

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

<b>Course Number:</b> SW 334	<b>Instructor's Name:</b> Jack Nowicki, LCSW
<b>Unique Number:</b> 63290	<b>Office Number:</b> SSW 3.104-A
<b>Semester:</b> Spring, 2013	<b>Office Phone:</b> Office: 328-6860 Cell: 659-1465 <b>E - Mail</b> jnowicki@tnoys.org
<b>Meeting Time:</b> M-W 4:00-5:30 <b>Place:</b> Room 2.132	<b>Office Hours:</b> Mon 2:00 pm - 4:00pm

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH ORGANIZATIONS & COMMUNITIES**

**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**

By the end of the course the student will 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).

The PB designation numbers referencing each course objective above refer to Practice Behaviors (PB) the School of Social Work assesses as part of its ongoing mission to assess the quality of our program in accordance with the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) see Section VIII of this syllabus for a complete explanation.

### III. TEACHING METHODS

This course includes a variety of learning experiences to achieve the course objectives and result in the students' educational outcome of understanding of social work practice with organizations and communities. The class includes lectures, readings, exams, discussions, group activities, and paper writing. It may also include videos and guest speakers.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXT & READINGS

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

Online Course Readings and resources as posted on Blackboard

### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Expectations of Students: Social work students are expected to:

1. Attend class sessions promptly and regularly. The professor reserves the right to lower a student's final grade if the student misses more than two classes. In unavoidable situations or emergencies (USOE) students must notify the professor about missing class and they are responsible for any missed notes or materials (See Class Participation in Section VII).
2. Complete assigned readings and any homework before class and be prepared to discuss materials from readings and/or any homework related to the readings. Some students in groups classes decide to form study groups in which to share and discuss the readings before class (See Class Participation in Section VII).
3. Participate in class (See Class Participation in Section VII).
4. Turn in assignments on the stated due date at the beginning of class. Assignments turned in after class starts or at the end of class are late. Late assignments are assessed point penalties at the rate of 5 points per day. If a student cannot complete an assignment on time, it is customary to inform the professor as soon as they know they won't make the date, and negotiate another due date. Note: late assignment penalties remain in effect in situations where students re-negotiate due dates.
5. Demonstrate a beginning knowledge of micro, mezzo, and macro approaches to social work in organizations and communities. Learnings and knowledge are demonstrated

through class discussions, small group activities and exercises, class participation, homework, and exams.

6. Meet with the professor to discuss their progress in the class and/or to explore ways to improve grades if needed. This professor welcomes feedback and considers the class as a mutual learning process between professor and students. I encourage students to provide feedback via email or in person! This professor keeps regular office hours for this purpose, and can be available at other times by appointment. Any such meetings must be scheduled by the student such that they have time to improve *before the end of the semester*. FINAL GRADES ASSIGNED IN THE COURSE ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.
7. Resolve challenges with colleagues within any of the student peer groups by using the group skills learned in class. The professor is willing to act as a consultant if group members are unable to resolve their differences.
8. Conduct themselves ethically. The professor and students have an ethical responsibility to colleagues to ensure the class environment is maintained as a respectful, confidential, safe, and educational setting. This class, like other social work practice classes may be emotionally challenging for some students. The professor welcomes student feedback. The class adheres to social work values and the NASW Code of Ethics and Confidentiality (especially in regards to information about our work with community and social service organizations).

## VI. Required University Notices & Policies that must be included in Syllabi:

### **Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

Any student who violates the University rules on scholastic dishonesty is 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 are strictly enforced. For further information, please refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs>).

### **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 practice related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

### **Religious Holy Days**

The university respects students' observance of holy days. Students are required to notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days before the date they intend to observe of a religious holy day. The professor gives the student an opportunity to complete any missed work within a reasonable time after the absence when the proper notice has been given by the student. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, students should give the notice on the first day of class.

### **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>.

### **Special Accommodations for Students with a Disability**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. Please notify the professor of any special accommodations that you may need prior to the end of the second week of class. In addition, the School of Social Work’s [DiNitto Center For Career Services](#) is available to assist students in many ways.

**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>

### **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 ASSIGNMENTS**

**Class Participation (20% of your grade)** Participation in this class reflects the students’ understanding of generalist social work practice and is crucial to completion of the course. Active class participation reflects the student’s development of critical thinking skills, their ability to communicate effectively about the subject matter, and integration of materials with their own values and perspectives.

Students are graded on the following aspects of participation: active class involvement and discussion, demonstrating an understanding of the course materials, and evidence of having read the readings, including completing homework when assigned.

Class involvement is graded based on the student's self-evaluation and the instructor's observation of class participation. The class participation grade is not only determined by the quantity of participation behaviors (utterances, arm waving, etc) but also on the quality of the participation; i.e. having salient contributions, reflecting preparation and knowledge of the material, and raising thought-provoking questions or issues.

**Exams (40% of your grade)**

There are two exams during the semester to assess students understanding of the material and to ensure students are reading the assigned book chapters. Each exam is worth **20%** of the student's final grade. The exams include short answer and essay-type questions taken from the text. Make-up exams are not given unless there are unusual extenuating circumstances.

**Team Projects (40% of your grade)**

Students will work in teams, based on their interests, to locate and assess impacts specific organization or community coalitions have on their interest areas (social problems /issues). Within the team's selected social issue area, each student picks an organization to assess and evaluate; producing a 8 to 10 page APA style paper. Complete instructions for the evaluation format and guidelines for writing the paper are forthcoming. This portion of the assignment is worth **20%** of the final grade.

The teams will then integrate their individual papers into a short presentation about how the selected individual organizations impact the social issue. These presentations are scheduled for the end of the semester and are worth another **20%** of the final grade. Complete details and instructions will be provided.

**VIII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA**

**Student Performance Evaluation**

Course Requirement	% of grade
Class Participation	20%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Paper	20%
Class Presentation	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Grading Scale	
100-94	=A
93-90	= A-
89-87	=B+
86-84	=B
83-80	=B-
79-77	=C+
76-74	=C
73-70	=C-
69-67	=D+
66-64	=D
63-60	=D-
59 <	below=F

The professor takes into account the quality of each student's writing as well as the content! Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) - 4<sup>th</sup> edition format in their writing.

Students should also carefully review, edit, and proofread their writing for common errors such as spelling, punctuation, typos, and good grammar. The School of Social Work's [DiNitto Center For Career Services](#) offers assistance in college-level writing for students whose skills need improvement.

## IX. EXPLANATION OF CSWE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

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 the list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be found in 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**

## X. COURSE OUTLINE

This schedule is intended as a guide - the professor reserves the right to shift sessions and topics around based on the learning needs of the class. The students should complete the readings as they are outlined. The student is responsible for all readings whether the material is covered as lecture material or not. In fact, since this is an practice-based course, the professor presupposes that the readings are understood unless a student raises questions about them during class.

**SW333 Social Work Practice with Organizations & Communities**  
 Spring, 2013  
Course Schedule

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Preparations Readings (# Pages) / Other</b>
1	1/14	Introduction to course and to colleagues Academic/professional biographies and learning objectives	Review Syllabus
	1/16	<u>Introduction to Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities</u>	Kirst-Ashman and Hull (K-A&H), Ch 1 (40)
2	1/21	MLK Day Holiday!	
	1/23	Group Project & Paper Assignment Guidelines Overview of Issue Areas	Blackboard (BB): Team Project & Individual Paper Instructions & Guidelines
3	1/28	<u>Using Micro Skills in the Macro Environment</u>	K-A&H, Ch 2 (45) BB: Homework - Exercise 2.4
	1/30	<u>Group Skills for Organizational and Community Change</u>	K-A&H, Ch 3 pp 82-101; 114-123. (28) BB: Homework - Exercise 3.9
4	2/4	<u>Understanding Organizations 1</u>	K-A&H, Ch. 4 pp 125-161; 165-184 (55) BB: Homework - Exercise 4.3
	2/6	<u>Understanding Organizations 2</u>	BB: Farruggia, How is the Nonprofit Sector Changing? (12)
5	2/11	<u>PREPARE - Decision-making for Organizational Change</u>	K-A&H, Ch. 5 (29)
	2/13	“PREPARE” Class Activity	(Review Ch. 5) (Exercise 5.4)
6	2/18	<u>IMAGINE How to Implement Macro Intervention</u>	K-A&H, Ch 6 (24)
	2/20	<u>IMAGINE - Project Implementation &amp; Program Development</u>	K-A&H, Ch 7 (33) (Exercise 6.6)
7	2/25	<b>EXAM 1</b>	Review K-A&H Chapters 1 - 7
	2/27	<u>Understanding Neighborhoods and Communities</u>	K-A&H, Ch 8 (39)
8	3/4	<u>Macro Practice in Communities 1</u>	K-A&H, Ch 9 (33)
	3/6	<u>Macro Practice in Communities 2</u> <b>GROUP ASSIGNMENT INDIVIDUAL PAPERS DUE!</b>	(Review K-A&H, Ch 9)

Week	Date	Description	Preparations Readings (# Pages) / Homework
9	3/11 3/13	SPRING BREAK WEEK	
10	3/18	<u>Evaluating Macro Practice 1</u>	K-A&H, Ch 10 (33) BB: Homework - Exercise 10.6
	3/20	<u>Evaluating Macro Practice 2</u>	
11	3/25	<u>Advocacy and Social Action with Populations at Risk</u>	K-A&H, Ch 11 (35) BB: TNOYS HOGG I Report
	3/27	<u>Ethics and Dilemmas in Macro Practice 1</u>	K-A&H, Ch 12 (43)
12	4/1	<u>Ethics and Dilemmas in Macro Practice 2</u>	
	4/3	<u>Developing and Managing Agency Resources</u>	K-A&H, Ch 14 (41)
13	4/10	EXAM 2	Review K-A&H Chapters 8 - 11, 12, & 14
	4/12	<u>Stress and Time Management</u>	K-A&H, Ch 15: (44)
14	4/15	Group Presentations	Groups prepare to present
	4/17	Group Presentations	Groups prepare to present
15	4/22	Group Presentations	Groups prepare to present
	4/24	Group Presentations	Groups prepare to present
16	4/29	Group Presentations	Groups prepare to present
	5/1	FINAL CLASS DAY Instructor/Course Evaluations	