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

**Course Number:** SW 312

**Instructor:** Vicki Packheiser, LCSW

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**Unique Number:** 61125

**Office Number:** 3.116D

**Semester:** Spring 2018

**Office Phone:** (512) 471-2364

**Meeting Time/Place:**

Tuesdays and Thursdays

12:30-2pm

Room 2.118

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays from 2-3pm

& by appointment

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**Generalist Social Work Practice:  
Skills, Knowledge and Values**

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course 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 and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice; and the development of observation, communication, interviewing and assessment skills utilizing the problem solving approach. Experiential learning is emphasized, including a 45 hour service learning requirement in which students have direct client contact.

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this 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 and 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

This class will be taught using a variety of methods to foster a stimulating, creative, collaborative and interactive learning community. Experiential learning and exercises to promote self awareness in relation to class content will be utilized. Other teaching methods include class discussion, videos, guest speakers, lecture and assigned learning activities in the community. For a meaningful experience in this class, students must actively participate, take risks, stretch their creativity and critical thinking skills and attend class regularly. All students are encouraged to provide the instructor feedback and meet with the instructor individually as needed to enhance their learning.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

#### **Required Text**

Birkenmaier, J., Berg-Werner, M., and Dewees, M.P. (2017). *The practice of generalist social work*. (4th ed.) New York: Routledge.

**Additional required weekly readings and handouts will be posted on Canvas.**

#### **Students are also expected to review:**

UTSSW Standards for Social Work Education

<http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/standards-sw-education.pdf>

NASW Code of Ethics

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Conduct

[http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/sw\\_conduct.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/sw_conduct.shtm)

NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence

<http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/PRA-BRO-253150-CC-Standards.pdf>

NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care

<http://www.compassionstrengths.com/uploads/NASW.ProfesionalSelf-Care.pdf>

### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to complete all the assignments listed below. Detailed assignment 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 they have any questions about the assignments. Grading sheets with point allocation will be provided with the assignment guidelines. All written assignments will be graded on depth and quality of required content, creativity and critical thinking skills, overall professionalism and quality of writing. Specific point totals for each assignment are listed below. **All students are required to complete a grading sheet that is to be turned in with each written assignment to foster their skill and comfort in self evaluation – a critical component of practice evaluation.**

### **Service Learning Requirement**

All students enrolled in SW 312 are required to complete 45 hours of service learning in a community agency or organization. Instructions, forms and due dates for this course requirement will be provided in a separate handout.

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>
Weekly Written Learning Reflections (14 – 5 points each)	70
Service Learning Form Submission (4 points each)	24
Student Learning Assessment	3
Semester Self Care Plan	5
VIA Signature Strengths Inventory	3
Midterm Take Home Exam	100
Video Project	65
Service Learning Portfolio	50
Final Take Home Exam	100
Class Participation (punctuality, attendance, and active participation in class – 2 points per class)	60
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>480</b>

### **VI. GRADES**

**Letter grades will be assigned according to the University grading scale:**

	<b>Grade</b>
94.0 and above	A
90.0 - 93.999	A-
87.0 - 89.999	B+
84.0 - 86.999	B
80.0 - 83.999	B-
77.0 - 79.999	C+
74.0 - 76.999	C
70.0 - 73.999	C-
67.0 - 69.999	D+
64.0 - 66.999	D
60.0 - 63.999	D-
59.999 and below	F

### **VII. CLASS POLICIES**

#### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and participation for the full class is expected for all students. Repeated late arrivals to class may be considered as an absence. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other class experiential exercises are essential for the students' professional learning and continued development of self awareness. This form of learning cannot be "made up" once missed. Consequently 2 points will be deducted for any missed classes (loss of class participation points). Students are to notify the

professor prior to class at the given office phone number or by email if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency. In addition, the professor reserves the right to add or deduct up to 5 points to students' final point total based on the overall quality of their classroom participation during the semester.

### **Papers**

Students are expected to produce high quality work in terms of appearance, writing style and content. Points will be deducted for errors, misspellings, incorrect grammar, poor organization and formatting, repetition of information, and inferior word processing. When using information from other sources, references and bibliography should conform to the current APA style citation. Students are encouraged to consult with the Undergraduate Writing Center at <http://uwc.utexas.edu> (512) 471-6222 for assistance with any writing assignments. Plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy.

### **Time Management**

**Assignments will be penalized 5 points per day that they are late.** Contact the professor before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency.

### **Feedback**

Students will be asked to provide feedback on their learning and the professor's teaching strategies in informal as well as formal ways. It is very important for the professor to know the students' reactions to what is taking place in class, ensuring that together the professor and students can create a dynamic and effective learning community. Students are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback to the professor during class and office visits.

## **VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

All students are expected to review the Standards for Social Work Education found on the School of Social Work website. The following policies will be observed:

### **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 as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in class discussions, 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. Students are expected 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 students will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism. This entails listening to the opinions, concerns and feelings of others with openness, speaking honestly about one's own experience, offering suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner, and being willing to promote group cohesiveness in the learning environment. **Use of cell phones and laptops is not permitted during class.**

### **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 professor. The professor 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 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu>.

### **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 that 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 remember 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 class, 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 professor 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 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). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. 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/>.

### **Religious Holidays**

According to 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>.

### **Campus Carry Policy**

The University's policy on concealed firearms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

### **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 regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is 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 email address. Students should check their email 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 are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## **IX. COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Note:** Text readings are listed here but additional Canvas readings will be found in the weekly modules on Canvas. Please be sure to check Canvas in your preparation for class.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>	<b>Readings</b>
T 1/16	Course Overview Understanding Service Learning and Experiential Education Kolb’s Cycle of Experiential Learning		(Reviewed in class) Course Syllabus Course Assignment Guidelines Service Learning Packet
Th 1/18	Preparing for your Service Learning: Professional Community Engagement Dweck’s Fixed vs. Growth Mindset Generalist Social Work Practice	Student Learning Assessment Service Learning Liability Form	Standards for Social Work Education Text Ch. 1 pp. 1-23
T 1/23	Professional Use of Self Professional Self Care: An Ethical Standard		NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care Text Ch. 3 pp. 169-174
Th 1/25	Social Work Values and Ethics	Semester Self Care Plan Learning Reflection #1	Text Ch. 2 NASW Code of Ethics Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Conduct
T 1/30	Applying Social Work Values and Ethics		Canvas Reading



Th 2/1	Theories and Models for Social Work Practice	VIA Signature Strengths Inventory  Learning Reflection #2	Text Ch. 1 pp. 25-38, Ch. 4 pp. 109-116
T 2/6	Theories and Models for Social Work Practice (Continued)		Canvas Reading
Th 2/8	Service Learning Seminar #1	Learning Reflection #3	Canvas Reading
T 2/13	Relationship Skills for All Levels of Practice		Text Ch. 3
Th. 2/15	Relationship Skills – Applied Practice	Service Learning Form #1  Learning Reflection #4	Canvas Reading
T 2/20	Multiculturalism, Cultural Humility and Social Justice Values in Practice		Text Ch. 4 pp. 119-124
Th 2/22	Overview of the Helping Process Working with Individuals Assessment and Planning	Learning Reflection #5	Text Ch. 4 pp. 125-168
T 2/27	Working with Individuals: Developing Intervention Plans  Social Work Roles  Goals and Contracting		Text. Ch. 5  Canvas Reading

Th 3/1	Suicide Assessment	Learning Reflection #6	Text pp. 154, 163-168 Canvas Reading
T 3/6	Working with Families Family Strengths and Resilience Genograms and Ecomaps	Midterm Take Home Exam	Text Ch. 6
Th 3/8	Working with Families (Continued)	Service Learning Form #2 Learning Reflection #7	Text Ch. 7
T 3/13 Th 3/15	Spring Break – Enjoy!		
T 3/20	Service Learning Seminar #2		Canvas Reading
Th 3/22	Abuse and Neglect of Children and the Elderly Mandated Reporting Laws	Learning Reflection #8	Canvas Reading
M 3/26	SW Student Day at the Legislature “Social Justice in the Public Sphere: Challenges and Strategies”		Canvas Reading
T 3/27	Social Work Practice with Groups		Text Ch. 8
Th 3/29	Social Work Practice with Groups (Continued)	Learning Reflection #9	Text Ch. 9

T 4/3	Crisis Intervention		Canvas Reading
Th 4/5	Additional Skill Based Practice	Learning Reflection #10	
T 4/10	Service Learning Seminar #3		Canvas Reading
Th 4/12	Social Work Practice with Communities	Video Project (Written Critique)  Learning Reflection #11	Text Ch. 10 and 11
T 4/17	Social Work Practice with Organizations		Text Ch. 12 and 13
Th 4/19	Leadership in Social Work Practice	Learning Reflection #12	Canvas Reading
T 4/24	Termination and Evaluation		Canvas Reading
Th 4/26	Creativity in Social Work Practice	Learning Reflection #13	Canvas Reading
T 5/1	Service Learning Seminar #4		Canvas Reading

Th 5/3	Course Review and Ending Celebration	Moments of Excellence  Service Learning Portfolio  Service Learning Forms #2,3,4  Learning Reflection #14	
M 5/7		Final Take Home Exam	