

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: 387R26/Unique #90165    Instructor: Alma Mena, LCSW  
Semester: Summer 2017    Office hours: Thursdays 11am - noon  
Meeting Time: T/TH 8:30-11:00    Phone: (512) 796-6233  
Meeting Place: SSW2.112    Email: alma@vidaclinic.org

**SPANISH FOR SOCIAL WORKERS**

I. **Course Description**

In preparation for field education and subsequent practice, this course builds on students' academic and/or native foundation in the Spanish language by providing specialized language education designed to increase cultural sensitivity with diverse Spanish speaking populations and their corresponding environments.

The focus is on development of skills for ethical and effective communication with client systems in a manner which addresses the complexities of cultural and individual identity, religious and spiritual beliefs, as well as differences related to age, economic class, geographic and national origin, gender, sexual orientation, and levels of disability. An experiential component of this course involves the students in exploration of their own and other cultures in order to facilitate understanding, affirmation and respect for diversity.

**Prerequisites**

A minimum of two semesters of college level Spanish is preferred. Completion of an oral language assessment with the instructor before registering for the course is required.

II. **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course students will demonstrate:

1. Familiarity with the complexity of cultural and personal identities existing among and within Spanish-speaking populations and their corresponding language variations.
2. Skill in application of values and professional ethics as they relate to effective communication with a variety of client systems, including differences related to economic class, geographic and national origin, levels of ability, gender, sexual orientation, religious and spiritual differences, and age across the life span.
3. Skill in use of a systemic, strengths approach in data collection, assessment, intervention, and evaluation, with clients who have limited proficiency in English.
4. Application of communication skills in interview that incorporate cultural nuances and empowerment goals for the promotion of social justice and human well-being among Spanish-speaking populations.

5. Familiarity and beginning skills in application of terminology specific to different fields of practice.
6. Skill in self-assessment and goal directed professional growth for cultural sensitivity in practice with Spanish-speaking client systems.

### **III. Teaching Methods**

This class will be taught using a variety of methods with an emphasis on experiential learning: i.e. lecture and instruction, drills and practice, role play, guest speakers, cultural immersion activity, audio and video taping, videos viewed in class, community based activity, course assignments and readings. The assignments will provide the opportunity for "learning by doing." For success in this class you must be willing to participate, risk yourself, and attend class. You are encouraged to ask questions, give the instructor feedback, and meet with the instructor individually as needed.

### **IV. Recommended Texts and Materials**

Materials will be provided by instructor.

#### **Recommended Text:**

DSM V in Spanish

### **V. Policies**

This class will operate under the guidelines of professional accountability in the classroom. The following policies will be observed:

**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.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM.** The professor expects students to act as 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. 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 also 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. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

**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 <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

**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 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.

**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://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

**USE OF COURSE MATERIALS.** The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor 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 sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

**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). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**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, examination, work assignment, or 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.

**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. Faculty, instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Deputy for the SSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf>.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

**CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY.** Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

**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 for keeping the university informed about a change

of 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>.

**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 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 between 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 in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering 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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

#### ADDITIONAL COURSE SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance and participation for the full class period community learning projects is expected for all students. Repeated late arrivals to class may be considered as an absence. Classroom exercises, discussions, guest speakers and other class experiential activities are essential for the students’ learning, skill building and continued development of self awareness. This form of learning cannot be “made up” once missed. Students are to notify the instructor prior to class at the given office phone numbers or by email if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency.

## PAPERS

Students are expected to produce high quality work in terms of appearance, writing style and content. Points will be deducted for errors, misspellings, incorrect grammar, poor organization, repetition of information, and inferior word processing. When using information from other sources, references and bibliography should conform to the current APA style citation. Students are encouraged to consult with the Undergraduate Writing Center at <http://uwc.utexas.edu> 471-6222 for assistance with any writing assignments. Plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy.

## TIME MANAGEMENT

Late assignments will be penalized 5 points per day that they are late. Contact the instructors before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency.

## VI. Course Requirements

There are FIVE major assignments for all students in this class.

- 1. Class participation and mini assignments (25% of grade, 25 points total)**  
The student's active participation in class which includes experiential activities is imperative for effective language development. An expectation of all students in this class includes evidence of and willingness to participate in class activities and exercises. Students are expected to express their thoughts and opinions and to ask questions and make comments relevant to the course material, speakers, videos, activities, role plays -in SPANISH as much as possible. Dialogue between both instructor and students, and among students, is encouraged. (10 points.) Professional accountability and responsibility implies consistent attendance and punctuality. Mini homework assignments will also count toward participation (5 points each.)
- 2. Cultural Immersion and Reflective Paper (20% of grade, 20 points) DUE June15**  
Students, individually or in pairs, will attend any local church which has a Spanish speaking religious or spiritual service (spiritual "limpias" or healings are fine). Students may also attend a Spanish speaking Alcoholics Anonymous, Al Anon or similar meeting in Spanish. Parenting classes, immigration workshops in Spanish are also offered throughout community. Students will then write a TWO page reflective paper in English or Spanish (Spanish will be graded for content, not grammar) summarizing the event and processing their own and their partner's (if a pair) reactions to the experience. Students will note any

awareness of language variations, vocabulary/phrases, and cultural nuances in communication.

**3. Meeting with a BILINGUAL social worker, mental health professional, social service provider, community activist/organizer, in the community and write Reflective Paper (20% of grade, 20 points) DUE June 29**

Students are required to meet with a bilingual service provider (as listed about) in the community. Instructor will assist students in locating one if needed. Students will interview them using class discussion points. Reflective paper of THREE pages in English or Spanish. Students may be asked to share their experience with the class.

**4. Written Translation Project and Client/Social Worker Role Play (15% of grade, 15 points) DUE July 11 / July 13**

**July 11:** Students will work in pairs to translate from English to Spanish a basic assessment or initial interview that is provided by the instructor (there will be a variety of choices). Students will also create a one page client case history in Spanish. Both to be turned to instructor for grammar review.

**July 13:** Students will role play as client and social worker and simulate how an actual interview/assessment would occur. Students will include an intervention approach in the assessment (i.e. problem-solving, strengths based, crisis, etc.). Translated assessments will be distributed to classmates to keep as tools.

**5. Oral exit interview (20% of grade, 20 points) DUE July 20 & 25**

Using skills and tools learned in this course, students will use a cultural assessment as a guide to interview the instructor in a private one-on-one setting the last day of class. Student will act as a social worker/clinician and instructor as client.

**VII. Course grading criteria**

Grades will be posted on Canvas. Students should be able to track their progress throughout the course. Should you have questions about any assignment for this class, please consult with the professor in advance of the due date.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

94-100 points A

90.0–93.999 points A- (very good)

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

87.0-89.999 points B+ (well above average)

84.0 -86.999 points B (above average)

80.0–83.999 points B- (slightly above average)

Work earning grades of B+ and B generally exceeds 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).

77.0-79.999 points C+ (average)

74.0–76.999 points C

70.0-73.999 points C -

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. MSSW Students must make a C or above to avoid having to repeat the coursework.

67.0-69.999 points D+ (below average)

64.0-66.999 points D 60.0-63.999 points

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.

Below 60.0 F (failing)

\*Instructor reserves the right to award differentially weighted grades on the group project. This will normally occur when a member of the group fails to actively participate in the group, consistently misses deadline for assigned tasks, or produces work that is below the quality standards expected for the project. In other words, if a student's individual performance is consistently below par so that it jeopardizes the grades of the other members of the group, I will down grade that student.

**VIII. Assignments, Due Dates, Points:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Points</b>
Class participation	On-going	10 pts
Voicemail/Introduction/ Directions	6/6	5 pts
Cultural immersion paper	6/15	20 points



Assignment	Due date	Points
Current event share out	6/20	5 points
Interview Bilingual Social Worker	6/29	20 points
Draft translations	7/6	
Final translations/Role play	7/11	15 points
Country of Interest	7/18	5 points
Oral interview	7/20, 7/25	20 points

IX. Course Schedule:

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Th 6/1	Class overview and syllabus review Basics -Introductions, class goals, grammar, pronunciation, and key phrases		
T 6/6	Family and Feelings.	Article (Check Canvas)	Create your own voicemail, introductions, directions to office, or agency description and bring in written copy to class

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Th 6/8	Immigration, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Guest speaker Ana Maria Cabezas, LPC		
T 6/13	Health Care and the Medical Setting Guest Speaker: Nadine Rueb, LCSW	Article (Check Canvas)	Cultural Immersion Paper
Th 6/15	Client's Rights and Confidentiality – Code of Ethics	Handout	
T 6/20	School, Counseling Centers Guest Speaker: Cris Gonzalez, LCSW		Current Event Share Out
Th 6/22	Community Agency Site Visit/Interviews (NO CLASS MEETING)		
T 6/27	Cultural Formulation Interview Assessment tools and Initial interviews	Article/ Handout (check canvas)	

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Th 6/29	The Legal Realm: Law and Law Enforcement Guest Speaker: Lieutenant Barrera	Article/Handouts (check canvas)	Interview with community bilingual social worker
T 7/4	NO CLASS MEETING		
Th 7/6	Mental Health, DSM V	Handouts DSMV Articles (check canvas)	Draft translations of assessment tools for instructor review
T 7/11	Housing and public assistance, basic needs.  Guest speaker: Melissa Orren		Written translated assessment tools
Th 7/13	Oral presentations of translated assessments	Handouts	Client/social worker simulations with translated assessments
T 7/18	Spanish speaking countries and their cultures		Students to share country of interest project
Th 7/20	Peer-to-peer feedback/ Consultation groups Individual oral interviews		Oral interviews
T 7/25	Peer-to-peer feedback/ Consultation groups Individual oral interviews		Oral interviews