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# SW327

## Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Spring 2017, Section 61815  
Monday, Wednesday, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm  
Room 2.112, Social Work Building

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### REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS

Hutchison, E. D. (2015). *Dimensions of human behavior: Person and environment* (5th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Texts can be purchased at the University Co-Op, 2246 Guadalupe, <http://www.universitycoop.com>.

*Additional readings are listed on the syllabus and will be available on Canvas.*

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### STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

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This course explores the biopsychosocial and cultural functioning of human beings across the lifespan using an ecological-systems lens and major developmental theories as a framework to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Using the generalist social work lens, this course integrates content from other human behavior courses. The students will gain an understanding of which physical, mental, social and economic justice hazards can adversely impact an individual's growth and development during their lifetime. Frameworks incorporating an eco-systems/developmental perspective, including systems/ecological and psychosocial (life span development) frameworks, are used to conceptualize stages of human growth and development, with a primary focus on adolescence, early adulthood, the middle years, and the aged adult within an intergenerational family context. The impact of the family, social groups, organizations, communities, and society on individuals during the stages of the lifespan are also discussed. This course emphasizes empirically-based research reflecting a risk and resilience perspective in making client assessment and recommending appropriate interventions. This contributes to a social worker's ability to understand and critically analyze the interactions among individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students will be able to understand how personal values are reflected in sociocultural contexts, such as culture, race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, and religion, and how they can influence human behavior. Increasing access to resources, reducing risks, and considering ethical dilemmas involved in dealing with human behavior are also considered.

Course prerequisites include Social Work 310, 312, and either Psychology 304 (Child Psychology) or Child Development 313 (Child Development). Social Work 325 (Foundations of Social Justice) is also required as part of this curriculum and is taken concurrently with SW327.

**This course carries the writing flag.** Writing flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing flag classes meet the Core Communications Objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

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## STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Explain the unique perspective that social work has in viewing the relationship between the individual person and environment in comparison to other helping professions **(PB 24)**;
2. Explain and apply basic principles of learning theories and the system-ecological and psychosocial frameworks and analyze individual, family, group, organizational, community, and societal dynamics from each of these perspectives **(PB 24)**;
3. Describe biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual aspects of adolescent, early adult, middle adult, and older adult developmental states within the context of the broader environment **(PB 24)**;
4. Describe the dynamics of social groups, organizations, communities, and society, and the ways that they can impact individual development and behavior **(PB 24)**;
5. Explain ways that ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and other factors contribute to human development and their implications for social work practice in assessment, intervention, and evaluation **(PB 23)**;
6. Describe relevant research and identify and conceptualize additional research needs relating to human behavior and the social environment;
7. Apply information and theories related to human behavior in the social environment to life situations in a manner consistent with social work values and the promotion of social and economic justice **(PB 24)**;
8. Use critical thinking skills in writing an academic literature review on a human development question of interest;
9. Explain and apply basic principles of learning theories and the systems/ecological and psychosocial frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation **(PB 23)**;
10. Apply information and theories related to human behavior and social environment to life situations in order to determine the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being **(PB 24)**.

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## ACCREDITATION

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The University of Texas' 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 found in your Student Handbook.

### E.P.2.1.7 APPLY KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

**PB 23** Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.

Course Objectives: 5, 9

Assignment: Literature review paper, theory presentations, exams

**PB 24** Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

Course Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10

Assignment: Literature review paper, theory presentations, exams

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## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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**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.

**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. More information may be found at <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**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 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/conduct/>).

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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 <https://cio.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

**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.

**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>.

**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://operations.utexas.edu/units/csas/bcal.php>.

**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.

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## CLASSROOM POLICIES

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**PARTICIPATION.** You are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions. This means coming to class having completed the readings for that day and bringing both your questions and ideas, thoughts, reflections concerning those readings. If class discussion lags, I will not hesitate to call on you to offer your ideas. I also encourage you to bring “additional” sources of information to share with the class as pertaining to the topic(s) of discussion. This may include sharing information you have learned from other classes, news or pop culture media, or simply relating your own experiences and observations of everyday life.

We will be discussing a variety of issues that may hold special significance to students. It is important to discuss ideas in a supportive and respectful manner, acknowledging that others may have different opinions. I encourage you to see things from a different point of view and use feedback from each other to augment your ideas. And while I encourage debate and disagreement as a productive aspect of classroom discussion, all students will be expected to act in a respectful manner towards classmates, the professor, and any guest speakers at all times.

To help foster a productive learning environment, each member of this class should avoid behaviors that are disruptive to other students and the professor. This means:

- Turning off cell phones *before* coming to class. If you must keep your cell phone available for emergency purposes, please notify me before class.
- Do not hold side conversations with your classmates at any time during class.
- Computers are not allowed in this class. Although instruction will consist of both lecture and class discussion, discussion is a crucial part of the learning process. The use of computers often distracts from this productive activity.

**LATE WORK.** Late work will be penalized 10% for every 24-hour period following the deadline for a given assignment (including weekends), and will only be accepted in the first week following an assignment’s due date. Please note that the late policy does not apply to in-class quizzes or other in-class activities. If you anticipate being unable to meet an assignment deadline, let me know in advance.

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## GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

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For all written assignments, you are required to properly cite and reference your sources of information. Any quotation, concept, idea, or piece of information that is taken directly or paraphrased from another source must be properly cited and referenced according to American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines. If you have any questions or are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please come see me. I also strongly encourage you to take advantage of the University Writing Center (<http://uwc.utexas.edu/>). All graded assignments will be scored according to a grading rubric. These will be available on Canvas, and I encourage you to reference them in advance of completing the assignment so that you are informed of the criteria you need to meet to achieve your desired grade!

### Grade Scale

A	94.0 +	C+	77.0 – 79.999	D-	60.0 – 63.999
A-	90.0 – 93.999	C	74.0 – 76.9991	F	Below 60.0
B+	87.0 – 89.999	C-	70.0 – 73.999		
B	84.0 – 86.999	D+	67.0 – 69.999		<i>Please Note: Grades will not be rounded.</i>
B-	80.0 – 83.999	D	64.0 – 66.999		

**MONTE CARLO QUIZZES (10%).**<sup>1</sup> Good participation means good preparation! To measure your preparation for class, there will be several “Monte Carlo” quizzes given throughout the term. A Monte Carlo quiz is similar to a pop-quiz except that the decision to administer a quiz during a given class meeting is determined entirely by chance! At the beginning of class, a student will roll a die. If an odd number is rolled, a quiz will be given. The quiz is not open book (unless indicated otherwise), but you may bring in notes and refer to them during the quiz. You cannot make-up a quiz, and extra time will not be provided if you arrive late to class. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

**“THEORY” PRESENTATION (20%).** You will have an opportunity to lead a class discussion based on an analysis of one of the theoretical perspectives presented in your textbook (Chapter 2). The class presentation is a group effort, and each group should have no more than three students. The purpose of the presentation is to consider how a given theoretical perspective can assist you in thinking about social work across personal and environmental dimensions. As part of this assignment, you will: 1) collect information about the theoretical perspective; 2) prepare a presentation for the class to teach them about your theoretical perspective and its applications to social work; 3) develop a handout for the class that explains key components of your theoretical perspective; and 4) write an individual critique of your group’s presentation. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be available on Canvas and presented in class.

**EXAMS (30%).** There will be two exams given in this class. Exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer questions, and essays where you will have an opportunity to cover materials from class lectures, discussions/debates, and reading; films are considered equivalent to lecture material. If you are unable to take an exam on the assigned date for any reason other than an emergency, you must notify your professor at least one week in advance of the test date. If you do not, it could result in not taking the exam. On exam days, arrive to class on time. If you arrive late, extra time will not be given for the exam. If you do not take the exam, you may be in jeopardy of not passing the course. Each exam is worth 15% of your grade for total weight of 30%.

**LITERATURE REVIEW PAPER (40%).** You will select a topic of interest related to human behavior and the social environment and write a literature review paper that analyzes and synthesizes empirical research to complete a scholarly review on that topic. This paper allows you to conduct an in-depth examination of a specific topic that you find interesting by reading, reviewing, and analyzing what other scholars have written about the topic. Through this assignment, you will demonstrate critical thinking skills and mastery of American Psychological Association (APA) writing format. Your critical thinking skills will be reflected through analyzing and synthesizing a minimum of three research-based, peer-reviewed journal articles and integrating this research to formulate a conclusion about your topic. The paper should be between 8 and 12 double-spaced pages using Times New Roman 12-point font and one-inch margins. The page limit does not include the title page or reference list pages. You are responsible for turning the assignment in on time the day that it is due. Computer and/or printer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late assignments, and thus, the late policy will apply under such circumstances. To facilitate your successful completion of this assignment, you will submit several components throughout the semester. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be available on Canvas and presented in class.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### Jan. 18 | Course Introduction

#### Jan. 23 | The Dimensions of Person and Environment

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 1, Human Behavior: A Multidimensional Approach, p. 3-34

#### Jan. 25 | Searching the Literature

*Assignment Due:*

- Dimension, Topic, & Research Question

*Recommended Reading:*

- Brainstorming. <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/brainstorming/>

#### Jan. 30 | Understanding and Evaluating Theoretical Paradigms

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 2, Theoretical Perspectives on Human Behavior, p. 35-76

#### Feb. 1 | Surveying the Literature

*Assignment Due:*

- One highlighted article for lit. review

*Recommended Reading:*

- Pautasso, M. (2013). Ten simple rules for writing a literature review. *PLoS computational biology*, 9(7), 1-4.

#### Feb. 6 | Analyzing the Literature

*Assignment Due:*

- Second highlighted article for lit. review

*Recommended Reading:*

- How to build a paper research database. <http://calnewport.com/blog/2007/10/01/monday-master-class-how-to-build-a-paper-research-database/>
- Galvan, J. L. (2006). General guidelines for analyzing literature. In *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences* (3rd ed., pp. 31-42). Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

#### Feb. 8 | Cognition, Emotion, and Selfhood

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 4, The Psychological Person, p. 115-143

#### Feb. 13 | The Psychosocial Framework

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 5, The Psychosocial Person, p. 145-176

#### Feb. 15 | Developing a Writing Plan, Writing an Introduction

*Assignment Due:*

- DUE: Research Table

*Recommended Reading:*

- Belcher, W. (2009). Anticipating writing obstacles. In *Writing your journal article in 12 weeks* (pp. 26-38). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Argument. <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/argument/>

## Feb. 20 | Spirituality and Religion Beliefs

### Required Reading:

- Hutchinson, Chapter 6, The Spiritual Person, p. 177-222

## Feb. 22 | Writing a Literature Review

### Assignment Due:

- Draft of Introduction

### Recommended Reading:

- Nadell, J., Langan, J., Coxwell-Teagure, D. (2015). Writing the paragraphs in the first draft. In *The Longman writer* (9th ed., p. 63-91). Harlow, UK: Longman Publishing.

## Feb. 27 | Biology as a System

### Required Reading:

- Hutchinson, Chapter 3, The Biological Person, p. 79-114

## Mar. 1 | Exam Review

### Assignment Due:

- Outline of lit. review

### Recommended Reading:

- Outlines. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sp0MWYbLUFU>

## Mar. 6 | \* \* \* EXAM \* \* \*

## Mar. 8 | The Physical and Built Environment

### Required Reading:

- Hutchinson, Chapter 7, The Physical Environment, p. 225-256

## Mar. 20 | The Culture Concept

### Required Reading:

- Hutchinson, Chapter 8, Culture, p. 257-290

## Mar. 22 | When Cultures Collide

*Film:* Rain in a Dry Land

## Mar. 27 | Receiving and Using Peer Feedback

### Assignment Due:

- First draft of lit. review paper

### Recommended Reading:

- Why peer review? <https://app.shoreline.edu/doldham/Why%20Peer%20Review.htm>

## Mar. 29 | From Social Structure to Structural Violence

### Required Reading:

- Hutchinson, Chapter 9, Social structure and social institutions, p. 291-336

## Apr. 3 | Understanding and Working with Families

### Required Reading:

- Hutchinson, Chapter 10, Families, p. 337-380



## Apr. 5 | Integrating Environmental Dimensions: Kingdom of Women

*Assignment Due:*

- Revised draft of lit. review

*Recommended:*

- Revising Drafts. <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/revising-drafts/>

## Apr. 10 | The Dynamics of Small Groups

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 11, Small Groups, p. 381-412

## Apr. 12 | Case Analysis Presentations

## Apr. 17 | Types of Communities

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 13, Communities, p. 447-478

## Apr. 19 | Case Analysis Presentations

## Apr. 24 | Perspectives on Formal Organizations

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 12, Formal Organizations, p. 413-445

## Apr. 26 | Understanding Social Movements

*Assignment Due:*

- Individual critique of your “theory” presentation

*Required Reading:*

- Hutchinson, Chapter 14, Social Movements, p. 479-512

## May 1 | Exam Review

*Assignment Due:*

- Final lit. review paper

## May 3 | \* \* \* EXAM \* \* \*

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<sup>1</sup> Fernald, P. S. (2004). The Monte Carlo Quiz: Encouraging punctual completion and deep processing of assigned readings. *College Teaching*, 52(3), pp. 95-99.