THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

HUMAN DIFFERENCES, SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, WELL-BEING & CHANGE THROUGH
THE LIFE COURSE

Social Work 500.002
Fall, 2003

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Tues. 11:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.
Office Hours:
Tues. 3:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M.
Thurs. 9:00 A.M.-10:00 A.M.
By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course takes a multicultural and critical perspective on understanding individuals
families, and their interpersonal and group relationships; lifespan development; theories of well-
being, stress, and coping and adaptation. The emphasis within this course is on knowledge about
individuals and small social systems and the implications of this knowledge for all domains of
social work practice. Students will be introduced to the concepts of risk and protective factors,
with relevant examples at the individual and small group levels. Students will also consider the
implications of this knowledge for intervening in social problems and supporting rehabilitation
once problems have developed. Major components will be concerned with the processes of
oppression, privilege, and discrimination and factors that help peoples and small social systems
change. The knowledge presented will include the inter-relationships between smaller and larger
social systems, and in particular, how biological factors and the larger social and physical
environments shape and influence individual and family well-being.

CONTENT:
Content will include selected theories of human behavior, human development, families
and small groups, and individual and small system change. Students will consider how relevant
concepts have been developed, the types of knowledge and data that inform different theories,
and current gaps and controversies in biological, behavioral, and social science knowledge and
theory. The course will emphasize similarities and differences related to human diversity and
dynamics of oppression and privilege. An important aspect is to emphasize how individual and
small system factors and processes can facilitate attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, family
characteristics and group processes that either promote multicultural human well-being and
social justice or help to recreate inequities and disease.
OBJECTIVES:
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge about and be able to critically analyze relevant theories of families, small groups, and human behaviors, development, and change through the life course emphasizing similarities and differences and the effects of oppression and

2. Articulate the concepts of risk and protective factors and give examples at the individual, group, and family levels.

3. Describe the impact of such characteristics as economic class, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, religion, and age on risk and protective factors, human development, human interactions, and the structures of small social systems.

4. Identify the inter-relationships between small and larger social systems, and describe how biological factors and larger social and physical environments interact to influence individual and family well-being.

5. Describe how relevant concepts have been socially constructed, what knowledge and empirical evidence supports selected theories, some current gaps in knowledge, and key controversies about these theories and knowledge.

6. Conceptualize how individual and small system factors and processes can either promote multi-cultural human well-being or recreate inequities and problems.

7. Examine theories of individual, family, and group change and their relevance for all types of social work practice towards a multi-cultural and social just world.

Course Design:
This course will typically involve a combination of lecture and discussion, multimedia presentations, and student presentations may be used to supplement and enhance discussion of individual topics.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:
1. Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed through analysis of differences in needs among subgroups within society and the differential application and impact of policies and services.

2. Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed by considering issues such as the distribution of social security and other benefits, varying standards for assessing the need for intervention (e.g., protective services and guardianship), and differing outcomes for behavior considered harmful to self or others.

3. Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed by considering the spectrum of policies and services ranging from promotion and prevention (e.g., pre-
retirement programs and in-home services) to treatment and rehabilitation (e.g., income support for those with inadequate resources and nursing homes).

4. **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be addressed by the inclusion of theoretical frameworks for understanding social roles, social stratification, and societal functioning among the elderly. The findings of research studies relevant to the design and evaluation of policies and services for older adults will also be included.

**Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**
This course will address Social Work values and ethics in terms of the extent to which policies and services adequately meet the needs of the individuals.

**CLASS DESIGN AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS**

**Class Process:**
We will conduct the class in a seminar fashion, which means students will be expected to fully participate in the learning process. Seminars will include a range of activities, lectures, guest speakers, discussions, audiovisuals, and student presentations. The above activities will be integrated at critical points in the semester to facilitate a better understanding of the course content.

**Writing Policy:**
Good writing skills to express information accurately and concisely to individuals involved in helping client systems, is a requirement for effective social work practice. Therefore, formal writing assignments for this course (i.e., papers) will be evaluated both for content, ideas presented, and for the clarity of the presentation.

Appropriate referencing is required on all written assignments. **Failure to use quotation marks for short quotations or indentations for longer, direct quotes with appropriate citations will result in a grade of zero as will failure to provide citations for indirect quotations.** If you do not know how to reference a paper, now is the time to learn. Please seek assistance before you submit your assignments. See also other appropriate university publications for penalties that may result from scholastic dishonesty such as plagiarism or cheating on tests.

*The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is the style manual to be used by all students. **Papers are to be doubled spaced, typewritten/word processed with a 12-point font.** All papers should be in narrative format.

LSA has a College Writing Workshop with graduate fellows and faculty of the English Composition Board. The Writing Center assists students in completing specific assignments or projects to help in improving academic writing skills. Feel free to use this service. Students have found it very helpful. For further information and an appointment contact:

*Sweetland Writing Center*
1139 Angell Hall, 1003
734-764-0429
ALL written assignments are graded according to the following criteria. Please review this section before handing in each of the papers:

1. **COMPLETENESS AND THROUGHNESS:** MAXIMUM POINTS = 30

   How fully has the issue been addressed? Has the student sufficiently researched the issue using library resources, interviews, and other means to gain differing perspectives and full knowledge of the issue? Does the paper leave the reader with the impression that major questions have been considered or are important issues not addressed? Has the paper been carefully proofread?

2. **ORGANIZATION AND CLARITY:** MAXIMUM POINTS = 15

   Is the paper well written and organized in a logical manner? Are there appropriate transitions between, paragraphs, and sections? Is the sentence structure, syntax, and grammar of appropriate quality for a graduate student? Have subtitles been used to improve organization? Has the student addressed issues in a way that someone unfamiliar with the issue can understand as well as someone knowledgeable about the particular issue?

3. **REFERENCING:** MAXIMUM POINTS = 25

   Are there a sufficient number of references? Has the theoretical and empirical literature on the subject been incorporated into the paper? Are the references well integrated in the text of the paper? Has referencing been done appropriately and according to the style of the American Psychological Association?

4. **ORIGINALITY AND CREATIVITY:** MAXIMUM POINTS = 30

   Has the student used his or her analytical skills in a way that suggests more than a restatement of what others have said about the issue? Has the student compared, contrasted, and integrated the different viewpoints and material on the subject in a way that shows that she or he has a thorough understanding of the issue? Has the student suggested points that others have not addressed?

* A comment sheet with points earned for each criterion will be returned with each paper.

**OTHER HOUSEKEEPING MATTERS**

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, I encourage you to contact me at your earliest convenience. Given enough notification the assignments, in-class assignments and my teaching methods can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier you make me aware of your needs, the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you do decide to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential.
Religious Observances
 Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Electronic Devices
 Due to their disruptive nature and in consideration of your classmates, I request that all students turn off all telephones and pagers while you are in my class. This is your time and I want you to be able to protect it. I prefer that you receive no messages during class time; however, if you must be on call for emergency, please let your home or office know that you are only available for emergencies that no one else can handle. If you must carry a pager, please set it to vibrate only.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

WEEKLY ATTENDANCE & CLASS PARTICIPATION- (10% of final course grade)

This course is in part, preparation for your professional career. Classroom attendance and participation are critical aspects of professional socialization. Students are responsible for assisting in the creation of a learning environment that promotes such socialization. To do so, students should assume responsibility for their own learning by being prepared for and participating in class interactions, and consulting with the instructor outside class. Opportunities for make-up assignments are determined at the discretion of the instructor.

a. Each student is expected to display professional behavior in class.
b. Attendance is required, and you are to arrive on time and remain for the entire class.
c. Each student is expected to actively participate in all class activities and discussions.
d. All reading assignments should be completed before class on the day indicated in the syllabus, to enhance the learning experience and class discussions.
e. Attendance and class participation are an integral part of the grade and will be judged on quality, not just quantity.
ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are expected to be submitted according to schedule barring serious, unforeseen emergencies. If this happens, please notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible. Late assignments may be submitted, but a 2 point penalty per day will be subtracted from the grade.

This two point penalty applies to weekends as well as weekdays.

Make Up Policy: If you must miss a class or session where a paper is due, you must notify the professor prior to the start of class. I will only accept late assignments, without point deductions, if a doctor's excuse or documented university approved reason for their absence is provided.

I. Integration Paper on Weekly Readings- (15% of final course guide)

♦ The purpose of this assignment is help you to integrated knowledge/theory about human growth, development and functioning from your readings with social work practice, values and ethics
♦ Connect the HBSE knowledge/theory to what you are learning in your other courses and in field instruction
♦ Develop writing skills required by every social worker and the ability to think critically about HBSE knowledge/theory and its importance to social work practice

Reaction papers should be written in response to supplemental readings that are relevant to your educational goals. They should be a well-thought-out two-page (maximum, typed, doubled spaced) statement that includes a brief summary of featured points. Be prepared to discuss theory, methods, applied implications of research and future directions for each topic.

Papers are due on:

- **September 16, 2003** - readings from sessions 2, 3 & 4
- **October 7, 2003** - readings from sessions 4, 5 & 6
- **October 28, 2003** - readings from sessions 7, 8 & 9
- **November 11, 2002** - readings from sessions 10, 11 & 12
- **December 9, 2002** - readings from sessions 13, 14 & 15

NOTE: Articles have been selected to give students the opportunity to focus more on some area discussed in the text. While students are expected to read more than one article for the assignments, only one is necessary for the written analysis.

a. Please be sure to use article citation at the beginning of each paper.

b. Responses are not book reviews, so please do not repeat what authors have said. Instead, give your critique of each assigned reading— that is, your thoughts about it, its shortcomings, how it expands your thinking and understanding, and how it compares with other material you have read or with what you have learned in previous or current courses.
c. Responses must also include the perceived implications for social work, and examples from your field practicum (if in placement) that help you better understand a give practice situation.

d. At the beginning of each class session, students who have read the same article will discuss it in a group (briefly) and share brief comments with the rest of the class. Students are to take turns in sharing the group findings with the class.

II. **Group Observation and Analysis Paper (20% of final course grade)**

a. To complete this you are to observe a small group, (non-policy making), and write a short paper (no more than 5 pages) which addresses the following elements.

b. Identify, attend and observe a meeting of a non-policy making group. Here meaning a social group, informal group, therapeutic group, church group, etc., that meets criteria and structure of a small group as defined in class and the literature. *ANY DOBUTS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CHECK WITH THE INSTRUCTOR.*

c. Using your knowledge of groups gained from the readings, class discussions, experiences and additional sources, define and illustrate *at least 5 of the following 7 group concepts* that you observed during the group meeting you attended:

   - Membership
   - Leadership
   - Boundaries
   - Norms
   - Roles
   - Decision-making
   - Task vs. Process

d. Describe, briefly, any human diversity or diversity related issues observed during the meeting. Think about the persons constituting the group, those persons attending the meeting, the environment in which the meeting takes place, or the issues dealt with by the group. Be especially sensitive to any of the following diverse persons: persons with disabilities, persons of color, women, gay men, lesbians, and persons distinguished by age, religion, socioeconomic class or culture.

**USE PREVIOUSLY CITED WRITING POLICY**— In answer to your question how many references are necessary for this paper—*no less than six*, although I prefer as many that are necessary to support your paper. Use required readings, text and outside sources.

**DUE DATE:**

October 21, 2002
III. Family Diversity Analysis Paper (25% of final course grade)

A list of "Selected Diversity Novels" will be distributed. Select and read one of the books listed. Using your book selection, and any journal articles or research reports related to the reading, write a 6-7 page, doubled-spaced, typewritten analysis that includes the following elements:

a. Discuss how the families represented in the reading are different in terms of structure and/or functions from so-called "traditional" families. Have these differences been greater or less pronounced in the past than they are currently?

b. Describe briefly the strengths available in the families discussed that could serve as resources for understanding and working with families similar to those reflected in the reading.

c. Describe the social systems with which the families represented in the reading link or interact (groups, organizations, institutions, community) and discuss the impact of the linkages and interactions for individual family members.

d. Describe the likely consequences of discrimination and oppression on the ability of the families and their members to reach or maintain optimal stages of life-span development, health, and well-being. Using your knowledge from your social welfare class, suggest a family-centered policy or service that might help remove the barriers presented by discrimination and/or oppression for the families reflected in the reading. [Note: NASW Speaks is also a good resource for this.]

USE PREVIOUSLY CITED WRITING POLICY-- no fewer than ten references are necessary for this paper, although I prefer as many that are necessary to support your paper. As a diversity exercise, be sure to include literature on the group that is discussed in your selected novel. Use required readings, text and outside citations.

DUE DATE: November 25, 2002
IV. Multidimensional Framework Integrative Analysis Paper (30% of final course grade)

This assignment is intended to allow you to do a personal assessment of your ability to apply the theories that have been presented during the course of the semester. The focus of this paper is the impact of your personal and professional development on various issues related to human behavior and the social environment. This assignment is not designed to force you to reveal information about yourself that you do not want. It is your paper. You have full control of what you include. It is not the point of this exercise to reveal information that you do not feel comfortable revealing. To complete this assignment, write a paper of 8-10 pages which includes at least the following elements:

a. A general description of yourself as a bio-psycho-socio-cultural being. Be sure to address each part of the hyphenated description! State how the overall combination of these characteristics influenced the opportunities and barriers to which you have experienced so far in your life. The assessment models as outlined in Ashford, et al., or any other theories studied during the semester can be used as a guide. Be sure to cover all aspects of human behavior and social environment in your analysis.

b. Using theories of models of individual development or identity formation presented in class and/or the text, describe your progress through the life-span to this point in time. That is, where are you now, and what phases have you passed through?

c. A brief discussion of the values you bring with you as your progress through phases of your life-span that remain. Discuss briefly whether these values are likely to be strengths or limitations in your professional development as a social worker.

d. Designate your family as a focal system. Sketch the significant subsystems that make up the family and show the linkage to the family of influential elements in the supra system.

e. Identify at least four groups and organizations in the larger environment that have been influential in your life. (This does not include your family or individual friends.) For each one, briefly describe how it has affected your personal or professional view of the world.

f. Identify and briefly describe at least three major events or factors in the larger environment, such as political or social movements or national problems, which have influenced you. For each one, briefly describe how your development and personal and professional world view were affected.

g. Diversity, discrimination and oppression affect everyone, whether they are part of the dominant group or a subordinated group. Describe the impact of diversity, discrimination and oppression on your development and personal and professional world views.
USE PREVIOUSLY CITED WRITING POLICY--no fewer than twelve references are necessary for this paper. You can use as many as you feel are needed to support your positions. Use required readings, text and outside citations.

DUE DATE: December 16, 2002

Final Grading Procedures

Each student will be graded on the basis of his or her performance in each area of activity outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration Paper on Weekly Readings</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Sept. 16, 2003</td>
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<td>Oct. 7, 2003</td>
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<td>Dec. 9, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Observation and Analysis Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Oct. 21, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Diversity Analysis Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Nov. 25, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multidimensional Framework Integrative Analysis Paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Dec. 16, 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Grading System:

Adding the percentage scores from each assignments and classroom participation will determine your final grade. The percentages will be totaled and converted to a letter grade using the following scale:

A+= 101%+
A = 100% - 96%
A-= 95% - 91%
B+= 90% - 86%
B = 85% - 83%
B- = 82% - 80%
C+ = 79% - 76%
C = 75% - 73%
C-= 72% - 70%

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COURSE OUTLINE AND REQUIRED TEXT


Note on course reading materials. - With the purchase of your text, you have access to INFOTRAC COLLEGE. INFOTRAC "is a fully searchable online university library containing complete articles and their images." All articles are on reserve in the School of Social Work Library. Readings are in two parts with the articles in Part One being listed under Reserved Readings and Part Two being listed under INFOTRAC articles.

Sept. 2  Session 1-Class Introductions
Overview of course goals, objectives, and requirements
Diversity perspective

Required Reading:
Zastrow, C. H. and Kirst-Ashman, K.K. ..... preface

UNIT ONE
Conceptual Themes and Theoretical Prepositions

Sept. 9  Session 2 - Theoretical Perspectives on Human Behavior and the Social Environment
Foundation Knowledge Purpose and Process of Social Work
Importance of Assessment
Social Worker System Roles
Interactions with multiple systems
Systems Impact Model

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:
UNIT TWO
Small Groups

Sept. 16 Session 3 – Groups

Small Groups in Social Work
Therapy Groups
Mutual Aid Groups
Self-Help Groups
Task-Groups
Dimensions of Group Structure
Composition
Basic groups process
Group Dynamics
Effects of Physical Environment on Group Processes

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:

Integration Paper from Sessions 2, 3 & 4 Due
UNIT THREE

Prenatal-Infancy-Childhood

Sept. 23  Session 4 – Impact of Biological Systems
Human Development
Genetics and Human Behavior
Impact of Macro Policy on Practice and Access to Services
Infertility
Developmental tasks that occur during normal infant development

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

Sept. 30  Session 6 – Impact of Psychological Systems
Theories of Psychological Development
 Psychodynamic Theory
 Behavioral Theories
 Phenomenological Theories-Carl Rogers

Cognitive Development
 Piaget
 Emotional Development
**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


**Oct. 7  **Session 6 – Impact of Social Systems

The Family Environment  
Families Past and Present  
Family Diversity  
Learning Theory  
Peers, Television and School  
Child Maltreatment

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


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**Integration Paper from Sessions 4, 5 & 6 Due**

**Oct. 14** Session 7 – No Class Fall Break
UNIT FOUR
Adolescence - Young Adulthood

Oct. 21  Session 8 – Impact of Biological Systems
Transition to Adulthood
Psychological reactions to biological changes
Body image and Self-concept
Issues and challenges; i.e., sexuality, substance abuse, etc….

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

Group Analysis Paper Due

Oct. 28  Session 9 – Impact of Psychological Systems
Theories of self and identity-Identity formation
Erikson’s Psychosocial Theory
Moral Development
Kohlberg’s Theory
Gilligan’s Theory
Spiritual Development

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:


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**Integration Paper for Sessions 7, 8, & 9 Due**

**Nov. 4  Session 10 – Impact of Social Systems**

Social aspects; relationships with family, peers, institutions, culture

Emotional and Behavioral Problems

Groups Revisited

**Required Reading:**

Suggested Readings:

UNIT FIVE

Adulthood

Nov. 11 Session 11 – Impact of Biological Systems in Middle Adulthood
Meaning of Adulthood
Major Themes in Adulthood
Love and Work
Physical Changes

Required Reading:

Suggest Readings:

Integration Paper from Sessions 10, 11 &12 Due
Nov. 18  Session 12 – Impact of Psychological Systems in Middle Adulthood
  Generativity versus Stagnation
  Nonverbal communication
  Substance Use and Abuse

Required Reading:

Suggest Readings:

Nov 25  Session 13 – Impact of Social Systems in Middle Adulthood
  The Functionalist Perspective
  The Conflict Perspective
  The Interactionist Perspective
  Poverty
  Social Work with Organizations

Required Reading:

Suggest Readings:


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**Family Diversity Analytic Paper Due Nov. 7th**

**Dec 2  Session 14 – Biological and Psychological Systems and their Impact in Later Adulthood**

*Required Reading:*


*Suggested Reading:*


Dec. 9 Session 15 – Social Systems and their Impact in Later Adulthood

Problems Faced by the Elderly
Elder Abuse
Crime Victimization
Course Evaluations
Wrap-up

Required Reading:

Suggested Reading:

Multidimensional Framework Analysis Paper Due Dec 16th
Integration Paper for Sessions 13, 14 & 15 Due Dec 9th
SUPPLEMENTAL CLASS READINGS

PART ONE: RESERVED READINGS


**PART TWO: INFOTRAC ARTICLES**


Periodicals: Social Work

Current Periodical Titles:

- Administration in Social Work
- Affilia: Journal of Women & Social Work
- Child Welfare
- Clinical Social Work Journal
- Community Mental Health Journal
- Computers in Human Services
- Families in Society
- Family Therapy Networker
- Health & Social Work
- Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences (Graduate Library)
- Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research
- Journal of Community Practice
- Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect
- Journal of Family Violence
- Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services
- Journal of Gerontological Social Work
- Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community
- Journal of Progressive Human Services
- Journal of Social Casework
- Journal of Social Work Education
- Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare
- Labor Notes
- New Social Worker
- Public Welfare
- Prevention in Human Services
- Research on Social Work Practice
- Social Security Bulletin
- Social Service Review
- Social Work
- Social Work in Education
- Social Work in Health Care
- Social Work Research

Inactive Titles: Social Work

- Social Work Research