

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
Generalist Social Work Practice: Skills, Knowledge, & Values
(Required Course – BSW Program)

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| Course Number: SW 312 | Instructor's Name: Miki Tesh, LCSW |
| Unique Number: 61375 | Semester: FALL 2010 |
| Class Time: TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS 9:30-11:00am | Class Location: SSW 2.112 |
| Office Hours: TUE 11:30-12:30 and by appointment | Office Location: 3.112 |
| Email: mikitesh@mail.utexas.edu | |

I. Standardized Course Description

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

II. Standardized Course Objectives

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

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

III. TEACHING METHODS

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized (e.g. discussion, lecture, and group exercises); experiential learning (e.g. volunteer project, role playing, & active learning) will be emphasized.

Use of Blackboard in Class

The instructor will use Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, and to submit assignments. Students can access support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly. Additionally, the Learning Resource Center at the SSW (1st floor) has computers and can provide some computer assistance.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND COURSE MATERIALS

Text:

Cournoyer, B. (2011). *The social work skills workbook* (6th Ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
Plionis, E.M. (2007). *Competency in generalist practice: A guide to theory and evidence-based decision making*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Available through Electronic Book Library: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

See directions at end of syllabus

Materials:

Each student will need to purchase one blank VHS tape to complete two videotaped interview assignments.

V. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS –

1. Attendance and Participation – 100 Points

Due to the format and content of this course, regular and punctual attendance is imperative. **Students are expected to be in class, to participate in a friendly, open, and respectful manner with the other students and instructor. Students are expected to share their thoughts or experiences to build on learning knowledge and insight. This is meant to be an engaging class where the most learning can occur through student active participation. A respectful, open, and encouraging environment will set the pace.** In extenuating circumstances, notify the instructor via email as soon as possible [see Attendance Policy below]. As this class relies on participation, involvement, and mutual respect of all class members, it is important for students to come to class prepared to take part in informed discussion each week, based upon the class readings. There will be ample opportunities for students to take part in experiential in-class exercises. This part of the grade will be determined by class attendance, participation in discussions and completion of the in-class and homework assignments. Please turn cell phones and lap tops off during class. A description of proper classroom etiquette will be provided.

Students will be responsible for any material missed due to absences. A sign-in sheet will be passed around at the beginning of each class period. **It is the student's responsibility to remember to sign the attendance sheet each week.**

2. Workbook – 20 Points each (for a total of 60 Points)

Three selected exercises in the Cournoyer workbook, including:

- a. **Ecomap and Genogram**
- b. **Active listening**
- c. **Ethics**

3. Presentations – 20 Points each (for a total of 60 Points)

- a. **Oral History Individual Presentations** - Each student is expected to complete a 30-45 minute oral history interview of a selected community member. The focus is on listening, exploring and appreciation of the individual. Each student will be expected to give a presentation with a short handout in class. You will receive specific instructions for this assignment.
- b. **Ethics Group Presentation**- Students will work in groups (3-6) to complete this assignment. Each group will receive several case presentations, each involving one or more ethical dilemmas. Class time will be provided (but may not be sufficient) for the groups to reach consensus on the appropriate response to the situation and a plan on how they will present the information to the class.

- c. **Community Neighborhood Group Presentation** -Students will work in groups (3-6) to complete this assignment. Students are asked to choose one neighborhood/community system in the Austin area. Students are expected to research the needs and problems of this system and should select one problem or need of this system and complete a problem-solving process. The products of the assignment must include a poster; however, groups may also incorporate a variety of other elements (photographs, PowerPoint, video, audiotapes, etc.). The poster should include photos, charts, graphs related to census data, police statistics, etc., maps, and summary data related to goals and tasks. Students may want to pre-submit materials to the instructor for feedback. As with other group assignments in this class, points for participation will be determined by group members.

4. Videotaped Interview/Self-Assessment - 30 Points each (for a total of 60 Points)

Students will complete two videotaped assignments during the semester, and write a short assignment for each. *Upload to blackboard:*

- a. A preliminary tape completed early in the semester for the purpose of assessing your beginning interviewing skills. Write a 2-3 page paper.
- b. A second tape made later for the purpose of demonstrating your competency in these skills. Write a 2-3 page paper. Include a comparison of the first and second interviews.

5. Volunteer Experience - 60 Points

All students enrolled in SW 312 must complete 45 volunteer hours at an approved agency. It is the student's responsibility to locate an agency at which to complete the hours. To aid students in their search for an agency, a list of area agencies with contact information has been posted on the class Blackboard site. Search the following sites for additional volunteer opportunities:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/vslc>

<http://volunteer.truist.com/ut/volunteer/>

<http://www.211centraltexas.org/>

Approval for the volunteer placement must be granted by the course instructor. Only 10 training hours can be used toward the 45 hour requirement. However, if you are enrolled in SW310 at the same time as this course, you will only have to complete 75 volunteer hours (instead of 90).

Required Volunteer Forms – all forms must be submitted to successfully complete the course

- a. Agency Selection Form
- b. Educational Contract (signed by the supervisor)
- c. Agency Evaluation of Student (signed by the supervisor)
- d. Student Evaluation of Agency
- e. Volunteer Time Logs (signed by the supervisor)

Please note that if a student does not complete at least 30 hours of the 45 volunteer hours, the student may not pass the entire class.

6. Two reflection Papers- 30 Points each (for a total of 60 Points)

Students will complete two reflection assignments (2-3 double spaced pages each) during the semester concerning their volunteer placement. You will receive additional instructions from the instructor for this assignment. *Upload to blackboard.*

7. Summary of Course Requirements

| Requirements (ordered by category) | Points | Due Due |
|---|------------|------------------------------|
| Class Participation (“community in the classroom”) | 100 | Thursday, August 31, 2010 |
| Workbook Assignments: Ecomap & Genogram | 20 | Tuesday, September 7, 2010 |
| Workbook Assignments: Active Listening | 20 | Thursday, September 16, 2010 |
| Workbook Assignments: Ethics | 20 | Tuesday, November 9, 2010 |
| Presentations: Oral History | 20 | Tuesday, October 19, 2010 |
| Presentations: Ethics | 20 | Tuesday, November 16, 2010 |
| Presentations: Community Neighborhood | 20 | Tuesday, November 30, 2010 |
| Videotaped Interview/Self-Assessments: #1 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, October 5, 2010 |
| Videotaped Interview/Self-Assessments: #2 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, October 26, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Agency Selection Form | credit | Tuesday, September 14, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Educational Contract | 20 | Thursday, September 23, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Agency Evaluation of Student | 20 | Thursday, December 2, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Volunteer Hours Log | 20 | Thursday, December 2, 2010 |
| Reflection Papers: #1 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, October 12, 2010 |
| Reflection Papers: #2 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, November 23, 2010 |
| Total | 400 | |

| Requirements (ordered by date due) | Points | Due Dates |
|---|------------|------------------------------|
| Class Participation (“community in the classroom”) | 100 | Thursday, August 31, 2010 |
| Workbook Assignments: Ecomap & Genogram | 20 | Tuesday, September 7, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Agency Selection Form | credit | Tuesday, September 14, 2010 |
| Workbook Assignments: Active Listening | 20 | Thursday, September 16, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Educational Contract | 20 | Thursday, September 23, 2010 |
| Videotaped Interview/Self-Assessments: #1 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, October 5, 2010 |
| Reflection Papers: #1 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, October 12, 2010 |
| Presentations: Oral History | 20 | Tuesday, October 19, 2010 |
| Videotaped Interview/Self-Assessments: #2 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, October 26, 2010 |
| Workbook Assignments: Ethics | 20 | Tuesday, November 9, 2010 |
| Presentations: Ethics | 20 | Tuesday, November 16, 2010 |
| Reflection Papers: #2 (2-3 page paper) | 30 | Tuesday, November 23, 2010 |
| Presentations: Community Neighborhood | 20 | Tuesday, November 30, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Agency Evaluation of Student | 20 | Thursday, December 2, 2010 |
| Volunteer Experience: Volunteer Hours Log | 20 | Thursday, December 2, 2010 |
| Total | 400 | |

VI. Class Policies

1. Grading Policy/Grading Criteria:

Undergraduate 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 and below = F

2. Attendance/Tardiness

It is the student's responsibility to be on time and sign the attendance sheet at the beginning of each class. Students who are absent are responsible for making up missed in-class work and/or obtaining class material/content from a classmate. Attendance is an important part of the course grade, which is included with participation. Attendance & Participation is 25% of the grade.

3. Assignments

Written assignments (not including volunteer placement forms) must be uploaded onto Blackboard prior to the beginning of class on the date due (Blackboard will record the time the assignment is uploaded). Late assignments will result in a deduction of five points for each day that the assignment is late.

Assignments should be turned in with correct spelling, punctuation, or grammar. The format of the assignments should follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA 5th ed.). Some style information is available at www.apastyle.org/, and a list of updated style guides for electronic sources is available at www.apastyle.org/elecref.html. If additional writing assistance is needed please contact The University of Texas at Austin Undergraduate Writing Center at (512) 471-6222 or visit their website at <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>.

4. Class Participation and Use of Technology

Attendance and participation are important for effective learning. Students are expected to attend class, and actively participate in discussions and exercises. Use of technological devices (cell phones, ipods, mp3s, computers, etc.) is not permitted, and will reduce the participation grade of the student. For emergencies or family issues, you may leave your cell phone on in vibrate/silent mode (calls should be taken outside the classroom).

5. Use of Blackboard in Class

As noted above, in this class the instructor uses Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give students online quizzes and surveys. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

6. Feedback Statement

Feedback is two-way. During this course the instructor will ask students to provide feedback on their learning in informal as well as formal ways, including through anonymous surveys about how the instructor's teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is very important for the instructor to know the students' reactions to what is taking place in class, so students are encouraged to respond to these surveys, ensuring that together the instructor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning. If students are concerned about their class performance, the instructor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve either their understanding of course content. The instructor can meet with students during office hours, or by appointment.

7. Email Communication with Instructor

The instructor is available by email to answer questions about assignments. Students should submit questions or requests for clarification at least 24 hours before an assignment is due. If an assignment is due in less than 24 hours, the instructor cannot guarantee a timely response. The instructor may suggest a meeting time for discussion if needed. Notifications regarding anticipated absences should be submitted the instructor as soon as possible.

VII. General University Policies

1. The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

2. Professional Conduct in Class

The instructor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the instructor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism. Privacy and confidentiality should be respected and kept private by everyone in the class. In addition, all emails are to be written in a professional manner and tone.

3. 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/scholdis.php>).

4. Services for Students with Disabilities

Upon request, appropriate academic accommodations can be made for any student with a documented disability. Any student who requires special accommodations should 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). The letter should be presented to the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

5. Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the instructor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the instructor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

6. 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>.

7. 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 instructor regarding any safety concerns.

8. 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>.

9. 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 instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instructor’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.

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

| CLASS TOPIC | week | DATE | READINGS: TEXTBOOK & BLACKBOARD | *DUE* |
|---|------|------------------|--|--|
| Introduction | 1 | THURS AUG 26 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Volunteer Agency Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/vslc • http://www.211centraltexas.org/ <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Careers in Social work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/choices/ | |
| Generalist Practice, Ecosystems, & Personal Insight | 2 | TUES AUG 31 | Cournoyer - Chapter 1: Introduction Cournoyer - Chapter 2: Professionalism | Classroom Etiquette Statement |
| | 2 | THURS SEPT 2 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Systems/ Ecological Perspective:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See blackboard <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Strengths Perspective</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.socwel.ku.edu/Strengths/about.shtml | |
| Communication & Helping | 3 | TUES SEPT 7 | Cournoyer - Chapter 6: Talking & Listening | Ecomap/Genogram Workbook Assignment |
| | 3 | THURS SEPT 9 | Plionis – Chapter 4: Communication Skills | |
| | 4 | TUES SEPT 14 | Cournoyer - Chapter 7: Preparing Cournoyer - Chapter 8: Beginning | Agency Selection Form |
| | 4 | THURS SEPT 16 | Cournoyer - Chapter 9: Exploring | Active Listening Workbook Assignment |
| | 5 | TUES SEPT 21 | Cournoyer - Chapter 10: Assessing | |
| | 5 | THURS SEPT 23 | Plionis – Chapter 6: Relationships in clinical practice & the art of healing | Education Contract |
| | 6 | TUES SEPT 28 | Cournoyer - Chapter 11: Contracting Plionis – Chapter 12: Social Work with Individuals | |
| | 6 | THURS SEPT 30 | Cournoyer - Chapter 12: Working & Evaluating | |
| | 7 | TUES OCT 5 | Video 1 Groups | Video 1 Group & Video Self-Assessment Paper#1 |
| | 7 | THURS OCT 7 | | |
| | 8 | TUES OCT 12 | Plionis – Chapter 14: Clinical Social Work with Families | Reflection Paper #1 |
| | 8 | THURS OCT 14 | Plionis - Chapter 16: Use of Groups in Clinical Social Work | |

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|--|----|-----------------|--|---|
| | 9 | TUES OCT 19 | Oral History Presentations | Oral History presentation |
| | 9 | THURS OCT 21 | | |
| | 10 | TUES OCT 26 | Video 2 Groups | Video 2 Group & Video Self-Assessment Paper#2 |
| | 10 | THURS OCT 28 | | |
| Ethical Considerations & Decision Making | 11 | TUES NOV 2 | Cournoyer - Chapter 5: Ethical Decision Making | |
| | 11 | THURS NOV 4 | Cournoyer – Chapter 4: Valuing Diversity | |
| | 12 | TUES NOV 9 | Plionis – Chapter 1: Decision Tree | Ethics Workbook Assignment |
| | 12 | THURS NOV 11 | NASW Code of Ethics (Preamble), available online: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp | |
| | 13 | TUES NOV 16 | Ethics Presentations | Ethics presentation |
| | 13 | THURS NOV 18 | | |
| Neighborhood & Community | 14 | TUES NOV 23 | Preparation for Community Neighborhood Presentations | Reflection Paper #2 |
| | 14 | THURS NOV 25 | Thanksgiving Break | |
| | 15 | TUES NOV 30 | Community Neighborhoods Presentations | Community neighborhoods presentation |
| | 15 | THURS DEC 2 | Community Neighborhoods Presentations | Community neighborhoods presentation & Agency Evaluation of student & Volunteer Hours Log |