work practice; (PB11, 27)
- 4. Familiar with the influence of community norms, priorities, and competitive community factions on the definition of problem/need and resource allocation for the delivery of social services; (PB12, 27)
- 5. Familiar with relevant cultures and how culture shapes individual lives and community processes. (PB 12, 27)
- 6. Able to understanding mezzo and macro economic events and how these events impact individual and community welfare (PB27, 28)

- 7. Familiar with the involvement of lay citizen groups as staff supplement and as a potential strategy for change; (PB11, 27, 28)
- 8. Familiar with information about special service populations and the participation of such populations in professional settings and community organizations; (PB12, 27)
- 9. Familiar with basic planning approaches, their advantages, and disadvantages and be able to utilize an empirical approach and associated tools to gather and analyze data to describe populations and communities and design service programs (PB12, 28).

III. Teaching Methods

The Instructor incorporates a variety of teaching methods including interactive lectures, experiential group activities, reading assignments, case studies and audiovisual material to help students understand social work practice with organizations and communities. Students are expected to contribute to their own learning through asking questions, sharing experiences and actively participating in class discussions.

IV. Required Texts and Materials

Kirst-Ashman, K. K. & Hull, G. H. Jr. (2012). *Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities*. **5**th Edition. Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishers.

The Instructor will assign additional reading to supplement the text. Supplemental articles are posted to Blackboard and may also be referenced in a bibliography attached to this Syllabus.

V. Course Requirements

Course requirements consist of four written exams, an assessment of an organization or community initiative (paper), and a team (small group) assignment. Students will be evaluated on these required assignments as well as class participation and contribution. The Instructor MAY offer one or more assignments for extra credit, i.e. attendance at a professional workshop addressing course content; or critical analysis of a selected paper, web article, op-ed piece, or video that describes an approach to organization and/or community practice.

1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (10 points)

Students are expected to attend all classes, to arrive on time, and to come prepared to participate meaningfully in class discussion, small group activities and assignments. Students are expected to call upon relevant experiences and course readings for contributions. A portion of the grade for this course will depend on your level of attendance, preparation, participation, and contribution. For some, this means learning to speak up, to add comments or to raise questions. For others, it means being sensitive and allowing others to contribute.

2. Exams

Each exam is worth 15% of your final grade. Exams will draw heavily from the readings, lectures and class discussions. Format for exams may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Only in the case of documented illness or other unforeseen emergency will make-up exams be given. The format of make-up exams is at the discretion of the instructor.

 Exam #1 (15 points)
 January 31, 2013

 Exam #2 (15 points)
 February 21, 2013

 Exam #3 (15 points)
 March 26, 2013

 Exam #4 (15 points)
 April 16, 2013

3. Individual Paper (20 points)

April 23, 2013 (Paper due)

4. Team Project (10 points)

In this integrated individual paper/team project assignment, students will work in teams to assess the impact of specific organizations and/or community coalitions on a social problem/issue. Students will individually conduct an assessment and evaluation of an organization/coalition currently active in addressing a social issue in the greater Austin area and write up the results in a 10-12 page double spaced written report (20%). Students will then integrate their reports with those of other team members to prepare an in-class presentation (10%) that reports the key findings from the individual assessments (papers) and that evaluates the collective organizations' efforts to impact the social issue. This syllabus includes guidelines for this assignment and the Instructor will review these the second week of class.

Grading Policy/Grading criteria:

To receive an "A" in this course you must have excellent attendance and participation, and you must produce work that is of exceptional quality.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

94-100 points	A (excellent)
90–93 points	A- (very good)
87-89 points	B+ (well above average)
84 -86 points	B (above average)
80–83 points	B- (slightly above average)

Work earning grades of B+ and B generally <u>exceeds</u> assignment/performance expectations; demonstrates varying degrees of in-depth critical thinking and analysis that resulted in work additional to that laid out in the assignment directions (i.e., coherence and integration of ideas);

Work earning grades of C+, C and C- may substantially to minimally meet requirements, have minor to more significant gaps, and lack evidence of in depth thinking and analysis. Social Work majors must make a grade of C- or above to avoid having to repeat the course.

67-69 points D+ (below average)
64-66 points D
60-63 points D-

Grades in the D range reflect work that has important gaps in the assignment both in terms of not meeting the requirements and lacking critical thinking and analysis.

59 points or below

F

Papers, responses to essay questions, and presentations awarded the highest grades include the following elements:

- Evidence of independent, critical thinking
- Citations of research from peer-reviewed professional journals and from recent books
- Integration of material from lectures and course readings

Papers must be typewritten in 12pt font, double-spaced, proofread for spelling and grammatical errors, and must follow the APA style format.

VI. Class Policies

1. <u>Attendance</u>. It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Students anticipating being absent from class for a legitimate reason (illness, family emergency) should notify the Instructor in advance by e-mail. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than two classes without a valid excuse, e.g., medical documentation) will be subject to having their <u>final</u> grade lowered by one point for each class missed beyond the second unexcused absence. In extenuating circumstances of absence, students are to notify the Instructor. Students are responsible for any material missed due to absences. Any student missing more than 3 classes (excused or unexcused) may be in jeopardy of not passing this course.

<u>Policy on Absence for Religious Holidays</u>: By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the assignment. If accepted, late assignments 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.

- 2. <u>Late Assignments</u>. All assignments must be turned in on the due date and must be submitted at the <u>beginning</u> of the class period. Changes in work schedules, personal celebrations, transportation problems, computer/printing problems, etc. are not considered legitimate reasons for missing and late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of three (3) points each day late. Any legitimate adjustments in due dates must be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled due date.
- 3. <u>The University of Texas Honor Code</u>. 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.

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/).

- 4. <u>APA</u>. The School of Social Work uniformly requires APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Information on APA style and format can also be found at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) in the School of Social Work.
- 5. <u>Mutual Learning</u>. The Instructor welcomes feedback about the course and the course will be viewed as a mutual learning process between students and the Instructor. Students are encouraged to request and to provide feedback during office hours, by phone, by e-mail, and by appointment if they desire. The Instructor also utilizes a mid-course evaluation to gain student feedback. PLEASE schedule office appointments with me if you have concerns about your performance in the course, or if you have specific learning needs or challenges that I can address to strengthen your participation and learning in the course.
- 6. <u>Class Participation and Ethics</u>. Social work practitioners strive to respect the values, ideas and opinions of others. Students are expected to participate actively in class, and to develop critical thinking skills through openly examining the theory, values, and evidence basis for the various opinions and points of view expressed by the Instructor and class colleagues. Professionalism as well as common courtesy and respect should be practiced during class discussions and guest presentations/ lectures. Obviously, there is no place for discrimination, harassment, and/or intimidation and any use of these behaviors may be grounds for dismissal from the course.

Please demonstrate professionalism and respect for others by observing the following:

- Arrive in class on time having read the assignments and ready to participate in discussion;
- Turn off and put away all cell phones, laptops, MP3 players and other electronic devices;
- Pay attention, participate, and refrain from side conversations or dozing off during class.

Some material provided in the class may be of a confidential nature since part of the material will involve examination of ongoing human service organizations. Therefore, all class participants must observe strict rules of professional conduct including treating all information about current human service organizations as confidential, not to be discussed with anyone other than classmates or the Instructor.

7. <u>Safety</u>. 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 Instructor regarding any safety concerns.

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/.

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Description	Text/Readings
Week 1 01/15/2013	 Introduction to course and to colleagues Academic/professional biographies and learning objectives Course Syllabus 	Syllabus
01/17	Introduction to Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities	Kirst-Ashman and Hull, Chapter 1 pp. 13- 15 Values and Ethics & HL 1.2; p. 21 HL 1.5; pp. 29-31; pp. 35 – 40 Summary, (may skip HL 1.8)
Week 2 01/22 01/24	 Individual paper/group assignment guidelines and overview of issue areas and Austin-area health and human services agencies Using Micro Skills in the Macro Environment 	Read assignment guidelines and Vision, Mission and Values article/handout Kirst-Ashman and
	Practice exercise	Hull, Chapter 2
Week 3 01/29	Group Skills for Organizational and Community Change; Audiotape/exercise (The Skilled Facilitator, Roger Schwarz)	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 3 pp. 87-90; 98-106; HL3.5; 112- 122; Schwarz, Groundrules for Effective Group
01/31	• Exam 1	Facilitation.
Week 4 02/05	Understanding Organizations 1	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 4, pp. 125-135; 142-145; HL 4.2, 4.3; pp. 150-161; HL 4.6; 165-169; 172-182.
02/07	 Understanding Organizations 2: Trends in the sector; Developing and Managing Agency Resources Guest Lecturer: 	Farruggia: How is the Nonprofit Sector Changing? Kirst- Ashman & Hull, Ch. 14, pp. 527-550.
		Selection Of Groups/Issue Areas And Agencies For Individual Papers

Week 10 03/19 03/21	 Debrief Blackland Tour (Analysis of model, class exercise). Evaluating Macro Practice 	Kirst-Ashman & Hull,
Week 9	-SPRING BREAK-	
		http://www.main.org/bl acklandcdc/
03/07	Tour Blackland Community Development: Specific readings and directions to site will be provided in advance.	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 9, pp. 302 – 321;
Week 8 03/05	Macro Practice in Communities	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 9, pp. 281 – 302
02/28	Understanding Neighborhoods and Communities	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 8
Week 7 02/26	Project Workday: Using assessment tools, understanding and evaluating strategic plans, assessing organization financial performance	SWOT, Peter F. Drucker Assessment, Wilder Nonprofit Lifestages Assessment. Sample agency strategic plans/budgets
02/19 02/21	Development EXAM 2	Chapter 7
Week 6	Project Implementation and Program	Kirst-Ashman & Hull,
02/14	Implementing Macro level Interventions and Facilitating Organizational Change: Understanding and applying the "IMAGINE" model to effect change.	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 6
Week 5 02/12	Decision-making for Organizational Change Understanding and applying the "PREPARE" model to potential macro interventions	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 5

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Week 11 03/26	• EXAM 3	
03/28	Advocacy and Social Action with Populations at Risk/Saul Alinsky Video	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 11 (selected)
Week 11 04/02 04/04	 Social marketing Ethics and Ethical Dilemmas in Macro Practice Case analyses, exercises 	Ch. 12, Hardcastle and Powers Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 12
Week 12 04/09	Macro practice and social innovation – The Nobelity Project - Guest Lecturer	Readings to be assigned
04/11	Stress and Time Management Class exercise: Holmes and Rahe: Life Events Scale	Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 15: Wounded Healers, Maeder
Week 13 04/16 04/18	EXAM 4 Team Project Workday and in-class consultations	
Week 14 04/23	 Group Presentations 1 & 2 INDIVIDUAL PAPERS DUE 	
04/25	Group Presentations 3 &4	
Week 15 04/30	 Instructor/Course Evaluations Group Presentations 5 & 6 	
05/02/13	• Group Presentations 7&8 FINAL CLASS DAY – HAVE A SAFE SUMMER!	

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Individual Paper and Team Project

During the first weeks of this course we read about social work practice with organizations and communities. We gain knowledge of micro skills and group skills that are necessary tools for effective intervention in macro systems. We examine different organizational theories; learn to think about organizations systemically; and to identify the major components of organizations. We gain familiarity with these concepts through discussion of case examples in the classroom. Throughout, we stress the importance of critical thinking skills in assessing and evaluating organizations and communities.

When you enter professional practice you will likely work both with and within organizations and communities. Some of this will involve working on teams, committees, boards and various community associations that are working toward solutions to major community social problems.

In this assignment, students will work in teams look at the goals and effectiveness of identified organizations and community coalitions that are working to address specific social issues in Central Texas. To accomplish this, students will individually conduct an assessment and evaluation of one organization/coalition currently active in Central Texas. Individuals/teams can identify organizations of their own (with approval from the instructor) or select from an approved list provided by the instructor.

In selecting the organization/coalition, the students should make sure that it is currently working to address a problem/issue specific to Austin/Central Texas and has been established and active long enough to understand how it has evolved and changed over time.

This project is worth 30% of your course grade. It will involve two parts: a 10-12-page double-spaced written report (20%) and an in-class presentation (10%).

Framing the assignment

Teams will be formed based on individual student interests in specific issue areas and organizations/ coalitions working to impact them. Once formed, your team has been contracted by the Pew Charitable Trusts, a national foundation that conducts research on social policy, to study community strategies to address health and human services issues in Austin/Central Texas. Pew has also contracted with teams in several other U.S. cities and will be looking for best practices and promising approaches to addressing specific social problems. Your team will examine an issue area and those specific organizations/ coalitions working to impact it. Each team member will be responsible for evaluating one organization/ coalition and writing your findings in a 10-12-page paper per the outline below. **During the process of collecting information and writing your findings, the team will meet to begin discussing how the individual organizations are collectively impacting the problem**. Your team will prepare a 20-25-minute presentation to the class (class will play role of Senior Researchers from Pew) that summarizes the individual organization assessments and that analyzes their collective impact on the specific issue area. The Instructor will provide an outline for the team presentations during the second week of class.

1. Individual paper – organization/coalition assessment: Each team member will produce a written report that includes a title page, acknowledgments (if appropriate), an executive summary, the body of the report, and a bibliography. The final report should be well organized, concisely written, neatly presented, and follow the APA style. Please refer to the course syllabus for specific guidelines for preparing papers. The body of the report should include the following sections:

Mission and goals: Identify the organization's vision, mission, values statements (if available), and goals. In your assessment are its goals aligned with its mission and vision?

History: Briefly describe the history of the organization and list its major accomplishments. How has the larger community shaped the organization and how has the organization contributed to changes in the larger community. How has the organization evolved or changed over time? Does it use different strategies and tactics now than it did when it first started? Why?

Theory of change: Most organizations like this are guided by a "theory of change." That is, a theoretical model that specifies the assumed cause-effect relationship between the conditions bring addressed, the nature of the intervention, and the expected outcomes of their activities. Sometime this theory is clearly articulated. More often it is implied. Based on your assessment, how would you define the "theory of change" that guides this organization's work? How do its recent activities align with its "theory of change" philosophy?

Structure and leadership: Describe the structure (include an organizational chart) and leadership of the organization.

- What is the governance structure? Describe the board and its committees and if possible review minutes of recent meetings to determine if the board is active, has clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and identifies and acts upon major strategic policy decisions.
- How would you define the management style (refer to readings.)? Identify the positions involved in major decision-making and programmatic implementation and evaluation.

Programs/services: What are the strategies (programs, services) that the organization has developed to meet its overall mission and goals, and the specifically issue that your team is addressing? Briefly describe: the service, how it aligns with (or doesn't align with) the goals, how it is staffed, and its outputs.

Constituents: What constituencies (client populations, target communities, specific conditions) are served by the organization/program and what are the limits of that service (geographic, severity of need, eligibility guidelines, etc.)? Identify the allies or strategic partners of the organization.

Funds development: How does the organization finance its activities and what percentage of the revenue budget comes from the each following:

1) Governmental grants and contracts, 2) Private foundations and corporations, 3) Individual contributions and fundraising special events, and 4) Earned income (fees for service).

(You may want to insert a summary spreadsheet that shows the revenue budget).

Is the organization engaged in entrepreneurial activities or ventures that produce earned income? How would you evaluate the overall business planning capacity and financial stability of the organization?

Marketing and public awareness activities: How does the organization make its constituencies aware of it mission and services? Does the group have a marketing plan and how is it implemented.

Overall assessment: This is where you can show the depth of your understanding of the organization, and put forth an analysis based upon critical thinking skills and knowledge gained through the course. Think first about the outcomes that really matter, and that would demonstrate that the organization is really making a difference in the lives of people and the community problem that it is attempting to impact. What evidence exists that the organization is effective in achieving these outcomes for clients?

What recommendations might you offer to help the organization move successfully into the future, and to be even more competitive for support from public and private funders?

2. Presentation: Each group will present their project to the class during the final weeks of class. The presentation will follow an outline to be provided the second week of class and may include overhead projection, PowerPoint, graphs, charts, pictures, audio, slides, videos, posters, web pages, and/or class activities. Each team will have 20-25 minutes to make their presentation so it will need to be focused and well organized. Each presentation will end with the group's overall assessment of the organizations' effectiveness in addressing the identified issue area. Time for questions and answers will follow.

Grading: This assignment is worth 30% of the final course grade. Each student will be graded independently on the paper (20%) and the group will be graded on the class presentation (10%).

IMPORTANT: Meet periodically as a group to discuss progress, and schedule time with the course instructor when you want to discuss questions or desire consultation.

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Bibliography

Some additional assigned readings will come from the articles below, and other sources, which will be posted on Blackboard:

Austin, James E. and Hesselbein, Frances. The Collaboration Challenge. Josey Bass Publishers, 2000.

Bridges, William. Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change. Perseus Press, 1991.

<u>The Drucker Foundation Self-Assessment Tool: Participant Workbook</u>, a publication of the Drucker Foundation and Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers. Copyright © 1999 by The Peter F. Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management.

Farruggia, G. How Is the Nonprofit Sector Changing? Futures Research Quarterly, 2007

Fogg, C. Davis. Team-Based Strategic Planning: A Complete Guide to Structuring, Facilitating and Implementing the Process. American Management Association, 1994

Goldsmith, Marshall; Lyons, Laurence and Freas, Alyssa. Coaching for Leadership. Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Hardcastle, David A., and Powers, Patricia R., Community Practice: Theories and Skills for Social Workers. Oxford University Press, 2004.

Marsh, J.C. 2003. To thine own ethics code be true. Social Work, 4(5), 5-7.

Munro, E. (2002). The role of theory in social work research: A further contribution to the debate. Journal of Social Work Education, 38(3), 461-470.

Napier, Rod; Sanaghan, Patrick; Sidle, Clint; et al. <u>High Impact Tools and Activities for Strategic Planning: Creative Techniques for Facilitating Your Organization's Planning Process.</u> McGraw-Hill Professional Publishing, 1997

NASW Code of Ethics http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp

Schwarz, Roger. The Skilled Facilitator. Josey Bass, 2004.

Simon, Judith Sharken. Conducting Successful Focus Groups. Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1999.

Simon, Judith Sharken with Donovan, Terrence. <u>The Five Life Stages of Non-Profit Organizations</u>. Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 2001.

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The School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, we engage in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Several required courses in our curriculum are part of this ongoing assessment, including this course. Below is a list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

EP2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

PB11 Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom

Objectives 1, 3, 7

Assignment: Exam 1; Exam 2; Case analyses, individual paper/team project

PB12 Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation

Objectives 4, 5, 8, 9

Assignment: Individual paper/team project, class discussion, Case analyses, Exam 1, Exam 2

PB13 Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues

Objectives (not specified)

Assignment: Exam 1; class exercises, individual paper/group project

EP2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.

PB27 Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services

Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Assignment: Exams 1 & 2; case analyses; individual paper/group project

PB28 Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services

Objectives 6, 7, 9

Assignment: Group project; class exercises/case analyses