COURSE TITLE: Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups

COURSE NUMBER: Social Work 521, Section 2

SEMESTER: Fall, 2004

DAY/TIME: Mondays, 9 a.m. to 12 a.m., September 13 to December 13

LOCATION: Room 3001, School of Education Building

INSTRUCTOR: Mike Woolley, M.S.W., Ph.D., D.C.S.W.
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OFFICE HOURS: Mondays, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents foundation knowledge and skills essential to interpersonal practice while considering the community, organizational, and policy contexts in which social workers practice. It integrates content on multiculturalism, diversity, social justice, and social change issues, and it relies on the historical, contextual, and social science knowledge presented concurrently in the foundation SWPS and HBSE courses. The student's field experience and future practice methods courses will build upon the skills presented in this basic course. Throughout this course, students examine social work values and ethics as well as issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ability as these relate to interpersonal practice.

COURSE CONTENT

Students will learn various social work roles (e.g., counselor, group facilitator, mediator, broker, advocate and resource planner), recognizing that these roles must be based on an awareness of cause and effect and on the adherence to social work values and ethics. Students will understand the importance of developing relationships with clients, colleagues, supervisors, other professionals, and many other constituencies that make up the organizations in which they work. Students will also learn how self-awareness and the conscious use of self affect the helping relationship. In this course all phases of the IP treatment and prevention process (i.e. engagement, assessment, evaluation, planning,
intervention, and termination) will be presented with attention to how they are applied to work with individuals, families, and small groups.

Students will learn to assess problems in clients' lives that relate to attributes of the client (e.g. age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability) as well as situational and environmental factors relevant to the client's social functioning. Students will understand patterns of functioning, to assess strengths and limitations, and to plan, implement and monitor change strategies. Students will learn the importance of evaluating methods of change based on situational effectiveness and on whether their implementation enhances the client's capacity for self-determination and the system's capacity for justice. Various prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation models will be covered as well as various IP skills. In subsequent IP courses, more emphasis will be placed on specialized assessment procedures, evaluation, treatment interventions, and termination.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe ecological-systems, bio-psycho-social, problem solving, structural, and pathology versus strengths based frameworks in practice with individuals, families, and small groups and critique the strengths and weakness of these various frameworks.

2. Recognize the impact of race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, power and privilege on interpersonal practice by: a) demonstrating self-awareness about how their attributes and life experiences impact on their capacity to relate to others with different personal attributes and life experiences, and (b) describe how others who are very different may perceive them and how status and power issues impact professional relationships with clients, colleagues, and other professions.

3. Carry out the roles of advocate, broker, counselor/therapist, group facilitator, and resource developer and assess the appropriateness of these roles in context.

4. Demonstrate basic interpersonal practice skills including active listening, empathic responding, critical thinking, case recording, and contracting.

5. Conduct culturally sensitive interpersonal practice by: (a) engaging diverse client systems (b) employing assessment protocols of PIE, ecomaps, genograms, network maps, and group composition (c) articulating treatment and prevention goals, developing measurable treatment and prevention objectives, and employing measurement tools to monitor and evaluate practice while maintaining sensitivity to the special needs of clients, (d) implementing treatment protocols consistent with treatment plans and sensitive to clients' situations, and (e) recognizing basic termination issues that pertain to interpersonal practice.

6. Operationalize the NASW code of ethics and recognize value dilemmas that emerge in interpersonal practice.
RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

*Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be concentrated in the topics of relationship building, communication, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation. These topics will explore how the differences between worker and client impact and shape these critical dimensions of social work practice. Critical consciousness about power imbalances between worker and client and between client and agency will also be explored.

*Social Justice and Social Change* will be central to the topic of various roles assumed by social workers and in clienthood. The focus of the course is on small system change (individual, families, and groups) but the larger social context and implications for change will be embedded in PIE, ecological assessment, and in the experience of applicants as they enter social agencies. These themes will be integrated into this course through the use of case examples and case scenarios that will be selected by the instructor to exemplify skills in practice.

*Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation* will be themes reflected in various purposes and models of contemporary social work practice. In addition, this course will emphasize skills that can be implemented with promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation as practice goals and outcomes.

*Behavioral and Social Science Research* will be presented in this course to support practice methods, skills and assessment procedures. Planning, decision-making and intervention procedures will be directly borrowed from the behavioral and social sciences.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES

Social work ethics and values will be addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working with clients and colleagues. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to give students direction about these ethical issues. In particular, this course will focus on client issues, such as confidentiality, privacy, rights and prerogatives of clients, the client’s best interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, interruption of services, and termination. In addition, issues that arise when working with colleagues, such as referral, consultation, dispute resolution, and mediation will be addressed.

COURSE DESIGN AND TEACHING METHODS

The development of a supportive learning environment, reflecting the values of the social work profession, is essential for the success of this class. A supportive learning environment is fostered by listening to the ideas and views of others, being able to understand and appreciate a point of view which is different from your own, articulating clearly your point of view, and linking experience to readings and assignments. We will appreciate your contributions to making this a safe and respectful class for learning and growth.

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, group exercises, case material, role plays and videos. The class
format is based on the understanding that you are a prepared and active learner. Reading the assigned materials prior to the class session is a prerequisite to getting the most out of each class and successfully meeting the course objectives. Material presented in class will be designed to complement the content in the reading assignments, not simply repeat it.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND COURSE READINGS**

There are two required text books for this course, which are listed below. These texts should be available at Michigan Book and Supply, Michigan Union Bookstore and Ulrich’s Bookstore. Additionally, there are many sources for textbooks on the web including, www.amazon.com, www.bestbookbuys.com and www.textbooks.com among others.


All required course readings beyond the texts will be posted to the CourseTools site for the course. If accessing the readings from the CourseTools site presents a problem for you, please let me know and other arrangements will be made for you to get the readings. Additional readings will be provided by the instructor and distributed in class. A resource that you would find valuable to own throughout your MSW coursework and later in your career is the *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, edited by R. L. Edwards, R.L. and published by NASW Press.

A good site to access world wide web resources for social workers: [http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsw/](http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsw/)

**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Several methods will be utilized to assess your learning and progress toward the class objectives. These methods will include participation, quizzes, papers, and a group project. The assignments are described below, and assignments, expectations and grading criteria will be discussed during the first class session. All written assignments should be typed or word processed using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**Class Participation**

Participation counts for 15% of your final grade. Everyone will receive a standard score of 100 for participation, in recognition of a norm of attendance, contributions to small
group assignments, and informed participation in class discussion. Points will be deducted from the base score if you miss class, are late, or are unprepared.

**Quiz**

A quiz will be worth 20% of your final grade. It will address material from class readings, lectures and handouts during the first 5 weeks of classes. The quiz is intended to provide feedback about your learning (to both you and I) and will include multiple choice and short answer questions.

**Papers**

Two papers will account for 45% of your grade in this course. These papers will include a practice topic paper and a BioPsychoSocial assessment of a client. A separate handout will provide more details.

**Group Presentation**

A group presentation will account for 15% of your grade in this course. These presentations will be made on December 1st and 8th. A separate handout will provide more details.

**Course Evaluation**

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**APA FORMAT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Please refer to the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual* (often called the APA Style Manual) in the preparation of your writing assignments. The current edition is the fifth, but using an earlier edition is acceptable. I think you will find having your own copy a valuable resource over the next two years. You can find out more at http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html.

It is critical to reference all sources of information or ideas you use in your writing, to do otherwise is academic dishonesty. Direct quotes in particular should be identified as such. Situations of apparent plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported and handled according to University policy.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students who have disabilities that affect participation in the course should notify me if they need special accommodations in instructional format, examination format, etc.
POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

A grade of “Incomplete” will be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with SSW and University policy. Assignments are due in class on the day as noted in the course outline. Late assignments, i.e., those not handed in to me in class on the day due, will be reduced one letter grade for each day they are late. Please plan to have things completed on time and keep me informed if any problems arise.

If, due to an emergency, you will miss the quiz, you must notify me prior to class by phone or email and make arrangements to make it up at the earliest possible time. Unexcused absence from a quiz will result in a grade of zero.

COURSE OUTLINE

CLASS SESSION 1: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13
Topics: Introductions, Course Overview, Syllabus and Course Assignments, Building a Professional Self, Process versus Content in Social Work Practice

CLASS SESSION 2: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20
Topics: Social Work Values and Ethics Relationship Building Skills


CLASS SESSION 3: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27
Topics: Interviewing Skills
Readings: Lukas: Introduction and Chapter 1 & 2


CLASS SESSION 4: MONDAY, OCTOBER 4

Topics: BioPsychoSocial and Multidimensional Assessment, Assessment Tools, Introduction to the DSM

Readings: Lukas: Chapter 13


CLASS SESSION 5: MONDAY, OCTOBER 11

Topics: Theoretical Perspectives in Social Work Practice: Risk and Resilience, Ecological, Solution Focused, Problem-Solving, Developmental, Family Systems, Strengths Perspective


CLASS SESSION 6: MONDAY, OCTOBER 25

QUIZ DAY

Topics: Goal Setting, Treatment Plans, Contracting, Ongoing Assessment and Evaluation of Treatment Plan

Readings: Lukas: Chapters 9 & 10

CLASS SESSION 7: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1

Readings: Paniagua: Chapters 1 and 2


CLASS SESSION 8: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8
Topics: Multicultural Issues in Social Work Practice, Continued

Readings: Paniagua: Chapters 3, 4, 5 & 6


CLASS SESSION 9: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15
FIRST PAPERS DUE
Topics: Social Work with Children and Adolescents
Readings: Lukas: Chapters 5, 6, 11


**CLASS SESSION 10: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22**

**Topic:** Social Work with Families

**Readings:** Lukas: Chapter 4


**CLASS SESSION 11: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29**

**Topic:** Social Work with Families, Continued, Group Presentations

**Readings:** Lukas: Chapter 7


**CLASS SESSION 12: MONDAY, DECEMBER 6**

**Topic:** Group Presentations

**CLASS SESSION 13: MONDAY, DECEMBER 13**

**FINAL PAPERS DUE**

**Topics:** Group Presentations Continued, Termination, Course Wrap-up and Evaluations