

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Department of Social Work**

**SWK 322.002 – Human Behavior in the Social Environment II**

**Fall 2012**

**HEN 302**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays: 11:05 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**Instructor:** Dr. Jaimie Page Brill  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 – 4 p.m.  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines the theoretical basis for understanding groups, organizations, & communities. Emphasis is placed on providing students with theoretical knowledge which can then be applied to assessing and intervening with mezzo and macro client systems. Systems theory is utilized as a framework for understanding interactions between and among social units. Prerequisites: SWK 225, 250, 275, and Soc 111. Concurrent enrollment in SWK 328, 329, and 370 required; ANTH 114 may be taken prior to or concurrently with this course. This course is restricted to social work majors and social welfare minors (3 semester hours).

**GOALS & COMPETENCIES:**

**1. Prepare BSW graduates for entry-level professional social work practice that reflects generalist social work knowledge and skills. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 1.1 Apply critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
- 1.2 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)
- 1.3 Apply knowledge of HBSE to practice (2.1.7)
- 1.4 Apply knowledge of policy to practice (2.1.8)
- 1.5 Apply change strategies with all levels of systems (2.1.10)

**2. Enable BSW graduates to practice ethically and apply social work values to promote equality and justice. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 2.1 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
- 2.2 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
- 2.3 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

**3. Provide meaningful contexts through which BSW students engage in leadership, service, and professional excellence. Graduates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- 3.1 Identify and respond as a professional social worker (2.1.1)
- 3.2 Respond to professional contexts that shape practice, demonstrating qualities of leadership for the profession. (2.1.9)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To reintroduce students to a systems paradigm for incorporating knowledge, theories, & methodologies for practice with groups, organizations, and communities.
2. To present an overview of major theories related to groups, organizations, and communities to support macro practice.
3. To assist students in synthesizing their understanding of social interactions within groups, organizations, and communities.
4. To emphasize the impact of age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender roles, & sexual orientation on interactions within & between groups, organizations, and communities.
5. To enhance students' awareness of social work principles, values, & ethics in relation to assessment and intervention strategies with diverse, disadvantaged, & oppressed populations in groups, organizations, & communities.
6. To assist students in analyzing the research base of theories & knowledge presented in the course content to enhance their critical thinking skills.
7. To encourage students' awareness of their own attitudes & behaviors within their personal & professional environments.
8. To promote knowledge of current human resource systems that is integral to the delivery of human services.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. demonstrate comprehension of the major organizational scheme of social work: reciprocal relationships between human behavior and the social environment.
2. integrate theories, concepts, and empirically-based knowledge related to individuals as they live in various systems in their environment: groups, organizations, and communities.

3. synthesize theoretical frameworks for understanding the interactions between and among the various systems such as individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems.
4. apply and illustrate theories, concepts, and empirically-based knowledge related to individuals as they live in various systems in their environment: groups, organizations, and communities.
5. describe typical roles a macro generalist social worker assumes, e.g., advocate, planner, activist, collaborator, supervisor, leader, and manager.
6. demonstrate generalist macro practice intervention skills involved in building relationships, establishing a vision/mission, assessing needs and capacities.
7. demonstrate the importance of using the strengths/capacities, empowerment, and evidence based practice principles to guide practice.
8. assess macro practice interventions and their relationship to the values of social and economic justice, stakeholder participation, empowerment, and diversity.
9. describe their plan for further knowledge development about human behavior and the social environment and groups, organizations, and communities.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:**

This course builds upon core foundation courses. In particular, it builds upon HBSE I, Human Behavior in the Social Environment, which focused on the individual.

### **TEXT:**

Kirst-Ashman, K. (2011). *Human behavior, communities, organizations, & groups in the macro social environment*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

### **GRADING:**

Evaluation of course grades will be assessed according to the following:

4 Quizzes (50 points each)	200 points
Social Problem Paper	100 points
Community Organization Group Presentation	100 points
4 Projects (50 points each)	200 points
In-class Assignments (5 at 10 points each)	50 points
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>50 points</u>
Total Possible Points	700 points

Grades will be determined based on the following point distribution:

A = 630 – 700 points

B = 560 – 629 points

C = 490 – 559 points

D = 420 – 489 points (must retake the course)

F = 419 points or less (must retake the course)

### **OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

**4 Quizzes:** (50 points each = 200 points total) (Outcomes 1 – 8)

Quizzes will be given which reflect content from the covered course material. This includes information from the text, any material provided in-class or via eCollege, in-class assignments, and any other material covered during the quiz time period. The format may include multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay questions. Note: Quiz 4 is through eCollege.

**Social Problem Paper:** (100 points) (Outcomes 1 – 8)

This paper (8 – 10 pages) will address a specific social problem that impacts human development and/or social functioning and includes a major macro component. The paper is due **10/25/12 at the beginning of class**. Possible topics include:

- Unemployment
- AIDS
- Teenage pregnancy
- Working poor
- Homeless families or general homelessness
- Poverty
- Domestic violence

Once you have decided on a topic and received instructor permission; use the following as a guide to completing the paper:

- I. Using statistical data and scholarly literature, define the nature and parameters of the social problem and the populations most impacted by the problem, including information about the nature of the any consequences.
- II. Using a theoretical approach (using any theory discussed in class, i.e. systems theory), explain how the specific social problem is created and/or maintained by the social, economic, political, media, religious and any other macro level institutions or social arrangements in our society.
- III. Explain the social injustices and the oppressive forces that are implicated in the problem.
- IV. Suggest some social work strategies for prevention of and intervention with the problem at the macro level including family, community and institutional levels.

- V. Papers should include at least 5 appropriate sources. Sources can include one website; the other sources must be scholarly books, chapters in books, or articles from academic journals.
- VI. If possible, you should attend a community event/activity related to your topic. Your experience at the community event and information gleaned from the event should be included in your paper.
- VII. You can include handouts or information from the community event in an appendix.

**Community Organization Group Presentation:** (100 Points) (Outcomes 1 – 9)

Students will form groups of 4 or 5 and provide class presentations regarding a specific community or organization. Group members are to work collaboratively to thoroughly assess the community or organization, including strengths and areas of possible improvement. Students will be graded on their individual contribution to the final group product as well as the quality of the completed project. Individual group members who do not participate in the project will also incur a lowered project grade. Students must be present during all the class presentations to receive the points from the Group Presentation. Presentation dates are: 11/8, 11/12, 11/15. Each member of the group will cover a specific element within the community or organization. Group members should provide the instructor with a typed outline that includes information to be presented by each group member. Be sure to cite sources of information presented. Group members are encouraged to include the following information in all presentations:

- A. **Introduction.** Include a detailed description of the community or organization.
- B. **Assessment.** Present a detailed assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- C. **Capacity Building.** Focus should be placed on how to increase the leadership and organizational skills of people for the purpose of strengthening the community or organization. Give a brief summary of the community's or organization's assets. What outside assets are available? What individual and group capacities exist?
- D. **Implications for Social Work Practice.** Discuss a viable plan and implementation strategy that will release individual capacities and empower the community or organization. Does community or organization empowerment include policy changes? How would a social worker form new alliances and cooperation between existing groups within the organization or agencies within the community? How would social workers educate the community or organization members about the plan? How will the plan be evaluated? In other words, how will the social worker empower the community or organization to make changes for the better?

**Four Projects:** (50 points each for a total of 200 points) ( Outcomes 1 – 8)

There will be 4 projects assigned throughout the semester, which are designed to help you learn the material for each particular topic area: Groups, Organizations, Communities, and Social Justice. Each project will vary. Three of the projects are due the same day that quizzes take

place, in order to help you integrate the material. Projects are due at the beginning of class OR by 8 p.m. on eCollege for Projects 3 and 4.

Project One: Groups (due 9/20, in class)

Each student will briefly describe an individual (real or imagined), highlighting: 1) the factors that helped form the individual's behavior/personality (think bio-psycho-social, eco-maps, history, genogram, etc.). Then, 2) describe how those factors affect (or are likely to affect) their behavior at the workplace. One long paragraph or page for each section. 2-page paper, double-spaced. You will get extra points for sharing in class. Keep it anonymous.

Project Two: Organizations (due 10/16, in class)

Describe an organization that you work(ed) for. What were some of the issues? How did management/supervisors handle it? What would you have done differently, using a social work perspective? 1-2 pages double-spaced. No references needed. Extra points for sharing. Keep it anonymous.

Project Three: Communities (due 11/8, eCollege)

Describe a community that you are very familiar with (socially, culturally, geographically, etc). You will develop a Power Point presentation and attach it to a Discussion item in eCollege. Your job is to educate those who are not familiar with this community. Approximately 5 – 10 slides, including a title slide with your name and the community you will be presenting. Be creative. Be culturally competence and strengths-based. Imagine that your audience knows nothing about the community, or they are potentially judgmental about the community.

Project Four: Social Justice (due 11/15, eCollege)

Each student will write a letter to a politician (city, county, state, or federal) regarding a social justice/social policy concern they have. You will post your letter on eCollege under a Discussion item for your peers to read and also report any responses you receive. Omit your personal address from the letter you post.

**In-Class/eCollege Assignments:** (5 at 10 points each for a total of 50 points) (Outcomes 1 – 9)  
These 5 assignments will take place during class and may be a combination of individual and group activities. They will be assigned randomly by the instructor, based on current class content.

**Class Participation:** (50 points) (Outcomes 1- 9)

Students are expected to participate in class! Points will come from any of the following: sharing/participating in class, responding to eCollege postings by peers, attendance/being on-time, appropriate and respectful conduct. Students will lose points by not participating and will lose points for conduct not appropriate for university level classrooms and for the social work profession.

These in-class exercises (approximately 10 throughout the semester) provide an opportunity to apply text/course material and will be assigned throughout the semester. These assignments will allow for the student to utilize creative means to demonstrate an understanding of the course content and the particular topic assigned. Some assignments will be done individually and some will be done in a small group format. Instructions will be provided prior to the assignment.

Students must be present during in-class exercises in order to receive the points; no make-up points will be provided.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITTEN WORK:**

Grading criteria for written work include thoroughness, logical development of statements, clarity of writing, and application of readings from the course.

All written assignments must demonstrate acceptable writing style, American Psychological Association (APA), including the use of Standard English, acceptable grammar, and the use of the American Psychological Association (APA) style of reference citation. The most current APA edition is *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010. Chapters from P Pyrczak, F., & Bruce, R. R., (2007). *Writing empirical research reports* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing can help guide your writing, especially the sections on literature reviews.

Part of the grading process will include an evaluation of presentation, including clarity, coherence, logic and organization of the assignment. All assignments must be typewritten, using double-spacing and standard margins. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the paper is in the possession of the instructor by the designated time. Any papers left in the mailbox or any other place are not the instructor's responsibility. **All assignments must be turned in on hard copy, no electronic papers.** At the discretion of the instructor, it may be required to submit written assignments via "turn-it in", a program utilized to determine instances of plagiarism. Please follow-up to ensure I have received your paper by the date assigned. Below is a partial list of factors that are addressed in the grading process:

- Any error in APA reference or citation format from the 7<sup>th</sup> edition
- Lack of quotation marks at the beginning and end of all direct quotes
- Extra or missing punctuation (i.e. commas, semi-colons, colons, periods)
- Incomplete sentences (i.e., sentences without a verb)
- Run-on sentences (i.e., sentences that run together without appropriate punctuation and capitalization delineating each sentence)
- Incorrect spelling
- Inappropriate and inconsistent verb tense
- Lack of noun-verb agreement
- Incorrect use of capitalization (e.g., social work is generally not capitalized)
- Incorrect use of possessives (examples of correct use are Shawn's book, the parents' child)
- Any contractions (e.g., I'm, can't, won't), except in direct quotes from another source)
- Lack of neatness (e.g., hand written corrections, uneven indentions)
- Papers that are not typewritten
- Use of a size other than #12 fonts
- Lines not double spaced
- Margins that are less than or wider than 1 inch
- Failure to indent the first line of a paragraph
- Incoherent sentences

**COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE** (subject to change; additional reading/assignments will be assigned via eCollege)

Week	Dates	Topic(s) & Quizzes	Assignments
1	8/28 & 8/30	Course Introduction & Review of HBSE I	
2	9/4 & 9/6	Human Behavior in the Macro Social Environment: Introduction, Values, Ethics, & Principles	Text, chp 1
3	9/11	<b>No class.</b> BSW Student Assembly 9 – 1 p.m. (Mandatory).	
	9/13	Assign Community Organizing Groups (4 students per group) Community Organizing Group Work	Text, chp 2
4	9/18 & 9/20	Human Behavior in Groups: Theories & Dynamics	Text, chp 3 <b>Project # 1 due on 9/20</b>
5	9/25 & 9/27	Types of Groups in the Macro Social Environment	Text, chp 4
6	10/2	<b>Quiz # 1 on Groups:</b> chapters 1 – 4 and all course material covered to date	
	10/4	Overview of Social Service Settings: Mission/Goals, Environmental & Socio-Political Context, and Structure/Dynamics	Text, chp 5
7	10/9 & 10/11	1. The Socio-Political Context of Social Service Organizations 2. Organizational Structure/Dynamics	Text, chps 6 & 7
8	10/16	1. Human Behavior, Management, and Supervision 2. Organizational Empowerment	Text, chp 8 <b>Project # 2 due</b>
	10/18	<b>Quiz # 2 on Organizations:</b> chapters 5 – 8 and all course material for weeks 6 – 8	
9	10/23 & 10/25	Communities: Theories and Concepts Community Organizing Group Work	Text, chp 9 <b>Social Problem Paper due on 10/25</b>
10	10/30 & 11/1	Communities & Neighborhoods : A Strengths-Based Perspective	Text, chps 10 & 11
11	11/6	<b>Quiz # 3 on Communities:</b> chapters 9 – 11 and all course material related to weeks 9 – 11	
	11/8	Diversity & Social Justice in the Macro Social Environment Strategies to address Social Injustices at the Macro Level <b>Community Organization Group Presentations</b>	Text, chps 12 & 13 <b>Project # 3 due on eCollege</b>
Master Syllabus as of	Fall 2011		
12	11/13	Strategies to address Social Injustices at the Macro Level	11/15

		<b>Community Organization Group Presentations</b>	
	11/15	<b>Community Organization Group Presentations</b>	<b>Project # 4 due on eCollege</b>
13	Week of 11/19: <b>No Classes</b> - Holiday		
14	11/27 & 11/29	<b>eCollege Classes and Assignments</b>	
15	12/4	<b>eCollege Quiz # 4</b> on chapters 12 & 13 and all current course material	
	12/6	Course Wrap-Up	

The above outline is provided as a guide though variations may occur. Readings are to be completed prior to class meeting. Class activities are based on the assumption that readings have been completed. Lecture information is to be considered as supplemental to required readings. Students are responsible for all assigned reading even if it is not discussed during class meetings. Additional readings/activities will be assigned. Class time will highlight and add to the knowledge gained through assigned reading; it is not intended to replace knowledge gained through reading. Assignments are to be submitted at the beginning of the class period.

#### **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from the Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In™) to identify plagiarism.

The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to

further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

### **ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:**

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the *NASW Code of Ethics* to guide social workers’ conduct. The *Code* is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department’s Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University’s commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).

**CORRESPONDANCE:**

Students are expected to stay in communication with the instructor of this course either verbally, in writing or via e-mail. *The preferred method of contact for the instructor is email.* Only Texas A&M-Commerce University email accounts will be used in corresponding with the instructor.

**CELL PHONES/PAGERS/LAPTOPS:**

Please turn your cell phone and/or pager (and other electronic devices) off during class. NO texting! If you are on-call for your work, please place the cell phone or page on silent mode. Notify me at the beginning of class if you are either on-call or may expect an emergency personal call/text (i.e. your child is home sick with a sitter and the sitter may need to contact you). If you utilize a laptop to take class notes, please be aware of potentially distracting others around you and seat yourself accordingly. *You will be asked to leave the class if it is determined you are utilizing a computer to do outside work, surf the web inappropriately or communicate personal conversations, and you will receive substantial point reduction in Class Participation.*

**TAPES AND NOTES:**

Recording of class notes will be allowed for students needing approved accommodation only. Recording recordings may not be shared, sold or distributed to others. While you may make copies of these notes for your personal use, no copy of these notes may be distributed to anyone other than persons currently enrolled in the class; nor may any copies be sold.

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