SOCIAL WORK INFORMATICS:
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIAL WORK MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

Course number:	**SW 393T**	**Faculty:**	**Suzanne Potts, MSW, MPH**
Unique number:	**94950**	**Office number:**	**3.106F**
Meeting time:	**TU/TH 5:30-8PM**	**Office phone:**	**(619) 994-1871**
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Office Hours:	**TH 4:30-5:30PM**		

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Human services are under increasing pressure to document the services they provide in light of the diminished resources. As a result of these demands, agencies compile data consisting of the number of services provided, the outcomes, and the demographics of clients receiving those services. Human service practitioners and managers are frequently using technological products (i.e., word processing applications, email, text messaging, case management applications) to not only document services provided to clients, but also to facilitate communication, report outcomes to funding agencies, and monitor trends in service delivery. Because human service managers are not working in a technological environment, they must become familiar with the technologies that agencies are typically using to document services, the ways to use technology to improve the overall quality of services provided to clients, and the barriers and opportunities afforded by the increased integration of technology into human services.

This course emphasizes the use of information technology in human service delivery and management (1) to improve overall quality of services provided by agency staff as well as (2) to leverage the implicit knowledge of workers so that agency's foster ongoing innovations in service provision. To that end, students in this course will be exposed to traditional management practices, intra-agency communication strategies using various technologies, factors facilitating and impeding information flow in organizations, and the technological opportunities and limitations facing human services as these organizations integrate technology into their daily operations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. understand the role of information and technology in both the management and delivery of human services; **(CAL/APB 7)**

2. understand how organizational, interpersonal, ethical, and cultural factors facilitate and impede the flow and exchange of knowledge (i.e., formal/informal structure, hierarchy, organizational roles, the democratic ideal, and similar factors) within organizations; **(CAL/APB 7)**

3. identify traditional methods of disseminating and exchanging knowledge in organizations and their strengths and weaknesses (i.e., policy manuals, memo systems, staff meetings, training, MIS, organizational development, and other methods); **(CAL/APB 6 & 9)**

4.   apply automated methods of information collection, dissemination and analysis (i.e., database management, report generation, spread sheet analysis, electronic mail systems, and other methods); **(CAL/APB 6)**

5.   assess organizations to determine the ways in which they make use of technology to facilitate communication between staff members and compile client information regarding services and outcomes achieved; **(CAL/APB 9)**

6.   apply general-purpose computer software to such human service information problems as client information and tracking systems, information and referral problems, budget preparation and analysis, and related problems; and, **(CAL/APB 10b, c, & d)**

7.   analyze the differential impact of technology on diverse client and user groups. **(CAL/APB 10c)**

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.

EP2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

CAL/APB6 Use empirical evidence to create strategies for system change

Objectives 3, 4

Assignments: Logic Model development and presentation

EP2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

CAL/APB7 Synthesize and select human behavior and the social environment theories to develop effective macro interventions

Objectives 1, 2

Assignments: Logic Model project and classroom discussions

EP2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.

CAL/APB9 Engage in continuous environmental scanning and forecasting and adapt macro practice based on the acquired knowledge

Objectives 3, 5, 6

Assignments: Agency budget project

EP2.1.10b Assessment
CAL/APB10b Design and conduct community, organizational, and technological assessments
Objectives 6

Assignments: Agency Technology Program Assessment project and presentation

EP2.1.10c Intervention
CAL/APB10c Critically apply systematic interventions that prevent problems, expand opportunities, and enhance quality of life
Objectives 6, 7

Assignments: Agency Technology Program Assessment project and presentation

EP2.1.10d Evaluation
CAL/APB10d Develop and recommend program and/or policy changes based on evaluation
Objectives 6
Assignments: Agency Technology Program Assessment project and presentation

TEACHING METHODS

This course is an intensive class-based learning that introduces them to the concepts, processes, and practice of human service information technology. At the end of this course students will be fluent in the terms used by information technology managers and will have a theoretical framework to assess information technology needs within an organization. Students will develop a logic model for a hypothetical program or project, as well as create an annual budget using Excel. The instructor will assign students into work teams for the Agency Technology Program Assessment. These teams will be provided an agency vignette to conduct an assessment of the agency and/or the program. The assessment seeks to identify the current technology in the agency/program, the agency's technological efforts towards improving the quality of services, and the mechanisms for exchanging knowledge among staff or programs within the agency/program. Student teams will meet with the instructor to discuss the process and outcome of the assessment for the assigned program and then present a PowerPoint presentation on their findings.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. All readings are included in the reading packet available at Speedway and/or available as PDF on Blackboard. Speedway is located at Dobie Mall, 2025 Guadalupe; (512) 478-3334. Readings will also be available on Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING

The assignments for this class include an in-class assessment based on the readings, presentation of projects, an information technology assessment, and an agency presentation. Each section includes the weighted percentage for that grade.

Discussion (20%)
This course will include discussion on readings, topics and small group work. Your participation in classroom discussion is expected and encouraged. This will be graded by attendance to the class and observation by the instructor.

In class exam (40 %)
The exam tests student knowledge and comprehension of the basic concepts, processes, and terminology associated with information technology, knowledge management, and IT in the nonprofit sector.

Logic Model Project (10 %)
In this project, students will develop a Logic Model on program, project or agency of your choice. It must include Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Short and Long Term Outcomes and overall Impact expected. A sample Logic Model will be developed in class and discussed from readings.

Agency Budget Project (10 %)
Students will demonstrate appropriate skill level and knowledge of basic Excel spreadsheet and develop an annual agency or program budget.

Agency Technology Program Assessment and Presentation (20 %)

Work teams will be provided an agency vignette to assess their agency information technology needs. Towards the end of the assessment, each student group is required to submit a PowerPoint presentation and corresponding Board memo assessing a particular project or program. These two items are the student's demonstration that they integrated the readings, analyzed the group process used to coordinate the project, reflected on the student meetings including what was discussed (in terms of tasks), tasks that were completed, and challenges in completing the project. *The PowerPoint will be presented in class. The Board memo is expected well-developed, carefully thought-out reflections of your perspective or ideas. The memo should be emailed to me by midnight on the date listed below. Late memos will not be accepted and will count as an automatic zero.*

The guidelines for this assessment will be drawn from Bennett, the readings, and the needs of the organization. Each assessment must include a detailed description of the methodology used to gather information about the agency's technology (i.e., interviews with staff or clients; document reviews), the methods to analyze the data, the conclusions, and recommendations for agency. **The report should look professional and reflect your team's knowledge, skills, and professional social work practice.**

The team will present the results of their technology assessment to the class. This presentation will be an informal showcasing of process the group engaged in to determine the technological needs of the organization as well as the results of the assessment. Typically, student groups' schedule the presentation and it lasts approximately 30 minutes with 10 minutes for questions and answers. Students' must submit copies of the presentation evaluation to the professor with a brief description of their perspectives of the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation.

Grading Matrix for class assignments:

A	100 - 94
A-	93 - 90
B+	89 - 87
B	86 - 84
B-	83 - 80
C+	79 - 77
C	76 - 74
C-	73 - 70
D+	69 - 67
D	66 - 64
D-	63 - 60
F	59 and below

CLASS POLICIES

Assignment Submissions

Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. Late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of ten (10) percent of the value of the assignment for each day late. If a student has a significant and unavoidable conflict with an assignment's due date, then they should contact the instructor well in advance to discuss an alternate submission date.

Student Feedback and Performance Questions

Student feedback is welcome. Students are encouraged to provide feedback during office hours, by phone, by e-mail, and otherwise by appointment. If students have questions on a specific assignment or general course topic, the professor is willing to work with them outside of class or office hours**.**

Special Accommodations for Students with a Disability

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. See following web site for more information: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php or contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

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. "Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act. (From UT's General Information Catalog, Appendix C, Sec. 11-802).

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/acint_student.php)

SCHEDULE

Class #	Date	Class content/Activity	Readings and/or Assignment
1	June 2, 2011	SW Informatics 101	**Kling ;** Pre-survey (in class)
2	June 7, 2011	Information Seeking	**Parker-Oliver;** http://gsswdenver.wordpress.com/ http://www.socialworker.com/home/index.php
3	June 9, 2011	Logic Models	**O'Looney;** **Carillo;** **Kellogg Foundation, Chapter 1 & 2** Homework-Logic Model **(DUE June 21)**
4	June 14, 2011	Information Systems	**Megivern, McMillen, Proctor, Striley, Cabasa, & Munson;**
5	June 16, 2011	Evidence-Based Decisions	**Kunkel;** **Benotsch et al.,**
6	June 21, 2011	Dealing with Data-Using Excel	Guest Speaker-OneStar Foundation: Texas Connector GIS system Homework-Agency Budget **(DUE June 30)**
7	June 23, 2011	Ethical Challenges with Technology	**Schopler, Abell, & Galinsky** **Gelman; Dunlop et al. ; NASW Policy statement**
8	June 28, 2011	Innovation in Technology	**McNutt, J. G., & Menon, G. M.;Kanani, K., & Regehr, C**
9	June 30, 2011	Program Evaluation	Guest Speaker-LAF Program Evaluation
10	July 5, 2011	Agency Assessment	Homework-Agency Vignettes **(DUE July 19)**
11	July 7, 2011	Social Media and Social Work	http://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/ Review: Social Work Podcast
12	July 12, 2011	Marketing your Organization	http://www.socialworktoday.com/archive/marapr2007p14.shtml
13	July 14, 2011	Project Presentations	No readings
14	July 19, 2011	Project Presentations	Agency technology assessments and evaluations DUE
15	July 21, 2011	Project Presentations	Post-survey (in class)
16	July 26, 2011	Last Class	Survey Results discussion

Readings in bold are included in the course packet.

AGENCY PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

Date: _____   _____

Program _____

_____

CONTENT	Y	N
The presentation covers the whole project		
Points in the presentation are clear		
The presentation is pitched to the audience well		
The presentation did not offer unclear jargon or unexplained acronyms		
The content of the presentation is suitable to our agency		

25 points

ORGANIZATION	Y	N
The presentation is well prepared and organized		
The assessment is appropriate considering the program		
The assessment is appropriate considering the agency		
The presentation is easy to follow		
The presentation addresses IT and KM needs and solutions		

25 points

DELIVERY	Y	N
The presentation is engaging		
The presentation is well delivered		
The presenters addressed the points on the overheads		
The presenters spoke clearly with good volume and enunciation, and no mumbling		
Efficient, avoided stumbling blocks and confusion		

25 points

FORMAT	Y	N
The slides are not too busy and the font is large enough to read		
The visuals supported the presentation		
The presentation did not have misspellings, poor grammar, or misuse of words		
The format of the presentation fits with the needs of the audience		
Presentation was within time frame allotted		

25 points

Suggestions:

Total: