

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

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW 312	<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Diane Rhodes
<b>Unique Number:</b>	60875	<b>Email:</b>	Diane.rhodes@austin.utexas.edu
<b>Semester:</b>	Spring 2025	<b>Office:</b>	n/a
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	Tuesdays and Thursdays	<b>Communication:</b>	Via Canvas email
	12.30 – 2.00	<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment
	Via zoom		

**Generalist Social Work Practice: Knowledge, Values, and Skills**

## **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. 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.

*"Texas Senate Bill 17, the recent law that outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas, does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Expectations and academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered post-SB 17, and students should not feel the need to censor their speech pertaining to topics including race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or diversity, equity, and inclusion."*

### 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.shtml](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/sw_conduct.shtml)

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.ProfessionalSelf-Care.pdf>

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

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grades are based on the following:

Class attendance:	10 points (.3pts@)
Service Learning:	30 points
2 Reflection Quizzes:	5pts (2.5@)
2 Video role-plays:	20 points (10@)
Movie Review:	10 points
Case Summary:	20 points
Self-care project	5 pts
Total:	100 points

**Student Attendance/Participation** - Attendance is required and rewarded. You are also required to remain in class during breakout sessions, to participate in role-playing, survey, and white board activities and chat tasks.

**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 January 17th from 11:30am-1pm.

### **Initial Service Learning Expectations**

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 January XX at 10am and closes January XX at 11:59pm. Students will participate in Mural board activities to report and reflect on the service learning experience.

### **Service Learning Reflection**

2 service learning reflections will be completed via Quizzes on Canvas. Each reflection will have a specific prompt related to your service learning experience with clients and services at the agency you are placed at.

### **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 Discussion Board**

**This discussion will ask you to share a self care strategy or activity that works well for you, and to read and respond to others.**

### **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

**Timeliness:** Sign in to your zoom account and the class on time.

**Participation:** Attend class from location that allows you to speak aloud, have your camera on at least 50% of class time and 100% of breakout group time.

### 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**

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**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**

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**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://disability.utexas.edu/>. 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 Advice Line (BCAL).** 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 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>.

**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	1/14	Welcome, get to know us; Syllabus review		
	1/16	Service Learning		
2	1/21	Introduction to Generalist Practice Core theories used in social work		
	1/23	Role-playing		
	1/24	Service Learning Fair 11.30 – 1.00		
3	1/28	Engagement skills; relationship skills for practice	Berg-Weger & Tyuse (B&T) Chapter 1	Service Learning Agency Selection Form
	1/30	Engagement skills; relationship skills for practice	B&T Chapter 3	
4	2/4	Learning and Accompaniment Skills	B&T Chapter 4; Assessment and planning - solution focused approach	Service Learning Agency contract
	2/6			
5	2/11	Learning and Accompaniment Skills	B&T Chapter 4; Implications of diversity and culture - Global connections	
	2/13			

6	2/18	Learning and Accompaniment Skills	B&T Chapter 4: Guide 5 - Contracting	Service Learning Reflection
	2/20			
7	2/25	Intervention	B&T Chapter 5; Interventions the support clients strengths - Environment focused processes and skills	Movie Review
	2/27			
8	3/4	Reflection and celebration skills	B&T Chapter 5; Cultural humility - mapping as an intervention strategy	
	3/6			
9	3/11	Reflection and celebration skills	B&T Chapter 5; Putting it all together - Empowerment Practice	
	3/13		B&T Chapter 5; Endings and termination - formal evaluations	1st video reflection
		Spring Break		
10	3/25			
	3/27	Introducing the NASW Code of Ethics		
11	4/1	Boundaries and taking care of yourself		Service Learning Reflection
	4/3	Working within licensure ethics that do not meet your personal beliefs		
12	4/8	Applying Values and Ethics to Practice		



	4/10	Ethical Dilemmas		
13	4/15	Boundaries and Professional Behavior		2nd video reflection
	4/17			Self-care project pt 1
14	4/22	Educational trajectory		Self-care project pt 2
	4/24	AMA		Final Case summary; Service learning hours completed
	4/28	Last Class Day		

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