SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SWK 424: Generalist Practice in the Field
Fall 2013

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to assist students in integrating the knowledge, skills and values learned in all social work courses previously taken, by applying these in their field practicum settings. Prerequisites: All required social work courses and successful completion of SWK 422 and SWK 425. Concurrent enrollment in SWK 426 is required. Restricted to Social Work majors. 3 semester hours.

GOALS AND 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 integrate appropriate generalist social work theories with chosen practice methods in the field practice setting.
2. To facilitate the integration of social work knowledge, skills, and values as learned in all previous social work courses
3. To strengthen the application of knowledge, skills, and values from all professional foundation courses in work with divers, disadvantaged, and oppressed clients at all levels of systems in social work practice.
4. To encourage student's continuing awareness of their own attitudes and behaviors within their personal and professional practice environments.
5. To prepare students for taking the Texas State Licensed Social Worker Examination (LSW) by reviewing the Social Work Examination Services (SWES) Basic Examination Study Guide.
6. To prepare students for employment/job search and or/application to graduate school.
7. To facilitate the professional socialization process by encouraging the demonstration of professional behavior and the application of social work values and ethics.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: See Goals and Competencies

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES: Taken concurrently with SWK 426

TEXTS

Social Work Examination Services, Inc. (2012). *Comprehensive study guide: Bachelor Level Social Work License,* (Version 3.7). Brookline, MA: Author.

GRADING

Grading and evaluation -- In general, a course grade of a "C" represents an acceptable level of work. A course grade of "B" represents a substantial effort and achievement. It

is clearly a grade for the better than average product and effort. An "A" is awarded only in the cases of both outstanding efforts and quality in the required products. The grades will be awarded on the following basis:

A = 350 – 400 of possible points
B = 300 - 349 of possible points
C = 249 – 299 of possible points
D = Below 248 of possible points

Evaluation for course grades will be computed according to the following formula:

Integrative Paper	200 points
Class Attendance & Participation*	100 points
Score on Comprehensive Exam	100 points
Total Points	400 points *

* See acceptable classroom behavior

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Integrative Paper** – This paper is an opportunity for each student to write a scholarly paper focusing on practice theories that support a specific social work intervention in his/her field practicum site. The specific assignment guidelines are at the end of the syllabus. Students will demonstrate their ability to use critical thinking skills and relay that information into a concise document that supports their stance. Students will use their previous textbooks and other research in accomplishing this assignment.

2. **Class Attendance & Participation** – As stated in the section on Attendance, students will be awarded up to 100 points for attendance and participation. Points will be deducted for absences (see guidelines in Attendance section) and for a lack of involvement or participation in the class. Assignments may be given for students to present information as a part of fulfilling this course requirement.

The Integrative Paper

Social workers are still searching for an integrated theory of practice for social work. Currently, generalist practitioners draw upon many **theoretical frameworks:**

Figure 1

Ecological theory
Bio-Psycho-Social theory
Developmental theory
Person-In-Environment theory

Psychodynamic theory
Family and Group theory
Cognitive theory
Behavioral theory
Oppression theory
Community Organization theory
Social/Open Systems theory
Organizational Behavior theory

Some specific models of practice intervention include:

Figure 2

Social Skills Training	**Problem-Solving**	**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**	**Cognitive Restructuring**	**Task-Centered Approach**
Gestalt Therapy	**Crisis Intervention**	**Client-Centered Therapy**	**Structural Family Therapy**	**Case (or Care) Management**

However, as entry-level professional social work is a broad, generalist perspective of helping, one integrated theory may not be possible. You are encouraged to consider how your practice model includes not only **evidenced based** theory-tested and proven intervention techniques but takes into account the issues of **social welfare policy, human diversity, and social justice** which form the historical foundation of social work as a profession.

The Integrative Paper is the culmination of what has been learned by the student at completion of the generalist BSW curriculum. It is an opportunity for each student to develop a personal practice theory from existing frameworks and apply that theory to his/her field of practice. As you work through the outline for the paper, you will want to refer to your previous social work texts.

Write this paper in 3rd person. The majority of the paper will be in past tense. The paper must be **at least twelve (12)** pages in length, and be written and formatted according to the American Psychological Association's Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2009, 6th ed.).
Students are required to utilize the APA format for the entire paper -- from the title page to the reference list. **You may not use more than three (3) references from a totally web based source.** You may use web based material for your research but you should locate the complete text of the article for documentation.

Particular attention will be focused on appropriate referencing within the text. Grammatical and structural correctness, concise writing, appropriate grammar, and completeness will be 25% of the grading criteria. At this point in your

educational experience, content is based on your ability to make a valid argument and defend your position after having looked at both sides of an issue. Content will be rated at 75%.

Do not attempt to write this paper without the APA Manual (6th ed).
One complete copy of the paper will be due on **Monday, November 11th, 2013. Submit electronically, by word attachment to** Chuck.Nash@tamuc.edu Keep a copy of all your referenced materials -- these must be available to the instructor upon request, so keep copies of journal articles and book chapters at home. A copy of your paper will be placed in your student file as a quantitative measure both of your progress in the BSW program and how the program is meeting its program objectives.

Good luck to each one. The success in developing this paper is to get an early start--- remember, use previously assimilated social work skills, knowledge and practice methodologies. This is a major paper and should be viewed as the bridge to writing more comprehensive papers for the Master of Social Work Program.
You are graduating seniors and must present your knowledge base of social work practice through written presentation.

Integrative Paper Outline

Title Page

Abstract (Paragraph providing information on what the paper content will state)

Introduction

Statement of Purpose
Describe the Practicum Setting and Client Services
Brief overview of Selected Client System

Literature Review

General discussion on theoretical frameworks (from social work literature – see Figure 1 on page 10) relevant to selected Client System and the helping approach used (or that could be used) in the Practicum Setting

Generalist Perspectives on the Practice Model with the Client/System

Bio-Psycho-Social theories relevant to the Client System
Policy issues (organizational, legislative, or judicial) related to Client System
Social and Environmental Systems Impact on Client/System
Relevant Practice Theories applicable to Client System (See Figure 2 on pg. 10)
Key Elements of the Helping Process Applied to the Client System (application of the strengths-based systematic approach to problem-solving)

Conclusion

Student's Perspective on issues related to diversity, oppression, and social justice that impact the Client System
Recommendations and Implications for Social Work Practice

Reference List

Appendix (if applicable)

EXAMINATIONS

1. **Comprehensive Exam** – Students will have one comprehensive exam that will assess their knowledge across all areas of the social work curriculum: human behavior & the social environment, social welfare policy, research, and practice with all levels of systems. This exam will come at the end of the course, and will be tailored to prepare the student for the actual state license exam.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to attend class, reflecting responsibility which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. Roll will be taken regularly. Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student's professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. Tardiness (or early departure) of more than 15 minutes will count as .5 absence (2 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 or more minutes early or does not come to class.

The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

Weekly	Up to 2 absences No penalty	3 absences 1 letter grade drop	4 absences Class grade of "F"	

Bi-weekly	Up to 3 absences No penalty	4 absences 1 letter grade drop	5 absences 1 letter grade drop	6 absences Class grade of "F"
Summer 10-week	Up to 1 absence No penalty	2 absences 1 letter grade drop	3 absences Class grade of "F"	

ONLINE OR WEB-ENHANCED CLASSES: Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via eCollege, students must log in and complete assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to eCollege (which can be monitored by the instructor) and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students' grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION. You have access to the university's computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs.
If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate interactions with classmates, (2) Attentiveness, and (3) Active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation is based on instructor observation. Students will be given feedback if problems are evident.

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

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 literacy 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).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Reading(s)	Assignment/Activities	Link to Comp.	SLO
1 Aug 26	Introduction to Course and overview of Assignments. LBSW Review/SWES Guidelines for Preparing for the Basic License Examination; Strategies for taking the Exam/NASW Introduction	Review the introduction in text	1.1 – 3.2	5
2 Sep 2	Review/Discussion Guidelines for Integrative Paper; Integration of Social Work Knowledge, Skills and Values; Generalist Practice Methods; Theoretical Frameworks;	Referred to prior reference books, journals and coursework	1.1 – 3.1	1,2,3&7

	Integrative Paper Topics in Relations to Field Practicum, etc.		1.1 - 3.2	1 - 7
3 Sep 10	**Tuesday. BSW General Assembly TBD. Role will be taken.**	**Readings are required prior to day of class.**		
4 Sep 16	A-1 Administration	Reading/Review of Section A-1 - Text	1.1	1,2,5&6
5 Sep 23	B-1 Generalist Social Work Practice	Reading/Review of Text/Discussion	1.1 – 3.2	1 -7
6 Sep 30	C-1 Community Organization	Reading/Review/Discussion	1.4,1.5,2.3&3.2	1,2,3,5,6 &7
7 Oct 7	D-1 Social Work With Groups	Reading/Review/Discussion	1.1,1.3,1.4,1.5,2.1,2.2,2.3	1 - 7
8 Oct 14	E-1 Human Behavior	Reading/Review/Discussion	1.1,1.3,2.1,2.22.3,3.1&3.2	1 - 7
9 Oct 21	E-1 Human Behavior **Integrative Paper Topical Subject Due**	Reading/Review/Discussion **The Subject, Topical Paragraph (abstract) and Integrative Paper Outline due for approval. 10 points deducted if late**	Same as above Submit electronically, by word attachment to chuck.nash@tamuc.edu **Not responsible for your computer malfunctions, etc. best use a backup system in case you have a problem.**	1 -7
10 Oct 28	F-1 Research	Reading/Review/Discussion –	1.1, 1.2,1.5,2.1,3.1&3.2	1 - 7
11 Nov 4	Social Policy	Reading/Review/Discussion **Integrative Paper Due: Submit electronically, by word attachment, to chuck.nash@tamuc.edu Not responsible for your computer**	1.1,1.5,2.1,2.2,2.3,3.1,3.2	1 - 7

		malfunctions.		
12 Nov 11	Culturally Competent Social Work Practice	Reading/Review/Discussion	1.1,1.2,1.5,2.1,2.2,2.3,3.1 &3.2	
13 Nov 18	Review of Exam I and II	**Review of Graduate School Requirements**		
14 Nov 25	Review of Exam I and II			
15 Dec 2	**Final Exam**	**Pre-BSW State License Format. 150 multiple choice questions directly from the practice exam I and II. Exam will be administered through MyLeo - Computer Room TBD**		
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