

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

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| <b>Course Number:</b> SW 383R   | <b>Instructor:</b> Sarah K. Sloan, LCSW-S<br>Clinical Associate Professor                  |
| <b>Unique Number:</b> 61590   | <b>E Mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ssloan@austin.utexas.edu">ssloan@austin.utexas.edu</a>      |
| <b>Semester:</b> Fall 2021  | <b>Office Phone:</b> (512) 471-9107<br><b>Cell Phone:</b> (512) 507-5057 (Best number)     |
| <b>Meeting Time/Place:</b><br>Practice class -Wednesdays, 8:30 -11:30 a.m.<br>Field Seminar-Wednesdays, 11:30-12:30 p.m.<br>SSW 2.112 | <b>Office Hours:</b> Zoom platform, Wednesdays<br>12:00-1:00 pm and on Zoom by appointment |

**Social Work Practice I**

**I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides an introduction to social work practice methodology and professional use of self from a generalist perspective for social work practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in conjunction with field education.

**II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and begin to apply social work values and principles of ethical decision making as articulated by the NASW Code of Ethics;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of professional use of self and awareness of personal values in the development and maintenance of purposeful, problem solving relationships with multiple levels of client systems, as well as cooperative and constructive relationships with agency staff, other professionals and community members;
3. Utilize professional communication skills, supervision and consultation in the effective and ethical provision of services to diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of organizational and community context on service delivery through the in-depth analysis of the assigned field agency;
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical roots and major developments of the social work profession and its commitment to promote social and economic justice for populations at risk;
6. Systematically apply an eco-systems frame work to engage client systems in identifying target systems and goals, and in analyzing, implementing and evaluating interventions that enhance client system strengths, capacities, assets and resources in relation to their environment;

7. Recognize the influence of socioeconomic status, age, developmental level, gender, culture, race, ethnicity, physical status, sexual orientation and spiritual beliefs on assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation at all levels of practice;
8. Demonstrate familiarity with basic concepts and methodology related to work with small groups in agency, organization and community settings;
9. Identify the importance of empirically based knowledge to evaluate and improve practice, policy and social service delivery.

### III. TEACHING METHODS

This class will be taught using a variety of teaching methods to foster a stimulating, creative and collaborative learning community. Experiential learning that builds upon students' field instruction will be emphasized. Other teaching methods include small group interaction, class discussion, role-plays, videotaping, videos, guest speakers, lecture and learning activities.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Finn, J.(2021) *Just practice: A social justice approach to social work*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Optional: Morgaine, Karen, et al. (2015) *Anti-Oppressive Social Work Practice : Putting Theory into Action*. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications. \$16.99 PDF VERSION

here <https://dumanus.com/product/anti-oppressive-social-work-practice-putting-theory-into-action-1st-edition-pdf-version/>

Roberts, A. & Corcoran, K. (2015). *Social workers' desk reference*. New York: Oxford University Press (This book is available on-line through UT libraries)

**Additional readings, all updates and in-depth course information will be in UT's course management system in [CANVAS](#)**

### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be **required to complete the assignments listed below**. Detailed assignment learning objectives and instructions, including expected demonstration of content mastery and skill development will be provided in [CANVAS](#). All assignments will be discussed in detail in class and students are encouraged to meet with the instructor should they have any questions about the assignments. Rubrics with point allocation will be provided with the assignment guidelines. All assignments will be graded on depth and quality of required content, creativity and critical thinking skills, overall professionalism and quality of writing. Specific point totals for each assignment are indicated below.

#### Assignments

**Participation and Preparedness (25 points)**

**Bring to each class**

As graduate-level social work students, it is expected that you will be able to participate on a deeper level in class discussions, taking healthy risks to work outside of your comfort zone. In order to receive the highest level of participation points, healthy risk-taking for increasing self-awareness and professional growth must be demonstrated. Participation points will be determined by attendance, level of interest, respect for others' learning needs and **contributions** to classroom discussions and activities. Being prepared or class by reading assigned material is part of this professional expectation as well. There will be the possibility of in-class activities throughout the semester that will gauge your preparedness for class.

### **Student Self-Reflection (10 points)**

This assignment provides an opportunity for this professor to get to know each student and for the student to discuss: 1) their learning style and past coursework 2) comfort with technologies used in classroom 3) self-care plan 4) interest and work in equity, inclusion and anti-racist work. This provides the professor the opportunity to tailor the learning environment to the needs of each student and the group as a whole. Students will be expected provide brief but thorough and thoughtful answers.

### **Comprehensive Field Organization Analysis (100 points)**

This assignment provides students an opportunity to: 1) collect data on their field agencies in order to facilitate their orientation and integration into the agency; 2) assess the agency's accessibility for diverse client populations and overall cultural competence; 3) analyze the impact of the community and organizational context on the agency service delivery system; 4) determine salient social and economic injustice issues addressed by agency programs; 5) identify methods of practice evaluation and research utilized by their agency; and 6) recognize value conflicts and ethical dilemmas encountered in this setting. Students will research and complete a comprehensive agency analysis of the data gathered that includes an overall assessment of agency strengths, leadership, openness to innovation, and future trends.

### **Knowing Yourself Ethically: A self-assessment (50 points)**

To begin the process of self-evaluation needed for effective social work practice, students are asked to analyze an area of the NASW Code of Ethics that seems most challenging compared to their own personal beliefs. This assignment encourages creativity, critical thinking, and authenticity.

### **Evidence Based Practice Assignment (15 points)**

The purpose of this assignment is for the students to obtain experience using evidence-based practice tools and resources. In evidence-based practice interventions, social workers use available research to guide their practice decision-making. Students will pose a question about an intervention or treatment approach in their field setting and search on available databases for support for that approach from research done with that population or problem area.

### **Video Role Play and Critique (100 points)**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students an opportunity to practice basic engagement and relationship building skills and the problem-solving process in a videotaped interview with a partner from class. Students will select a role play topic and either schedule a taping session in the LRC or use their own equipment i.e. camera, cell phone, etc. The video and a written critique will be turned in to the instructor. The written critique will require students to identify and evaluate the use and effectiveness of their social work roles, skills and interventions. Students will also participate in small group viewing and feedback sessions to deepen their clinical learning and increase their comfort and skill in the use of supervision and consultation.

### **Multidimensional Assessment (100 points)**

A multidimensional case assessment of a client in field is required. The primary purpose of this assignment is to increase students' knowledge and skill in data gathering, intervention planning and practice evaluation. While gathering client information and developing an intervention plan, students will identify client strengths, assets and resources, salient social and economic justice issues impacting their particular client population, significant policy implications, potential value conflicts and ethical dilemmas and important considerations related to agency and community context. The theoretical foundation for the intervention design will be a systems, ecological, transtheoretical, developmental strengths-based framework and an anti-oppressive lens.

## **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- |

## VII. CLASS POLICIES

**STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT** Social work students must adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the UT School of Social Work and the NASW Code of Ethics (found in the MSSW Handbook, see web addresses below) and assume responsibility for their own conduct.

Find the MSSW Handbook at <http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/current/forms/>

Find the MSSW Graduate Guide to Field at <http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/field/forms/>

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION** Attendance and participation for the full three hours of class, and the additional hour of field seminar is expected for all students. **After two absences the student's final grade will be lowered by one grade (A- A-, A- to B+, etc).** Further absences may result in the student being dropped from the course. Repeated late arrivals to class may be considered as an absence. Classroom exercises, discussions, role-plays, guest speakers and other class experiential exercises are essential for the students' professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. This form of learning cannot be "made up" once missed. Students are to notify the instructor prior to class at the given phone number or via email if they cannot attend class due to an illness or emergency.

**USE OF CELL PHONES IN THE CLASSROOM** Practice I is a practice course, and class participation is essential to successful learning. Cell phones should be turned off when class begins and remain off throughout the duration of the class. Distractions, like texting, are not encouraged during class time unless special circumstances arise, about which the professor has been made aware.

**PAPERS AND ASSIGNMENTS** 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, repetition of information, and inferior word processing. When using information from other sources, references and bibliography should conform to the current APA style of citation. Students are encouraged to consult with the SSW writing consultant if needed. Plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules and will be dealt with according to university policy.

**TIME MANAGEMENT** All assignments are due at the date and time indicated in CANVAS. Late assignments will be penalized 5 % of the total percentage points allowed per day that they are late and will only be accepted in the first week following an assignment's due date. Contact the instructor before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency.

**USE OF CANVAS IN CLASS** In this class the professor uses Canvas Web based course management system with password protected access at <http://canvas.utexas.edu> to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give students online quizzes and surveys. Students can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk. For more information go to <http://www.utexas.edu/its/helpdesk/>

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

## **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 and COVID-19 ADVICE LINE (BCCAL).** 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 and COVID-19 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>. The Behavior Concerns and COVID-



19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

**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

Practice and Field are two different classes. Below you will find the Practice course schedule.

For each Practice class, you will have a reading assignment, usually a chapter of Just Practice textbook, and additional readings in CANVAS. You will need to keep up with the textbook reading on your own; as we won’t cover everything in class. I consider the textbook to be “background reading” – in other words, read it before class, and if it covers new or unfamiliar concepts for you, then re-read and study it more carefully on your own time. Please come to class with, at least an outline of the day’s topic.

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Main Topic(s)</b>   | <b>Readings – to be completed <u>before</u> class</b> | <b>Assignments, due at the beginning of class</b> |
|-------------|--|---|---|
| 8/25        | <b>Syllabus</b><br><br><b>Introduction to the profession of social work</b><br><br><b>Imagining Social Work and Social Justice</b> | <b>Module 1</b><br><br>Finn, Chapter 1                | <b>Turn in Self-reflection</b>                    |
| 9/1         | <b>Social Work Values and Ethics</b>   | <b>Module 2</b><br><br>Finn, Chapter 4                | <b>Field Log due</b>                              |

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| 9/8   | <b>Looking Back: The history of the field</b>   | <b>Module 3</b><br>Finn, Chapter 3                         | <b>Field Log due</b>  |
| 9/15  | <b>Guiding frameworks for Social Work Practice</b>  | <b>Module 4</b><br>Finn, Chapters 2 and 5 (70 + pp.)       | <b>Field Log due</b>  |
| 9/22  | <b>Engagement and relationship building skills</b>  | <b>Module 5</b><br>Finn, Chapter 6                         | <b>COMPREHENSIVE FIELD AGENCY ANALYSIS DUE due 9/25</b><br><br><b>Field Log due</b> |
| 9/29  | <b>Helping Skills</b><br><br><b>How We Help</b>   | <b>Module 6</b><br><br>Handouts                            | <b>Field Log due</b>  |
| 10/6  | <b>Multidimensional assessment: Reframing the process</b>   | <b>Module 7</b><br>Finn, Chapter 7                         | <b>Field Log due</b>  |
| 10/13 | <b>Social Work with Religion and Spirituality</b><br><br><b>Professional Use of Self</b>            | <b>Module 8</b>  | <b>SELF INQUIRY AND ETHICS DUE</b><br><br><b>Field Log due</b>                      |
| 10/20 | <b>Evidence Based Practice and Introduction to Intervention (Action and Accompaniment) Planning</b> | <b>Module 9 Handouts/Activities</b><br><br>Finn, Chapter 8 | <b>Field Log due</b>  |

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| 10/27 | <b>Intervention planning at micro and mezzo practice</b>                     | <b>Module 10</b><br>Finn, Chapter 8            | <b>Field Log due</b><br><b>EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT</b>                   |
| 11/3  | <b>Intro to group work in agency, organization and community settings</b>    | <b>Module 11</b><br>Finn, Chapter 8 pp 279-282 | <b>Field Log due</b><br><b>VIDEO ROLE PLAY RECORDING DUE AND CRITIQUE PAPER DUE</b> |
| 11/10 | <b>Video Role-Play Review 8:30 – 1:30 p.m. (No regular class or seminar)</b> | <b>Module 12</b>                               | <b>Field Log due</b>  |
| 11/17 | <b>Community and Organizational practice</b>                                 | <b>Module 13</b>                               | <b>Field Log due</b>  |
| 11/25 | <b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>  | <b>NO READINGS DUE</b>                         | <b>MULTIDIMENSIONAL ASSESSMENT due 11/28</b>  |
| 12/1  | <b>Endings and transitions</b><br><br><b>Looking forward to Practice II</b>  | <b>Module 14</b><br><b>NO READINGS DUE</b>     | <b>BRING MOMENTS OF EXCELLENCE WORDS FOR CLASSMATES</b>                             |

## **X. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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