

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

Course Number:	SW 312	Instructor:	Shannon Dennis, LCSW-S
Unique Number:	60995	Pronouns:	she/her/hers
Semester:	Spring 2021	Office:	N/A
Email:	Shannon.dennis@austin.utexas.edu	Cell Phone:	512-797-0632
Meeting Time/Place:	Mon and Weds 11:00am -12:30pm Virtual meetings on Zoom	Office Hours:	Mondays 12:30 – 1:30 and by appointment

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 20 hour service learning requirement in which students have client contact.

Completion of SW310 is a prerequisite for this course.

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; and
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 used on synchronous learning days. Other teaching methods include pre-posted lectures, class discussion, videos, guest speakers, 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 with 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.

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

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>

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

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for this course will be based on the following requirements:

Student Participation - Attendance and active participation are critical to the teaching and learning in this class. Students are expected to be on video and present during synchronous classes, or, in extenuating circumstances, to notify the instructor if they cannot attend. This portion of the grade will be determined by attendance and quality of contribution as demonstrated by student preparation level during synchronized classes including chat discussion as a form of participation via zoom classroom and active engagement in small group exercises. Preparation includes completing readings and assignments by due dates and coming to class prepared to discuss them, and “being present” and involved in experiential activities and discussions. Note that even if absences are excused, missing more than one class will impact your participation grade (unless it is because of a religious holiday) since you cannot participate if you are not present. Missing more than three classes may result in a reduction in your final letter grade, especially since our synchronous classes are reduced in the current semester.
10% of final grade

Service Learning Requirement - All students enrolled in SW 312 are required to complete 20 clock hours of service learning in a community agency or organization. Additional instructions, forms and due dates for this course requirement are available on Canvas.
20% of final grade

Required Forms/Expectations

Students are required to 1) register on GivePulse and 2) track service-learning hours on GivePulse. Timely documentation of hours is required for full credit. Late forms will not be accepted unless the instructor was notified 24 hours in advance.

Register on GivePulse	DUE 2/5/21
Complete and Submit Agency Selection Form	DUE 2/19/21
2% of final grade	

Service-Learning Agency Presentation

Students will participate in a 15 to 20 minute fishbowl presentation or other preferred modality to engage and teach the class about their experience at their service learning agency. Details to be given out in class.

5% of final grade

Self-Interview

To assist you in beginning the course, write a 3 to 4 page essay that answers the following questions: 1. Tell me about someone whose life inspired you and why? 2. What is your first memory of something that wasn't fair or just? 3. Tell me about an issue or movement you are passionately involved in. What inspired you to get involved? 4. What are your professional goals? 5. What resources (e.g., personal strengths, family/friend support, and community support) will you draw upon to facilitate your success in the class and program? 6. What is your current, personal definition of intersectionality? 7. How would you describe your vision of social change? How do you see yourself contributing to this vision of social change?

5% of final grade

Self-Care Project

Over the course of the semester, students will cultivate a self-care practice. They are encouraged to come up with a regular practice that supports their own mental health and their ability to best care for their clients. At the end of the first month of the class, the professor will ask students to provide a paragraph describing their self-care practice and will touch-base throughout the semester to assess the effectiveness of students' self-care practices. On the last day of class, students will have two minutes to share with the class about their self-care practice. You can use photos, slide show, YouTube, art work, music, poetry, or a creative use of expression suitable for classroom presentation.

5% of final grade

Learning Reflections

Students will submit a total of 10 learning reflections (worth 1 point each) over the course of the semester. The reflections should be a 1 page minimum/ 2 pages maximum (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins) and focus on the student's experiences. On a few occasions, the instructor may provide designated topics for the reflection paper. The reflections are meant to inspire critical thinking, integration of learning materials, and reactions to the service learning. This will also serve to foster the practice of professional journaling, which will be an integral part of the field practicum course. The reflections are due the day after class experiential lab. Students who do not attend the lab cannot submit a journal

reflection for that group and will subsequently lose a point for that submission. Reflections are due no later than 11:59 p.m. on Wednesdays (see class schedule section of the syllabus for due dates).

10% of final grade

Video Project – All students will create a brief video demonstrating basic social work skills, working with a partner in the class. They will then view and critique the presentation of their partner. Grades will be based on both the student’s submitted video and thoughtful critique of their presentation and the presentation of their partner.

15% of final grade

Take Home Final Exam – Students will complete a final take home exam. Details will be provided in class and on the final exam module in canvas.

30% of final grade

Assignment	Points
Class attendance/contribution	10 pts
Self-Assessment	5 pts
Weekly Reflections (10)	10 pts
Video Project	15 pts
Service-Learning GivePulse Registration	1 pt
Service-Learning Agency Selection	1 pt
Service Learning Expectations	20 pts
Final Take-Home Exam	30 pts
Service Learning Presentations	5 pts
Self Care Project	3 pts
Total pts 100	

VI. GRADES

Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments

Your written work should be well-conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. It also should show evidence of your own creative and thoughtful analysis. Papers must follow APA style formatting. Additional criteria and evaluation guidelines are provided at the end of the syllabus for all assignments. Note that if you are a social work major you will need to repeat this course if your final grade falls below a ‘C’-.

GRADING SCALE

- 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-
- 67.0 to 69.999 D+

77.0 to 79.999 C+
74.0 to 76.999 C
70.0 to 73.999 C-
64.0 to 66.999 D
60.0 to 63.999 D-
Below 60.0 F

VII. CLASS POLICIES

Instructor Contact: If you wish to make an appointment to see me, cannot attend class, or have a question about the course, please call or text me at 512-797-0632 (cell) or come to my office hours. You can also send an email to me at Shannon.dennis@austin.utexas.edu. I check my e-mail and phone messages regularly and will respond as quickly as possible.

Attendance: This course is interactive in nature, with students learning from each other as well as from readings and other course assignments. It also is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is submitting assignments on time. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than two classes without valid documentation – Student Disability Services) will receive one or more course grades lower than their final grade when points are totaled.

Electronic Devices: Students are welcome to use notebooks, laptops and other electronic devices for note taking during class time. If students are using these devices for other purposes not relevant to the class (i.e., checking email or working on assignments for other courses), they will be unable to continue bringing them to class. Students are asked to have cell phones on vibrate or turned off during class. If you receive an emergency call, please step out of class to talk. You are also expected to refrain from texting during class.

Submission of Papers and Late Assignments: Written assignments must be submitted as a word document on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. the day that an assignment is due. All assignments must be turned in on the due date. Changes in work schedules, personal celebrations, transportation problems, computer/printing problems, etc. are not considered legitimate reasons for missing an assignment deadline. A late assignment will result in a deduction of **5%** for each day it is late. Any legitimate adjustments in due dates must be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled due date unless there is a valid documented reason for not being able to meet this requirement.

Quality of Written Work, APA & References: 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. The Steve Hicks School of Social Work uniformly requires APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of APA style are included in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Information on APA style and format can be found at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) in the Steve Hicks School of Social Work and on the UT library website. Another excellent source is Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL). Appropriate referencing is required. Failure to use quotation marks for direct quotes or citations for indirect quotations and/or others' ideas constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy. Students also are encouraged to consult with the Undergraduate

Writing Center at <http://uwc.utexas.edu> (512) 471-6222 for assistance with any writing assignments.

Course Feedback: Students will have two formal opportunities to evaluate the quality of the course and instruction. About midway into the course students will be asked to provide an anonymous evaluation about the course and any suggestions for improving content, delivery, and discussion. The second evaluation will occur at the end of the course, using the format provided by the University. At any time during the course, students should feel free to comment on the quality of the course and instruction and suggest changes that will increase their learning. These comments can either be made in class, by making an appointment to meet with the instructor, or via any other means selected by the student.

Course Modifications: Any modifications, amendments, or changes to the syllabus and/or assignments are at the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of students to inquire about any changes that might have been made in their absence; all changes will be published on Canvas.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu>

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/>.

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.

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.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings Due
1/20 Wk 1/Weds Synchronous	Introductions/ syllabus review Service learning Experiential Education Kolb's Cycle of Experiential learning		(reviewed in class) · course syllabus · course assignment guidelines · service learning packet
1/25 Wk 2/Mon Synchronous	Service-Learning Fair		
1/27 Wk 2/Weds Synchronous	Service-Learning Presentation Guest Presenters: Prof. Cossy Hough April Oviedo	Self-Interview assignment due 1/29 by 11:59 pm	Asynchronous lecture: Social Work Ethics
2/1 Wk 3/Mon Synchronous	· Social Work Ethical Applications · Small group break outs	Learning Reflection 1 due 2/3 by 11:59pm	· Birkenmaier Chapter 2 · NASW Ethics (on Canvas)
2/3 Wk 3/Weds Asynchronous	Cultural Competence	Givepulse Registration Due 2/5/20	· Canvas Readings · Asynchronous lecture: Self-Awareness and
2/8 Wk 4/Mon Synchronous	Self awareness and Cultural Competence small group break outs	Learning Reflection 2 due 2/10 by 11:59p	· Cultural Awareness (on canvas)
2/10 Wk 4/Weds Asynchronous	Professional Use of Self and Self Care		· Birkenmaier Chapter 4 · NASW Policy Statement on Self Care

			Preparedness/Planning/Resilience
2/15 Wk 5/Mon Synchronous	Boundaries and Professionalism · Exercises and case examples	Learning Reflection 3: (with Self Care Plan) Due by 2/17 11:59pm	· Canvas Reading as indicated
2/17 Wk 5/Weds Asynchronous	· Theoretical Perspectives	Agency Selection Form Due 2/19 11:59pm	· Canvas Reading as indicated
2/22 Wk 6/Mon Synchronous	· Client Engagement and theoretical applications · dyad break-out	Learning Reflection 4 Due by 2/24 11:59pm	· Birkenmaier Ch 3 · Canvas Reading as indicated
2/24 Wk 6/Weds Asynchronous	· Skills: Client Engagemen		
3/1 Wk 7/Mon Synchronous	· Client Engagement · dyad break-ou	Learning Reflection 5 (with service learning check-in) Due by 3/3 11:59p	· Birkenmaier Ch 4
3/3 Wk 7/Weds Asynchronous	· Assessment		· Birkenmaier Ch 4 p. 103-13
3/8 Wk 8/Mon Synchronous	· Time-lines, Ecograms, genograms, and case examples	Learning Reflection 6 Due by 3/10 11:59pm	· Berkenmaier Ch 4, p. 139-144
3/10 Wk 8/Weds Asynchronous	· Identifying and developing intervention plans and contracts		· Birkenmaier Ch 5 p. 173-208 · Canvas Reading as indicated
Wk 9 is spring break			
3/22 Wk 10/Mon Synchronous	Assesment/Intervention · dyad break-out	Learning Reflection 7 Due by 3/24 11:59pm	· Birkenmaier Ch 5 p 209-231
3/24 Wk 10/Weds Asynchronous	· Termination strategies Evaluating Practice		
3/29 Wk 11/Mon Synchronous	Issues working with children	Learning Reflection 8 Due by 3/31 11:59pm	· Canvas Reading as indicated
3/31 Wk 11/Weds Asynchronous	Working with Family Systems		· Birkenmaier Chapter 6 · Asynchronous Lecture
4/5 Wk 12/Mon Synchronous	Family Systems · experiential lab	Learning Reflection 9 Due by 4/7 11:59pm	
4/7 Wk 12/Weds Asynchronous	Working with Communities and Organizations		Birkenmaier Ch 10-13, selected readings may be posted and specified on canvas. Asynchronous Lecture
4/12 Wk 13/Mon Synchronous	Issues and Opportunities: Service Learning	Learning Reflection 10 Due	

	discussions	by 4/14 11:59pm	
4/14 Wk 13/Weds Asynchronous	Issues working with groups		Birkenmaier Ch 10-13, selected readings may be posted and specified on canvas. Asynchronous Lecture
4/19 Wk 14/Mon Synchronous	Issues and Opportunities: Service Learning discussions	Service Learning hrs due 4/21 11:59pm	
4/21 Wk 14/Weds Asynchronous	Asynchronous Video Experiential Lab		No additional readings or asynchronous lecture
4/26 Wk 15/Mon Synchronous	Video tape review and discussion		
4/28 Wk 15/Weds Synchronous	Video tape review and discussion		
5/3 Wk 16/Mon Synchronous	Video tape review and discussion		
5/5 Wk 16/Weds Synchronous	Final Class – Wrap up and celebration	Review and presentation of self care projects and moments of excellence	Final Case Evaluation/Exam due 5/7/20 11:59pm

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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