

**ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
BSW PROGRAM
SYLLABUS**

**I. COURSE TITLE: SOWK 355C(01)
Communication and Interviewing Skills
Fall Semester, 2009
Monday & Wednesday @ 12:15 – 2:15 pm
355 CdC, SCU**

COURSE VALUE: One course – (4 Credits)

**INSTRUCTOR: Valandra MSW, LISW
Office: 305 Fontbonne Hall, SCU
Office Phone: (651) 962-6709
Cell Phone: (612) 226-5620
Emails: Vala0251@stthomas.edu; Valandra@stkate.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 10:30am – 11:30am SCU
 Tuesdays 6pm - 7pm UST
 Wednesdays 10:30am – 11:30am SCU
 Saturday 11:30am - 12:30pm SCU
 By appointment**

CLASSROOM ACCOMMODATIONS

In compliance with the University of St. Thomas/St. Catherine University policy and disability laws, students with a verifiable disability seeking reasonable accommodations should register with disability services to determine appropriate academic accommodations.

Students at SCU are encouraged to contact the St. Catherine's O'Neill Center for Academic Development at 690-6563 or go directly to the Center, located in the lower level of CDC room 021, M-F, 8:30-4:30. The web site is <http://minerva.stkate.edu/offices/academic/oneill.nsf>.

Students at UST can register with the Enhancement Program-Disability Services office for disability verification and for determination of academic accommodations. Please do so within the first two weeks of the term. Appointments can be made by calling 651-962-6315 or 800-328-6819, extension 6315. Telephone appointments are available as needed. You may also make an appointment in O'Shaughnessy Educational Center, room 119. For further information, you can locate the Enhancement Program on the web at <http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/>.

REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS:

Intentional Interviewing and Counseling (Sixth Ed).
A. Ivey & M. B. Ivey, Thomson Brooks/Cole 2007

Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach. (Fifth Ed.)
Miley, O'Melia, Dubois, Allyn and Bacon, 2007

Intentional Interviewing and Counseling – Your Interactive Resource CD-ROM.
A.E. Ivey & M.B. Ivey, Thomson Brooks/Cole, 2007 (Optional)

The Everyday Writer (2nd Ed.). A. A. Lunsford, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001 (Optional)

1. Digital videotaping capability

Articles -

Dean, R.G. (2001). The Myth of Cross-Cultural Competence. *Families in Society*, 82(6), 623-630 [SCU Online Journals](#)

Hardy, K.V. & Laszloffy, T. A. (1995). The Cultural Genogram: Key to Training Culturally Competent Family Therapists. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 21(3), 227 - 237. [SCU Online Journals](#)

Hodge, D.R. (2005) Spiritual Ecograms: A New Assessment Instrument for Identifying Client Strengths in Space and Across Time. *Families in Society*, 82 (2), 287-296 [SCU Online Journals](#)

McIntosh, P. Winter (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School*, 49, 2, 31-36 [SCU Online Journals](#)

Sue, D.W., Capodilupo, C.M., Torino, G.C., Bucceri, J.M., Holder, A.M.B., Nadal, K.L, Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice. *American Psychologist*, 67, 4. 271-286 [SCU Online Journals](#)

Taub, D.E., Penelope, A.M, & Fanflik, P.L. (2004). Stigma management strategies among women with physical disabilities: contrasting approaches of downplaying or claiming a disability status. *Deviant Behavior*, 25(2), 169-190. [UST Online Journals- InformaWorld](#)

Zamboni, B.D. (2006). Therapeutic Considerations in Working with the Family, Friends, and Partners of Transgendered Individuals. *The Family Journal*, 14(2), 174-179. [SCU Online Journals](#)

Additional handouts and readings are assigned by the instructor.

Prerequisite: SOWK 340 or consent of the instructor.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Within a BSW Generalist framework, students learn beginning skills of interviewing, the intervention process and group work the first year. This course is the first of a four-course practice sequence. The primary focus is on communication theory and skills as applied to social work with individuals, families, small groups, communities and organizations. There is an emphasis on self-awareness, beginning assessment skills and diversity; which includes dynamics related to race, gender, ability, age, sexual orientation and GLBT issues, social economic status, political ideology, etc. Students will learn to focus on client strengths while considering the many aspects of diversity that clients bring into the social work relationship. Students learn skills in building relationship, collecting and assessing data, planning and contracting, identifying alternative interventions, selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action, monitoring outcomes and termination in working with client systems. An integrative approach to generalist social work practice provides the context for interventions within different systems. This is the first of four courses in the Social Work major with a writing intensive requirement. This course has specific assignments to help the students develop writing skills for reflection and documentation. Writing assignments focus on professional writing as needed in the field of social work. The reflective writing assignments, skill development analysis (SDA's) are designed to stimulate self-awareness and critical thinking while developing knowledge and skills in communication and interviewing. You will be giving and receiving peer assessments.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, students will have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

A. Knowledge of the following:

1. The diversity of attitudes toward working with clients from whom you are different.
2. Communication theory as applied to interpersonal relationships and helping interventions with individuals, families, groups and communities as appropriate for generalist social work practice.
3. Professional relationships as characterized by mutuality, collaboration and respect for client systems.
4. Systems theory related to understanding individual and group behavior in the context of the uniqueness of the interaction of each individual and his/her environment with emphasis on client strengths.
5. Cultural and lifestyle diversity with a focus on clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, class backgrounds, gender sexual orientation and age.
6. The impact of personal and professional values and ethics on the helping process and the potential for value conflicts.

7. The relationship of the helping interview to each stage of the helping process.
8. The application of communication skills to social change efforts and social policy development.
9. The use of appropriate research methodology to monitor and evaluate outcomes.
10. The availability of resources and resource systems for vulnerable populations and their families.
11. Effective written communication as it relates to the interviewing process.

B. Skills in:

1. Verbal and non-verbal interpersonal communication patterns.
2. Self-assessment and the disciplined use of self as a primary tool of generalist practice.
3. Identifying and beginning to integrate personal and professional values and ethics in working with client systems.
4. Interviewing skills, involving the client system in the process and communicating of genuineness, warmth and respect to clients.
5. Defining issues, collecting and assessing data and planning and contracting.
6. Developing sensitivity to human diversity from a strengths perspective.
7. Giving and receiving feedback about practice skills.
8. Using social work case management skills (such as brokering, advocacy, monitoring and discharge planning, etc.) to link elders and their families to resources and services.

IV. COURSE OUTLINE:

A. Knowledge Base for Generalist Social Work Practice

1. An Integrative Model of Practice: Individual, Environment, and Societal Levels of Intervention
2. Communication Theory and Skills
3. Eco Systems Perspective
4. Personal and Professional Values and Ethics
5. Human Diversity
 - a. Race
 - b. Gender
 - c. Sexual Orientation
 - d. Class
 - e. Religion
 - f. Spirituality
 - g. Age
6. Strengths Perspective

7. Empowerment

B. The Helping Process

1. Personal and Professional Relationships
2. Forming Partnerships
3. Articulating Challenges
4. Goals setting
5. Contracting

C. The Social Work Interview

1. Attending and Observing
2. Open and Closed Questions
3. Client Observation Skills
4. Encouraging, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing
5. Reflection of Feeling
6. Focusing
7. Meaning
8. Exploration of Values

D. Communication and Social Change

1. Relationship between Micro and Macro Practice
2. Communication Skills in Macro Settings
3. Social Policy
4. Research

The following methods, assignments, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.

V. COURSE METHODS:

This course combines traditional learning and experiential learning. Numerous types of learning both in and out of the classroom are employed to enhance intellectual and practical application. Students will be placed in small groups to practice skills and remain with the same peer group throughout the semester. The students will be asked to provide the instructor and each other with feedback on how they are individually benefiting from the learning experiences provided. Small group feedback and self-evaluation of skill forms will be handed out in each class to assist your learning and focus on particular skills. Handouts on specific topics will be provided in class and small group exercises will regularly occur. An atmosphere of openness and the ability to take risks is very important in this course. High professional standards are expected for both personal and group interactions as well as in written work.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

Assignment #1. Video Tape: Part A due Sept 21st & Part B due Dec 14th: 25 points

Set up a role play interview with someone who is willing to play a client. Instruct them NOT TO USE any personal life problem or issue. Ask the person to identify a problem or issue of a friend, or a client they have worked with for some time. They should change the biographic information for confidentiality. You should have the same person for both interviews. **DO NOT CHOOSE A SIGNIFICANT OTHER, CHILD OR PARENT TO BE YOUR CLIENT.**

You are the Social Worker. Set up the video to view two chairs. For the first interview start the tape and have the client enter and begin the role play. Tape for **10-12** minutes and stop. Do not edit the tape. Keep the tape secure, as you will compare your second recorded interview to it at the end of the semester. Complete Assignment #1 Part A immediately after the interview and **turn in a photocopy of Part A on Sept 21st.** I suggest you practice once before you tape to help ease any anxiety. Be sure to check the tape for adequate lighting, sound, and visuals before recording the actual interview. I should be able to see and hear you and the client clearly.

For the Second role play, at the end of the semester, set up the same parameters for your client. Begin the tape and have your client enter the room. Tape for **10-12** minutes and stop. Watch both interviews and complete the last question of Assignment #1, Part A and then complete Part B during and after watching the interviews. **Turn in these completed forms on Dec 14th along with your 2 interview tapes.** Grading is based on the last item of Part A and all of Part B.

Fifteen points of your grade is based on your own analysis and assessment, rather than in competition with others in the class or an absolute standard. **The other ten points is based on my assessment of your improvement from the first to second interview.**

Assignment #2: Skill Development Analysis (SDA): 40 total points

The last 1 hour of class will focus in depth on a specific category of a communication skill. Role plays will be an important part of this learning process. Before the class ends, the instructor will model a 10 minute role play with a mock client. Each student will play the role of a client at least once during the semester for the SDAs. Students will have 20 minutes to complete the SDA form. The purpose of this assignment is to simulate the charting that social workers often do during or immediately after meeting with clients. For classes in which SDAs are completed, students will receive feedback from the instructor on their writing skills and analysis. Each SDA is worth 10 points.

Assignment#3: Reflection Paper: 10 total points

Students will critically reflect on their use of specific verbal and nonverbal interpersonal communication patterns in everyday interactions with others. Students will also assess their strengths in communicating and identify communication and interviewing skills used by others. This reflection is intended to support students' ability to engage in critical self-assessments and the disciplined use of self as a primary tool of generalist practice. The paper should be 3 to 5 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font, with 1 inch margins.

Assignment #4: Reflection Paper & Personal Genogram: 20 points

Each student is expected to develop a family, cultural, religious or community genogram that includes 2 generations (you and any siblings, your parents/caregiver) using the symbols identified in Ivey & Ivey (Ch 10), Hardy & Laszloffy, Hodges reading, or the symbols used from the genogram website www.genopro.com/genogram or any other genogram software. A written assessment should be included with the personal genogram with a discussion of meaningful (strong, problematic, wishful) or significant relationships between you and different family members, how you define family and why, as well as significant family values you recognize, and significant life events. The reflection paper will focus on primary insights and reflection into your own skills, learning and feelings about using intentional skills within your field agency and everyday life. The paper should be 3 - 4 pages double-spaced, 12 point font, with 1 inch margins.

Attendance & Participation:

Attending and being on time are extremely important in this course. One simply cannot learn to interview from a book. The in-class labs and SDAs are designed to give you opportunities to practice skills you will need. If you are absent, your lab partners will not be able to receive feedback from you. For this reason, there is a stringent attendance policy.

- 1) Students are allowed **one** absence. After which, every absence results in a drop in your final grade by 1 letter grade (e.g., your grade will drop from an A to a B). **Students who do not attend all classes are not eligible for a final grade of "A" for the course.**
- 2) Any absence from class exceeding 20 minutes will count as a one-half absence.
- 3) Students absent from class, regardless of the reason, are responsible for *initiating* a dialogue and plan with the instructor and/or classmates for making up missed readings, labs, and assignments within 24 hours of the missed class.

While this attendance policy is stringent, it is also understood that emergencies can happen requiring your presence elsewhere. Students are expected to notify the instructor immediately under such circumstances.

Assignment	Due Date	Total Points	%
1. Videotape project	Part A - September 21 Part B - December 14	25	12.5
2. Skill Development Analysis - SDAs - (4)	See course schedule	100	50
3. Reflection Paper	October 14 (Peer Review) October 19 (Final Paper)	25	12.5
4. Reflection Paper and Genogram	November 9	30	15
5. Participation, preparation, feedback		20	10
Total		200	100

Grading:

Evaluation criteria are listed for each requirement. Grade Ranges are assigned as follows:

A	93% - 100% of points	Excellent/superior work exceeding stated requirements
A-	90% - 92% of points	
B+	87% - 89% of points	
B	83% - 86% of points	Good work; stated requirements have been met and exceeded
B-	80% - 82% of points	
C+	77% - 79% of points	
C	73% - 76% of points	Work meets but does not exceed stated requirements
C-	70% - 72% of points	
D	60% - 69% of points	Work does not meet stated requirements

Guidelines for Grading Written Work

Excellent Work: A- to A (90 - 100%)

- ⌘ Fulfills and exceeds minimum requirements of the stated assignment.
- ⌘ Insightful, goes beyond what was asked, demonstrates new concepts, creative thinking & scholarship. For example, drawing connections to speakers, newspapers, integration of theories, case scenarios.
- ⌘ Well written, makes sense, flows logically, well edited.
- ⌘ No grammatical or spelling errors.
- ⌘ Typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, printed in 12-point font (APA format).
- ⌘ Meets minimum page requirements but does not exceed them.
- ⌘ Turned in on due date; not late.

Assignments reflect in-depth knowledge and understanding of the course material, present creative or innovative ideas and conceptualizations, utilize extensive use of references that reflect either depth or scope in assembling ideas or concepts, and reach a high level of critical analysis. The assignment also **reaches beyond analysis into application, prediction or theorizing**. Here the student presents ideas or concepts worthy of further consideration, debate, and/or publication

Good Work: B- to B+ (80 - 89%)

- ⌘ Fulfills and exceeds minimum requirements of the stated assignment.
- ⌘ Expands on existing content, concepts, or ideas discussed.
- ⌘ Well written, makes sense, flows logically, well edited.
- ⌘ No grammatical or spelling errors.
- ⌘ Typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, printed in 12-point font. (APA format).
- ⌘ Meets minimum page requirements but does not exceed them.

- ⌘ Turned in on due date; not late.

Assignments **go beyond the minimum requirements of the assignment**. The student demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topic, draws on a wide range of references effectively, and engages in analysis of the topic that reflects the ability to critique the ideas. The content is best characterized as **analytical**.

Average Work: C- to C+ (70 - 79%)

- ⌘ Meets but does not exceed minimum requirements of the stated assignment.
- ⌘ Every part of the assignment is addressed.
- ⌘ Well written, makes sense, flows logically, well edited.
- ⌘ Minor grammatical or spelling errors (1-3)
- ⌘ Typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, printed in 12-point font (APA format).
- ⌘ Meets minimum page requirements but does not exceed them.
- ⌘ Turned in on due date; not late.

Assignments **meet the minimum requirements** for the successful completion of the assignment. The student has sufficiently dealt with the question or purpose of the assignment, demonstrates a minimum knowledge and understanding of the topic and has made adequate use of references. The content of the assignment is best characterized as **descriptive**.

Below Average Work: D (69% or below)

- ⌘ Does not meet minimum requirements of the stated assignment.
- ⌘ Parts of the assignment are not addressed; work is incomplete.
- ⌘ Does not demonstrate knowledge and understanding of course concepts and content.
- ⌘ Poorly written, does not make sense, flows illogically, unedited.
- ⌘ Major (3+) spelling and grammatical errors.
- ⌘ Hand written, single-spaced if typed, does not meet APA format guidelines
- ⌘ Does not meet minimum page requirements.
- ⌘ Turned in after due date; late.

NOTE: Social work majors must receive a grade of C or better to avoid repeating this course.

NOTE: Late Assignments

Papers and assignments are due in class on the date assigned. Papers handed in 1 to 7 days late will be marked down one letter grade (e.g., from an A- to a B-). Anything handed in 8-14 days late will be marked down two letter grades, and so on. There are several reasons for this policy. First, the class moves along quickly. You do not want to get behind as you may not be able to catch up. Second, to be fair, people need to take the same amount of time on each assignment. If you take a week or two extra, your work should be of higher quality than others". To compensate, your grade will be lowered - no exceptions.

Professional Accountability:

Papers for this class are to be original work rather than a recycled version of work from another class. Handing in work other than your own will result in an automatic failing grade. Punctuation and spelling will be included as part of the grade and handwritten work must be legible. If I cannot read your answers, I will not be able to give you maximum credit. Plagiarism will result in an automatic failing grade.

It is my hope that this class will provide you with a firm understanding in the basic skills of communication and interviewing and the importance of assessment and the intricacies of understanding client systems at many levels. This is our course and so I welcome your feedback and your participation in the development of this course through the semester. Feel free to email me any time to ask questions or offer suggestions; email is probably the best way to reach me and I will respond as quickly as I can

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE:
(Note: Read chapters prior to class).

Class Session	Topics	Reading/Assignments And Due Dates
Class #1 Monday September 14	Introductions Teaching Philosophy Roles, Expectations, Norms Overview of Syllabus & Course Introduction to Generalist Social Work Integrative Model Intentional Interviewing Ethics, Values and Multicultural Competence	Miley, Ch 1; Ivey & Ivey, Ch 1 & 2 Dean, R.G. - The Myth of Cross-Cultural Competence Group Assignments - syllabus & labs
Class # 2 Wednesday September 16	Informed Consent & Confidentiality Client's rights; Duty to Warn Social Work Practice Principles Recordkeeping	Miley, Ch 3; pp. 152-156; pp.209-210 Miley, pp. 294 - 297
Class #3 Monday September 21	Attending Behaviors Video: Homeless Youth: Finding Home (30min) Practice Application: Homelessness Guest Speaker	Ivey & Ivey, Ch 3 Role plays & SDA Assignment #1 Part A due
Class #4 Wednesday September 23	Strengths Perspective Articulating Situations	Miley, pp. 84 - 88; Chp. 9 Miley, Ch. 7
Class #5 Monday September 28	Opening Communication Practice Application: Mental Illness	Ivey & Ivey, Chp.5 Role plays
Class #6 Wednesday September 30	Empowering Approach to Generalist Practice Phases of the Helping process	Miley, Chp 5

Class #7 Monday October 5	Observation Skills Practice Application: Eating Disorders	Ivey & Ivey, Chp.5 Role plays & SDAs
Class #8 Wednesday October 7	Junior Field Interviews	No class
Class #9 Monday October 12	Forming Collaborative Partnerships Social Worker Roles Constructing Empowering Relationship	Miley, Chp 6
Class #10 Wednesday October 14	Gender and Sexual identity Video: "Middle Sexes: Redefining He and She" (75 min) Guest Speaker	The Heterosexual Questionnaire Zamboni, B.D. - Therapeutic Considerations
Class #11 Monday October 19	Encouraging, Paraphrasing, Summarizing Practice Application: Sexual Identity	Ivey & Ivey, Chp.6 Role plays & SDAs
Class #12 Wednesday October 21	Racial Microaggressions & Clinical Practice Understanding the Impact of Privilege Guest Speaker	Sue, et. al. – Racial Microaggressions McIntosh – Unpacking White Privilege
Class #13 Monday October 26	Responding to Thoughts and Feelings Observing & Reflecting Feelings Practice Application: Supervision	Miley, pp. 183 - 198 Ivey & Ivey, Chp.7 Role plays & SDAs
Class #14 Wednesday October 28	Defining Directions Working with Voluntary and Mandated Clients	Miley, Chp 8 Assignment #3 Reflection Paper Due
Class #15 Monday November 2	Integrating Listening Skills & Culture Basic Listening Skills Practice Application: Mental Health	Ivey & Ivey, Chp 8 Role plays & SDAs
Class #16 Wednesday November 4	Assessing Resource Capabilities Cultural genograms Family and community genograms Spiritual genograms	Miley, pp. 261-293 Hardy and Laszloffy - cultural genograms Ivey & Ivey, Ch 10 Hodges - spiritual genograms
Class #17 Monday November 9	Confrontation Practice Application: Institutional Racism	Ivey & Ivey, Chp 9 Role plays & SDAs Assignment #4 due - reflection paper & genogram DUE
Class #18 Wednesday November 11	Framing Solutions Negotiating and Contracting	Miley, Chp 11
Class #19 Monday November 16	Focusing Practice Application: Domestic Abuse	Ivey & Ivey, Chp 10 Role plays & SDAs
Class #20 Wednesday	Downplaying or Claiming Disability Status A new way of thinking (video, 24 min)	Taub, et. al. – Stigma Management Strategies

November 18		
Class #21 Monday November 23	Reflecting Meaning Practice Application: Physical Disability	Ivey & Ivey, Chp 11 Role plays & SDAs
Class #22 Wednesday November 25	Activating Resources Changing Perspectives Modeling & Self-disclosure	Miley, Ch 12
Class #23 Monday November 30	Influencing Skills Strategies of Interpersonal influence Practice Application: Community Organizing	Ivey & Ivey, Chp. 12 Role plays & SDAs
Class #24 Wednesday December 2	Creating Alliances Strengthening natural support networks Case management Organizational alliances	Miley, Chp 13
Class #25 Monday December 7	Empowering Groups & Communities Resource Expansion Community Organizing Skill Integration Practice Application: Spirituality	Miley Ch 14 Ivey & Ivey, Chp. 13 Role plays & SDAs
Class #26 Wednesday December 9	Practice & Program Evaluation Client Outcome Assessment Termination	Miley, pp. 423-434 Miley, Chp 15 & 16
Class #27 Monday December 14	Finals Week	Role Play and Evaluation, Part A & Part B Due

