Course Description

This course takes a multicultural and critical perspective on understanding: 1) individuals and their interpersonal and family relationships, 2) psychological and sociological theories of human behavior, 3) life-span development, and 4) research of well-being, stress, coping and adaptation. This course will emphasize knowledge about individuals and families and the implications of this knowledge for social work practice. Information on oppression, privilege, and discrimination and factors that help people and families to change will be discussed. Information will include how the larger social and physical environments shape and influence individual and family well-being.

Course Content

The content of this course includes selected theories of human behavior, human development, families and individuals. Students will consider how relevant concepts have been developed, the types of knowledge and data that inform different theories, and current gaps in social science knowledge and theory. The course will emphasize similarities and differences related to human diversity and the dynamics of oppression and privilege. An important aspect is to emphasize how individual and family factors can facilitate attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that promote general well-being.

Course Objectives:

Upon Completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge about and be able to analyze relevant theories of families, human behavior, development and change through the life course

2. Articulate the concepts of risk and protective factors

3. Have some level of understanding of critical issues that impact contemporary families such as adolescent pregnancy and parenting.

4. Describe the impact of such characteristics as class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, religion and age on human and family development.

5. Describe what knowledge and empirical evidence supports selected theories, some current gaps in knowledge and key controversies about these theories and related concepts.

6. Examine theories of individual and family change and their relevance for social work practice
Relationship to Four Curricular Themes

**Multiculturalism and Diversity.** Students will examine the ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement affect individuals and small social systems. Emphasis will also be placed on the processes of oppression, privilege, and discrimination, as well as the factors that help people and small social systems change.

**Social Justice and Social Change.** Students will analyze selected theories in terms of the factors and processes that either promote social justice and change or help to recreate inequities and problems.

**Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation.** Students will learn about social problems, as well as the spectrum of interventions and supportive rehabilitation currently used to alleviate these problems.

**Behavioral and Social Science Research.** Students will critically analyze relevant theories of human behavior, human development, and families, and individual and small system change through the life course. The research supporting these theories will provide a foundation for the content in the course.

Required Text:


Required Articles:


Recommended Readings:


Recommended Articles:


Introduction

Impact of Age, Period, and Generation on Human Behavior.

Life Course vs. Life Span Development.

Social History of Hispanics and Native Americans

Readings:

Longres (2000). A social history of ethnic communities in the United States. (Chapter 5)

Longres (2000). The new arrivals. (Chapter 6)

Sociological Theories of Human Behavior

Readings:


Psychological Theories of Human Behavior

Readings:


Critical Issues Impacting Families Across the Life Span:

Readings:

Longres (2000). The Family as a Social Institution. (Chapter 8)

Longres (2000). Diversity in family lifestyles. (Chapter 9)

Longres (2000). The Family as a Social Organization: Identifying well-being. (Chapter 10)


Family Support across the Life Span and Intergenerational Relationships:

Readings:


**Life-Span Development - Erikson**

Readings:

Longres (2000). Life-Span Development: Prenatal Influences and Early Life. (Chapter 16)

**Childhood Development**

Readings:

Longres (2000). Life-Span Development: Childhood and Adolescence. (Chapter 17)

**Adult Development**

Readings:

Longres (2000). Life-Span Development: Early, Middle and Later Adulthood. (Chapter 18)

**Aging**

Readings:

See readings for previous section.
Supplemental Materials

Text and Readers:


**Families**


Selected Diversity Novels

African American Experiences


Asian American Experiences


**Hispanic Experiences**


**Native American Experiences**


Gay, Lesbian Experiences


