

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

Course Number:	SW 381R	Instructor:	Mercedes Hernandez, PhD, LCSW
Unique Number:	59565	Email:	mercedeh@utexas.edu
Semester:	Fall 2020	Office:	3.106F
Meeting Time/Place:	Tuesdays	Office Phone:	512-471-8189
	11:30am – 2:30pm	Office Hours:	Before or after class
	Online		Other time by appointment

**THEORIES AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES
OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This graduate-level course will focus on empirically based theories and conceptual approaches that undergird social work practice and research with individuals and families in social systems. Ecological-systems theory and a lifespan developmental framework will serve as conceptual guideposts for understanding social work’s person-in-environment, contextual approach to the reciprocal relationship between human behavior and the social environment. Other traditional and alternative theories are also examined, including psychodynamic, cognitive behavioral, social learning, empowerment, transpersonal, and feminist. A critical perspective is emphasized to understand (1) theoretical knowledge construction, engagement, assessment, intervention, evaluation, and integration, and (2) theoretical relevance to explain the influence and contribution of factors related to race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and physical and mental ability to human behavior and development. Methodological, empirical, and ethical considerations of contemporary issues (i.e., poverty, privilege, oppression, risk, and resiliency) and multi-dimensional aspects of the human experience and change across the lifespan (i.e., biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual) will be critically examined.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge about and critically analyze relevant theories of human behavior and development comparing definitional components, philosophical underpinnings, value assumptions, strengths, and limitations;
2. Analyze the reciprocal relationships of human behavior and social systems, and how this interaction influences health and well-being as well as risk and vulnerability;
3. Describe the social construction of theoretical concepts, empirical evidence, gaps in knowledge, and relevant controversies regarding theories of human behavior and development;
4. Analyze the impact of such factors as race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and physical and mental ability on risk and resilience, identity development, and human interactions within social systems;
5. Understand the interaction between the biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of the human experience and lifespan development;

6. Conduct a scientific review of empirical evidence and theory to address human behavior and development topics;
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person in environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies, assess data from clients and constituencies, select and implement interventions with clients and constituencies, and evaluate practice with individuals, families, and groups.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course is designed to provide the student with a meaningful learning environment that will incorporate diverse perspectives of thought about human behavior. The class will be conducted using active learning approaches that will emphasize inclusion and different learning styles. Course activities will include a combination of group discussion, small group critique and feedback, audiovisual presentations, case study analyses, readings, experiential exercises, and lecture. Students are expected to be open to learning and actively engaged in class discussion and activities, to take appropriate personal risks, and to demonstrate both critical thinking and self-reflection throughout the course. Classes are designed to encourage student participation, input and discussion.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Grande, R. (2013). *The distance between us: A memoir*. New York: Atria Books.
(available online through UT library)

Hutchison, E.D. (2016). *Essentials of human behavior in the social environment: Integrating person, environment, and the life course* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Additional readings from other books and journals are available on Canvas.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for this course will be based on the following requirements (further guidance for each assignment is included in a separate document found on Canvas):

Literature Review Matrix and Paper – You are expected to use critical thinking to complete a scholarly literature review on a selected human behavior topic that may be confronted in social work settings. This paper allows you to examine a specific topic, problem, or issue in depth by reviewing what other scholars have written about it. Prior to completing the review, you will complete a matrix identifying five peer-reviewed journal articles relating to your topic that can be incorporated in your review. (15% of final grade)

Case Analysis Paper – To fulfill the EPAS competencies of 6.1, 7.2, 8.2, and 9.2, the case analysis paper is a common assignment for all sections of HBSE. You will complete a case analysis focusing on how to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate practice with an individual, a family, a group, an organization, or a community. You may choose from cases **10.2, 11.2, 12.1, or 16.2** in the Hutchison text. (25% of final grade)

Group Presentation of Case Analysis – You will work in small groups to apply several different theories and content from one of the week's readings to a case example from the

Hutchison text (6.5, 7, 9.1, 10.1, 11.1, or 14.1), and share your findings in a class presentation and facilitated discussion. (10% of final grade)

Exams – Two take-home exams will be given, one at mid-semester and one at the end of the semester. You will apply theory and course content to a case study in the first exam and to the Grande book in the second. Exams will focus on application of theory and human behavior content from the text and class sessions. (40% toward final grade – 20% for each exam)

Student Participation - This portion of the grade will be determined by attendance and quality of contribution as demonstrated by your preparation level. Preparation includes completing readings and assignments by due dates and coming to class prepared to discuss them, and “being present” and involved in activities and discussions. Discussion boards on Canvas will help to facilitate this process. In addition, you are also expected to submit one-page case synopses of those case studies discussed in class that you are not presenting. (10% of final grade)

In order to receive a passing grade, ALL assignments need to be completed and expectations for class participation met.

Assignment	Date Due	Points
Literature Review	Matrix due 9/23; review due 10/7	15
Group Presentation of Assigned Case Analysis	Depends on choice of case	10
Exam I	10/21	20
Case Analysis	11/25	25
Exam II	12/8	20
Participation/Discussion Board/Case Synopses	Synopses due on days of presentation	10

Note: Any information contained in this course outline (including, topics, readings, assignments, and dates) is subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor.

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. Additional class policies related to our online learning environment are available on Canvas.
2. You are expected to read the assigned readings (some students use study groups), attend each class meeting, remain in class for the duration of the session, contribute to class discussions, and participate in skill-building exercises. Failure to attend class regularly (missing more than two class sessions) may result in a lower grade for the course, at the instructor's discretion. As soon as you know that you will not be able to attend class, you should e-mail or call the instructor.
3. You are encouraged to fully participate in class, especially if you do not understand the material. This course should be a fully interactive one. No question will be regarded as insignificant by the instructor. However, the instructor will reserve the prerogative of asking students to meet separately if discussion or questioning is so extensive that it infringes on the topics that other students need to have covered. The classroom should be an open forum for the liberal exchange of differences of opinion and for discussion of these different perspectives, and for promoting understanding.
4. No late assignments will be accepted except in extreme emergencies and then only with permission of the instructor. If you are in an emergency situation you should contact the instructor and negotiate a new due date. All late assignments will be assessed point penalties at a rate of 5 points a day.
5. You should be especially careful not to contribute unwittingly to myths about mental illness and disability in the conduct of practice, research, interpretation of data, and use of terms. The integrity of persons being addressed should be maintained by avoiding language that pathologizes or equates persons with the conditions they have (such as "a schizophrenic," "a borderline," "addicts," "epileptics," or "the disabled") or language that implies that the person as a whole is disordered or disabled, as in the expression "chronics," "psychotics," or "disabled persons." Terms are preferred that preserve the integrity of the person, as in "persons [or people] with disabilities," "a person diagnosed with schizophrenia." Terms conveying negative overtones should be replaced with more neutral expressions. For example, instead of "confined to a wheelchair," state "uses a wheelchair."

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
Unit 1 9/1/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and course overview • A multidimensional approach to human behavior and social work practice • The strengths 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison - Chapter 1 ○ Unger, 2013 ○ Syllabus & Assignments • <u>Recommended:</u>

	<p>perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ecological/ systems framework 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greenfield, 2012 ○ Saewyc, 2010
<p>Unit 2 9/8/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating theory, research, and practice • Writing literature reviews • The helping process • Decision cases • Theoretical perspectives 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review topics (bring to class) • Finalization of case presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison - Chapter 2 ○ Hepworth 2013, Chapter 3, pp. 35-45 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goldberg, 2012 ○ Beck, 2016
<p>Unit 3 9/15/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biopsychological dimensions • Brain-based implications for human behavior • Psychological dimensions 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison – Chapters 3 & 4 ○ Perry, 2014 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First, 2018
<p>Unit 4 9/22/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual dimensions • Postmodern views of culture • Group case presentation (Case 6.5) 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis <p>Literature review matrix 9/23 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison - Chapters 5 & 6 ○ Kulis, 2012 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sallis, 2012
<p>Unit 5 9/29/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical perspectives for understanding families • Challenges that impact family life: Interpersonal violence, poverty, divorce, substance misuse • Group case presentation (Case 7) 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison - Chapter 7 ○ Barrio, 2016 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schwartz, 2013 ○ Kolbert, 2013 ○ Alaggia, 2012

<p>Unit 6 10/6/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group structure/dynamics • Formal organizations • Communities • Social justice, structure, and institutions • Theories of social inequality • Global perspectives 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review 10/7 at 11:59 p.m. <p>Take-home Exam I posted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison, Chapters 8 & 9 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Braveman, 2011 ○ Brown, Excerpt, 2017
<p>Unit 7 10/13/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of discussion on social justice, structure, and social inequality • Group case presentation (Case 9.1) 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis 	<p>Review readings for Exam I</p>
<p>Unit 8 10/20/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The life course perspective • Psychosocial /developmental frameworks • Pre-pregnancy and prenatal development • Group case presentation (Case 10.1) 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis <p>Exam I 10/21 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison, Chapter 10 & 11 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cloitre, 2009 ○ Warner, 2011
<p>Unit 9 10/27/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in infancy and early childhood • Family and community risks and opportunities • Group case presentation (Case 11.1) 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison, Chapter 13 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dubow, 2009 ○ Zayas, 2015
<p>Unit 11 11/10/20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in adolescence • Group case presentation 	<p>DUE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison, Chapter 14 • <u>Recommended:</u>

	(Case 14.1)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kim, 2011 ○ Steelman, 2016
Unit 12 11/17/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in young and middle adulthood • Group case presentation 	Take-home Exam II posted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison, Chapter 15 • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Walker, 2012 ○ Ainspan, 2018
Unit 13 11/24/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in late adulthood • Loss and grief • HBSE in a changing world • Group case presentation (Case 16.1) 	DUE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case synopsis • Case Assessment 11/25 at 11:59pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hutchison, Chapter 16, Late adulthood • <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goodcase, 2017 ○ Almack, 2010
Unit 14 12/1/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and wrap up 	DUE: Take-home Exam II 12/8 at 12pm	Review readings for Exam II

IX. 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.

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 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/>.

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 race, 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. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. 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 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 may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

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 (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) 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/>.

SHARING OF COURSE MATERIALS IS PROHIBITED No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

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 duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course 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 sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

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.

CLASS RECORDINGS. Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

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 for keeping the university informed about a change of 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>.

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, examination, work assignment, or 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 on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

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.

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 have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. This service is provided through a partnership between 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 in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering 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.

COVID CAVEATS. To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to [University Health Services](#), and faculty and staff report to the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](#) (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](#) to understand what needs to be reported. In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this [University Health Services link](#).

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Not intended to replace your own literature review)

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