SW 628 – Interpersonal Practice with Adult Individuals

Spring/Summer 2005
Section 001, Mondays 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
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Course Description

This course will approach work with individual clients from a person-in-environment perspective and build on the content presented in course 521/540 (i.e. Interpersonal Practice) and equivalent courses. The stages of the treatment process (i.e. engagement, assessment, planning, evaluation, intervention, and termination) will be presented for work with individual adults. The relevance and limitations of various theoretical approaches will be reviewed as they apply to assessment, planning, and intervention methods. This course will focus on empirically evaluated models of intervention and will teach students how to monitor and evaluate their own practice. Special attention will be given to issues of diversity (i.e. race, gender, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation of the client), time-limited treatment methods, and practice with involuntary clients.

Course Content

This course will present various models of intervention designed to prevent and treat psychosocial problems of individual adults. Emphasis will be placed on approaches that enhance social functioning, strengthen problem solving capacities, and support the coping capacities of individual adults. The various models will be responsive to the impact of social environments, and supported by empirically based efficacy studies. Treatment models that focus on specific psychosocial problems associated with work, relationships, mood, anxiety, and impulse problems will be discussed. Various treatment models will be presented such as psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and client-centered. These intervention models will also be evaluated for how well they fit the special needs of diverse populations (e.g. people of color, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered clients, and the poor) and meta-theories from empowerment, feminist and socialist perspectives will be applied.
Each model presented will cover all phases of the intervention process: engagement and screening, assessment, planning, evaluation, implementation, and termination. Although evaluation will be discussed in much greater depth in the Practice Area evaluation courses, students will learn how to integrate evaluation techniques and measures into their on-going interventions with individual adults so that they can employ systematic measures of their effectiveness in the field. This course will carefully explore the issues that influence and determine client motivation because many individual adults come into the treatment process with varying degrees of willingness and sometimes are coerced to seek help by authorities or family members. Strategies that workers can employ to engage reluctant or resistant clients will be presented. Intervention models in this course will be general enough to apply to a wide range of adult clients in a wide range of situations, since other courses will focus more specifically on special populations and problems. Course content will include ethical issues that related to interpersonal practice with individual adults and with those elements of the NASW Code of Ethics that especially impact on practice with individual adults.

**Course Objectives**

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

1) Describe how theory informs and shapes the kinds of intervention strategies that may be employed when working with individual adults.
2) Assess the effectiveness of various kinds of intervention models and procedures that may be utilized with individual adults
3) Operationalize the various intervention phases of prevention and treatment models that effectively impact the psycho-social problems of individual adults.
4) Identify common factors that determine client motivation in adults and how to apply specific interventions to enhance “readiness” for client change.
5) Modify intervention models to take into account race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and special abilities of adult clients.
6) Operationalize the NASW Code of Ethics as it applies to value dilemmas in interpersonal practice with adults.

**Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes**

*Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be addressed through careful analysis of how clinical models can be applied and modified to fit the special needs of various groups. Resistance and motivation of adults to interventions will be covered to demonstrate how effective intervention models must be adapted to fit the needs of various ethnic and racial groups. This course will emphasis that mono-cultural clinical models must be adapted to fit the definitions of “problem” and “treatment” that exist in diverse groups in order for social workers to practice with adults from diverse backgrounds.

*Social Justice and Social Change* will be addressed by recognizing that, historically, clinical services have excluded poor and oppressed clients from “talking
therapies.” Often these clients were given the harshest and most restrictive treatments (e.g. shock, sterilization, medications, and lobotomies), whereas more privileged clients were granted more benign interventions (e.g. outpatient family therapy). This course will examine those differences as well as how socioeconomic exclusion arises in screening criteria that exclude clients because of intelligence, verbal ability, insight, and motivation.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through a focus on intervention models and intervention procedures that can be used to prevent and treat psychosocial problems of adults.

Behavioral and Social Science Research will be addressed through careful selection of intervention models for which there is empirical evidence on efficacy. Students will learn that although many time-limited models of practice with adults have proliferated over the past two decades, not all of them have generated research that demonstrates their efficacy.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

In working with adults, social workers must encourage self-determination and empower adult clients to choose and pursue their own change goals. Ethical issues such as sexual relations between client and worker, involuntary treatment, primacy of client interests, and precipitous withdrawal of services will be considered as they impact individual clients.

Course Design

This course will employ a number of methods to promote knowledge and skill development, such as reading assignments, case analyses, interactive media simulations, in vivo exercises, role play simulations within the classroom, modeling and video demonstrations, and didactic presentations of theory/models/procedures. Whenever possible, assignments will be tied to the field placement experiences of students.

Students are expected to bring their own thoughts, insights, and understanding from their field placements. Attendance, preparation for class, and participation are expected. Frequent absences are not acceptable and will result in a lowering of a course grade. If you know in advance that you are going to miss a class, prior notification of the instructor is expected.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Books are available at Shaman Drum Bookstore on State Street.
Grading Criteria

Class participation & attendance  30 points  
Project                          30 points  
Final paper                     40 point

Assignments

Class Activity
Each student is expected to do one during the semester. The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes in length to allow for discussion. The activity involves sharing one field experience that led to a positive outcome and one struggle as a therapist in which you felt challenged. Provide the responses and outcome for both.

Class Presentation
Students will select a topic (and a partner) from those listed below (or one of your choice, but pre-approved by me) and prepare a class presentation, approx. ½ hour in length. Each model presented will cover a complete explanation of the theory including all phases of the intervention process: engagement and screening, assessment, planning, evaluation, implementation, and termination. These presentations will begin May 23rd and we will have two each week. In-class preparation time will be given at the end of class on May 9 and 16.

Cognitive-Behavior Therapy  
Psychodynamic Therapy  
Adlerian Psychotherapy  
Person-Centered Therapy  
Analytical Therapy  
Psychoanalysis  
Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy  
Behavior Therapy  
Cognitive Therapy  
Existential Psychotherapy  
Gestalt Therapy  
Electro-Convulsive Therapy, Use of psychotropic medications  
Multimodal Therapy  
Asian Psychotherapies
Written Assignment: Final Paper due July 18, 2005
The formal writing assignment for this course will be evaluated for content, ideas presented, and for the clarity and accuracy of the presentation. Appropriate referencing is required on all written assignments. Sources of assistance include Writing Term Papers, by Professor Kossoudji, in your Student Guide to the Master's in Social Work Degree Program. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association is the style manual to be used by all students. Another source of assistance is Strunk & White's Elements of Style.

If you feel you need assistance in this area, please consult services offered through the University.

All papers are to be typewritten or word-processed with a 12-point font and double-spaced. All papers will need to include bibliographic references and follow parenthetical format for references. Papers not adhering to these instructions will be returned and regarded as “late”.

This paper will have three sections.
The first part is to select a piece of non-fiction or fiction that lends itself to an application of psychotherapy; i.e., a novel that can be looked at with a therapeutic understanding of the problem(s).
The second section will be to explain the nature of the difficulty, highlighting some technical aspect of treatment. For example, you might read a book about an eating disorder, research eating disorders, and cite references. If you are looking at resistance, explore the literature of resistance. The dysfunction captured in the novel will need to be researched. This part should present an overview/definition of the technical or other aspect you have chosen, drawing from references in the novel. Apply the literature to illustrate the concept using example(s) from the book as well as your own field placement or other experiences.
The third part is to expound on how you might “treat” the character(s) in the novel you selected. This application should be from the vantage point of your currently preferred modality of treatment (i.e., cognitive behavioral, psychodynamic, systems perspectives, crisis intervention, etc.).

Some suggested aspects of psychotherapy to look for in the book: (Of course this list is not exhaustive. If you have other ideas, feel free to use them.)
Resistance: Affects
Acting out: Transference
Regression: Counter-transference
Use of dreams: Interpretation
Unconscious: Termination
Therapist’s neutrality: Self-disclosure
Thought processes: Cultural aspects of treatment
Working alliance: Corrective Emotional Experience
Therapeutic impasses
Course Outline and Reading Schedule

May 9
Introductions, course outline, review of syllabus, sign up for class presentation and class activity.
Movie, Nuts
Prep time for class presentation

May 16
Readings: Chapters 1 & 2 (through p. 35) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 1 (through p. 19) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion on skills and abilities of a clinician
Discussion on working alliance.
Prep time for class presentation

May 23
Readings: Chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 37-65) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 2 (pp. 21-36) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion on perverse pleasure, reenactment, corrective emotional experience, attachment.
Guest speaker.

May 30: Memorial Day, no class.

June 6
Readings: Chapters 5 & 6 (pp. 67-100) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 3 (pp. 37-52) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion on resistances.

June 13
Readings: Chapters 7 & 8 (pp. 105-145) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 4 (pp. 53-85) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion of internal process of change, working through.

June 20
Readings: Chapters 9 & 10 (pp. 147-179) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 5 (pp. 87-123) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion of affect states, affective disorders.

June 27
Readings: Chapters 11 & 12 (pp. 183-218) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 6 (pp. 125-144) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion on understanding and utilizing knowledge of family dynamics and clients experiences of family of origin.

July 4: Independence Day, no class.
July 11
Readings: Chapters 13 & 14 (pp. 221-269) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 7 (pp. 145-163) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion of use of the therapist to promote change in the client.

July 18
Readings: Chapters 15 & 16 (pp. 271-310) in How Therapists Change
Chapter 8 (pp.165-177) in Between Therapist and Client
Discussion on diagnostic categories, mental status examination.

July 25
Readings: Chapter 17 (pp. 315-329) in How Therapists Change
Discussion on termination.
General Source Materials


