**Course Description:**
This methods course focuses on intervention with the elderly at micro and macro levels. The course builds upon foundation coursework theory about human development, personhood, and social environment with an emphasis on cross cultural and historical comparison. This content will be integrated with intervention strategies directed toward the elderly and the ethical issues raised through such work. Major areas to discuss include advocacy and empowerment, long term care, geriatric assessment, coping with age-related changes, advance directives, guardianship, Adult Protective Services, conflict resolution, and caregiving.

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

1. Identify the common barrier in serving the needs of the elderly from an interpersonal, environmental, and societal 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 of 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:**
The overall theme of the course is intervention work with older adults. The course is divided into three strategies of teaching and learning. The first is lecture and readings based on a weekly topic focusing on a level of intervention, intervention tools and approaches, or a significant area of social work practice with older adults. Students are required to be prepared to discuss the lecture topic and readings as well as lead at least one group discussion. The second is experiential learning and learning from those with experience (guest speakers). The third is an
opportunity for students to more direct their own learning through designing an intervention project with help from the instructor.

**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.

**Promoting, 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. This course will specifically address such ethical issues as client “expressed interest” conflicts with a social work assessment of “best interest” and the sometimes conflicting values of beneficence and autonomy.

**Assignments:**

1. Life history, reminiscence exercise. Details handed out on May 8th. Due May 15th

2. Required readings: Each week, you will need to submit an electronic response to the readings via a discussion thread which I will set up on coursetools. The purpose of the readings is to provide background to the weekly topics as well as for you to understand anthropological approaches to aging and intervention work. You should read the assignments as practitioners—that is, read strategically for the information that will help you to understand the contexts in which you will be working. The following is a guide to help you read strategically. Please use this when responding weekly to the readings through coursetools in one paragraph. If you are unable to attend class, you will need to address these questions for each reading in a 2 page paper. Reading responses are due the day before class –(Sundays). Each student will lead discussion one week. Sign up first day of class.
1. Describe the problems, context or other issues about aging and older people that are raised in this reading.
2. Explain how they are addressed (or not).
3. Describe what additional problems or issues that you think are missing in this reading.
4. Describe the implications for social work practice—that is, what in this reading is useful for micro or macro practice with older adults.

3. Semester intervention project (to be handed out May 15th). The purpose of this project is for you to gain hands-on experience in the problem solving work you will do as professionals—identifying the need to intervene, identifying what resources or information you need and getting that, and designing and carrying out an intervention. Choose something of importance to you related to practice with older adults.

**Grading:**

The purpose of grading is to reward you for the work you do as well as to evaluate the quality of the work you produce. The overall breakdown of grades will be as follows:

- **A + = 98 – 100**
- **B + = 87 – 89**
- **C + = 77 – 79**
- **D = < 69 (no credit)**
- **A = 94 – 97**
- **B = 84 – 86**
- **C = 74 – 78**
- **A- = 90 – 93**
- **B - = 80 – 83**
- **C - = 70 – 73**

Each assignment is weighted to total a particular number of points. The points add up to the final grade. The points are as follows:

1. Reminiscence exercise = 10 points
2. Readings and class participation = 20 points
3. Leading group discussion of readings one week = 10 points
3. Intervention project
   - weekly updates = 15 points (due for weeks 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9)
   - final presentation and discussion = 10 points (on July 24th)
   - final papers = 35 points (due July 24th)

Total = 100

**Policy on Academic Integrity:**

If you have questions regarding university policies on plagiarism (intended or unintended) please see me. The main thing is that you need to indicate the resources from which you are drawing your conclusions.

**Accommodations/Special Needs and Class Attendance Issues:**

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.
If you need to miss class due to religious holidays or important life cycle events (e.g. your sibling’s wedding), please let me know ahead of time. I will give you an assignment to help keep up with class and the readings. If you miss a class, you will also have to complete a reading assignment in order to keep up with the class.

**Required and Recommended Texts:**

There are three books available at Shaman Drum and on reserve in the library. We will read about half of each.

- Jeffrey, P. (2001) *Going Against the Stream: Ethical Aspects of Ageing and Care* Herfordshire: Gracewing

Required articles will be posted on coursetools and/or handed out in hard copy.


**Course Outline:**

**WEEK ONE: MAY 8th** Introductions. Life History and Reminiscence
- importance of life history in practice with older adults
- use of reminiscence therapy as intervention tool
- use of reminiscence exercise for reflection as a practitioner

Readings: none

**WEEK TWO: MAY 15th** How do you know that?: Ways of Knowing and Finding Out
- historical information, primary resources
- reflexivity, intuition, and “tacit” knowledge
- evidence based practice
- field based practice

**Required Readings:**

Sokolovsky, *The Cultural Context of Aging* Chapters 26, 9, 19, 20
Ingersoll-Dayton and Bommarito in Berkman, 2006 *Handbook of Social Work in Health and Aging* “Reminiscence and Life Review” (hand out)

Recommended:
Lawler, S. et. al. (1999) “Enhancing Library Research Skills of Graduate Students through Guided Autobiographies” (hand out)
Homework due May 22nd: Play the Aging Game – calculate your life expectancy and test to see what helps increase or decrease this prediction. The game is available through the following URL: http://www.northwesternmutual.com/games/longevity/

WEEK THREE: May 22nd  Advocacy and Empowerment
- ageism, internalized oppression, and social justice
- self help and self care
- effective campaigns
- learning the process through which decisions (and therefore change) are made
- understanding individual, organizational, and societal change

Required readings:

Sokolovsky, The Cultural Context of Aging  Chapters 17, 22

Recommended readings:

Chambon, A. et. al. (1999) “Resistance and Old Age” in Reading Foucault for Social Work
Sokolovsky, The Cultural Context of Aging  Chapters 23
Also: check out the Red Hat Society – just type the name into a search engine such as Google
Berkman (2006) Chapters 75, 76

WEEK FOUR: June 5th  Aging and Intervention Work Overview

Required Readings:
Berkman and Harootyan, Social Work and Health Care in an Aging Society, Chapter 16
Sokolovsky, The Cultural Context of Aging  Part IV overview, Chapters 12, 24

Recommended:
Santiago-Irizarry (1996) Culture as Cure Cultural Anthropology Vol. 11(1)
Sokolovsky, The Cultural Context of Aging. Preface, Chapter 1, 9 (review), 13

MAY 29th  --- NO CLASS

WEEK FIVE: June 12th  Micro Practice with Emphasis on Geriatric Assessment and Clients with Dementia

Required Readings:
Berkman and Harootyan (2003) 12, 5

**Recommended readings:**
Berkman (2006) Chapter 10
Berkman and Harootyan (2003) Chapter 2, 3, 9

**WEEK SIX: June 19th** Macro Practice with Emphasis on Long Term Care

**Required readings:**

**Recommended readings:**
Berkman and Harootyan (2003) Chapter 15
Jeffery, Chapter 5

Mid-term class evaluation (this is not graded, it is used to assess how things are going)

**WEEK SEVEN: June 26th** Age-related Changes (mostly losses) and Ethical Dilemmas

**Part One: Age-related changes and key ethical issues**
  - the Value of Independence and Autonomy in American Society
  - coping with change of ability and social status: e.g. driving, retirement, financial control, cognitive, physical, and mental health functioning
  - ethical principles: beneficence and autonomy, “best interests” and expressed interests

**Part Two: Legal Intervention Tools and Alternatives**
  - Legal tools: powers of attorney, advance directives, guardianship
  - Adult Protective Services
  - Conflict resolution through mediation and other forms of ADR

**Required Readings:**
Sokolovsky. Chapter 21
Berkman and Harootyan, Chapter 11
Jefferey, Peter (2001) Going against the Stream: Ethical Aspects of Ageing and Care, Chapter 3

**Recommended reading:**
Berkman (2006) Chapter 18

**WEEK EIGHT: July 3rd** NO CLASS, work on your projects

**WEEK NINE: July 10th** Conflict Resolution Cont. and End of Life Decision-Making
Part One: Mini mediation training

Part Two: Ethical Dilemmas and Practice in End of Life Decision-making

Required Readings
Sokolovsky, Chapter 3
Jeffrey, Chapters 6

WEEK TEN: July 17th Caregiving
- Older adults as caregivers (grandparents raising grandchildren)
- Older adults as care recipients

Required Readings
Sokolovsky, Chapters 6, 7, 10

Recommended Readings:
Sokolovsky, Chapters 6, 7, 10
Berkman and Harootyan, Chapter 8

WEEK ELEVEN: July 24th Presentations and discussions of student intervention projects