

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

Course Number:	SW 327	Instructor:	Erin K. Ebert, LCSW-S
Unique Number:	60735	Pronouns:	she/her/hers
Semester:	Spring 2023	Office:	SSW 3.104A
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**HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT
Writing Flag**

I. Standardized Course Description

This course explores the biopsychosocial-spiritual and cultural functioning of human beings within the context of their environment across the life span using major theories of change as a framework to guide social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students will critically examine the basic principles of several theories of change prior to making selections appropriate for engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation in work with clients/client systems. Students also will apply an understanding of socially constructed concepts incorporating a person-in-environment perspective including racialization, ethnic origin, class, gender, gender identity and expression, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical and mental disabilities, caste, immigration/refugee status, national origin of communities and tribal sovereign status. Socially and equitable engagement in services to individuals, families, and communities drives the teaching approach and educational foundation of this course.

This course carries the writing flag. Writing flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing flag classes meet the core communications objectives of critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and personal responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Prerequisites: For social work majors, admission to the practice sequence; for others, upper-division standing.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Use evidence-based, culturally-grounded theoretical perspectives, including theories and perspectives developed by Black, indigenous and other scholars of color, to describe neurobiological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development within the context of the broader environment over the human lifecycle.
2. Apply socially constructed concepts relating to social identity including racialization, ethnic origin, class, gender, gender identity and expression, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical and mental disabilities, caste, immigration/refugee status, national origin of communities and tribal sovereign status and other factors contributing to human development within social environments.
3. Analyze basic principles and critiques of various social change theories, perspectives and practices, focusing on engagement, assessment of needs, intervention, and evaluation with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, including but not limited to, perspectives of ecological systems theory, strengths-based perspective, critical race theory, social construction theories, racial identity theory, queer-crit theory, lat-crit theory, dis-crit theory, theories with anti-racism and anti-oppressive focus, psychosocial development, psychodynamic theories, social learning theories, cognitive theories, narrative theories, perspectives on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and transtheoretical model of change.
4. Using a social justice lens, identify policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist and oppressive systems and suggest strategies for change.
5. Apply theories of social change to life situations in an effectively written analysis of an assigned case with consideration of social work values, the impact of social institutions on clients/client systems, and equitable social work practice.
6. Explain the importance of centering clients/communities as experts in their lived experiences.
7. Engage in intentional practices of exploring personal biases and assumptions relating to the intersectionality of identities and celebrate the progress made in this life-long process.

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 Educational 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 the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.

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

Outcome 7.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.

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

Outcome 8.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

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

Outcome 9.2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks in evaluating practice with individuals, families, and groups.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This class will be taught using a variety of methods to foster a stimulating, creative, collaborative and interactive learning community. Experiential learning and exercises to promote self awareness in relation to class content will be used. Other teaching methods include class discussion, videos, guest speakers, lecture and assigned learning activities in the community. For a meaningful experience in this class, students must actively participate, take risks, stretch their creativity and critical thinking skills and attend class regularly. All students are encouraged to provide the instructor with feedback and meet with the instructor individually as needed to enhance their learning.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Hutchison, E.D. & Charlesworth, L.W. (2022). *Essentials of human behavior in the social environment: Integrating person, environment, and the life course* (3rd ed.). Sage.

This text is available electronically on Canvas through the Longhorn Textbook Access (LTA) program, a collaboration between UT Austin, the University Co-op and textbook publishers to significantly reduce the cost of digital course materials for students

Supplemental course materials (worksheets, assignments, resources, articles) will be posted on Canvas.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for this course will be based on the following requirements (further guidance for assignments will be available via canvas):

Attendance/Participation	10pts
Case Analysis Paper	
Part 1	15pts
Part 2	20pts
Peer Review Feedback & Draft	10pts
Group Presentation	25pts
Peer Presentation Engagement (2pts per presentation)	10pts
Journal / Reflection (1x/wk)	10pts
Total	100pts

Student Attendance/Participation - Attendance and active participation are critical to the teaching and learning in this class. Your presence is necessary for everyone's success in this course. You are allowed to miss two class meetings. Any absence after the second may impact your engagement with content and ideas shared in class, so I encourage you to remember this. Please be proactive in situations where you will be absent.

Group Presentation & Peer Presentation Engagement

The class will be divided into 6 groups and each group will be responsible to present on a theory from our textbook and how it ties into a contemporary issue. For those not presenting, their attentiveness and participation/support of their peers will be accounted for in a "peer presentation" form that will encourage participation and feedback.

Learning Reflections – Students will submit learning reflections most weeks that integrate content from readings, class sessions, and personal reflection. Some will be free writing and others will have prompts. Reflections should be about a page and are to be submitted on Canvas no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sundays.

Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments

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

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. CLASSROOM POLICIES

1. Participation and Attendance

Attendance and active participation are critical to the teaching and learning in this class. Especially in a course where we examine social justice and social work it is essential to have all voices in the room. Students are expected to be in class and actively engaged in discussions. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent attendance, be sure to notify the instructor if they cannot attend. This portion of the grade will be determined by attendance and quality of contribution as demonstrated by student preparation level and interactions/discussion with instructor and students. Preparation includes completing readings and assignments by due dates and coming to class prepared to discuss them, and “being present” and involved in experiential activities and discussions. Students are encouraged to utilize university resources and support if they need accommodations related to attendance flexibility.

2. Late Assignments

It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time. Assignments are generally due at 11:59pm on the due date. If this changes—the professor will make an announcement via canvas and adjust the time setting for the assignment in Canvas. Assignments, including papers, are due on the date and time indicated in Canvas. Late assignments will be penalized 5% of the assignment point value for each day late. After 7 calendar days, late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. **Frequent communication is key when needing to turn in a late assignment. If there is a barrier to completing an assignment by the due date, please discuss with the professor to find a workable solution.**

3. APA & References: APA & References: The School of Social Work uniformly requires APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of APA style are

included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 7th edition. Information on APA style and format can be found on the UT library website.

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

5. Technology: Cell phones are expected to be away and silenced during class time. If there is an urgent need to have your phone accessible, please discuss this with the instructor before class. Our course success is rooted in participation and engagement, and having electronics away is crucial to meet this objective.

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.

DISABILITY ACCOMODATION STATEMENT. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/> . If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

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.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Reading
Wk 1 1/10	Introduction/ syllabus review		Review syllabus
1/12	HBSE Overview	Reflection 1 due 1/15	

Wk 2 1/17	Multidimensional Human Behavior		Ch. 1
1/19	Theoretical Perspectives	Reflection due 1/22	Ch. 2
Wk 3 1/24	Justice, Structure & Organizations		Ch. 8–Groups Ch. 9–Structure
1/26	Social Inequity, CRT & Feminist theory	Reflection Due 1/29	Canvas Readings
Wk 4 1/31	Culture of Physical Environment		Ch. 6
2/2	Discussion of Intersectionality	Reflection Due 2/5	
Wk 5 2/7	Families		Ch. 7
2/9	Trauma & the Brain, Biopsychosocial	Reflection Due 2/12	Ch. 3 & Canvas
Wk 7 2/14	Theory		Ch. 4
2/16	Religion & Spirituality	Reflection Due 2/19	Ch. 5

Wk 7 2/21	Life Course		Ch. 10
2/23	Reproductive Justice, Contraception	Reflection Due 2/26	Ch. 11
Wk 8 2/28	Early Childhood		Ch. 12
3/2	Attachment & Play	PART 1 OF PROJECT DUE BY SUNDAY 3/5	NONE
Wk 9 3/7	Middle Childhood		Ch. 13
3/9	Belonging, Social learning, Resilience		Canvas
Wk 10		SPRING BREAK	
Wk 11 3/21	Adolescence		Ch. 14
3/23	Young & Middle Adulthood	Reflection due 3/26	Ch. 15
Wk 12 3/28	Group Presentations Group 1 & 2		

3/30	Group Presentation Group 3 & 4	Reflection due 4/2	
Wk 13 4/4	Group Presentation Groups 5 & 6		
4/6	Older Adults	Reflection due 4/9	Ch. 16
Wk 14 4/11	WRITING WORKSHOP	ROUGH DRAFT	In-class workshop
4/13	LGBTQ+ Communities	Reflection Due 4/16	Canvas
Wk 15 4/18	Putting it all together: Discussion		
4/20	Reflection & Send off	Final Paper Due SUNDAY 4/23	

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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