Course Description

This course prepares students to engage in integrated practice focused on working with community and social systems to support individual, family and community functioning. It builds on practice methods presented in the foundation and elaborates how social workers can work in partnership with community and social systems. Special emphasis will be placed on conducting this work in a multicultural context and on enhancing the well being of vulnerable and oppressed populations and communities.

Course Objectives

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how community and social systems can play a role in improving the well being of individuals, families, organizations and communities;
2. Identify the critical primary and secondary structures in communities that can be mobilized for engaging in practice;
3. Describe how the gender, racial, religious, economic or other characteristics of a community affect the needs and assists to be mobilized in practice;
4. Demonstrate skills for engaging community systems and encouraging the participation of community members;
5. Identify how social work ethics and values can guide practice with community and social systems.

Relationship to Four Curricular Themes

1. Multiculturalism and Diversity: This course will focus on ways in which the characteristics of individuals, families and communities will drive the approach to practice. Therefore, the themes of diversity and multiculturalism will be addressed
throughout the course. This will include attention to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, economic status, and sexual orientation.

2. Social Change and Social Justice: This course will focus on methods for increasing community participation and empowerment. Therefore, the themes of social change on multiple levels toward the goal of social justice are central to this course. Special attention will be paid for developing methods that are democratic, participatory and focused on equity and equality.

3. Promotion/Prevention/Treatment/Rehabilitation: This course will consider how community and social systems can be mobilized toward promotion, prevention, treatment or rehabilitation efforts. For example, community and social system involvement can be an integral element of the promotion of mental health, the prevention of mental illness, the treatment of mental distress or the rehabilitation of the mentally disabled. This course will shed light on how these methods can be involved at these different types of practice focus.

4. Social Science and Social Research: Community and social systems practice is supported by research that suggests that well being is enhanced by the involvement of social supports and social networks. This course will be based in social research that guides this practice. In addition, social science methods will be introduced as a means for developing and evaluating specific practice methods.

Relationship to PODS Content

Social Work 697 is one of the concentration courses designed to provide intensive focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS). Materials on these four themes are woven in to the four curricular themes described above and are integral aspects of course readings, assignments, activities, and exercises. Methods for developing and implementing practice that addresses the PODS content are a major emphasis of Social Work 697.

Course Content

This course will cover practice methods for working with multiple social systems to promote well being through the involvement of community and social systems. The primary focus will be on ways to work in partnership with formal and informal social systems in communities such as schools, neighborhood associations, self-help organizations, community centers and faith based organizations. Emphasis will be placed on ways in which different levels of practice -- including interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy -- can be involved in this kind of work. Under-girding all of these levels is a focus on methods for encouraging community participation and empowerment.

Community Based Initiative (CBI). This course is part of a sequence of three courses and field placement through the Community Based Initiative (CBI): A Partnership between the University of Michigan School of Social Work and the communities of Southwest Detroit and Dearborn. We believe that the CBI is a great opportunity for students to understand and impact a community which taking required courses. We also see the community as a classroom for real life learning. The CBI includes a section of
SW683, SW647, and this course. SW 647 is taught on the same day as this class by Prof. Larry Gant.

CBI Mission Statement:

The CBI strengthens student learning from diverse communities as an integral part of their professional training, building sustainable university-community partnerships which contribute to the quality of life and enhance the educational process.

The CBI Working Principles:

a) We are committed to providing resources and methods to promote community capacity development in Southwest Detroit

b) We are committed to providing an exemplary educational experience for students interested in community development, community organization, and neighborhood empowerment

c) Methods of participant driven, community based research and evaluation will be used to engender community capacity building development and exemplary educational experience

d) Working with small groups of community organizations and institutions, we assess needs and resources, conduct a twice annual assessment of need or interest from both community members and university faculty to generate a series of relationships, projects, and programs

e) Depending on the needs and interests, the form and nature of the relationship may consist of one-term class driven projects, longer term internships with a small number of students, or development of a technical assistance model.

Assignments

Assignment 1: Reflection Papers.

Students in this class will turn in common reflection papers onto the SW 647, section one Course Tools Next Generation site every other week. For those in both the Gant and Gutierrez sections, the same reflection papers will count for both SW 647 section 1(GANT) and SW 697 section 1. If you are not a student in SW 647, let me know and I will get you access to this site. The class will be divided into two groups with each group alternating the weeks in which they turn in a reflection paper.

Reflection papers should include reflections and discussions that integrate the readings, field experiences, and classroom experiences for that week. Reflection papers should be posted every week on the Friday prior to class. The group that does not turn in reflection papers will read these journals and comment on them in Course Tools. These comments
will not be graded, but will count towards your participation grade.

*The reflection papers will be graded from a scale of 1-10 with 10 being exceptionally reflective in understanding self-awareness around social work practice in communities and social systems, clarity, integration of class readings (both required and recommended) with citations in the text (no bibliography required, and proofreading. The papers will make up 20% of your grade.*

**Assignment 2: Group Assignment.**

In our second or third class session, you will sign up for a group project that will work on a focused community assessment. These assignments will focus on a specific dimension of a SW Detroit Neighborhood as identified by community partners. Students in SW 647 (GANT) will follow this up with a paper on the same topic with the same group with a policy and services focus. For students in the Gant section, this paper will count for Part I of their policy analysis paper.

Potential topics are the following:

- **Project 1. Illegal Dumping, Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision**
- **Project 2. Homelessness Assessment, SW Detroit Business Association**
- **Project 3. Community Health Worker Assessment, REACH Detroit**
- **Project 4. Video surveillance, Community Policing**

This assessment will utilize three or more methods for community assessment taught in SW 560, 521, and in the this class. Time will be provided during class for student groups to work on the project and the Feb 21 session will be dedicated for this group work.

The group will turn in a 8 to 10 page summary of their findings in class on March 14. Each group will present their findings to the rest of the class during the second half of the semester. These findings will be compiled into a report to be shared with our community partners at a presentation on April 18.

Suggestions for the group papers:

1. Write the papers using APA format. Use of correct grammar is mandatory. Points will be deducted for incorrect grammar. Type this paper, double-spaced in a report format and make use of sub-headings.

2. DO NOT split the group according to the sections of this paper. Group members cannot contribute their fair share to a project if this method of task distribution is employed.
3. Give responsibilities during task group meetings and ensure that they are fulfilled during the next meeting.

4. If the members do not solve issues and concerns related to group process within a week, kindly bring this to the notice of the professor. All issues concerning the content of the paper (e.g. difficulty in finding literature, developing methodology, etc.) should be brought to the attention of the professor as soon as possible.

The presentation and paper will make up 30% of your grade. Each group member will submit to us a grade for all group members. Grades will be based on the quality of the paper and presentation and the recommendations of all group members.

Assignment 3: Case portfolio.

In order to integrate the course content with your field placement experience, the focus of this assignment will be to assess and document what you learned from one “case assignment” you are working on in the field. Your portfolio should include reflective essays, documents from your organization, written products related to the case, etc. This case can be an individual, family, group, or community or policy project. The portfolio should be turned in a 3 ring binder with dividers for each section.

Part 1 will be due February 14. Part 2 will be due March 28. Part 3 will be due April 18.

The final portfolio is worth 30% your grade.

Part 1: Provide some background and context for the case. This should include the following:

- A brief description of your organization: where it is, what it does, who it works with, your role within it; (brochures, agency documents, etc. can be part of this)
- A brief description of this case assignment and why you were assigned to it;
- How you view the central problem, issue, or situation this case presents. Provide a brief review of some literature related to this particular case;
- How you view your role in relation to the case: How involved will you be? Who else will be working on this case and how you will work together.
- A learning goal for this case: what do you hope to gain?

Part 2: Provide an assessment of this case. Use at least two assessment tools you learned in this class or SW 560 or 521. Please include copies of the logic model, ecomap, force field analysis, gantt charts, etc. that you use in the assessment process. The assessment should include the following topics:

- A description of the client system;
- How the client system views the situation and how the situation has been handled in the past;
- The major strengths or resources of this client system;
• How issues of gender, ethnicity, race, age, class, sexual orientation and other identities impact on this case;
• Tentative “goals” or “objectives” for working on this case. How do they relate to your learning goal?

Part 3: Describe and analyze your work on this case. This should include the following:

• A discussion of your progress on this case: who has been involved? How did you engage the client and other systems?
• What strategies or methods did you use? How effective were they?
• What have you accomplished so far?
• What did you learn in relation to your learning goal? What have you learned about CSS practice from working on this case?

Class Participation:

Each week we will engage in group activities and discussion, therefore attendance is very important. Students are expected to attend every class session and participate in discussions and group exercises. Class participation will be graded based on your attendance, extent of participation (including online comments to reflection papers), and the self-assessment form that is at the end of this course outline.

Class Participation makes up 10% of your grade.

Community Service:

During the second half of the term we will develop and work on one or more community service projects to benefit the population of Southwest Detroit. If you are unable to participate due to extenuating circumstances, make up community service may be considered at the discretion of the professor. Participation in this activity is worth 10% of your grade.

Grading:

A 100 point system is used. At the end of the term, the numerical grades earned for each written assignment will be averaged and translated into letter grades using the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-90</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-80</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-70</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-96</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-76 (no credit)</td>
<td>F 50&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>91-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades in the B range reflect satisfactory completion of course requirements (competent performance). C grades reflect less than satisfactory work. A D indicates deficient performance and is not acceptable at the graduate level. A grades are given for exceptional individual performance. Assignments turned in on time can be revised if
students desire.

A major part of your grade for written assignments is based on your clarity and thoroughness. All written assignments should be carefully proofread for typos and clarity of content. A paper with lots of errors or is difficult to read and will be marked down. All assignments should be double-spaced, using 12-point font, no less than 1-inch margins.

You should turn in all written assignments on time. Having assignments in on time will assist me in reading and grading them in a timely manner. On time is defined as turned in at the start of class on the due date. In general, a paper will be marked down for each day it is late. Exceptions will only be made for extreme circumstances that require documentation. If you expect that you are going to be late turning in an assignment, let me know as soon as possible so I can plan accordingly.

Please try to anticipate your responsibilities and start your assignments well in advance of the due date. Be sure to have a back up copy on disk in case I misplace your work (which I hope is not the case!).

Readings

Readings for this course have been selected very carefully to reflect community and social system practice. Students should come to class having read the material and prepared to discuss and work with what has been covered. Some classroom exercises have been developed to synthesize and apply the readings to practice. Books are available at Ulrich’s bookstore.

All books and readings will also be placed on reserve at the Social Work Library. The course pack is also available online on e-reserves.

Required:


Highly Recommended:


**Housekeeping**

*Accommodations for students with disabilities*
If you need an accommodation for a disability please let me know as soon as possible. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and teaching methods can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. I will make every effort to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential.

*Religious Observances*
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

*Electronic Devices*
In consideration of your classmates and your own learning please turn off all telephones and pagers during class. I prefer that you receive no messages during class time, if you must be on call for an emergency, please let your home or office know that you are only available for emergencies that no one else can handle. If you must carry a pager, please set it to vibrate only.
COURSE SCHEDULE FOR SW 697-WINTER 2005

**Session 1: Introduction and Overview**
January 10, 2005

*Activities*
- Introductions
- Overview of course and requirements
- Developing our class community

**Session 2: MLK Events**
January 17, 2005

A number of lectures, exhibits, videos, performances and other presentations will be held on campus in recognition of Martin Luther King. A complete listing of these events is on the Web at http://www.mlksymposium.umich.edu/. Attend one of these events to attend and discuss it in your journal.

*Readings*
- Delgado: Ch. 1-4
- Adams and Nelson: Ch. 1


**Session 3: Principles of Community and Social Systems Practice**
January 24, 2005

*Activities*
- Form assignment groups

*Readings*

- Adams and Nelson: Ch. 2
- Delgado: Ch. 5-7


**Session 4: Entering and Engaging with Communities and Social Systems**
January 31, 2005
Activities:
Community Treasure Hunt

Readings
Delgado, Chapter 10
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 3


Session 5: Cultural competencies for working in communities and social systems
February 7, 2005

Readings
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 4


Session 6: Assessing community conditions
February 14, 2005

Activities:
Case Analysis – Part 1 due

Readings:
Delgado: 8, 9, 11
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 5


Session 7: Group work
February 21, 2005

Activities:
Working session on group assignments
Readings:
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 6-8

Session 8: Group facilitation skills
March 7, 2005

Readings:
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 9-10

Community toolbox (http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/tools/) – Part E, Chapter 16: Group Facilitation and Problem Solving


Session 9: Collaboration and Partnerships
March 14, 2005

Activities:
Community Assessment report due

Readings:
Delgado: Ch. 13
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 11

Community Tool Box: Creating Coalitions and Partnerships, http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/coalitions/create/narrativeoutline.jsp


Session 10: Identifying and Securing Resources
March 21, 2005

Case analysis: Part 2 due

Readings:
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 12

**Session 11: Evaluating community and social systems practice**  
*March 28, 2005*

**Readings:**
Delgado: 12


**Session 12: Changing community conditions**  
*April 4, 2005*

**Readings**
Adams and Nelson: Ch. 13-14

**Session 13: Community Service Project**  
*April 11, 2005*

**Session 14: Community Presentations**  
*April 18, 2005*

*Case Analysis, Part 3 due*
Guidelines for Evaluating Your Own In-Class Participation

Successful social work practice is almost always a collaborative activity. Participants often learn from others they work with. Much of what you learn in this class is also likely to derive from your own participation and your interaction with other students. You will contribute to your own learning and to theirs by the questions and comments you make in class, the way in which you make formal presentations, the leadership you undertake in your working groups and the way you contribute to the other working groups.

You may use the following criteria to evaluate your own in-class participation. Alternatively, you may prefer to write a brief, one-page essay (400 words or less) that indicates how you would grade your own participation and why.

Your Name________________________________

Score Yourself 1-10

1. I read the assignments in advance of class, thought about them and came ready to ask questions or to integrate new info. ______

2. I took initiative for raising issues in class that I think benefited others, brought in news clippings or other useful materials to share. ______

3. I played a leadership, facilitative or otherwise active role during in-class exercises and small group activities. ______

4. I did my share and more as a member of my assignment team. ______

5. I played a constructive role and assumed my share of responsibility and more as a member of the class. ______

6. I attended all class sessions. ______

7. Other (describe) __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

Add up your five highest scores for your total score ________
References for SW 697

BOOKS


READINGS


