1. **Standardized Course Description**

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

2. **Standardized Course Objectives**

   By the end of the 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 or 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.

3. **Teaching Methods**

   Although a variety of teaching methods will be employed (e.g., lecture, discussion, and group projects), experiential learning (e.g., volunteering, conducting oral histories, and practice interviewing with video feedback) is emphasized in this course.
This course will use an electronic Blackboard site. Blackboard will be used for communication between students, the instructor, and the TA. Some materials, grades, and attendance will also be posted online. To reach your class site on Blackboard, please go to http://courses.utexas.edu or go to the Social Work web page and click on Blackboard. To access the course website, you must have an internet connection and computer access. You will need a UT EID and password. The Help Desk available through the UT home page (www.utexas.edu/its/help) can assist you with your computer and blackboard questions. You can also call them at 475-9400. Additionally, the Learning Resource Center at the SSW has computers and computer assistance.

4. Required & Recommended Texts & Materials
Required texts:

Recommended texts:

5. Course Requirements & Assignments
Students are expected to attend class sessions regularly and participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments. Failure to regularly attend the class and demonstrate through discussions that one comprehends the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Grade Points:</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Social Work in the Real World Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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Assignments

1. Community/Volunteer Experience
   - Students must complete 45 hours of volunteer work in an agency of their choice. 
     [NOTE: Only 5 hours of training can be used toward the 45 hour requirement.]
     If you are concurrently enrolled in SW310, you only have to complete 70 volunteer hours (instead of 90).
   - Students are required to choose an agency of their choice for completion of the volunteer requirement of this course, from the list of recommended agencies compiled by the School of Social Work BSW Office. If you are interested in volunteering at an agency that is not on the recommended list you must provide the instructor with a request related to the alternate agency. All agencies must provide specific social work services and employ licensed social workers. Provide the agency name, description of agency, and the contact information of the social worker employed by the agency. Instructor will follow up with agency social worker to verify the acceptance of the alternate agency.

   - Volunteer Agency Selection Form (Required for course credit)
     Indicate the agency selected for volunteer work, location, supervisor, and scheduled volunteer hours.

   - Volunteer Hour Log Sheet (Required for course credit)
     Each student must turn in a log documenting all hours completed during the semester. A log sheet will be handed out as the beginning of the semester.

   - Volunteer Evaluation Form (Required for course credit)
     Students will submit an evaluation of their performance in their volunteer placement by their agency volunteer supervisor.

   - Reflection Papers (35 points each)
     These papers will reflect on topics discussed in class and incorporate classroom and volunteer knowledge to discuss your learning and experiences in a 5-page paper. Papers should include a combination of content related to class topics, assigned questions, and personal insight and experience to be considered complete. You will receive a list of the topics for each paper in advance. Appropriate APA formatting and grammar will also be included in grading. APA style is considered the standard for assignments in the School of Social Work. Information is available in the latest addition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association in the reference section in the LRC.

   - Education Contract (10 points)
     The education contract is a format for organizing your personal learning objectives for accomplishment at your volunteer agency with specific activities designed to help you meet those objectives. This contract also illustrates the type of contracts useful when working with clients. You will receive specific instructions for the format of this assignment.
2. Other Assignments
   - **Genogram/Questions and Cultural Profile** (20 points)
   - **Eco map** (10 points)
   - **Generalist Case Group Assignment** (10 points)
     Students will work in groups and will prepare a class presentation on a case assigned to the text (Decision Cases for Generalist Practice). Students not presenting an assigned case are also expected to read and be prepared to ask questions and contribute to the class discussion of the case being presented on the specific class day. Presentations should be 10-15 minutes long.
   - **Social Work and the Real World** (5 points for paper / 5 points for presentation)
     Each student will be responsible for selection and presentation of one current newspaper articles from the Austin American-Statesman (article should be current and no more than ten days from date of presentation date). Dr. Shorkey will deposit copies of the recent issues of the newspaper at the front desk of the Social Work Learning Resource Center (located on the first floor in the School of Social Work) for your use. The Statesman is also available at the University Libraries. Students should choose and review the article for class presentation and discussion. Presentations should be 5-10 minutes and include:
     a. a brief summary of the article
     b. relevance of article to social work
     c. reason for selecting the article
     d. personal reflection on the issue
     Students should submit a 1-2 page paper to professor of the information that they presented, at the beginning of class on day that they present.
   - **Oral History Assignment** (10 points)
     Students will complete a 15-20 minute oral history interview of a selected community member. We will meet as a class at an agreed upon location and conduct interviews. The focus is on using interviewing skills, listening and exploratory skills and a strengths-based approach with the individual in conversation. Each student will be expected to submit a **1-2 page report on the interview/experience and give a brief report in class**. You will receive specific instructions for this assignment.
   - **Ethics Group Presentation** (10 points)
     Small groups will be formed, and each group will receive a list of ethical scenarios that involve one or more ethical dilemmas. Groups will choose two cases to analyze, and present in class. Class time will be provided (additional time outside of class is often necessary), and a summary report will be made for each case and turned in during the class presentation.

     Presentations should include: a reading of the case, outlining of the relevant legal
duties and social work ethical principles, a listing of relevant stake holders (persons with an interest in the case), a discussion of possible courses of action and implications of each, and a discussion of the course of action chosen by the group. Presentations should be done in 10-15 minutes followed by questions/discussion from the class.

- **Videotaping** (10 points for worksheets for each session)
  Students will complete two videotaped assignments during the semester in the video studies in the Social Work Learning Resource Center. Students will work in pairs and focus on listening skills and use of listening and exploratory responses. Attendance at this lab is necessary to receive credit for the assignment. A second videotape recording will be made in pairs in the LRC to demonstrate your progress in developing your exploratory skills.

Additional instructions will be handed out in class. **Each student must purchase one blank DVD or VHS videotape prior to the first taping and submit their interviews on their own tape.** You may want to purchase a package of tapes to share with classmates since they are often only available in packages of three to seven tapes.

- **At-Risk Population Presentation** (15 points)
  Students will work in groups of four to research and prepare a PowerPoint presentation discussing a selected at-risk population. A person is determined to be at-risk when they are included in a group that significantly affects their individual experiences, perspectives, and increases risk factors for exposure to discrimination, deprivation, or oppression. Students will research the history, characteristics, incidence, current resources, continuing existing needs, and potential services. Class time will be provided for groups, although additional out of class time may be necessary. Further information will be given in class.

- **Community Assignment** (30 points)
  Students will work in small groups and be asked to choose one neighborhood/community system for the project. Students will research the needs and problems of this system and select two problems or needs and develop an action plan. The plan should include: (1) identified goals, (2) tasks needed, (3) a timeline, and (4) identification of specific members in the action system completing coordinated tasks. Research topics for the community must include, among other things, history, census data, crime statistics, interviews with neighborhood leaders, special characteristics, etc.

Each group will be assigned a wall panel in the LRC to display their project. The poster will include: photos, charts, graphs, census data, maps, and summary data related to goals and tasks. Additional data and photos are appropriate for the presentation, but all required information should be included on the display poster. [NOTE: Do not use products that you cannot leave on display in the LRC.]

Since this assignment is due at the end of the semester, an “unsatisfactory”
presentation or product cannot be resubmitted. Therefore, students may want to pre-submit materials to the professor. Points for individual participation will be determined by team member ratings which will be turned in at the time of the presentation.

**Instructions for Formatting Papers and Assignments**

Assignments should be typed, double-spaced on letter size paper, 1” margins, 12 point font in Times New Roman. Papers must meet the minimum page requirement; for example, at least 5 full pages are required for Reflection Papers. If you do not have a personal computer, computer are available for use at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) (first floor of the Social Work Building) and undergraduate Library Computer Facility (FAC) during business hours. Handwritten or unstapled reports will receive no credit. Papers that are incorrectly formatted will receive a grade reduction. Staplers are available in the LRC.

Exceptions to these requirements apply to the following assignments, which may be neatly handwritten: Volunteer Agency Selection Form, Group Member Evaluation Form for community project, Videotaping Assignment Review Papers, and the Final Evaluation Form.

6. **Class Policies**

**Assignments:** Except in the case of extreme emergencies, which should be reported to the professor immediately, late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. Students are expected to **turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date at the beginning of class.** Assignments turned in after class begins will be considered late. If accepted, **late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of two points each day late.** Any adjustments in due dates MUST be requested in written form and discussed with the instructor at least one class session PRIOR to the regularly scheduled date.

**Attendance:** Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (**missing more than three classes** without a valid excuse or medical documentation) **will receive a letter grade lower than their final grade as indicated above.** More than five absences will result in an increased grade reduction as determined by the instructor. It is the student’s responsibility for ensuring that he/she has signed the daily attendance sheet for the class. There is a limit of four days of medically documented excused absences; beyond the four medically excused absences, the student must make special arrangements with the instructor to complete the course. Similarly, the instructor reserves the right to raise a student’s grade at the end of the semester based on class participation. Students who arrive to class more than 15 minutes late or leave class more than 15 minutes early will receive ½ attendance credit for that class.

**Participation:** In addition to regular class attendance, the instructor expects all students to actively participate in class discussion and be a contributing member to group assignments. The instructor reserves the right to reduce the grade up to one point for lack of class participation.

Students requesting an incomplete for the class for medical problems or family emergencies must fill out the required form available from the BSW office and discuss their request with
the instructor.

**Use of Technology:** Use of technological devices (cell phones, ipods, mp3s, computers, etc.) is not permitted, and will reduce the participation grade of the student. For emergencies or family issues, you may leave your cell phone on in vibrate/silent mode (calls should be taken outside the classroom).

**Scholastic/Professional integrity:** Social work practitioners assume responsibility for themselves. Therefore, it is expected that work handed in will be your own. Scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism, violates social work values and will result in recommendation against admission to the BSW program and a referral to the Dean of Student's Office.

Information shared in class about agencies and clients is considered to be covered by 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. However, discussion outside of class with individuals not in this class or with other class members in settings where you can not assure that no one else may overhear the conversation is considered a breach of confidentiality and will result in recommendation against admission to the BSW program.

Social work practitioners are assertive and function as team members. Therefore, feedback about the course is welcome and the course will be viewed as a joint effort between students and the instructor. Part of professional accountability includes treating others with respect and courtesy. Within this class, this means you will be expected to listen to the opinions and concerns of others with openness, to offer suggestions and ideas in a positive and respectful manner and to be willing to promote group cohesiveness in order to create a safe learning environment.

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 also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Service for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

**Religious Holidays:** By UT Austin policy, students must notify the instructor 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 instructor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed
work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**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 instructor 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](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: 1. 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. 2. If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the instructor in writing during the first week of class. 3. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instructor’s instructions. 4. 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.
# 7. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Session 1 – January 15**
  Tuesday    | • Introductions
  • Syllabus Overview | **Read:**
  Walsh – Defining Generalist Practice, p. 3-12 |
| **Session 2 – January 17**
  Thursday    | • Volunteer Opportunities
  • Student Introductions
  • Stages of Change | **Handouts:**
  • Social Work Basics
  • Special Interest Form
  • Volunteer Agency Packet
  • Stages of Change |
| **Session 3 – January 22**
  Tuesday    | Social Work Assessment I:
  • Social Work is Easy as PIE (Person In Environment)
  • Eco-Maps | **Read:**
  Walsh – Assessment for Individual Clients, p. 153-155;
  Assessment outline for Families, p. 182-185;
  Agency Assessment Outline, p. 246-248
  **Handouts:**
  • Eco-map assignment |
| **Session 4 – January 24**
  Thursday    | Family & Culture: Discussion on genograms & cultural profiles
  • Dr. Shorkey’s Genogram example
  • Cultural profiles | **Handouts:**
  • Cultural Profile & Genogram assignment |
| **Session 5 – January 29**
  Tuesday    | Social Work Assessment II:
  Discuss ecosystems/societal influence on eco-maps
  • Class Present/Discuss Eco-maps | **Due:**
  Eco-map |
| **Session 6 – January 31**
  Thursday    | Culturally Competent Practice
  • Mexican-American Families | **Read:**
  Walsh – Cross Cultural Intervention, p. 45-52
  **Handouts:**
  • Culturally Competent Practice Standards
  • Considerations for work with Mexican- American |
| Session 7 – February 5  
Tuesday | Culturally Competent Practice  
| Handouts:  
• Considerations for work with African Americans and their families |
| Session 8 – February 7  
Thursday | Class Presentations & Discussion of Genograms & Cultural Profiles  
Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 1  
Due:  
1. Agency Selection Form  
2. Genogram  
3. Group 1 Presentation: Case 1 |
| Session 9 – February 12  
Tuesday | • Four basic systems in social work practice  
• Social work roles  
Read: Walsh – Roles of the Generalist Practitioner, p. 12-14; Relationships with client systems, p. 41-45  
Handouts:  
• Pincus & Minihan Ch. 3&4  
• Social Work Systems  
• Relationships Among Social Work Systems  
• Social Work Roles |
| Session 10 – February 14  
Thursday  
Happy Valentine’s Day | Educational Contracts: Introduce and discuss duties/responsibilities and learning objectives  
Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 2  
Due: Group 2 Presentation: Case 2 |
| Session 11 – February 19  
Tuesday | Broad range of Social Work Agencies: Community Resources  
• 211 Presentation  
Read: Social Support Community Resources, p. 140-146  
Due: Reflection Paper #1  
Handouts:  
• 211 |
| Session 12 – February 21 Thursday | Educational Contracts: • Work in small groups to discuss, plan, write | Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 3
**Due:**
1. Rough draft of Educational Contract by the end of class
2. Group 3 Presentation: Case 3 |
| Session 13 – February 26 Tuesday | Discuss basic concepts of interviewing • Non-verbal communication exercise • Sign up for partners for video lab • Motivational Interviewing | Read: Walsh – Reaction, Clients, and Motivational Interviewing, p. 52-61
**Due:** Final Draft of Educational Contract
Handouts:
• Interviewing Skills
• Motivational Interviewing |
| Session 14 – February 28 Thursday | More Interviewing Concepts: Exploring affective (feelings/emotions), cognitive (thoughts/ beliefs), & behavioral (verbal/skeletal motor) | Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 4
**Due:** Group 4 Presentation: Case 4 |
<p>| Session 15 – March 5 Tuesday | No regular class meeting. • Videotape Interview 1 • Meet in LRC for Individual Lab Sessions at your scheduled time. <strong>Bring your own VHS tape or DVD+R.</strong> | Handouts: Videotape Worksheet 1 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Session 16</td>
<td>Group assignments and instructions for Ethics Group Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>In class preparation for Ethics Group Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 5</td>
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<td>* Walsh – Ethic and Values:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Value Base of SW Practice and Strengths Based Practice, p.14-20;</td>
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<td>2. Value Principle and Social Justice, p. 36-39;</td>
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<td>3. Establishing and Maintaining Boundaries in Relationships, p. 61-60;</td>
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<td>4. Personal Reactions of Social Workers to their Clients, p. 66-70;</td>
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<td>March 11-15</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>Session 17</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>In class preparation for Ethics Group Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Session 17</td>
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<td>Session 18</td>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>Ethics Group Exercise Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>1. Discuss class fieldtrip for oral history interview</td>
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<td>Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 6</td>
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<td>1. Group 6 Presentation: Case 6</td>
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<td>2. Ethics Group Presentations</td>
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| Session 19 – March 26 Tuesday | **Class Fieldtrip for Oral History Interview**  
*Meet in front of the School of Social Work to ride bus to Austin Resource Center for the Homeless, Caritas, & Salvation Army* | Handouts:  
• Oral History Instructions |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Session 20 – March 28 Thursday | • Report on fieldtrip  
Introduction to At-Risk Population Projects  
• Discuss  
• Assign groups | **Read:** Scales and Wolfer - Case 7  
Handouts:  
• At-Risk Population Assignment Instructions  
**Due:** Group 7 Presentation: Case 7 |
| Session 21 – April 2 Tuesday | • Group Time for At-Risk Presentations | **Due:**  
1. Reflection Paper #2  
2. Brief Oral History Interview paper |
| Session 22 – April 4 Thursday | At-Risk Group Presentations | **Read:** Scales and Wolfer - Case 8  
**Due:**  
1. Group 8 Presentation: Case 8  
2. At-Risk Group Presentations |
| Session 23 – April 9 Tuesday | **No regular class meeting.**  
• Videotape Interview 2  
• Meet in LRC for Individual Lab Sessions  
**Bring your own VHS tape or DVD+R** (Can reuse VHS from previous session; Cannot reuse DVDs) | Hand outs:  
• Videotape Worksheets 2 & 3 |
| Session 24 – April 11 Thursday | Introduction to Community Project  
• Discuss  
• Assign groups | **Read:**  
Scales and Wolfer - Case 9  
Walsh – Community Intervention, p. 264-279  
Handouts: Community Project Packet |
| Session 25 – April 16 | Problem Solving & Brainstorming  
|                       | • Problem solving exercise  
|                       | • Brainstorming exercise  
|                       | Planned Change  
|                       | • Emphasis on strengths perspective  
|                       | • Research-informed practice  
| Tuesday               | **Read:** Walsh – Problem Solving in Generalist Practice, p. 22-36  
|                       | **Handouts:**  
|                       | • Problem-solving  
|                       | • Brainstorming  
|                       | • Planned Change  
|                       | • Evidenced-Based practice  
|                       | • Strengths Perspective  
| **Due:**              | Group 9 Presentation: Case 9  
|                       | Videotape Worksheets 2 & 3  

| Session 26 – April 18 | Goal Setting  
|                       | • Discuss goal specification  
|                       | • Tangible and intangible goals  
|                       | • Decision making  
|                       | Task development / timeline  
| Thursday              | **Read:** Scales and Wolfer - Case 10  
|                       | **Handouts:**  
|                       | • Goal specification  
|                       | Decision-making  
| **Due:**              | Group 10 Presentation: Case 10  

| Session 27 – April 23 | **Neighborhood Tours:** Meet in front of the School of Social Work to travel with your group to the neighborhood you chose for your Community Project  
| **Tuesday**           |  

| Session 28 – April 25 | Decision Making  
|                       | Task Analysis  
| Thursday              | **Read:** Scales and Wolfer - Case 11  
|                       | Walsh – Practice Skills: Behavior Therapy, p. 91-104; Cognitive Therapy, p. 108-127  
| **Due:**              | Group 11 Presentation: Case 11  

15
| Session 29 – April 30  | Community Project Presentations | Due:  
1. Community Assignment Projects  
2. Reflection Paper #3 |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>(Presentation Details)</td>
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| Session 30 – May 2     | Community Project Presentations | Read: Scales and Wolfer - Case 12 |
| Thursday              | (Presentation Details)          | Due:  
1. Group 12 Presentation: Case 12  
2. Volunteer Hour Log Sheet  
3. Volunteer Evaluation Form |
|                       | (Presentation Details)          |                  |