

ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
MSW PROGRAM

SYLLABUS

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Course number: GRSW501 (C03)
Course title: Theory and Practice of Social Work I
Class time: Fall Semester, 2009
Wednesdays, 4:40 - 7:05pm
Course location: 108 Fontbonne SCU Campus
Course value: Three semester credits

INSTRUCTOR: Kendra J. Garrett, PhD
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Or by appointment

REQUIRED TEXT:

Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & Dubois, B. (2009). *Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach (6th edition)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Collins, Donald, et al. (2010). *An Introduction to Family Social Work (3rd edition)*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

(Both books may be purchased at the SCU bookstore and are available electronically on CourseSmart at <http://tinyurl.com/coursesmartchoice>.

Other readings as assigned

BIBLIOGRAPHY Found on the School of Social Work web site.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides the first year MSW student with the knowledge and skills needed for generalist social work practice. Students develop communication and interviewing

skills which are used in work with client systems of all sizes. Basic content on working with family systems is also presented. It is taken concurrently with a field placement which serves as a practice lab for applying theory and skills learned in the classroom. Student self-awareness and self assessment are especially important since they facilitate the development of an authentic style of practice.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual or theoretical frameworks for this course are ecosystem theory, strengths perspective, and the integrative model of practice. of social work practice, the strengths perspective and systems theory.

IV. COURSE OUTCOMES

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

A. Knowledge of the following concepts:

1. The integrative model of social work practice.
2. The core purposes, values and ethics of the social work profession with particular attention to how these fit with personal values and ethics.
3. The generalist model of social work practice.
4. The strengths perspective and empowerment principles with particular application to diverse and at - risk populations including the elderly.
5. Social Justice as an organizing principle for clinical social work practice.
6. Basic principles of family systems theory with particular attention to assessment and intervention strategies. Special attention is given to how these theories operate with clients who are identified from a population at risk.
7. Practice evaluation and its importance to social work practice and a cursory overview of selected materials
8. A basic understanding of Feminist and Narrative theories and how they contribute to our generalist practice model in understanding issues of race, class, or ethnicity.
9. Assessing, analyzing and gathering data about a client's resources from a strengths perspective as it relates to clients who vary in age, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, as well as social , cultural, racial, spiritual and class background.

B. Skill in:

1. Developing active listening techniques (furthering responses, paraphrasing, empathic responding, summarizing), judicious use of questions, confrontation and self-disclosure.
2. Developing professional relationships characterized by mutuality, collaboration, respect for the client system, and authenticity of the social worker.
3. Developing the use of self, paying close attention to self-awareness, critical self-reflection and self-assessment.
4. Assessing client's strengths and their resources focusing on issues of social class, gender, race and ethnicity.
5. Applying the generalist perspective to a variety of client populations including but not limited to poor people, women and the elderly.
6. Application of the strengths perspective and empowerment principles to survivors of abuse, various ethnic groups, the economically poor and the elderly.
7. Identifying the impact of psychosocial problems on family systems and developing strategies for family systems interventions.
8. Evaluating one's own practice.
9. Defining the impact of problems on family systems and developing strategies and goals for family work.
10. Identifying social work values and ethics as they relate to generalist practice.

V. CONTENT OUTLINE

1. The integrative Model of Social Work Practice: Individual, Environmental and Societal Integrations
 - a. Generalist Social Work Practice
 - b. Integrative model of social work practice
 - c. Eco systems perspective
 - d. Teaching Justice Principles
 - e. Professional values and cultural competence
 - f. Strengths and Empowerment
2. An Empowering Approach to Generalist Practice
 - a. Overview
 - b. Dialogue
 - i. Forming partnerships
 - ii. Articulating situations
 - iii. Defining directions
 - c. Discovery
 - i. Identifying strengths
 - ii. Analyzing resource capabilities
 - iii. Framing solutions
 - d. Development

- i. Activating resources
 - ii. Creating alliances
 - iii. Expanding opportunities
 - iv. Recognizing success
 - v. Integrating gains
 - e. Skill Development
 - i. Nonverbal attending and client observation
 - ii. Verbal following
 - iii. Empathic responding
 - iv. Paraphrasing
 - v. Use of questions
 - vi. Uses of self-disclosure
 - vii. Dealing with resistance
 - viii. Confrontation
 - ix. Applying strengths perspective
 - x. Applying empowerment principles
- 3. Family Systems Interventions
 - a. Introduction to family work
 - b. Examining family systems
 - c. Role of the worker
 - d. Joining with families
 - e. Best practices in family work

VI. ASSIGNMENTS

Methods used in the course of study will include: lectures and discussions, reading, examination of current research, use of small groups, and applications to generalist practice and family practice with diverse populations. Since the integration of theory and practice can be best learned by following the scheme of experiential learning, i.e., experiencing, reflecting, thinking and doing, students are expected to be active learners using all modes to master the knowledge and skills presented in the course.

Please note: *If classes are cancelled for any reason, please check the course Blackboard site for directions on how to proceed with your study.*

The only 'political correctness' appropriate to this course is the search for truth and the commitment to encounter and engage the course goals, the texts and each other with openness, honesty and respect.

A. Attendance and Preparation

Professional education involves experiential and collaborative learning and the development of high standards of personal and professional responsibility. Each student is a valuable resource in the learning experience. Course content and class activities are fundamental to effective social work learning. Please attend class, arrive on time, be prepared, and participate. Attendance and preparation will count for 15% of your final grade. We will make decisions in the first class as to how best to assess attendance and preparation.

B. Ice Breakers

You and a partner (or two) will lead the opening class discussion once during the semester. (We will create a schedule in Class 1). Working together, develop an opening exercise (time length 30 minutes) for the class. Develop a discussion guide for the class and a practice situation (or case study) for use with the discussion guide. The discussion guide should be based on the readings for the day and include questions, dilemmas, quotes, etc..

D. Self-Assessment

See below,

E. Four Application Papers

See below

F. Ethics Practice Self-Assessment

A self-assessment of your growing ability to display ethical and respectful care and assistance to all clients will be posted on the blackboard survey tool during the last week of class. After

completing the self-assessment, post a message on the blackboard discussion board to your classmates discussing one of the areas you found personally challenging and how you might seek consultation and support to continue your work. (Note: your self-assessment will not be graded, only your reflection on it on the discussion board).

VII. EVALUATION AND GRADING

Please double space all papers and use APA style.

Papers will be graded based on the following criteria:

- Completeness in answering the questions
- Focus (Responses are concise yet thorough, easy to follow, and avoid wandering off topic or adding extraneous, unnecessary filler).
- Evidence the writer has thoughtfully reflected on the question.
- Evidence of comprehension of theoretical concepts from the book and class discussions.
- Appropriate rhetoric, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Date Due</u>	<u>% of Final</u>
Attendance and preparation	Weekly	15%
Ice Breaker	As assigned	10%
Self Assessment	Class 2	10%
Case Applications (4@ 15 points each)	Classes 4, 6, 9, 13	60%
Blackboard Ethics	December 21	5%
Discussion Board Entry		

Grading:

A:	94-100%	C+:	78-80 %
A-:	91 - 93 %	C:	74 - 77 %
B+:	88 - 90%	C-:	71 - 73 %
B:	84-87%	D:	61 - 70 %
B-:	81 - 83%	F:	60% and below

VIII. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Classroom accommodations will be provided for qualified students with documented disabilities. Students are required to contact the Enhancement Program at the University of St. Thomas and Resources for Disabilities at the College of St. Catherine about accommodations for their courses within the first two weeks of the term. Appointments can be made at the UST Enhancement Program by calling 651-962-6315 (<http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/>) or the SCU Resources for Disabilities office at 651-690-6563 (<http://minerva.stkate.edu/offices/academic/oneill.nsf>).

IX. COURSE POLICIES

Incompletes

“I” (Incomplete) course grades will be considered only in emergency and hardship situations in accordance with the policies outlined in the MSW student handbook.

Ethics, Integrity, and Professional Behavior: Please use high professional and ethical standards both in your personal and group interactions, with colleagues and in your written work. 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 or recycled personal work will result in an automatic failing grade. While it is acceptable to study and work with colleagues in preparing assignments, papers must be written independently and be your own work.

Respect for Differences: Although we may not all agree about our interpretations of particular issues, we can agree that open dialogue carried on in a respectful manner is essential to the search for knowledge and understanding. Let us pledge to listen not withdraw from difficult discussions, listen respectfully, and disagree with courtesy.

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all cell phones and pagers during class!!!

Pandemic Policy: The School of Social Work is committed to a healthy campus community. During the 2009-2010 academic year, there will be ongoing concerns regarding the prevalence among university faculty, staff and students of both the H1N1 virus and seasonal influenza. To help limit the spread of these illnesses, the Center for Disease Control has provided college campuses the following recommendation: students, faculty, or staff with influenza like illnesses (temperature of 100.0 or greater, plus a cough or sore throat) are directed to self-isolate (or stay home) for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine. In the event that MSW students are unable to attend classes due to this self-isolation recommendation, they should consult the university’s pandemic web site <http://www.stthomas.edu/pandemic/plan/default.html> and complete an on-line form informing professors of their absence. In accordance, faculty will provide opportunities for these students to participate in alternative educational delivery due to this illness

X. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Class Content	Assignment
Class 1 September 9	Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course • Each Other What Makes Social Work Unique? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystems Perspective • Integrative Model of Thinking • Social Justice Creating a Team-Learning Environment Class Schedule Discussion	<i>Generalist SW Practice (Miley) - Chapters 1/2</i>
Class 2 September 16	Icebreaker Professional Values Cultural Competence Defining Ethical Behavior	Miley Chapter 3 Self Assessment Due
Class 3 September 23	Ice breaker Strengths, Resilience and Empowerment Macro, Mezzo, Micro Interventions	Miley Chapters 4, 5
Class 4 October 7	Icebreaker Forming Partnerships The Importance of Relationship <i>Lab Skill - Non-verbal attending and client observation</i>	Miley Chapter 6 Application 1 Due
Class 5 October 14	Icebreaker Articulating Situations Defining Directions Goals, Objectives, and Monitoring <i>Lab Skill - Verbal following</i>	Miley Chapter 7, 8
Class 6 October 21	Icebreaker Identifying Strengths Assessing Resource Capabilities Helping Clients Claim Their Strengths <i>Lab Skill - Empathetic Responding/Uses of Self-disclosure</i>	Miley Chapter 9, 10 Application 2 Due
Class 7 October 28	Icebreaker Framing Solutions Activating Resources Creating Alliances <i>Lab Skill - Paraphrasing, Use of Questions</i> Midpoint: How are we doing?	Miley Chapters 11, 12, 13

Class 8 November 4	Icebreaker Expanding Opportunities Recognizing Success Integrating Gains Clinical Social Work and the Generalist Method <i>Lab Skills - Dealing with Resistance/Confrontation</i>	Miley Chapters 14, 15, 16
Class 9 November 11	Icebreaker Generalist Approaches to Family Work What is a family?	Family Social Work (Colins) Chapters 1, 2, 3 Application 3 Due
Class 10 November 18	Icebreaker Models of Family Life Cycle/ Development Fostering Family Resilience	Collins, Chapters 6, 9
November 25	Happy Thanksgiving	
Class 11 December 2	Icebreaker Family Assessment Defining Needs and Goals Planning for Intervention	Collins Chapters 4, 5, 7, 8
Class 12 December 9	Icebreaker Interventions with Families Case Management Supporting Change	Collins Chapters 10, 11
Class 13 December 16	Icebreaker Ending with Families Looking Ahead	Collins Chapter 14 Application 4 Due
Monday, December 21		Blackboard Ethics Self- Assessment Completed

Appendix

Self Assessment

In completing this assignment take time to reflect on the questions in order to assure yourself you are completing an accurate assessment of your core values and skill level.

1. Identify three values that underpin your professional/work life. Discuss how each value is evident in your work behavior.
2. Compare the three values identified in question # 1 to those found in the *NASW Code of Ethics* and the values of *Social Work for Social Justice* reflecting on similarities, differences, and ways your values may strengthen/complement the social work values or ways your values may cause value conflicts with social work values.
3. Are the values that you identified that underpin your professional/work life the same as your core values for personal living? Discuss how you deal with any differences in style in your professional and personal lives, and how you capitalize on similarities.
4. Describe three specific skills **you bring** to the social work profession from your personal life and work experience. What three specific skills **do you anticipate learning** within this first year of study, describing why you think each is important.
5. Discuss briefly what support you would like from this learning group to strengthen your values and develop new skills.

Due: Class 2

Value: 10 points

Application # 1

Client Situation 1: Elana is a thirty-eight year old woman who is facing eviction. She lives with the two youngest of her four children in an apartment in a Twin Cities suburb. Jimmie is 15 and Mara is 17. She is connected to several social service agencies and their programs for people in poverty.

Elana has not completed high school. She is not working because of back pain and depression. She has had on-going chemical dependency issues. She is on MFIP. She has used her emergency assistance and Family Support Funds. This eviction comes after

her failure to pay two months rent and to report that her ex-husband a convicted felon is living with the family once again.

The children are completing their school year. They are both excellent students. They are concerned about being homeless again and whether or not they will be able to return to their current high school in the Fall.

Client Situation 2: James is a 58 year old African-American man who lives alone. He is on SSI because of serious health issues. He is a college graduate and has worked in human resources in a large corporation. It is important to James that he take care of his own personal business. He has a community social worker from a private agency that works with him in the role of case manager. Together they have identified resources that allow James to maintain his independence. He is pleased with their working relationship.

A crisis is at hand because James failed to pay his pharmacy bill on time and sent his SSI reports in late to the County. Someone on the county team called a meeting of all providers and James and warned him that he would lose his county support and independence, if he would not allow her to appoint a guardian. She is "tired of doing extra paperwork" for people who are not responsible.

Before the meeting James had spoken to the pharmacy and arranged a payment plan. He did miss his county report once last year while he was hospitalized. The county worker told his case manager just before the meeting that she had not done her job properly and that "these people just don't know how to be responsible." This is why she was going to push for a guardianship.

Choose one of the two situations described above to answer the questions below.

1. Discuss how the eco-systems perspective and the integrative model apply to this situation, ie, what systems would you need to consider in your work with this client.
2. Describe how you would use EACH of the theories of strengths, resilience, and empowerment in approaching work with this individual or family.
(15 points)
3. In both cases a partnership has been formed between the client and a social worker. Explain **three** qualities or methods you believe are key to forming an effective working relationship with this particular client system.

Due: Class 4

Value: 15 points

Application # 2

1. Describe your communication strengths and challenges, then choose a concept in Chapter Seven - "Articulating Situations" that is new to you or difficult for you to employ. Discuss two ways you can use your internship experience to expand your use of this skill.
2. Discuss how you believe a social worker can work with client resistance and foster motivation in the change process.
3. Assess your field placement agency's administration and staff using the ecosystems framework (*Miley, pp.268-269*).
4. Based on this assessment make **two suggestions** for change that will strengthen the organization.

Due: Class 6

Value: 15 points

Application # 3

For #1 and 2 - Watch 3 episodes of the Simpson or the film What's Eating Gilbert Grape and note the family patterns you see.

1. Identify and briefly describe **three strengths** you ascribe to the client system from your assessment. Identify and briefly describe **three barriers** you see for this client system from your assessment.
2. Identify two goals you would suggest as part of your work with this family, the risks and benefits of each to the client, and your reasons for choosing these goals.
3. Translate these goals into **measurable outcomes**.
4. Describe a social policy issue that affects this family and a proposal to improve the policy issue.
5. Identify two values from *Social Work for Social Justice* related to the policy issue you identified in #4 and explain your thinking.

Due: Class 9

Value: 15 points

Application # 4

1. Discuss **two ways** you could apply theory on the family life cycle and family development to better understand and act in your own family.
2. Using the family situation assigned describe how you would engage the family, and what qualitative and quantitative approaches you would use in assessment with them.
3. Describe how Froma Walsh's framework on family resilience in Chapter 6 applies to their situation.
4. Discuss your emerging professional beliefs and style in working with families differeny from yourself.

Due: Class 13

Value: 15 points

<p><i>Ethics Practice and Personal Development</i></p>

Complete the *Ethics Self-Assessment (found on the survey tool on blackboard)* and create an entry in the Discussion Board of Blackboard about one of the areas you found personally challenging and how you might seek consultation and support to continue your work. (Note: your self-assessment will not be graded, only your reflection on it on the discussion board).

Due: December 21

Value: 5 points