

**The University of Texas at Austin
Steve Hicks School of Social Work**

Course number: SW 383 R

Unique number: 61595

Semester: Fall 2021

Meeting time/place: SSW 2.116

Wednesdays 8:30-11:30am,
Field Seminar, 11:30-12:30pm

Instructor: Starla Simmons, LCSW
(she/her) Clinical Assistant Professor

Email: starla.simmons@utexas.edu

Office number: Office: 3.124D

Office phone:

Cell phone:

Office hours: Wednesdays, 12:30pm-
1:30pm and 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 framework 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-play, videotaping, videos, guest speakers, lecture and learning activities in the community. For a meaningful experience in this class, students must actively participate, take risks, stretch their creativity, apply their critical thinking skills and attend class regularly. All students are encouraged to ask questions, raise issues, provide the instructor feedback and meet with the instructor individually as needed to enhance their learning.

Students with disabilities are expected to inform the instructor so appropriate academic accommodations may be planned. Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities in the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

IV. Required Texts and Materials

Morgaine, K., & Capous-Desyllas, M. (2020). *Anti-Oppressive Social Work Practice: Putting Theory into Action*. (2nd Edition)

All required readings listed on the class schedule that are not found in the required texts will be available on Canvas. If readings are added to the reading list after the beginning of the class semester, you will be notified by the professor, generally by email.

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 a separate handout. 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. Grading sheets 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.

- **Class Participation & Asynchronous Work 10pts.**

Asynchronous work may consist of reading responses, podcasts, videos, groupwork with classmates, discussion boards, etc. These assignments are to supplement instructional objectives while providing opportunities to learn independently. Completion of asynchronous activities throughout the course are required and count towards your grade. All work will be posted in Canvas.

- **Self-Inquiry and Ethics 10pts**

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 and apply the assignment encourages creativity, critical thinking, and authenticity. A separate assignment sheet will be provided in canvas.

- **Agency Analysis Presentation 20pts**

The agency analysis and presentation are designed to thoroughly acquaint the student and classmates with the student's field placement.

Objectives of the Assignment:

- a) Collect data in order to facilitate the interns' orientation and integration into the agency;
- b) Determine the social and economic issues addressed by agency programs;
- c) Assess the agency's accessibility for diverse client populations and overall cultural competence;
- d) Understand the policies that impact agency practice;
- e) Analyze the impact of the community context on the agency service delivery system;
- f) Identify the values and culture of the agency;
- g) Examine strengths and challenges of the agency; and
- h) Deliver an effective pitch for resources for the agency.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided in Canvas

- **Evidence-Based Practice Intervention 10pts**

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. A separate assignment sheet will be provided in Canvas

- **Video Role Play and Critique 20 pts**

Each student will be paired with a peer from class and video an interview with that student peer. The video will be reviewed by the professor and a review team, and feedback will be provided to the interviewer by all review team members. Each student will write a critique of his or her beginning interviewing skills based on the video role play, review of the recording, and the feedback provided by the review team.

The goals of this assignment are for students to:

- a) Gather and synthesize relevant data;
- b) Assess a client's present situation;
- c) Demonstrate professional communication skills; and
- d) Practice and receive feedback on relational skills, including the use of verbal and nonverbal social work skills to build rapport and gather relevant information.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided.

- **Multidimensional Case Assessment 30pts**

Case assessment refers to the process of collection and evaluation of biopsychosocial data, as well as to the report that describes the worker's inferences and resulting intervention plan based on the data collected. You will write a case assessment based on work with a client in your field placement. The assessment should be concise yet comprehensive, demonstrating a clear knowledge of the assessment process based on practice experience, class lecture and learning, and guidelines and readings provided. The assessment paper should be written from a strengths perspective and address cultural diversity and competency issues.

The goals of this assignment are to give students the opportunity to:

- a) Gather relevant client data;
- b) Practice engagement, relational, and interviewing skills;
- b) Assess a client's past and present situations; and
- c) Synthesize information into a professional report.

A separate assignment sheet will be provided.

A draft of the case assessment is due in class the week before Thanksgiving break. The draft will be used for the purpose of discussion with and feedback from peers.

Self-Inquiry and Ethics	10
Agency Analysis and Presentation	20

Video Role Play and Self Critique	20
Evidence Based Intervention	10
Multi-dimensional Case Assessment	30
Asynchronous & Class Participation	10
TOTAL POINTS	100pts

VI. Grading

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-
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

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. If a student is unable to attend class, please inform the Professor by email at your earliest convenience. Repeated absences will require conference with Professor, additional make-up work if necessary, and possible loss of points. 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 will be expected to contact their peers to secure any missed notes or handouts. The student may schedule an office visit with the professor if they wish to discuss missed classroom material in more detail.

PAPERS 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. 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 beginning of class on the date and time indicated. **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 due date. However, students will be allowed to turn one assignment in late by one day during the semester without incurring the 5% penalty. Contact the instructor before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date and time indicated on Canvas.

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> 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 campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

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

Date	Topic	Practice I Assignment Due	Readings: (Articles & Handouts in Canvas)	Field Seminar Assignment Due
8/25	Course and Syllabus Review History of Social Work		Social Work Legacies Module AOP SWP Textbook: Chapter 10	

9/1	Social Justice & Anti-Oppression SW Practice Social Work ethics and values		NASW Code of Ethics (in canvas) AOP SWP Textbook: Chapter 1, pgs 1-24 Chapter 2, pg 46-68 Critical Race Theory article	Field Log
9/8	<u>Foundational Frameworks</u> Strengths Perspective Person Centered Practice P-I-E Ecological	Self-inquiry and ethics	AOP SWP Textbook: Chapter 3 Abdullah Article: <i>“Islamic perspective for strengths-based work with Muslim clients” (in canvas)</i>	Field Log
9/15	<u>Social Work Frameworks:</u> Trauma Informed Care Transformative Justice		No textbook reading Ginwright article: <i>“Healing Centered Care”</i> <i>Healing Centered Care</i>	Field Log COVID Safety Assessment
9/22	Relational and Communication Skills		AOP SWP Textbook: Chapter 4, pgs 124-148	Field Log
9/29	Relational and Communication Skills		AOP SWP TEXTBOOK: Chapter 4, 149-170 Handouts in Canvas	Learning Contract due 10/1 Field Log

10/6	<u>Mini-Agency Fair</u> Case Management	Field Agency Analysis DUE	AOP SWP: Chapter 7	Field Log
10/13	<u>Working with Families</u> Mapping dynamics, roles, and patterns		AOP SWP: Chapter 5 See Handouts in Canvas Waites Article: Intergenerational Practice with African American Families	Field Log
10/20	<u>Case Consultations</u> Intervention Planning: Developing Goals Crisis Intervention Ethical Dilemmas		TBD	Field Log
10/27	Social Work with Groups		AOP SWP Textbook: Chapter 6	Field Log Process Recording #2 by 10/31
11/3	Video Role-Play Reviews	Video role play review & consultation	No Readings	Field Log
11/10	Advocacy, Organizing & Policy Practice		<u>AOP SWP:</u> Chapter 8	

11/17	Environmental Justice & Macro Social Work		<u>AOP SWP:</u> Chapter 9	Field Log
11/24	Thanksgiving Break/No Class			
12/1	Endings & Meaning Making	Multidimensional Case Assessment Paper Due		Final Evaluation Process Recording #3 Due Self-Narrative Due

X. Bibliography

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