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

Course Number:	SW n381T	**Instructor:**	René Gaitan, LCSW-S
Unique Number:	89260	**Email:**	rene.gaitan@austin.utexas.edu
Semester:	Summer 2022	**Office:**	3.124J
Meeting Time/Place:	Mon/Wed	**Office Phone:**	512-232-5871
	5:30pm – 8:00pm	**Office Hours:**	Wed 4:00PM-5:00PM
	SSW 2.112		Other time by appointment

Dynamics of Organizations and Communities

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the reciprocal relationship between human behavior and the social environment at the mezzo and macro levels to prepare students to work in programs, organizations, and communities. Special emphasis is given to the development of assessment skills and intervention methods that are relevant to empowerment, capacity-building and social change within organizations and communities. Drawing on a variety of frameworks, including, but not limited to, feminist theory, ecological systems theory, critical race theory, the strengths-based perspective, social construction theory, and other theories with an anti-oppressive and antiracist focus, students will identify and critique power structures within policies, procedures and organizational culture that create inequitable access to social services and disparate opportunities for communities marginalized by the dominant culture. Students will apply this knowledge and an antiracism lens to understand how power and oppression impact populations and interventions at multiple levels. Understanding the intersectionality of racialization, ethnic origin, class, gender identity and expression, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical and mental abilities, caste, immigration/refugee status, national origin of communities and tribal sovereign status is an integral part of this course. Students will also practice cultural humility by centering community voices throughout assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation. The complex tensions between dismantling systems of oppression while working within those systems as agents of change will also be discussed.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Explore communities and organizations as a context for social work practice to meet individual needs, build community capacity, and promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

2. Demonstrate knowledge, skills, critical examination, and self-reflection in engaging with value dilemmas and ethical issues confronting social work professionals and their implications for social work practice with organizations and communities.

3. Assess the influence of values and norms, priorities, and competing interests on the social structure of communities and the delivery of human services.

4. Analyze the reciprocal impacts of organizational and community dynamics on client populations and relate those impacts to the participation of clients in organizational and community governance, human service provision, and policy formulation.

5. Gain understanding of the existence of community agency and learning to center on the community's knowledge and determination of its own capacity-building and power.

6. Evaluate strategies for initiating change in organizations and communities, such as planning models, coalition building, community development, direct action, and advocacy at the mezzo and macro levels.

7. Demonstrate knowledge of how bias, power, and privilege as well as personal values and personal experiences may influence assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation at multiple levels.

8. Compare various evidence-based interventions and emerging approaches for working with organizations and communities.

9. Make use of knowledge and skills in strengths-based approaches to build capacity with client systems, exploring and building on existing individual and community assets.

10. Increase knowledge of internal workings of public and private organizations across the lifecycle.

11. Examine systemic and institutional racism in organizations and institutions in communities, including racial and ethnic representation in the different branches of agencies, analyzing structural elements such as boards, bylaws, and hiring practices of organizations that reinforce white supremacy culture.

EPAS Competencies
The Steve Hicks School of Social Work 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
Outcome 6.1: Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.
Outcome 6.2: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Outcome 7.1: Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies

Outcome 7.3: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies
Outcome 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
Outcome 8.1: Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
Outcome 8.3: Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
Outcome 8.4: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
Outcome 8.5: Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
Outcome 9.1: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
Outcome 9.3: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
Outcome 9.4: Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

II. TEACHING METHODS

This course uses various teaching methods which includes lectures, class discussions, video presentations, and guest speakers. Furthermore, assignments are provided to help foster deep reflection and facilitate open and engaging class discussion. These assignments will include readings, brief case studies, reflective writing pieces, community analysis, and small group work and presentations. Parallel processing is noted as class and small group dynamics are built around the same positive community and organizational dynamics forming the foundational purpose of this course.

III. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

The primary text for this course will be the Community Tool Box (https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents) developed by the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. This work group is part of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Community Health and Development. The Community Tool Box is available for free online.

While the focus of much of the content is on community health, the tools and skills covered in the book are easily translatable to other kinds of community issues. All assigned readings and other course materials are available in the class Canvas page, which is organized into modules for each class session. Additional readings and materials may be assigned as we progress through the semester. These readings will also be available on-line in the course modules. If additional readings are assigned, the class will be notified the week before so that students will have adequate time to read it before class.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Reflection (70 Points) - Writing prompts requiring students to reflect/respond to case scenarios related to course EPAS core competencies. These reflections are expected to be written

in journal format of no more than 1-page double spaced. The intent is to prepare the student for the common assignment due at the end of the semester. 7 reflections at 10 points each will be assigned through the semester. Specific weekly prompts will be published on CANVAS one week before they are due.

Common Assignment (75 Points) – Students in groups will have one of two project options to select for their common assignment:

    1. Simulate engaging with and assessing a community, identifying concerns and propose an intervention with an evaluation.

    2. Conduct either an organizational or community needs assessment which will then lead to the selection of a project or intervention to participate in.

The end product will be a group presentation to the class in addition to an individually written assignment. A detailed assignment and grading rubric will be posted on CANVAS.

Participation (80 Points) - Lectures, readings, and assignments make up a portion of the learning experience. Experiential learning through class engagement and participation will make up a great portion of the learning experience. In order to achieve these learning objectives it is important that students attend class on-time, are engaged, and present free of distraction (email, texting, etc). Students are allowed one unexcused absence and will lose 5 points for each subsequent absence. Arriving to class after start time will result in a deduction of 2 points per incident. Extenuating circumstances involving documented medical emergencies may be considered on a case-to-case basis.

70 Points	Weekly Reflections (7 Reflections x 10 Points Each)
150 Points	Common Assignment
80 Points	Participation
300 Points	**Course Total**

V.   **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

Class Attendance & Participation - Classes will begin promptly at the start time indicated. Students are allowed one unexcused absence and late arrival. Subsequent absences will result in a deduction of 5 points per incident. Incidents of tardiness will result in a deduction of 2 points per incident. Extenuating circumstances involving documented medical emergencies may be considered on a case-to-case basis. Students are responsible for checking CANVAS and reaching

out to peers for any information and class notes missed.

Assigned Readings – Readings listed in the syllabus are to be read before class for the days they are assigned to help facilitate conversation about the topic listed. Any additional readings or direction around specific page numbers will be communicated no later than one week before reading assignment is due.

Assignment Deadlines and Late Submissions - Assignments are due no later than 11:59 PM on the assigned due date. Assignments submitted past the deadline will result in a deduction of 5 points per day. Assignments that are 3 days past due will require a meeting with the Professor before being accepted.

Writing Style - Certain assignments will require students to follow APA 7th Edition guidelines regarding professional writing (cover page, running head, in-paper references, bibliography). Students are encouraged to access UT resources through the University Writing Center to review papers: http://uwc.utexas.edu/.

Students can use Purdue University online resources to help guide APA formatting: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

CANVAS - All assignments, relevant instructions, grades and announcements will be posted through shared class CANVAS page. Students will be expected to maintain their UT provided emails in order to continue to receive timely communications regarding class or assignments.

Online Etiquette and Professionalism - All University Policies including but not limited to those regarding conduct, civility, and professional communication still remain in effect with regards to remote/online instruction courses. As a professional courtesy to fellow peers, students will be expected to focus in class and refrain from texting, browsing other sites, or answering emails while in class. All information shared in class is expected to be held in confidence.

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 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct.

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.

UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC MAIL STUDENT NOTIFICATION. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. 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 HOLY DAYS. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential

to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Office for Inclusion and Equity. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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.

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

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Reading Selection Acronyms
- CTB – Community Tool Box
- SWDR – Social Work Desk reference
- SWP – Social Work Practice with Groups, Communities, and Organizations

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 1 - Intro to the Course			
Mon June 6th	• Getting to Know You • Class Overview • Syllabus • Course EPAS		• NONE
Wed 8th	• Group Facilitation and Problem Solving		• CP - Chp 10 (252-255) • CTB - 16.1, 16.4
Week 2 - Exploring			
Mon June 13th	**Exploring Communities** • SDOH		• CTB - Chp 2.17
Wed June 15th	**Exploring Organizations** • Organizational Structure • Task Groups	Reflection #1	• CTB - Chp 2.1, 9.1 • CP - Chp 9 (Pg 250-252)
Week 3 - Engaging			
Mon 20st	**Engaging Communities** • Formal & Informal Influence • Relationship Building • Participatory Approaches		• CTB - Chp 13.3, 13.6, 13.11, 18.2
Wed June 22rd	**Engaging Organizations** • Leadership vs Management • Servant Leadership	Reflection #2	• SWDR - Chp 6 • CTB - 13.2

Week 4 - Assessing			
Mon June 27th	**Assessing Communities** • Tools for Analysis		• CP - Chp 5 (Pgs 133-139) • CTB - Chp 3.2
Wed June 29th	**Assessing Organizations** • Worker, Manager, Funder, and Client Perspectives	Reflection #3	• SWP - Chp 5
Week 5 - Intervening			
Mon July 4th		4th of July Holiday **NO CLASS**	• NONE
Wed July 6th	**Interventions for Communities & Organizations** • Theory of Change & Logic Models • Strategic Planning/VMOSA	Reflection #4	• CTB - 2.1 • CTB - Chp 8.1-7
Week 6 - Evaluating			
Mon July 11th	**Evaluating Community & Organizational Practices and Effectiveness** • Logic Model (Review) • Community-Level Inidicators • Strategic Goals • Key Performance Indicators • 360 Reviews		• CTB - Chp 38.9-10
Wed July 13th	**Common Assignment** • Overview and Dedicated Class Time **Group Prep**	Reflection #5	• NONE

Week 7 - Presentation			
Mon July 18th	Group Prep		• NONE
Wed July 20th	Group Presentation	Reflection #6	• NONE
Week 8 - 'Finalysis'			
Mon July 25th	Course Summary	Reflection #7	
Wed July 27th	Hindsight and Foresight	Common Assignment DUE	

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Corcoran, K., & Roberts, A. (2015). *Social workers' desk reference / Kevin Corcoran, Editor-in-Chief ; Albert R. Roberts, Founding Editor-in-Chief.* (Third edition.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Community Tool Box. (2020, May 25). *Learn a Skill.* https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents. Retrieved on May 25, 2020.

Glisson, C., Dulmus, C., & Sowers, K. (2012). *Social work practice with groups, communities, and organizations evidence-based assessments and interventions / Charles A. Glisson, Catherine N. Dulmus, Karen M. Sowers.* Hoboken, N.J: Wiley.