Course Description
Social work methods designed to enhance functioning and ameliorate problems in the personal and work relationships of adults are presented within the framework of an ethnic historical perspective. This includes problems arising in personal and marital/domestic partners, family relationships, work relationships, and in the overlap between work and family. A broad definition of family will be used to include single parents, unmarried couples, and gay/lesbian couples. The special problems arising from low-income and unemployment will also be addressed.

Course Content
There is a clear interaction between individual/family health, the workplace and economic security. Home tensions spill over to work, and problems with employment affect home life. Issues of self-esteem and psychological well being are directly affected by unemployment, loss of status, and diminished sense of self-efficacy at work. These problems are exacerbated for women and minorities who often experience discrimination and role overload. Family stress occasioned by balancing the demands of work and home is a critical consideration in understanding and addressing the problems faced by adult clients. Such stresses arise, particularly among the poor and in dual-career families. Changing roles create new realities and challenges for both men and women.

This methods course is relevant to a wide range of intervention settings in which intervention is directed to problems of normative life transitions and to unexpected crises such as: family counseling services, battered women’s shelters, outpatient clinical services and workplace programs, e.g. Employee Assistance Programs, as contrasted to treatment centers serving people who have extreme difficulty psychologically coping with their environments. The methods highlighted include: assessment, short-term interventions and program design relevant to work-family issues. Assessment skills will involve recognizing depression, anxiety, domestic violence and drug and alcohol problems that often accompany family and work difficulties.

Couples and family intervention techniques relevant to work/family problems will be taught. Interventions will include stress management techniques that help adults cope better with stresses at work and home. Such techniques address self-defeating thoughts that link self-esteem with work success. Techniques helping domestic partners and families reassess stereotyped gender roles will be emphasized to help clients learn new ways of restructuring family roles which are more suited to our contemporary society.

A special emphasis will be placed on learning techniques of pre-marital, cohabiting, marital, separation, and divorce counseling to assist couples who are trying to decided whether to marry, whether to remain married, or how to manage their divorce. In addition, this course will include content on how to intervene with domestic violence, especially as it is related to the couple’s relationship and the stresses of caregiving (e.g. caring for children, adults with disabilities, and elders.)
Interventions focusing on the workplace will also be incorporated into this course. Students will learn about programs that decrease work/family conflicts via scheduling (e.g. flextime), dependent care programs, pre-retirement counseling, and information and referral services. Further the effect of downsizing, job insecurity, and unemployment will be analyzed from a larger systems perspective. Students will learn how to help clients normalize their experiences and develop advocacy skills that enable them to seek out career counseling and job re-tooling.

In addition, each week I will demonstrate, or otherwise present a relaxation technique that you will be able to experience for yourself in class. (This is the fun part!) If you wish to participate you will be alerted when to bring in necessary items such as a tape recorder, photograph, mat, or towel.

**Course Objectives**

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

1. Identify the major social and family stresses (individual and family) that impinge on work and family roles.

2. Demonstrate assessment skills that focus on the effects of work and economic stress on the functioning of adults and, on the effects of family stress on functioning at work.

3. Demonstrate interpersonal, organizational, community and administrative interventions that help the adult function in family and work roles.

4. Demonstrate workplace interventions, including interpersonal, organizational and administrative interventions that help the adult function in family and work roles.

5. Operationalize the NASW Code of Ethics as it applies to value dilemmas that arise in interpersonal interventions with adults.

**Relationship to Four Curricular Themes**

1. Social science will be addressed by the inclusion of theoretical frameworks and empirical findings relevant to work/family stress from a life crisis perspective. In addition, research on the effects of downsizing, job insecurity, and unemployment will be included.

2. Multiculturalism and diversity will be addressed by identifying ways in which general assessment and intervention with adults and in the workplace should be adapted to accommodate the needs of the diverse groups within our society.

3. Social justice and social change will be addressed by considering social forces inherent in problems of downsizing, job insecurity, and unemployment. Special emphasis will be placed on the discrimination experienced by women and minorities in the workplace.

4. Promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation will be addressed by covering prevention strategies for the workplace that are designed to promote worker well-being and prevent stress, intervention techniques focused on couples and families that are designed to reduce stress, and interventions for couples who are having particular difficulties balancing the work/family interface (e.g. couples who are divorcing, or families in which there is domestic violence.)

**Social Work Values and Ethical Issues**

Values and ethics will be addressed as they relate to working with families and within the workplace. Specific issues include: developing ways of handling confidential information that may emerge in educational groups in the workplace, being an advocate for the employee and the workplace organization simultaneously, and advocating for employees who may face discrimination in the workplace, such as women and members of ethnic minority groups.

**Course Design**

In addition to the readings, the course will use a combination of lecture, presentations from experts in the field of work/family; large and small group activities and visual presentations.
Expectations

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Please notify the instructor in the event of a possible absence due to illness or emergency. It is your responsibility to contact a classmate to obtain the information you missed. Assignments are expected to be in on time. If your assignment is late it will be reflected by a lower grade (-.5). Preparation for class by completion of the assigned material and active participation in class provide a baseline for expected performance at the graduate student level. You are encouraged to read recommended readings and refer to the referenced articles to enrich your understanding of the subject matter.

Required Text


Coursepack

Recommended Readings


Assignments

Weekly Class Participation – **10 points** (Yes, it will count!)

A. **Movie Time**—Head out to your video rental store (grab some popcorn, while you’re at it) and select one of the following movies. While films may be a major source of entertainment, they can also be keen reflections of the lives we live and the dilemmas we face as individuals in society. (It has to be one of the following films because it has to be one I’ve seen!) Write a 3-5 page typewritten (double spaced) critique including the following: 1. The identification of the existential dilemma of the main character(s). 2. What attempts have the main characters made in trying to maintain a balance in their life with regards to work and home life? 3. What strengths and weaknesses can you identify in the main character? 4. Note any intergenerational/extended family conflicts in the lives of the main characters. 5. If there was some kind of professional intervention presented in the movie, identify those interventions and give a critical analysis. 6. If no interventions were presented in this movie, what interventions would you have provided for this family and/or individual? **10 points**

- A Map of the World
- A Price Above Rubies
- Affliction
- American Beauty
- Antz
- Bye Bye Love
- Eve’s Bayou
- First Do No Harm
- Grand Canyon
- Hannah and Her Sisters
- How to Make An American Quilt
- Husbands and Wives
- If These Walls Could Talk 1
- If These Walls Could Talk 2
- In the Gloaming
- Kramer Vs. Kramer
- Living Out Loud
- Manhattan
- Marvin’s Room
- Mr. Holland’s Opus
- Mr. Mom
- Music of the Heart
My Family (Mi Familia) The Firm
My Life The Good Mother
One Fine Day The Joy Luck Club
One True Thing The Story of Us
Regarding Henry The War of the Roses
Soul Food Where the Heart Is
Stepmom When A Man Loves a Woman
The Deep End of the Ocean

B. Mid-Term Research Paper
An 8-10 typewritten double-spaced Research Paper exploring issues facing American families today. The family may be of any configuration e.g. single parent, blended family, gay/lesbian families; please identify the family configuration you select. Discussion may include issues in regard to income, employment, childcare/eldercare, extended family issues, relocation issues, dual -career families, families with an impaired adult or child. Describe, in detail how the issue places stress upon the adult individual within the family, or at the workplace. The first part of the paper should detail the issue and its problematic effect on the adult. The second part of the paper should take a critical look at current solutions/interventions. Gender roles must be explored. Identify issues such as housing, ethnicity, schools, transportation, and explore how these issues impact the family. This paper must include a minimum of 5 references, other than the required text, and it must be correctly cited and referenced according to APA standards (see The Student Guide, pp.66-77.) 25 points.

C. Group Project
This will be a group project (3-4 class members per group). The purpose of the assignment is to expose the class to a variety of methodologies in approaching problems that confront the individual adult at home and in the workplace. You are asked to present a one-hour workshop presentation on an innovative intervention or program developed to enhance individual functioning in relationships at home/work. For instance you may present on an domestic violence prevention program, a unique approach to helping families through divorce, a work place program designed to relieve stress, an innovative childcare program for dual career families, an specific approach to marital therapy such as IMAGO or PAIRS therapy. BE CREATIVE! You may use role-play, demonstrations, experientials, videotapes, handouts, power point, guest speakers. Be sure to include minority content information in your presentation and demonstrate the intervention’s ability to be ethnic and gender sensitive. A minimum bibliography and a half-page typewritten page describing the workshop should be provided for distribution to the rest of the class. Additional handouts or visuals are encouraged. 25 points.

D. Summary Papers
These are 2-3 typewritten, double-spaced response papers. How has the material presented impacted you professionally and personally; how do you see yourself using this information as a clinician, administrator, program designer, and in your personal relationships. Be sure to note the sources (readings, lecture or classroom experience) to which you relate these insights. This will be graded as satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on how well you have met the criteria for content. Three papers -10 points each for a total of 30 points.

Course Outline
PART I – THE PROBLEMS
Session I – January 9
Introduction; discussion of syllabus and assignments; guidelines and expectations related to group process, overview of required readings.
Session II – January 16
   Rubin, Chapter 1, 8 and 9
“Relaxation in a Box”

Session III – January 23
The “Eco-Genogram” as a Means of Illustrating the Overlap of Family and Work Societal Issues and Their Impact on Work and Family: Feminism, Gender, Multicultural and Racial Differences
   Hochschild, Chapters 2 and 3, Chapters 5, and Chapter 13
   Rubin, Chapter 4
Coursepack:
   Family Matters: A National Survey of Women and Men.
   Peer Marriage
“Walk into a Picture”-Please bring a picture or a postcard of your favorite place on earth.

Session IV – January 30
ECO-GENOGRAM DUE (extra credit)
Stress in the Workplace: Competition, Downsizing, Relocation, Job-retooling, Sexual harassment, low pay, unemployment, discrimination, job satisfaction.
   Rubin, Chapter 6 and 7
Coursepack:
   Globalization and the Downsizing of the American Dream
   Detours on the Road to Employment: Obstacles Facing Low-Income Women
   Forget Washington: The Poor Cope Alone
   The Likelihood of Poverty across the American Adult Life Span
   Hand-Outs:
   Pregnancy Discrimination
   Sex and Race Discrimination, Sex and Age Discrimination
   Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
   Pay Discrimination
Aromatherapy

Session V – February 6
The Overlap of Job Stress onto Family Functioning
What’s a Family to Do?
   Hochschild, Chapter 8, 9 and 10 and 15.
   Rubin, Chapter 11
Coursepack
   The New Dad
   Mama at the Lion Gate
Brief relaxation techniques to use on the job.

Session VI – February 13 (Yes, its Valentine’s Day, but your not excused from class)
FIRST SUMMARY PAPER DUE
Continuation of Session V—Bringing it Home
Stresses in Parenting and Extended Family Matters: Aging Parents and Grandparent Parenting
   Hochschild, Chapter 4 and 6
   Rubin, Chapter 5
Coursepack
   Dan Quayle Was Right
Object of Relaxation
Session VII – February 20
MOVIE REVIEW DUE
Marital Discord and Domestic Violence
Recognizing Depression, Anxiety, and Substance Abuse
Hochschild, Chapter 14
Coursepack
A 20 Year Literature Review and Synthesis: Dynamics of Partner Violence and Types of Abuse and Abusers.
Partner Violence in Ethnic Minorities
Letting Out the Secret: Violence in Lesbian Relationships
Predictors of Child Abuse in Maritally Violent Families
Marital Conflict Management: Gender and Ethnic Differences
Progressive Relaxation Exercise (bring tape recorder)

February 27th Break!!!

Session VIII – March 6
Separation, Divorce, Blended Families
Coursepack:
The Good Divorce, Chapter 2 What Divorce Is and Is Not
Children and Marital Conflict, Chapter 2 Conflict in the Marital Dyad
The Post Divorce Family, Chapter 2 Causes and Consequences of Divorce and
Chapter 7, The Post Divorce Society: How Divorce Is Shaping the Family And Other Forms of Social Organization.

Hand-Out:
Going Through Your Divorce.
Create a Relaxation Spot in the Home

PART II: THE SOLUTIONS

Session IX – March 13
Job Stress Management, Time and organizational management skills
Employee Assistance Programs
Career Counseling
Burn-out prevention strategies
Coursepack:
Family Leave For More Family Needs
What Affirmative Action Is (And what it is Not)
Employee Services and How to Use Them
Dealing with a Troubled Employee
Understanding a Work-Family Fit for Single Parents Moving from Welfare to Work
Surviving Unemployment: Economic Resources and Job Loss Duration in Blue-Collar Households
The Family Support Act: Reinventing the Wheel?

Meditation as relaxation
MID-TERM RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Session X – March 20
SECOND SUMMARY PAPER DUE
Classroom Presentation #1
Marital Therapies: Keeping the Executives of the Family Strong
Coursepack:
Happily Ever After
Visiting Preventionist Virtual Symposium: The Prevention of Marital Distress
Dual Career Couples: New Perspectives In Counseling – Chapter 5, An Integrated Approach to Counseling Dual Career Couples
Clinical Handbook of Couple Therapy, Chapter 14, *Therapy with Same-Sex Couples.*

Handout:
Key Points of Various Theoretical Approaches: Bowenian, Cognitive Behavioral, Problem Solution Focused, Psychoanalytical, Imago.

Journaling for Stress Reduction

**Session XI – March 27**
Classroom Presentation #2
Marital Therapies, con’t.
Coursepack:
  - Predicting Marital Success for Premarital Couple Types Based on PREPARE
  - Marriage Contracts
  - Structured Techniques

Tea time – my treat!

**Session XII – April 3**
Class Presentation #3
Effective Responses to Domestic Violence, Tools for Prevention
Coursepack:
  - A 20 Year Literature Review and Synthesis: Prevention and Intervention of Partner Violence
  - Choice and Empowerment for Women Who Stay: Toward a Constructivist Model
  - Oakland County Domestic Violence Handbook

Reading to Calm the Soul

**Session XIII – April 10**
LAST SUMMARY PAPER DUE
Class Presentation #4
The Good Divorce, Chapter 8, *Pathways to a Good Divorce.*
Rebuilding Our Families
Coursepack:
  - Can Government Rescue Marriage?
  - Eight Ways to Build a Healthy Stepfamily

“Let Your Cares Fly Away”
REFERENCES


Katepoo P. WorkOptions, Two part-time options under FMLA. http://workoptions.com/PF_FMLA.htm


Peterson, Gayle Eight Ways to Help Build A Healthy Stepfamily. ParentsPlace.com. [http://www.parentsplace.com/parentsplace/print/0,3292,378-13900-7-STEPFAMILIES,00.html](http://www.parentsplace.com/parentsplace/print/0,3292,378-13900-7-STEPFAMILIES,00.html)


Sacks, M. To Relieve Stress, Many Try Mindfulness Meditation. But Which Class? [http://onhelath.webmd.com/alternative/in-depth/item/item,25209_1_.asp](http://onhelath.webmd.com/alternative/in-depth/item/item,25209_1_.asp)


Young, C. The Mama Lion at the Gate. [http://salon.com/mwt/feature/2000/06/12gatekeeping/print.html](http://salon.com/mwt/feature/2000/06/12gatekeeping/print.html)