S.W. 694 – Social Work with the Elderly
Dr. Abigail Lawrence-Jacobson
Spring/Summer 2005
Office: Room 2764, SSWB
Mondays, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
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3 credits
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Course Description:
This methods course focuses on intervention with the elderly at micro and macro levels. The course will build upon foundation coursework theory about human development, personality, and social environment. This content will be integrated with intervention strategies directed toward the elderly. Major areas to be discussed are: coping with age-related changes, caregiving demands, advance directives, guardianship, managed care, elder abuse, case management and advocacy, and intergenerational interventions.

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

1. Identify the common barriers in serving the needs of the elderly from an interpersonal, environmental and social perspective, and recognize that these problems can be addressed using all levels of social work intervention.
2. Plan intervention strategies in micro and macro practice that are of particular importance for the elderly of various racial/ethnic backgrounds, SES levels, and sexual orientations.
3. Plan various intervention strategies that promote prevention of health and functional problems and rehabilitation among the elderly.
4. Plan or plan and conduct an intervention strategy with the elderly in micro and macro practice.
5. Incorporate social work values and ethical principles related to social work with the elderly.

Course Design:
Students will have weekly readings and written assignments. Approaches such as lecture, discussion, case review and simulations will be employed. Students will be expected to contribute case/programmatic examples from their field experiences. As a service-learning course, this class will also allow students to acquire “real-life” experience with older adults, to apply classroom knowledge to their interactions with elders, and to reflect upon their experiential learning in a structured environment. Students will spend one hour per week with an older adult with whom they will practice the tools and assessment techniques discussed in class.
Relationship to Curricular Themes:

Multiculturalism and Diversity: Students will develop the capacity to see how race, gender, SES, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, physical and mental ability affect how older people function within various contexts.

Social Change and Social Justice: Students will learn skills to aid older clients in recognizing external and internal oppression. They will be able to recognize and address the influence of social inequities in individual, group, policy and social interaction. Students will be able to empower clients to articulate their needs, as individuals and in groups, and to acquire the knowledge and skills to get their needs met.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation: Students will learn individual and group strategies for promoting wellness, a client knowledge base of variations in “normal” aging, a spectrum of coping skills to deal with change, loss and disability and preparedness for end-of-life issues.

Social Science Theory and Research: The course readings will include theory and research findings regarding the efficacy of various intervention strategies from a micro and macro perspective that are successfully utilized with older people and their caregivers.

Ethics and Social Work Values: Readings, case discussion, and simulations will help students to define their own interpretations of the NASW Code of Ethics in work with the elderly.

Assignments:

1. Facilitating a Class Discussion (due date to be decided) = 15 points

   In pairs or groups of three, facilitate a 35-minute class discussion based on the presentation of a case/situation from your practice experience (i.e., from your field placement or from your service-learning partnership with a University Living resident). This case/situation can be based upon work with an individual, group, family, community organization, or policy development group. Describe background information concerning the problem situation. Use the case to facilitate a discussion relevant to:

   1) how the class readings illuminate this case;
   2) how this case relates to our intensive focus on privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice; and
   3) what kinds of prevention and intervention strategies might be useful.

2. Ten Reflective Journal Entries (due each week at the start of class) = 20 points (2 points each)

   Write a 2-page (double-spaced) “journal” entry for reflection on your experiences with your University Living resident partner each week. Each journal entry
should be typed and dated. These do not need to be written in as formal a style as a research paper, but they should be well-written (see writing policy below). Include in each entry:

1) a rich, factual description of what you and your resident partner did together that week. For instance, what did you talk about? Who initiated each topic? Where were you -- did you spend time together in the resident’s room, or did you go somewhere else within the facility? What physical cues were present – where did you sit in relation to one another? When did your partner smile, or frown, or express confusion? Did you interact with other residents while you were with your partner, or with a caregiver/staff? What did you observe?

2) your personal interpretations and reflections on the interaction. How did your experience together this week affect you emotionally, physically, or intellectually? What do you make of the factual observations you reported in part (a)? What was challenging about your time together? What was easy? When were you most comfortable? When were you uncomfortable? What was surprising? What was expected? What did you learn? What areas do you feel you need to work on?

3) You are welcome and highly encouraged (but not required) to comment on class readings as they relate to your experiences with your resident partner.

You may choose to identify certain journal entries as “confidential,” which means that I will not ask you to share your entry with the class and I will not cite your entry during class discussions or lectures. If you do not mark your journal entry as “confidential,” I will assume that it is o.k. for me to share your comments or ask you to share your comments during class.

Grades for reflective journals will be based on the depth to which you can describe and reflect upon the many dimensions of your one-on-one interactions with your resident partner.

3. Weekly participation in class = 10 points
   Attendance is, of course, required. If you are unable to attend, please e-mail me in advance, and please let your resident partner know as well so that s/he is not expecting you at the usual time. You are also expected to contribute to class discussions and activities. Comments, questions, ideas, constructive critiques are expected at each class session. Come prepared with a question for the guest speaker each week. Participation will be graded on quality as well as quantity.

4. Assessment Paper (6-8 pages, due Monday, August 1st) = 15 points
   This paper is the culmination of your partnership with a University Living resident. Begin by describing your resident partner and providing relevant background information. Assess your partner and organize your assessment with
respect to his/her physical, social, and psychological functioning. The assessment should include:

1) the completion of each of the tools you will be given to practice with your resident partner (e.g., the Mini-mental status exam, the Geriatric Depression Scale, a genogram, life review). Please include these as appendices to your paper.

2) analysis of an organization that serves (or might serve) this person (e.g., University Living) regarding accessibility to older clients (e.g., interactions with staff, physical environment). How is this person’s needs met (or how might they be met) through this organization? Are there any needs that still need to be met?

An example will be provided in class of an assessment paper. We will also discuss the ethics surrounding sharing these papers – or portions thereof -- with your resident partners.

5. Research Paper (12-15 pages, due in my office door on Friday, August 5th)
   = 40 points

Write a research paper on a specific problem area covered in this course that is relevant to the elderly and is of interest to you (e.g., mental health, cognitive functioning, sexuality, substance abuse, guardianship, elder abuse, grandparent caregiving). In this paper, address each of the following areas:

1. Discuss what is known, based upon the literature, about the area of concern on which you are focusing.

2. Describe preventions and/or interventions that might be useful for addressing the problem area you have chosen at each of the following levels of practice:
   a. Interpersonal
   b. Community organizing
   c. Administration and/or policy

3. Analyze how concepts from the strengths perspective are relevant to the preventions and interventions you have chosen.

If applicable to your topic of interest, you are welcome to incorporate examples from your field placement or from your service-learning experience with your resident partner.

The paper should appropriately reference at least 8 sources (i.e., peer-reviewed journal articles or books) using American Psychological Association style.

I will be asking you to tell me your choice of topic in early July.

Writing Policy:
Good writing skills to express information accurately and concisely are a requirement for effective social work practice. Therefore, formal writing assignments for this course (both journal entries and papers) will be evaluated for content, ideas presented, and for the clarity of the presentation. Misspelled words, typos, inappropriate use of grammar,
and other indications of sloppy work will be graded down. In addition, appropriate referencing is required on all written assignments. You may wish to contact the Sweetland Writing Center (http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/grads/support/, located at 435 South State Street, 1139 Angell Hall, 734-764-0429) for assistance in writing and referencing.

**Grading Procedure:**
Each assignment will be given points out of a total number of points for that assignment. The ratio of points given to total possible points will constitute your score for that assignment. For example, there are 40 possible points to be given for the research paper. If a student receives 36 points on that assignment, his/her score is 90%. The comparability of letter grades and scores is shown below:

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<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100% - 96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>95% - 91%</td>
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<td>90% - 86%</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>75% - 73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72% - 70%</td>
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Scores that reflect an “A” are reserved for student work that shows exceptional individual performance – good mastery of content, application of critical thinking, and clear and concise writing. “A” and “A-” distinguish the degree of superiority. A grade of “B+” denotes performance just above the mastery level. A grade of “B” is given to students who meet the basic requirement of the assignment. A grade of “B-” is used for student work that is less than adequate, reflecting only moderate grasp of the material. Variations of the “C” grade are given to work that reflects a minimum grasp of the material and poor organization. Final grades will be determined by adding the scores from all assignments.

**Policy on Academic Integrity:**
Academic integrity should not be taken lightly. Plagiarism and/or “borrowing” material without citing it can result in severe penalties!

**Accommodations/Special Needs:**
If you have a disability or impairment that requires accommodation, please contact me within two weeks after class starts to discuss what modifications are necessary.
Readings:
There are two separate coursepacks: one of required readings, and one of recommended readings. Both required and recommended reading coursepacks are available at Ulrichs. They will also be on reserve in the Social Work Library.

Course Outline:

Session 1 (May 9) - Overview of Course and Introduction to Working with the Elderly

Session 2 (May 16) - Physical Functioning: A Central Feature of Macro and Micro Practice

Schedule for the day
*****Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.*****
8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL
9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL
9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.: Reflection on meetings with resident partners
10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Panel on Social Work Interventions to Address Physical Functioning (Andrea Carroll, Mary Rumman, and Carol Schauer from Turner Geriatric Clinic), held in rm. 2816 SSWB

Required Reading

Recommended Reading

Session 3 (May 23) - A Strengths-Based Framework for Assessment, Prevention, and Intervention

**Schedule for the day**

- Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.
- 8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL
- 9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL
- 9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Guest speaker, Ruth Campbell (Turner Geriatric Clinic), in rm. 2816 SSWB

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


****** Note: There is no class on May 30th******
Session 4 (June 6) - Mental Health Functioning

Schedule for the day
Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.
8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL
9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL
9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Guest speaker, Dr. Susan Maixner (UMHS Dept. of Psychiatry and Geriatrics), in rm. 2816 SSWB

Required Reading

Recommended Reading


Session 5 (June 13) - Cognitive Functioning

*Schedule for the day*

Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.

8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL

9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL

9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.: Guest speaker, Katherine Beck-Ei (Glacier Hills), in rm. 2816 SSWB

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Guest speaker, Kim Walsh (Alzheimer’s Association), in rm. 2816 SSWB

*Required Reading*


*Recommended Reading*


Session 6 (June 20) - Intergenerational Interventions

**Schedule for the day**

Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.

8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL

9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL

9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.: **Guest speaker, Virginia Boyce** (Grandparents-as-Parents Program, Catholic Social Services), in rm. 2816 SSWB

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Lecture and class discussion

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


**Session 7 (June 27) - Elder Abuse and Neglect**

**Schedule for the day**

Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.
8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL
9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL
9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Guest speaker, Kathie Supiano (Turner Geriatric Clinic), in rm. 2816 SSWB

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


****** Note: There is no class on July 4th******

Session 8 (July 11) - Substance Abuse
Schedule for the day

*****DO NOT*** meet at University Living (UL); **meet at SSWB instead*****

8:10 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.: Class discussion and activities, held at SSWB rm. 2816
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: **Guest speaker, Martin Hoekstra** (Chelsea Arbor Older Adult Recovery Program)
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: More discussion, lecture, and activities

Required Reading

Recommended Reading

Session 9 (July 18) - Sexuality and Sexual Orientation

Schedule for the day
Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.
8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL
9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL
9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m: **Guest speaker, Jim Toy** (University of Michigan), in rm. 2816 SSWB

Required Reading

**Recommended Reading**

**Session 10 (July 25) - Caring for the Caregiver**

**Schedule for the day**
Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.
8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Class discussion, held in the Cultural Center (2nd floor) at UL
9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.: Meet with resident partners at UL
9:55 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Guest speakers, Lynn Stern, Mary Rumman, and spousal caregiver(s) (Turner Geriatric Clinic), in rm. 2816 SSWB

**Required Reading**
**Recommended Reading**

**Session 11 (August 1) - Advance Directives and Guardianship: Advocacy for Social Justice**

***Assessment Paper Due***
***Research Paper Due in my office door by 5 p.m. on Friday, August 5th***

**Schedule for the day**
Meet at University Living (UL), 2865 S. Main St.
8:10 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Celebration breakfast with resident partners
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.: Break and reconvene at SSWB
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.: Guest speaker, Penny Hommel (Center for Social Gerontology), in rm. 2816 SSWB
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Wrap up

**Required Reading**
Hommel, P (2003). Written testimony before Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate.

**Recommended Reading**
Michigan Bar Association (2002). Five of the 120 most frequently asked questions from clients at the legal hotline for older Michigamians. [www.michbar.org/sections/elderlaw](http://www.michbar.org/sections/elderlaw)
Directions from campus to University Living
2865 South Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Take State Street heading south until you reach Eisenhower Parkway.
Take a right at that light, onto Eisenhower Parkway.
At the next light, take a right onto South Main St.
University Living’s entrance will be the first driveway on your right.

There is parking in front of the University Living building as well as in a parking lot across from the UL building.

Total estimated time: 9 minutes
Total estimated distance: 3.42 miles