

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

<b>Course Number:</b> SW 393R29	<b>Instructor's Name:</b> Mitch Sudolsky, LCSW
<b>Unique Number:</b> 61675	<b>Office Number:</b> SSW 3.124K <b>Phone:</b> 512-475-7328
<b>Semester:</b> Fall 2018	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:sudolsky@mail.utexas.edu">sudolsky@mail.utexas.edu</a>
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b> W 2:30-5:30 PM SSW 2.132	<b>Office Hours:</b> W 1:00-2:00 PM and by appointment

**CRISIS INTERVENTION**

**I. Standardized Course Description**

This course is designed as an advanced clinical selective for graduate students in the School of Social Work who wish to increase knowledge and skills for practice with crisis intervention. The prevalence of acute crisis situations in our society necessitates that social workers acquire a knowledge and skill base for effective applications of theory to practice with identified at-risk populations. Special vulnerabilities and ethical concerns for at-risk populations will be examined. Students will apply crisis intervention theory and models of intervention to various problem areas such as suicide, sexual assault, domestic violence, substance abuse, grief and loss, and violent behavior in institutions. A biopsychosocial and cultural emphasis will be applied to the various problems covered.

**II. Standardized Course Objectives**

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic theoretical approaches and models of crisis intervention.
2. Demonstrate skill in the application of the triage model in the assessment of cognitive, affective and behavioral domains in crisis situations.
3. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of the relationship between assessment and intervention as it relates to the strengths, the processes involved in human change, and the capacities and resources of people in crisis.
4. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of intervention with specific areas of crisis, including suicide, sexual assault, domestic violence, substance abuse, grief and loss, and violent behavior in institutions.
5. Critically examine professional use of self and personal limits involved in crisis intervention.

6. Critically evaluate ethical and professional issues related to crisis intervention, with particular attention paid to the principles of ethical decision-making as presented by the NASW Code of Ethics.
7. Demonstrate the ability to adapt intervention models and strategies to reflect an understanding of persons from religion/spirituality, physical or mental ability, developmental level, age, and national origin.
8. Demonstrate the ability to skillfully implement, document, and evaluate the effectiveness of clinical interventions for people in crisis.

### III. TEACHING METHODS

The instructor will incorporate a variety of teaching methods, including readings, lectures, discussions, audiovisual materials, guest speakers, and small group activities around clinical case examples.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Yeager, K. and Roberts, A.R. (2015) Crisis intervention handbook (4<sup>th</sup> edition)

Montross, C. (2013) Falling into the fire: a psychiatrist's encounters with the mind in crisis

Linde, P. (2010) Danger to self: on the front line with an ER psychiatrist

Selected required readings will also be placed on Canvas.

### V. Course Requirements

#### 1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (15% of grade)

**Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to participate in class discussion and exercises. Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and to be prepared to demonstrate their familiarity with major concepts and ideas from the readings during class discussions and experiential learning assignments. The grade for class participation will be determined by the instructor's rating of the quality and quantity of students' contributions to class discussions.**

Students are expected to attend all classes. However, students will be allowed **one** unexcused absence. In cases where a student misses more than one class, the instructor reserves the right to lower the student's final grade by one point for each class missed. Students should not leave class during the break, as leaving at the break will count as an absence. In extenuating circumstances requiring more than one absence, the student is to inform the instructor; documentation may be required. Students are responsible for any material (class notes, handouts, etc.) missed due to absence.

## 2. Examinations (60% of grade)

Two 90 minute examinations will be given during the course of the semester (see course schedule for dates). Examinations will include case analyses and short-answer questions. Short-answer questions will be similar to the licensing exam questions and will give the student an opportunity to practice the necessary test-taking skills needed to pass that exam.

## 3. Crisis intervention in action (25% of grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to learn about a human services organization or agency in central Texas that provides crisis intervention services. Students should identify an organization or agency and research its mission, activities, and accomplishments in depth with respect to its target population(s). This research must include some contact with the organization/agency, e.g., via visit, interview with staff, phone conversation, email, etc.

Subsequent to this, students are asked to write an 8-10 page paper about the organization/agency and the target population, and answer the following questions:

- a) What is the scope of the problem addressed by the agency? Epidemiological data about prevalence and vulnerable populations should be presented in this section.
- b) Describe the agency that is the focus of your study: How did the agency get started? How long has it been in existence? What is its mission? How is it funded?
- c) Describe the operations of the agency. What are its referral sources? How is it staffed? What interventions are utilized? Does the agency use evidence-based practices? What role do social workers play in direct service and in administration?
- d) Does the agency evaluate the effectiveness of its services? Does it conduct a formal program evaluation? Is this a place where you would like to work? Why or why not?
- e) Conclusions

**Note:** This assignment is due at the last class meeting. **Papers will not be accepted after this time.**

### **Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments**

**The skills possessed by effective professional social workers include the ability to write well and to speak in an articulate and persuasive manner to groups. Your written work should be well conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. Papers must be typewritten, proofread for spelling and grammatical errors, double-spaced and in 12 font, and must follow the APA style format. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) is the style manual to be used for all assignments. Incorrect use of APA style may result in a deduction of points on assignments. Appropriate referencing (authors, titles, page numbers, etc.) of assignments is required. This**

includes giving due credit to others when indirect quotes (paraphrasing) and direct (verbatim) quotes are used. Short direct quotes (less than 40 words) must be placed in quotation marks. Long direct quotes (40 or more words) should be indented. Paraphrasing requires more than changing a word or two in a sentence. Failure to give due to credit to others will result in a “0” for the assignment and/or an “F” for the course. **Plagiarism is a form of scholastic dishonesty and will be addressed as such. If you do not know how to cite appropriately, please learn before you submit any assignments.**

**Papers must include the following elements:**

- **Clear answers to all required questions**
- **Adherence to assignment parameters around length of paper (Note: papers less than the minimum length will receive no higher than a grade of 80; papers exceeding the maximum length will only be graded on a review of the maximum number of pages stipulated by the assignment)**
- **Evidence of independent, critical thinking**
- **Research from peer-reviewed professional journals and from recent books**
- **Integration of material from lectures and course readings**
- **Use of grammar, spelling, and punctuation appropriate to graduate level written work.**

**VI. GRADES**

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

**VII. CLASS POLICIES**

1. It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late. **The paper due at the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last class meeting.**

2. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than one class without a valid excuse, e.g., medical illness or family emergency) will be penalized one point per unexcused absence when points are totaled. More than three unexcused absences may result in a failing grade for the course.
3. This course is part of a professional training program. The behavior that is expected of social workers in professional practice is also expected of students in this course. Students are expected to arrive at class punctually, to remain in class for its duration, and to maintain focus upon course content during class. Eating in class is permitted only during breaks. Cell phones, smart phones and laptops must be turned off. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.
4. During this course, the professor will ask students to provide feedback on their learning in informal as well as formal ways, including anonymous surveys about how the professor's teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is very important for the professor 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 professor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.
5. If students are concerned about their grades, the instructor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades prior to the end of the semester. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during office hours if you have any concerns or questions about the course material or about your performance in the course. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable.**
6. Course modifications: Should any modifications or changes need to be made to the course (e.g., calendar, assignments), students will be notified in class and/or by e-mail. Students should check their e-mail frequently, and students who are absent from class should check on announcements made in class during their absence.

## VIII UNIVERSITY 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 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.

**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 instructor. The instructor 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 can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at [512-471-3515](tel:512-471-3515) or online at [www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/](http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/).

**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.

**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/>).

**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 copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor 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 sharing those materials with other current or future students.

**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. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**CAMPUS CARRY.** Information on The University's policy on concealed firearms (Campus Carry) may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu/>

**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.

**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>.

**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 FERPA regulations as well. Discussions with individuals outside of the educational context are 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.

**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](tel: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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
8/29/18	Course Overview	
9/5/18	Crisis intervention theory	Yeager, Introduction, Ch. 1,5,25 Linde, Preface, Ch. 1,4,10 Montross, Prologue
9/12/18	Crisis intervention skills	Yeager, Ch. 3,20 Montross, Ch. 1
9/19/18	Sexual assault; intimate partner violence	Yeager, Ch. 16,17 Linde, Ch. 9
9/26/18	PTSD; disasters and community approaches	Yeager, Ch. 4,7,8
10/3/18	The chronically mentally ill client; psychosis and involuntary psychiatric commitment	Montross, Ch. 2,3,5
10/10/18	<b>Exam #1</b>	
10/17/18	Police and social work practice	Yeager, Ch. 10,19 “Making policing safer for everyone,” <i>NY Times</i> 3/2/16 Rachlin, B., New Hampshire has the second highest rate of drug overdoses, <i>New York Times Magazine</i> , 7/6/17

10/24/18	Crisis work with substance use disorders	Yeager, Ch. 18 Linde, Ch. 5,8 The addicts next door, <i>The New Yorker</i> , 6/5/17
10/31/18	Suicidality; danger to self	Yeager, Ch. 2,6 Linde, Ch. 2,6,7 Granello (2010), A suicide crisis intervention model with 25 practical strategies for implementation Joiner, et.al.(1999), Scientizing and routinizing the assessment of suicidality in outpatient practice
11/7/18	Danger to others: working with potentially violent persons	Linde, Ch. 3 Montross, Ch. 4
11/14/18	Crises involving loss; developmental crises; medical illness and disability <b>Crisis Intervention in Action paper due</b>	Yeager, Ch. 12,13,14,15,23,24
11/21/18	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	
11/28/18	<b>Exam #2</b>	
12/5/18	Burnout Discussion of findings from Crisis Intervention in Action papers	Yeager, Ch. 22 Linde, Epilogue Montross, Epilogue

## **X. Bibliography**

Yeager, K. and Roberts, A.R. (2015) Crisis intervention handbook (4<sup>th</sup> edition)

Montross, C. (2013) Falling into the fire: a psychiatrist's encounters with the mind in crisis

Linde, P. (2010) Danger to self: on the front line with an ER psychiatrist