



*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

**SWK 503.41E: Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities**  
**Tuesday 6-9:00 p.m.**  
**MPLX Campus**

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**INSTRUCTOR:** Philip Ortiz  
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***According to State of Texas HB 2504, this course syllabus must be submitted for review prior to the course's scheduled start date. Therefore, the instructor has the right to modify this syllabus and course calendar at any time between submission for publication and the first day of class. Furthermore, the instructor has the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the course provided (1) such changes do not increase expectations or requirements beyond a reasonable equivalent and (2) students are given ample notification.***

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This second practice theory course builds on SWK 501, Generalist Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups, extending the concepts of strengths based practice to work with communities and organizations. The relationships between communities and organizations and at risk populations are infused throughout the course. Knowledge, values and skills will be obtained through oral and written assignments, role-playing and video tapes.

**GOAL & COMPETENCIES:**

**F 1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

F 1.1 Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)

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- F 1.2 Demonstrate research-informed practice and practice-informed research (2.1.6)
- F 1.4 Engage in change strategies with individuals, families, groups, organizations & communities (2.1.10)

### **F 2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

- F 2.2 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
- F 2.3 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
- F 2.4 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)

### **F 3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:**

- F 3.1 Engage as professional social workers (2.1.1)
- F 3.2 Respond to professional contexts that shape practice, demonstrating qualities of leadership for the profession. (2.1.9)

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Upon completion of this course students will have attained the following competencies:

1. Students will learn to use micro and mezzo skills appropriately in the macro environment.
2. Students will learn and apply systems theory to organizations and communities and to identify major differences between urban and rural areas.
3. Students will acquire knowledge, values and skills required for policy and organizational change.
4. Students will learn to use the evidence based knowledge and skills of mezzo and macro generalist practice in assessment and problem solving with organizations and communities.
5. Students will demonstrate commitment to the importance of ethics and diversity (age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, disability, and income) when examining theories, conducting assessments, and planning macro level interventions.

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

This course builds on the social work skills taught in foundation content of SWK 501 and relates SWK 521 to practice with organizations and communities. The areas of ethics and social justice are further integrated into the student knowledge base. It works in conjunction with SWK 513 to prepare the student for Advanced Generalist Practice courses SWK 507, SWK 508 and SWK 557.

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### REQUIRED TEXT:

Kirst-Ashman, K. K. & Hull, G. H., Jr. (2011). *Generalist practice with organizations and communities* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

### SUGGESTED TEXTS:

Fauri, D. P., Wernet, S. P. & Netting, F. E. (2000). *Cases in macro social work practice*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Gilbert, N. & Terrell, P. (2002). *Dimensions of social welfare policy* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Ginsberg, L. H. (Ed.). (2003). *Social work in rural communities* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education.

### GRADING:

Grading and evaluation – Grades will be determined according to the following percentage points earned against possible points.

<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
450 – 500 points	A
400 – 449 points	B
350 – 399 points	C
300 – 349 points	D
below 300 points	F

### OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

#### **Organizational Paper** **100 pts**

Each student will develop a 6 to 7 page paper discussing the purpose of their field placement as a living human system with its formal functions and informal functions. The paper must follow the outline provided by the instructor and should be APA style, typed and double-spaced. (MSWG1O1,2; MSWG3O1,2; MSWG4O2,3)

#### **Community Assessment Paper** **150 pts.**

The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate an understanding of the boundaries, participants, conditions, dynamics, needs, resources and strengths of the community in which the student has their field placement. The student is to follow the form provided by the instructor. Include community prevention efforts, social development, normalization and empowerment of at risk populations at multiple system levels. (MSWG1O1,2; MSWG3O1,2; MSWG4O1,2,3)

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### **Journal Article Review and Class Presentation** **50 pts.**

Each student will do a 2 to 3 page review of a professional journal article that deals with macro social work practice and present it to the class. (MSWG2O1,2,3)

### **Log/Presentation** **200 pts.**

Each student will follow the governing body of a local governmental or social organization during the semester. The student will log specific information such as procedures followed in decision making, roles, current issues of concern, conflict management, diversity, representation and policy development. The student will be required to attend at least three meetings of the governing body. The student will do a class presentation concerning the functioning of the governing body. (MSWG1O1; MSWG3O1,2; MSWG4O1,2,3)

**TOTAL: 500 pts.**

### **GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT:**

You will submit an assessment of a community system. Be sure to include referenced material from the required social work texts of Kirst-Ashman & Hull. The paper should reflect appropriate American Psychological Association's (APA) Publication Manual (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) style. The minimum length is 6 pages, typed and double-spaced. Select a city or town with which you are familiar. If possible, avoid large cities, but be sure that the city is large enough to allow you to gather the information required.

#### **Description of Community Characteristics**

City or town name, geographical location and description  
Demographic information: population, ethnicity, socioeconomic factors, age distribution, etc.  
Economic base of the community; major employers in industry, government, and business  
Methods of city government, political affiliation of current community leaders  
Recreational, work, and residential areas in the city and its immediate environment  
City's major social institutions; schools, churches, civic groups, hospitals, human service agencies and criminal justice system locations.

#### **Description of Community Issues and Concerns**

Major social problems in the city  
Significant social tensions and value conflicts among the city's citizens  
Interview at least two vulnerable or oppressed residents and get their perspectives  
Mechanisms of discrimination and oppression that impact the city's vulnerable residents; include human service agency or governmental policies that maintain oppression of these vulnerable individual.

#### **Description of Community Resources**

Resources available to the residents of the city  
In-kind resources  
Cash resources  
Social services resources  
Societal institutions and organizations that are significant sources of strength and pride to segments of the community, and to the community as a whole

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Gaps in resources, or problems with existing resources (such as inaccessibility)

### **Assessment of the Community Strengths and Weaknesses**

Based on data collected, assess strengths and weaknesses of the community in terms of the adequacy of the community in meeting the needs of its residents; use the knowledge of human needs and social systems you have learned in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses.

Discuss two change strategies you think are urgently needed by the community, to address one problem you identified in Section II.

Describe actions that a social worker might take to bring about these planned change strategies.

### **Relationship to Rural Areas**

Discuss data concerning the rural population surrounding the city.

Describe difficulties and needs particular to the rural residents in the surrounding areas.

Describe how agencies and service organizations reach out to rural areas to meet needs.

### **AGENCY ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS:**

Include the following factors in your report and any other factors you feel are of significance in analyzing the field agency/organization.

#### **PHYSICAL PLANT**

Name and location of agency; location of other branches of agency, if any

Physical appearance of agency – external and internal

#### **HISTORY**

Where and when was the agency originally established?

What services does it deliver?

How was it funded originally?

#### **CURRENT SERVICES**

What are its present official goals?

What services does it deliver?

How many clients were served last year by the agency, by your department?

Describe the population served (age groups, ethnic minorities, etc.)

How is it funded at this time? Give approximate % of income from each source.

#### **EXTERNAL STRUCTURE (SUPRASYSTEM)**

Is the agency part of a larger bureaucracy of service network?

With which other agencies does it most frequently work cooperatively?

#### **INTERNAL STRUCTURE (SUBSYSTEMS)**

Describe the different departments within the organization, if any, and their official goals.

Who makes the eligibility requirements for services from the department in which you are located? What are the services provided?

What are the eligibility requirements for services from the department in which you are located? What are the services provided?

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Are the clients expected to contribute to the payment for services they receive?

### SOCIAL WORK

How many social workers are currently employed by your agency?

What types of positions are they eligible to fill?

What are the eligibility requirements for professional employment in the agency? In your department?

### STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE ORGANIZATION

Adequacy of resources

Adequacy of service delivery and outcome measures used.

### **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.

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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 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).

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### 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
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### **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

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