SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE I

I. Course Description

This course provides an introduction to social work practice methodology and the professional use of self in combination with the generalist practice approach to social work with individuals, families and groups, within the context of organizations and communities.

Prerequisites: This course must be taken concurrently with Field Instruction I. It is either taken with or after Basic Dynamics of Organizations and Communities, Basic Dynamics of Individuals and Families and Social Policy I. It is a prerequisite for Social Work Methods II and Field Instruction II.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and begin to apply social work values and principles of ethical decision making as articulated by the NASW Code of Ethics (PB2,8);

2. Demonstrate an understanding of professional use of self and awareness of personal values in the development and maintenance of purposeful, problem solving relationships with multiple levels of client systems, as well as cooperative and constructive relationships with agency staff, other professionals and community members (PB 2,3,7);

3. Utilize professional communication skills, supervision and consultation in the effective and ethical provision of services to diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities (PB 2,5,6,30);

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of organizational and community context on service delivery through the in depth analysis of the assigned field agency (PB29,36);

5. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical roots and major developments of the social work profession and its commitment to promote social and economic justice for populations at risk (PB5,8);
6. Systematically apply an eco-systems framework to engage client systems in identifying target systems and goals, and in analyzing, implementing and evaluating interventions that enhance client system strengths, capacities, assets and resources in relation to their environment (PB33,34,48,39);

7. Recognize the influence of socioeconomic status, age, developmental level, gender, culture, race, ethnicity, physical status, sexual orientation and spiritual beliefs on assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation at all levels of practice (PB 32,33,34,38);

8. Demonstrate familiarity with basic concepts and methodology related to work with small groups in agency, organization and community settings (PB29,31,35,36);

9. Identify the importance of empirically based knowledge to evaluate and improve practice, policy and social service delivery (PB 35,36,37).

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

**EP 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**

**PB2 Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development**

Objectives: 1, 2 and 3
Assignment: Video Role-Play, Self-Assessment and Ethics Brief Assignment, Historical reflection brief assignment

**PB3 Attend to professional roles and boundaries**

Objectives: 2
Assignment: Agency Analysis and Presentation, Video Role-Play

**PB5 Engage in career-long learning**

Objectives: 3 and 5
Assignment: In Class Discussion

**PB6 Use supervision and consultation**

Objectives: 3
Assignment: Video Role Play

**EP 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.**

**PB7 Recognize and manage personal values to allow professional values to guide practice**

Objectives: 2
Assignment: Ethics Brief Assignment, Historical reflection brief assignment

**PB 8 Make ethical decisions by applying NASW Code of Ethics and, as applicable, IFSW/IASSW ethical principles**

Objectives: 1 and 5
Assignment: In Class Exercises and Discussion, Ethics Brief Assignment

**EP 2.1.10a. Engagement**

**PB29 Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities**

Objectives: 4 and 8
Assignment: Agency Analysis and Presentation, Task Group Observation Assignment
Quizzes

PB 30 Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
  Objectives: 3
  Assignment: Video Role Play, in class exercises

PB31 Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes
  Objectives: 8
  Assignment: Quizzes, Case Assessment, Video-tape interview

**EP 2.1.10b. Assessment**

PB 32 Collect, organize, and interpret client data
  Objectives: 7
  Assignment: Video Role Play, Quizzes, Case Assessment

PB 33 Assess client strengths and limitations
  Objectives: 6 and 7
  Assignment: Video Role Play, Case Assessment

PB 34 Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives
  Objectives: 6 and 7
  Assignment: Quizzes, Case Assessment

PB35 Select appropriate intervention strategies
  Objectives: 8 and 9
  Assignment: Case Assessment, take home final

**EP 2.1.10c. Intervention**

PB36 Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals
  Objectives: 4, 8 and 9
  Assignment: Agency Analysis and Presentation

PB37 Implement prevention intervention that enhances client capacities
  Objectives: 9
  Assignment: Case Assessment, take home final

PB 38 Help clients resolve problems
  Objectives: 6 and 7
  Assignment: Case Assessment, video tape role-play

PB39 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients
  Objectives: 6
  Assignment: Case Assessment, Historical reflection brief assignment

III. Teaching Methods

This class will be taught using a variety of teaching methods including: small group interaction, case examples, class discussion, role play and videotaping, guest speakers, lecture and learning activities in the community. For a meaningful experience students are encouraged to actively participate, take risks, stretch their creativity and attend class regularly. All students are encouraged to ask questions, raise issues, provide the instructor feedback and meet with the instructor individually as needed to enhance their learning.
IV. **Required Texts and Readings**


A course supplement of readings is available at Speedway Copy in Dobie Mall. Additional articles will be used as handouts in class.

V. **Course Requirements**

Students will be required to complete the assignments listed below. Instructor will hand out specific guidelines for each of the assignments. Detailed learning objectives and instructions including expected demonstration of content mastery and skill development will be provided in a separate handout. All assignments will be discussed in detail in class and students are encouraged to meet with the instructor should there be any questions about the assignments. Grading sheets with points allocation will be handed out with the assignment guidelines. Assignments will be graded on depth and quality of content, critical thinking skills, overall professionalism and quality of writing. Student should follow the APA guidelines for writing of papers.

**Comprehensive Field Agency Analysis (100 points), due on 9/21**

This assignment provides students an opportunity to: 1) collect data on their field agencies in order to facilitate their orientation and integration into the agency; 2) assess the agency’s accessibility for diverse client populations and overall cultural competence; 3) understand the policies and legislation that impact agency practice; 4) analyze the impact of the community and organizational context on the agency service delivery system; 5) determine salient social and economic injustice issues addressed by agency programs; 6) identify methods of practice evaluation and research utilized by their agency; and 7) recognize value conflicts and ethical dilemmas encountered in this setting. Students will research a fact sheet about the agency and submit an analysis of significant findings about the agency. A written report and a brief oral presentation are included. See handout for more specific instructions.

**Brief Quizzes/Assignments (20 points each), due on 9/7, 9/14, 10/12, 10/19 and 11/23**

Students will be required to complete two quizzes and two brief assignments, including an ethics project, a community task group observation, and two in-class quizzes that demonstrate students’ grasp of assigned readings and class content. See handout for more specific instructions.

**Video-taped Role play and self critique (50 points each), due on 10/26 and 11/2**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students an opportunity to practice basic communication skills and the problem solving process in a videotaped interview with a partner from class. Students will select a role-play partner and schedule a taping session in the LRC or other site if preferred. Students will participate in a small group viewing of their videotape with the instructor and peers. The purpose of the peer review group is to receive feedback to deepen clinical learning and increase comfort and skill in the use of supervision
and consultation. After the small group review, students will submit a self-critique of the videotape. See handout for more specific instructions.

**Multidimensional Case Assessment (100 points), due on 11/16**

A multidimensional case assessment of a client in field is required. The primary purpose of this assignment is to increase students’ knowledge and skill in data gathering, intervention planning and practice evaluation. While gathering client information and developing an intervention plan, students will identify client strengths, assets and resources, salient social and economic justice issues impacting their particular client population, significant policy implications, potential value conflicts, ethical dilemmas and important considerations related to agency and community context. See handout for more specific instructions.

**Take Home Final Examination (100 points), due on 12/2**

A final take home examination is focused on the integration and application of course content in the context of the students’ field experiences. This exam will be due on of the last day of classes.

**Assignment Points and Due Dates:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Agency Analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>09/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brief assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>09/7, 9/14, 10/12, 10/19, 11/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video Tape Role Play</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video Tape Self Critique</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11/02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multidimensional Assessment</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take home final exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>12/02</td>
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<td><strong>500 points</strong></td>
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**Grades:** the following scale will be used for determination of grades.

470-500 = A  
450-469 = A-  
435-449 = B+  
420-434 = B  
400-419 = B-  
385-399 = C+  
370-384 = C  
350-369 = C-  
349 or below: no credit for course

**Graduate Grading Scale (on 100 point scale equivalent)**

100 - 94 = A  
93 - 90 = A-  
89 - 87 = B+  
86 - 84 = B  
83 - 80 = B-  
79 - 77 = C+  
76 - 74 = C  
73 - 70 = C- (Class failed/no credit: 73 and below)  
69 - 67 = D+  
66 - 64 = D  
63 - 60 = D-  
59 and below = F
VI. **Class Policies**

**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.

**Reliability and attendance**
Social work professionals must be reliable in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Students will lose 5% points per calendar day that an assignment is late. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on their due date. Any adjustments in assignment due dates and/or examination must be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled date. Missing class in excess of two times will impact learning and course grade. Students who miss more than three classes without a valid excuse, e.g., medical documentation) may be dropped from the Practice I course as well as Field Practicum.

**Class Participation**
Participating in class discussions, raising questions, being willing to share opinions and contributing to the learning environment are expectations of each student. The instructor reserves the right to add or subtract 5 points from the final grade in recognition of the student’s class participation. Please turn your cell phone off during class. Refrain from use of lap top computers unless the class activity necessitates use.

**Confidentiality**
Information shared in class about agencies and clients is considered to be confidential according to the NASW Code of Ethics regarding the sharing of information for supervisory purposes. Agencies are aware that information is shared in class for this purpose. Discussions outside of class with individuals who are not class or seminar members regarding information from class about clients, colleagues, supervisors or agencies marks a breach of confidentiality.

**Professional Conduct in Class**
The professor expects students to demonstrate professional behavior in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show courtesy and respect for one another’s opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. This also entails listening to the opinions and concerns of others with openness, offering suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner, and willingness to promote group cohesiveness in the learning environment.

**Plagiarism** When using information from other sources, references and the bibliography should conform to current APA style (refer to School of Social Work handout). Instances of plagiarism will be dealt with according to University policy. Be particularly cautious with plagiarism using electronic sources.

**Special Learning Needs**
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 have limited hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. Students with learning challenges are encouraged to discuss and resolve special needs with the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. For more information, visit [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/).
Religious Holidays and Observances
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, an examination, a work
assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an
opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

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

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 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

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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the
  UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Use of Blackboard in Class
The professor’s preferred means of communication are e-mail, phone, and in-person. Assignments and the
syllabus will be posted on Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected
access at http://courses.utexas.edu. Supplemental materials for class and announcements may also be
posted on Blackboard. Students will submit the brief assignment that is due on 11/24 via Blackboard since
students may not be on campus that day. 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.

Feedback Statement
During this course the professor will encourage students to provide feedback on their learning in informal
as well as formal ways, including through feedback cards and/or anonymous surveys about how the
professor’s teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is helpful for the professor to
know the students’ reactions to what is taking place in class. Students are encouraged to respond so that
together the professor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning. Students
are also encouraged to discuss any concerns in person with the professor.
## VII. Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/24</td>
<td>Course Overview: Syllabus, Class policies</td>
<td>Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Ch. 1</td>
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<td>The History and Functions of Social Work as a profession</td>
<td>Field Immersion Packet Readings</td>
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<td>“Legacies of Social Change” video</td>
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<td>8/31</td>
<td>Systems Theory, Person in Environment and the Generalist approach</td>
<td>Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Ch. 2</td>
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<td>Defining professional behavior and roles within systems</td>
<td>Packet: Blundo: “Learning Strengths-based Practice”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strengths and empowerment in action</td>
<td>Facione: “Critical thinking: What it is and why it counts”</td>
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<td>Know Thyself: Professional Use of Self</td>
<td>Glicken: “The Strengths Perspective and the Client-Worker Relationship”</td>
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<td>Walters: “An Introduction to use of self in field placement”</td>
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<td>Handout: Professional Use of Self</td>
<td>The Successful Internship Chs 1 &amp; 2</td>
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9/07
Cardinal principles and values of social work: Ethics and Values in Social Work Practice
The role of critical thinking in ethical practice
Confidentiality, Professional boundaries and Dual relationships: Case discussions
Brief Assignment #1 Due: Ethics Project
Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Ch. 4
Roberts and Greene: #14, “Ethical Issues”
NASW Code of Ethics – see UTSSW website
Packet:
Facione: “Critical Thinking: What it is and Why it Counts”
The Successful Internship: Chs 3 & 4

9/14
Linking social work roles to agency function
The first phase of the helping process: Engagement
Communication Skills/Relationship-building
The Empathic Helper
Class role playing exercises
Quiz #1
Hepworth, Rooney et al.: Ch. 3
Packet:
Fine: “The First Helping Interview”
Lukas: “Where to start and what to ask”
The Successful Internship: Chs 5&6

9/21
Communication Skills Continued
Goal Setting, Contracting, and Skill building
Class role playing continues
Agency Analysis paper and oral presentations due
Hepworth, Rooney et al.: Chs. 5, 6, 12
Roberts and Greene: #81, “Successful Therapeutic Relationships”
The Successful Internship: Chs 7&8
09/28
The Change-oriented Phase
Transtheoretical Model of Change
Deepening your skills and competence and reducing barriers to change
1st Process Recording Due for Field
Rosh HaShanah
Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Chs. 7, 17
Roberts and Greene: #91 “Transtheoretical Model”
The Successful Internship: Chs 9&10

10/05
Assessment as a product and process
Mental status exam
Tools for assessment of families: the genogram and ecomap.
10/08-10/10 NASW State Conference
Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Chs. 8 and 9
Roberts and Greene: #51 “Biopsychosocial Assessment”, #57 “Genograms”
Packet: DiClemente and Velasquez: “Motivational Interviewing and the Stages of Change”
The Successful Internship: Chs 11&12

10/12
Evidenced-based social work practice:
Becoming an Evidence-based Practitioner
BRIEF ASSIGNMENT #3 HISTORICAL REFLECTION DUE
Roberts and Greene: #21 “How Social Workers can do more good than harm”
Packet:
Furman: “Ethical Considerations of Evidence-Based Practice”
Weick: “Guilty Knowledge”
Additional handouts on EBP
The Successful Internship: Chs 13&14

October 14, 1:00 to 4:00 - The Sue Fairbanks Lecture in Psychoanalytic Knowledge presents:
The Sibling Relationship: A Force for Growth and Conflict, presented by Joyce Edward, LCSW, BSD
10/19 Multicultural and diversity issues in assessment and practice: Ethnographic interviewing and shifting the direction of change efforts

In class scheduling of video tape role play debriefing sessions

Quiz # 2
2nd Process recording due for field

10/17-10/21 Social Justice Week- Max. 5 field hours or 2 extra credit points

10/26 Implementing Change Strategies

Managing difficult Social Work Roles: Mandated clients and the use of Authority

Barriers to change: When Social Workers Aren’t Welcome

Role-Play Video-tape sessions occur this week

10/19
Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Ch. 10

Roberts and Greene: # 139 “Practice with Refugees/Immigrants”

NASW Standards for Cultural Competence – see UTSSW website

Handout: Cultural Competence Continuum

Handout: Ethnographic Interviewing

Packet: Johnson and Munch: “Fundamental Contradictions in Cultural Competence”

10/26
Hepworth, Rooney et al.: Chs. 13, 18

Roberts and Greene: #94 “Child Maltreatment”

Packet: Rooney: “Working with Involuntary Clients”

Schnitzer: “They don’t come in! Stories told…”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Source 1</th>
<th>Source 2</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Working with Groups Diverse Families and Resilience</td>
<td>Hepworth, Rooney et al.: Ch. 11, 15, 16</td>
<td>Roberts and Greene: #58 “Family Resilience”, #137 “GLBT Clients”</td>
<td>Handout on Task Groups</td>
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<td>Video Role Play Critiques due</td>
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<td>11/09</td>
<td>The Community as Context for Practice: Empowering communities and organizations</td>
<td>Hepworth, Rooney et al.: Ch. 14</td>
<td>Roberts and Greene: #129 “Community Practice Model”</td>
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<td>Packet:</td>
<td>Parsons, “Guidelines for Empowerment”</td>
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<td>11/16</td>
<td>Social Work’s Interface with Spirituality and Religion</td>
<td>Hepworth, Rooney, et al.: Ch. 19</td>
<td>Packet:</td>
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<td>Endings and Transitions</td>
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<td>Roberts and Greene: #89, “Terminating”</td>
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<td>Take home final distributed</td>
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**Multidimensional Case Assessment Due**
11/23 Required Student participation in video role play debriefing enables students to forego class on 11/23 for Thanksgiving holiday

Enjoy and Be Safe!!

3rd Process recording due for field

Brief Paper on Community Task Group due. Submit via Blackboard

11/30 Social Justice, Leadership and Professional Use of Self Time for review, reflection and evaluation

Take Home Final due 12/2 at noon

Bibliography and Table of Contents


Sweitzer, Frederick H. and King, Mary A. (2009) *The successful Internship:  

