

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

Course Number:	SW 312	Instructor:	Dr. Diane Rhodes
Unique Number:	60765	Email:	Diane.rhodes@austin.utexas.edu
Semester:	Fall 2024	Office:	n/a
Meeting Time/Place:	Tuesdays and Thursdays	Communication:	Via Canvas email
	3.30-5.00	Office Hours:	By appointment
	Via zoom		

Generalist Social Work Practice

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the first practice course you will complete in the social work curriculum. In this course, you will be introduced to the change and problem-solving process with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. You will learn the purpose of theory in social work and begin to understand the theories that most influence generalist practice. The impact and guidance of the NASW Code of Ethics and other codes/principles of ethics on generalist social work practice will also be explored. Several sets of beginning social work skills, including observation, relationship building, interviewing and assessment skills, will be developed in this class. Experiential learning is emphasized as skills evolve, including a 30-hour service learning requirement that involves opportunities to interact with community members. In addition, in this course, you will learn how to reflect the needs of diverse individuals, groups and communities – as categorized by 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.

This course carries the Ethics flag. Ethics courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

Prerequisite: S W 310, Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, with a grade of at least C.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Define the major dimensions of generalist social work practice and the planned change/problem solving process with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
2. Understand the purpose of theory, how theoretical perspectives fit with individual beliefs and values, and how theory works to provide a framework for social work practice.
3. Explain how the lenses of ecosystems perspective, critical race theory, strengths-based approaches, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and social constructionist theory can be applied to generalist social work practice.
4. Discuss anti-racism in generalist practice, centering racialization, and using perspectives developed by Black, Indigenous and other scholars of color.
5. Using a social justice lens, identify policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist and oppressive ideas and actions and suggest strategies for change.
6. Demonstrate basic skills in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities including:
 - a. Observation,
 - b. Engagement,
 - c. Communication,
 - d. Interviewing,

- e. Assessment,
 - f. Goal setting and intervention,
 - g. Evaluation,
 - h. Collaboration, and
 - i. Problem solving.
7. Demonstrate use of tools in generalist practice including, but not limited to ecomaps, culturagrams, and genograms.
 8. Demonstrate the ability to differentially use basic social work skills to reflect the needs of clients of diverse groups distinguished by racialization, ethnic origin, class, gender, gender expression, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical and mental disabilities, caste, immigration/refugee status and national origin of communities.
 9. Identify ethical issues and recognize when client, legal, policy, societal and/or personal values conflict, emphasizing understanding, affirmation and respect for human diversity and social justice in the practice of social work.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This is an online synchronous class. The classroom will be utilized by students to support group and pairs work during class time on Thursdays. I teach using a variety of teaching methods to foster a stimulating, creative and collaborative learning community. These methods intentionally draw on diverse pedagogical approaches to be inclusive of a variety of learning styles; activities include readings, writings, small group discussions, role-play, lectures, videos, in-class group activities, learning activities in the community and self-reflection. Experiential learning that builds upon your field instruction will be emphasized.

For a meaningful experience in this class, you are encouraged to actively participate, take risks, stretch your creativity, apply your critical thinking skills and attend class regularly. This course will highlight diverse perspectives of thought and will encourage you to engage in new ways of thinking that may be represented by speakers, the professor, and classmates from diverse backgrounds. You are encouraged to ask questions, raise issues, provide the instructor with feedback and meet with me individually as needed to enhance your learning.

In this course you will find a number of approaches to teaching that may be new to you, and I welcome conversation around these approaches. These are designed to support a community of compassion, a community of connection, and a community of lifelong learners.

I also reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus as needed, which will be communicated to you both in class and electronically.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Berg-Weger, M., Tyuse, S. W., & Birkenmaier, J. (2023). *The practice of generalist social work* (Sixth edition). Routledge. (available via Longhorn Textbook Access)

Possible additional material will be on Canvas

Students are also expected to review:

UTSSW Standards for Social Work Education

<http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/standards-sw-education.pdf>

NASW Code of Ethics

<http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners Code of Conduct

http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/sw_conduct.shtm

NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence

<http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/PRA-BRO-253150-CC-Standards.pdf>

NASW Policy Statement on Professional Self Care

<http://www.compassionstrengths.com/uploads/NASW.ProfesionalSelf-Care.pdf>

Additional required weekly readings and handouts will be posted on Canvas.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grades are based on the following:

Service Learning:	30 points
2 Video role-plays:	30 points (15@)
Movie Review:	10 points
Case Summary:	20
Self-care project	10 pts
Total:	100 points

Student Attendance/Participation - Attendance and active participation are critical to the teaching and learning in this class.

Service Learning Requirement - All students enrolled in SW 312 are required to complete 30 clock hours of service learning in a community agency or organization. Additional instructions, forms and due dates for this course requirement are available on Canvas. Service learning experiences will be implemented into learning labs and case examples during class. There will be a service learning fair on September 1st from 11:30am-1pm.

Initial Service Learning Expectations

Provide a set of the forms to your supervisor at the beginning of the semester for their records. On the days that the forms are due, the forms need to be completely filled out and signed by the supervisor to receive full credit. A “tracking hours” form can be accessed on Canvas. Tracking service learning hours will occur on GivePulse as well, and you are expected to track hours timely for full credit. Late forms will not be accepted unless the instructor was notified 24 hours in advance. GivePulse Registration begins September 6th at 10am and closes September 15th at 11:59pm.

Service Learning Agency Presentation

Students will participate in a 15 to 20 minute fishbowl presentation or other preferred modality to engage and teach the class about their experience at their service learning agency. As a part of this evaluation of your experience, the group should address cultural diversity, systemic issues, and ethics.

Movie Review

You will watch an assigned documentary and write a movie review that explores the unique needs of people based on their identities, positionality, and experience.

Self-Care Project and Moments of Excellence

Over the course of the semester, students are encouraged to come up with a regular practice that supports their own mental health and their ability to best care for their clients. The professor and students will notice the effectiveness of their self-care practices, and engage in a practice of accountability throughout the semester in order to parallel the learning experienced in this course. In addition, noticing strengths in others is an essential social work skill, and you are expected to notice your peers strengths and skills throughout the semester and take note as well. On the last day of class, students will have two minutes to share with the class about their self-care practice, and the person(s) they have selected for moments of excellence.

Video Project

You will create 2 videos demonstrating basic social work skills this semester, working with a partner in the class.

Case Summary

You will use information provided online about the Sanchez family to develop an engagement strategy, needs assessment, goal plan, and referrals for 3 members of the family.

VI. GRADES

[No A+]		87.0 to 89.999	B+	77.0 to 79.999	C+	67.0 to 69.999	D+
94.0 and Above	A	84.0 to 86.999	B	74.0 to 76.999	C*	64.0 to 66.999	D
90.0 to 93.999	A-	80.0 to 83.999	B-	70.0 to 73.999	C-	60.0 to 63.999	D-
				<i>*minimum to pass course</i>		Below 60.0	F

VII. CLASS POLICIES

Guides for work turned in:

- Your work must be clear. Using format and composition, ensure your work is understandable to readers.
- It also needs evidence of your original thoughts; including elements of critical thinking:
 - Reflection
 - Analysis
 - Acquisition of information
 - Creativity
 - Structuring arguments
 - Decision making
 - Commitment
 - Debate.
- You must give credit to outside sources for any materials used in your assignments. Social work uses APA formatting to do this. If you are unfamiliar, or use another system, notify the instructor.

Note: social work majors need a final grade of a 'C'- or above to progress to following courses in the major.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Attendance and Academic Behavior. At the University of Texas at Austin, regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. See more information at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/>. Furthermore, students are expected to abide by the Standards for Social Work Education (available at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/student-resources/bsw/policies-and-procedures/>). The student shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements.

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 Center for Access and Restorative Engagement at <https://community.utexas.edu/care/>. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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.

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.

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>.

Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

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.

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.

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 and Mental Health 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.

Resources, Prevention of Discrimination, and Safety

Disability Accommodation 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: <https://community.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.

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.

Covid-19 Related Information. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

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/>.

Title IX Accommodations for Those Pregnant, Nursing and Parenting. Pregnant, nursing and parenting students, faculty, and staff are eligible for accommodations through the Title IX Office that support equal access to education and work and prevent discrimination. Students may reach out to the Title IX Office for help with accommodations to make up missed classes, complete missed coursework, keep them safe in the classroom, apply for leaves of absence, receive priority registration and other related support. Faculty and staff, including undergraduate students who work on campus and graduate student employees, may reach out for assistance with job or schedule restructuring and obtaining modified or additional work equipment. Visit the [Title IX pregnancy and parenting resource page](#) for more information or contact the [Title IX Support and Resources team](#) connect with a Case Manager.

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.

Emergency Evacuation Policy. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due
1	8/27	Welcome, get to know us; Syllabus review		
		Introduction to Generalist Practice		
2	9/3	Engagement skills; relationship skills for practice	Berg-Weger Chapter 1	
3	9/10	Engagement skills; relationship skills for practice	Berg-Weger Chapter 3	
4	9/17	Learning and Accompaniment Skills	Berg-Weger Chapter 4; Assessment and planning - solution focused approach	Service Learning Agency Selection Form
5	9/24	Learning and Accompaniment Skills	Berg-Weger Chapter 4; Implications of diversity and culture - Global connections	
6	10/1	Learning and Accompaniment Skills	Berg-Weger Chapter 4: Guide 5 - Contracting	
7	10/8	Intervention	Berg-Weger Chapter 5; Interventions the support clients strengths - Environment focused processes and skills	Movie Review
8	10/15	Reflection and celebration skills	Berg-Weger Chapter 5; Cultural humility - mapping as an intervention strategy	
9	10/22	Reflection and celebration skills	Berg-Weger Chapter 5; Putting it all together - Empowerment Practice	1st video reflection

10	10/29	Endings	Berg-Weger Chapter 5; Endings and termination - formal evaluations	
11	11/5	Boundaries and taking care of yourself		
12	11/12	Applying Values and Ethics to Practice	Berg-Weger Chapter 2	
13	11/19	Boundaries and Professional Behavior & Ethical Dilemmas		2nd video reflection
	11/25	Thanksgiving break		
14	12/2	Educational trajectory		Self-care project
	12/9			Final Case summary; Service learning hours completed

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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