

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW393R/SW360K/ WGS340
Unique Number: 94610/94620/88930/88940
Semester: Summer-2–2010
Meeting Time: MTWTH 8:30-10:30 am

Instructor: Dr. Dorie Gilbert
Office: SSW 3.130H
Office Phone: 512-471-8229
Office Hours: T/W 10:30-12:30

**Counseling African American Individuals, Couples, and Families:
Africentric Interventions**

I. Course Description

From individual counseling to community practice to simple awareness and advocacy, many helping professionals find themselves lacking the appropriate tools and techniques to assist and empower African American individuals and families. While a major strength of African Americans/Blacks is the ability to adapt and survive in a context of racism and adversity, many current problems of African Blacks are traced to the historical trauma resulting from slavery and persistent societal oppression. Accordingly, this course will emphasize Africentric-based psychological intervention and prevention models which instill traditional African and African American health and mental health promotion and cultural values (such as the African-centered behavior change model shown to be effective across several areas, including substance abuse, HIV prevention, and positive identity development). The course fills a void in traditional theories and approaches to psychological intervention and prevention services that fail to consider sociocultural aspects that contribute to the distress and concerns of African Americans. The course will prepare students to apply knowledge about the historical and current sociocultural factors impacting African Americans in designing assessment procedures, psychological interventions, prevention programs, and individual, couples, and family counseling models.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how the legacy of slavery, economic and socio-political forces have impacted the contemporary challenges facing African American men, women, children, older adults, families, and communities.
2. Demonstrate self-awareness regarding our existence in a multicultural society with particular attention to conflicting values, ethical dilemmas, empowerment and social justice.
3. Demonstrate an ability to identify similarities and differences between traditional, eurocentric approaches to theory and practice and africentric approaches.
4. Demonstrate skill in identifying diverse value orientations, life experiences, and worldviews of African Americans (intergroup and intragroup differences/similarities with regard to culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, physical or mental ability, age/generation, and national origin) which affect the type and nature of psychological intervention and/or prevention models needed.
5. Demonstrate skill in critically evaluating the appropriateness of assessments, standardized measures, intervention and prevention strategies, and research designs related to characteristics of African American populations.
6. Demonstrate skill in designing and presenting a workshop or proposal for a culturally consistent and theory-driven africentric-based psychological intervention and/or prevention model.

III. Teaching Methods

The teaching methods for this course include lectures, discussions, informal student presentations, guest speakers, video and audio materials, and community collaborations in designing final projects.

IV. Required Texts/Readings

Parham, Thomas A. (Ed.). (2002). *Counseling Persons of African Descent: Raising the Bar of Practitioner Competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Richardson, B. (2000). What mama couldn't teach us about love: Healing the emotional legacy of slavery, celebrating our light. LaPort, IN: Harper Collins. *****Read in full by JULY 22 class period*****

Required Course packet: ON-LINE (or available at UT Copy Center)

Reference Texts (on reserve at LRC)

Jones, R. L. (1996). Handbook of tests and measurements for Black populations (Vols. 1 & 2). Hampton, VA: Cobb & Henry.

Logan, S. (2008). Social Work with People of African Descent. CSWE Press.

Dana, R (2000). (Ed.). Handbook of cross-cultural and multicultural personality assessment. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Bibliography (Available online)

V. CLASS POLICIES

Class Meetings: Class will be conducted as a seminar with students having responsibility to review case studies, discuss concepts from readings, and show evidence of critical thinking. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and actively participate by raising questions and fostering discussions. Participation is essential to the student's learning progress. Assigned readings must be completed before the class meeting. Electronic Devices: Students are not allowed electronic devices in classroom. Use of laptops requires signed agreement.

Confidentiality: Students are expected to adhere to the standards of professional confidentiality in discussing clients' and peers' experiences and related matters.

Attendance & Late Assignments: Attendance is mandatory. Beyond one absence, each absence will result in 5 points being subtracted from the final grade points. A three-point penalty per day will be applied to late assignments. An individual exception will be made only in the event of documented, unavoidable circumstances beyond the student's control.

OTHER 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.

Professional Conduct in Class

The professor 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 professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

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://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

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). 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. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

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, 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 <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 among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Use of Blackboard in Class

In this class the professor 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.

10. Religious Holy days: A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious Holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution, & Critical Thinking Papers (15% of grade)

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and actively participate by raising questions and issues in class discussions and exercises. Students are expected to be prepared to respond to the instructor’s discussion questions. To foster contributions, students will be asked to respond in writing to key questions about the readings. These written critical thinking assignments will be assigned as homework and will focus on the main themes of the selected week’s class readings. Review and sign active learning contract for part of this grade.

2. Weekly Quizzes (30% of grade)

There will be five weekly quizzes (Monday, Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5) containing a combination of objective (70%) and short answer questions (30%).

3. Undergraduate Students:

Final Exam (Objective and Essay format)

Graduate Students--Research & Project Implementation Paper and Presentation

Graduate students will be required to write a 10-page research paper that will focus on experiences of one or more African American sub-groups. Papers are required to be typed, double-spaced, 12-font and adhere to APA 5th edition journal format. Students will be responsible for turning in a paper proposal that identifies the paper topic, specific issues they plan to cover and how they will go about researching their topic. See Guide to completing Research & Project Implementation Paper.

Grading and Weighting of Assignments

	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Attendance, Contribution & Critical Thinking Exercises	15%	15%
Quizzes	30%	30%
Research Paper		45%
Paper Presentation		10%
Final exam	55%	
Research Paper		
Total	100%	100%

Quality of writing, grammar, organization and adherence to APA format will e considered in evaluation of all written assignments. Grades will be assigned as follows:

GRADING SCALE (Graduate & Undergraduate)

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

CRITERIA for GRADING

A/A-	SUPERIOR: Significantly exceeds assignments/performance expectations; demonstrates a high level of in-depth critical thinking and analysis that resulted in work additional to that laid out in the assignment guidelines and exceptional integration of ideas and course material.
B+/B/B-	GOOD: Assignment/overall performance in course meets all the requirements with evidence of critical thinking and analysis.
C+/C/C-	AVERAGE: Assignments/performance meets the requirements or has minor gaps; lacks evidence of in-depth thinking and analysis
D+/D/D-	BELOW AVERAGE: Important gaps exist in meeting the requirements and evidence of critical thinking and analysis.

