

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW334	Instructor: Lori Lewis-Conerly
Unique Number: 61080	E-mail: lorilconerly@utexas.edu
Semester: Spring 2021	Phone: (512) 554-3159
Meeting Time: T/Th 12.30-2pm	Office Hours: By appointment
Meeting Place: Zoom	

Social Work Practice in Organizations and Communities

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the organizational context within which social services are delivered: how funding, mandate, and organizational arrangements influence service delivery, and factors to consider in efforts to modify existing organizational arrangements. The course emphasizes the interlocking and complex nature of culture and personal identity with content on populations-at risk, examining the factors that contribute to and constitute being at risk. It introduces the student to the obligation that social services meet the needs of groups served and be culturally relevant. This includes equipping students with skills to recognize diversity within and between groups that may influence assessment, planning, intervention, and research. Students learn how to define, design, and implement strategies for effective practice with persons from diverse backgrounds. The course also includes an overview of the development of the community in America and the interaction between communities and service organizations. Attention is given to particular elements of organizational and community dynamics affecting diverse gender and ethnic groups.

Admission to the social work major is a prerequisite for this course.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you will be:

1. Familiar with the major concepts and dynamics of formal organizations and their influence on social work practice.
2. Familiar with the impact of the organizational mandate, funding sources, and other constituencies on problem definitions and goal formulation.
3. Able to identify major concepts in organizational theories and to explain how such concepts relate to social work practiced at individual, family, organizational, and community levels, each as a focus of social work practice.
4. Familiar with the influence of community norms, priorities, and competitive community factions on the definition of problem/need and resource allocation for the delivery of social services.
5. Familiar with relevant cultures and how culture shapes individual lives and community processes.
6. Able to understand mezzo and macroeconomic events and how these events impact

individual and community welfare.

7. Familiar with the involvement of lay citizen groups as staff supplement and as a potential strategy for change.
8. Familiar with information about special service populations and the participation of such populations in professional settings and community organizations.
9. Familiar with basic planning approaches, their advantages, and disadvantages and be able to utilize an empirical approach and associated tools to gather and analyze data to describe populations and communities and design service programs.

EPAS Competencies

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work (SHSSW) has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, the UT SHSSW engages in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

Using a common evaluation instrument, this course measures the implementation of knowledge, skills, values, and/or cognitive and affective processes to assess the following competencies:

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

6.2 Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

7.1 Collect and organize data and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies

7.3 Develop mutually agreed upon intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs and challenges within clients and constituencies

7.4 Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

8.1 critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies

8.3 Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice

8.4 Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies

8.5 facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed upon goals

Competency 9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

9.1 Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes

9.3 critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes

9.4 apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course is designed to provide you with a meaningful learning environment through use of multiple methods of instruction (e.g. discussion, lecture, and group exercises); experiential learning (e.g. service learning, role playing, & active learning) will be emphasized. You are

expected to complete assigned readings prior to each class period. Class attendance and participation is required and essential for successful completion of this course. This course will use an electronic Canvas site. Canvas will be used for communication between students and the instructor.

IV. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Empowerment Series: Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities, 7th Edition
Karen K. Kirst-Ashman, Grafton H. Hull, Jr. ISBN-10: 1305943295 ISBN-13: 9781305943292 © 2018

It is available through the Coop.

Additional readings and material will be available on Canvas

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. *Professional Accountability (Class Attendance & Participation)* 25 points

You are required to come to class. Attendance will be managed via roll call at the beginning of class. If arrival is post roll call, it is your responsibility to ensure that your attendance is noted. More than two absences will result in a loss of the 25 *Professional Accountability* points.

A quiz covering the assigned reading for the class may or may not be administered at each class meeting.

2. *Group Project - Community Analysis*

Each group will study a community located in the Greater Austin area. Each community will have specific geographic boundaries that encompass at least one zip code. Group members will assess the assigned community

- Cedar Park
- Hutto
- Mueller Community
- Pecan Springs-Springdale
- Round Rock

Group Project consist of the following parts:

- **Work Plan** [due February 2]: developing a scope of work, division of labor between teammates, deadlines for creation of content, and creation of a final product. **25 points**
- **Class Presentations** [due April 29 & May 4]: PowerPoint presentation to members of the class on your neighborhood. This 20-minute in-class multi-media presentation will take place at the end of the semester. The group lead will provide a copy of the PowerPoint presentation along with a portfolio of all work products produced as part of the assignment. **50 points**

- **Executive Summary Report [due May 6]:** a written report to the city planning agency on your findings and rationale for your proposed solution to identified social work issues. **75 points**

As a group assignment, **all members of the group will receive the same grade.**

3. There will be 4-6 written assignments designed to reflect considerations for community development, assessing community needs, conducting a gap analysis and implementation projects. Each assignment is 50pts. More information will be provided via Canvas and class discussion.

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. Conduct and Civility: Social work students adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their conduct. Scholastic honesty and integrity are to be consistent social work values. The instructor will comply with University guidelines regarding scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Social work practitioners respect others: therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected. Students will help create and support a learning environment that does not interfere with the learning of fellow students. When students voice an opinion with which you do not agree, feel free to voice opinions in a civil manner that can enhance the flow of ideas and dialog.

2. Readings and Preparatory Assignments: Students are expected to be active and participate in the learning process, and in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are also expected to complete readings and preparatory assignments prior to class. Failure to demonstrate through discussions in class, online, and through assignments that one has comprehended the readings will be considered when assigning the final grade. Students are responsible for the material in the assigned readings whether or not the material is covered in class. Professor reserves the right to conduct quizzes should there be a pattern of students not demonstrating that they have completed the readings and are not prepared to engage in thoughtful discussion.

3. Professional Communication and Interactions: Cameras must be on during class.

Refrain from private conversations during class or other disruptive behavior. Disrespect toward the professor, students, or others is unacceptable and will be handled directly and in the context it occurs. Disrespectful behavior includes overt acts, such as talking over others or making derogatory remarks based on another person's age, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religious preference, and ability. Moreover, covert acts of disrespect such as sneers, and other facial expressions, excluding class members from classroom tasks, etc. are also unacceptable. Refrain from interacting with others w/in your zoom environment from which you are located. **Electronic Devices:** Cell phones must be silenced during class. Grade is negatively impacted by student's failure to comply with this policy.

4. Class Attendance Policy: Punctuality and timeliness are important for social work practitioners. Class attendance is expected. Attendance is defined as students' attentive physical presence in class for the entire class. Establishing a pattern of late arrivals and early departures will negatively affect your grade. A pattern is considered three or more late arrivals and early departures during the semester. Late arrivals and early departures are defined as student arriving 10 minutes after class starting or prior to class ending. Missing more than two classes will result in a loss of Professional Accountability points (25). The instructor should be notified in advance of any planned absence and as soon as possible in the case of an unforeseen, serious emergency.

5. Assignments and Grades: Assignments should be turned in online on the date they are due, barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. Late assignments will be considered when assigning the final grade.

6. Writing Style: The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Seventh Edition (APA) is the style manual to be used by all students. There are many online guides to using this system, including https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html.

7. Use of Canvas: The professor uses Canvas Web-based course management /collective workspace.

8. Course Modification: To ensure achievement for course objectives, the professor reserves the right to make modifications to any part of this syllabus related to schedule and assignment due dates. Should any modifications be made, students will be notified in class and modifications will be posted to Canvas. Students should check their email frequently. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on the Internet may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

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: <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>.

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 <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

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 <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>.

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

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	1/19	Welcome, Introductions & Syllabus Review	
	1/21	Introduction to Generalist Practice w/ Org. & Comm. Group Assignments	Chapter 1
2	1/26	<i>Guest Speaker - Tanya Rollins, Disproportionality Mgr, Department of Family & Protective Services</i>	Visit these sites: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/ http://www.pisab.org/
	1/28	Exercise... Stress & Time Mgt.	Chapter 2
4	2/2	Using Microskills w/ Org./Comm.	Chapters 3
	2/4	Group Skills for Org/Comm. Change <i>Work Plan Due</i>	Chapter 4
5	2/9	Understanding Organizations	Chapter 5
	2/11	<i>Guest Presenter</i>	
6	2/16	Decision Making for Organizational Change	Chapter 6
	2/18	Implementing Org. Change: Agency Policy, Proj....	Chapter 7
7	2/23	Group Work	
	2/25	Understanding Neighborhoods & Communities	Chapter 8
8	3/2	Macro Practice in Communities	Chapter 9
	3/4	Evaluating Macro Practice	Chapter 10

9	3/9	Guest Presenter	
	3/11	Advocacy & Social Action w/ Populations at Risk	Chapter 11
3/16 & 3/18 SPRING BREAK			
10	3/23	Class Exercise	
	3/25	Ethics & Ethical Dilemmas in Practice w/ Org.....	Chapter 12
11	3/30	Class Exercise	
	4/1	Guest Speaker	
12	4/6	Using Supervision	Chapter 13
	4/8	Group Work	
13	4/13	Developing & Managing Agency Resources	Chapter 14
	4/15	TBD	
14	4/20	Class Exercise	
	4/22	Class Exercise	
15	4/27	TBD	
	4/29	<i>Group Presentations</i>	
16	5/4	<i>Group Presentations</i>	
	5/6	<i>Executive Summary Report Wrap-up</i>	

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

<https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=MsqoiY7cG48%3d&portalid=0>

<https://www.socialworkers.org/News/News-Releases/ArticleType/ArticleView/ArticleID/2232>

<https://www.austintexas.gov/page/demographic-data>

<https://2020census.gov/en/community-impact.html>

<https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/>

<http://www.pisab.org/>

