

SYLLABUS
SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS I - SWK 351
FALL 2009

Dr. James C. Piers
Van Zoeren 261
395-7555
Office hours are by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the first in a series of three practice courses in the social work major curriculum. It will focus on the generalist intervention model of working with client systems: intake, assessment, goal setting, treatment planning, contracting, intervention applications, evaluation, and termination. Attention will be given to social work values; ethical decision making; roles of the worker; and ethnic, racial and gender sensitive practice.

METHODS OF THE COURSE

Lecture, discussion, demonstration, role play and guest speakers will be used. Students will be expected to complete all readings as assigned and participate in class discussion and demonstration.

REQUIRED TEXT

Kirst-Ashman, Karen K. and Hull, Grafton H. (2009). Understanding Generalist Practice, Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

EVALUATION

1. Three (3) case analysis papers . Each case analysis is worth **30%** of your grade if you have no absences. Each absence is a reduction of one percent of your final grade.

* All paper due dates will be announced at least 3 weeks before the due date. This gives us some flexibility on how long we take to cover some of the material.

Papers will be evaluated on the integration of concepts presented during the semester, the comprehensiveness of your paper (have you mentioned all of the facets discussed in class) the

quality of writing. The specific requirements and organization for each paper will be described in the case analysis and in class. If you need clarification, please ask!

2. In class quizzes on the material for that day.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice. (Outcome measure: Papers)
2. Understand the values and ethics of the social work profession. Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity. (Outcome measure: V & E - small group exercise on prioritizing in ethical dilemmas. Diversity - papers)
3. Demonstrate professional use of self. (Outcome measure: Papers)
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply the strategies and skills of change that advance social and economic justice. (Outcome measure: Paper, in class case presentation of family in public housing)
5. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work to practice with systems of all sizes. (Outcome measure: Case - public housing family, in-class exam, paper)
6. Apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems. (Outcome measure: Preparation of an assessment document and paper)
7. Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems. (Outcome measure: Papers)
8. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities. (Outcome measures: papers)
9. Integrate Christian perspectives with the knowledge, skills and values of the social work profession. (Outcome measure: class discussion)

LIBERAL ARTS FOUNDATION

In this course, you will be expected to utilize the theoretical knowledge you have gleaned from

several of your core and cognate courses. Biology and the social sciences will help you understand various client systems. Several courses will help you to understand diversity and populations at risk. Natural and social science research methodology will help you evaluate intervention effectiveness. Your liberal arts study of religion and philosophy will help you understand the values, ethics, and ethical dilemmas encountered in generalist practice. Your written, verbal, and critical thinking skills, honed by all the Hope College courses, will aid you in analyzing and facilitating solutions and interventive strategies in the cases to be presented during the semester. In this course, you will continue your study of intervention strategies for generalist practice. You will learn information on each stage of the problem-solving model to aid you in developing intervention strategies including those that will promote social and economic justice for client systems.

HUMAN DIVERSITY

Your studies of foreign languages, the arts, sociology, political science, economics, psychology, and history offer insights into diverse populations, their cultural beginnings, how needs of diverse groups are or are not met, and how diverse individuals and groups may behave and function.

PROMOTION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND AT-RISK POPULATIONS

Two professional foundation areas that will be covered in this course are at-risk populations and promotion of social and economic justice. In this course, at-risk populations will be discussed and examined with a focus on defining at-risk populations, understanding and assessing the system dynamics and institutions that encourage or perpetuate the risk and those that may reduce risk.

Essential to social work practice is the promotion of social and economic justice. Examination of organizations, services and resources that empower at-risk groups and promote social and economic justice will also be undertaken.

Finally, interventions that may empower at-risk populations and the impact of these interventions will be considered throughout the course.

SOCIAL WORK VALUES AND ETHICS AND THE CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

It is specifically in the practice of social work where your professional and personal values and ethics and your Christian perspectives are integrated and converge or battle one another and

cause personal strife. You will have ample opportunity throughout the semester to learn and understand social work values, clarify your personal values, and examine your Christian perspective as they relate to specific social work situations and cases to be discussed in class, readings and cases.

ABSENCES

The course is a part of the learning community and each participant has a responsibility to herself or himself to engage in the learning, and each participant has a responsibility to others engaged in the process and to treat other learners with respect. An absence may be an indication of disrespect for others and/or an unwillingness to recognize the communitarian nature of the process.

I am making the assumption that you are moving into a professional career path. Showing up on time and ready to do the work are parts of the job. Your behavior in the class tells me what you have learned about professionalism and what you will do on the job.

Each absence will result in deducting one percent from your cumulative class grade.

COURSE OUTLINE AND OUTCOMES

Sept 1 - 3

Topic 1: Understanding Ourselves

The class will examine and discuss student responses to the following questions.

- a. How do I think and feel about myself (intellectually, psychologically, socially, physiologically, and spiritually)?
- b. How do I deal with my own fundamental intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual needs?
- c. What is my value system, how does my religious perspective inform and influence this value system, and how does it define my behavior and my relationships with others?
- d. How do I relate to the society in which I live and work?
- e. How will or might my self-image, need-meeting mechanisms, value system and method of relating to society affect my interactions with client systems, organizations and communities with whom they interact?

Sept 8 - 10

Topic 2: Generalist Practice

- a. Baccalaureate generalist practice

- b. The comprehensiveness of practice
 - c. The skills needed for practice
 - d. The problem solving model
(in-class analysis of "Al's Case")
- Readings: Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 1

Sept 15

Topic 3: Values

- a. Social work values and ethics
- b. Major U. S. value systems
Democratic, social darwinism, puritan work ethic, and Judeo-Christian
- c. Your spiritual and religious values and how they support/challenge the social work values and ethics
- d. Some religious perspectives on current social issues
- e. Ethical dilemmas in practice
- f. Methods of prioritizing and decision-making regarding ethical/religious dilemmas in practice (followed by a small group exercise).

Readings:

Kirst-Ashman and Hull, Chapters 1 & 11.

Sept 17

Topic 4: Focus of Social Interventions and the Roles of the Worker

The roles of the worker and the fields of practice undertaken by the generalist will be discussed.

(small group exercise - public housing family)

Readings:

Kirst-Ashman and Hull, Chapter 2-4.

Sept 22 - 24

Topic 5: Planning - Intake

Planning activities of the worker.

- a. Evaluating and planning use of referral and previous agency material,
- b. Planning initial contact with client system and how to present self and agency to the client,
 - 1. appreciate the client's role
 - 2. ethnic and gender sensitive engagement issues
 - 3. perception of social worker's held by members of special

- populations.
- c. Establishing rapport and beginning exploration of problems and systems
 1. specific skills and techniques for establishing rapport
 2. specific techniques for defining the initial problem and deciding where to start
 3. describing data needed and data collection methods
 4. identifying macro, mezzo and micro skills needed at intake and beyond.

(in-class role-play by professor and student(s): Defining the presenting concerns and issues of a client system).

Readings:

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 2-5.

Sept 29

****PAPER #1****

Sept 29 – Oct 7

Topic 6: Assessment

- a. The biopsychosociocultural perspective.
- b. Ethnic, racial and gender issues related to assessment
- c. The strengths and deficits perspective.
- d. Specific skills and techniques
- e. Preparation of an assessment document (an individual activity with a roommate or friend).

Readings:

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 5.

Oct 13 - 15

Topic 7: Goals, Social Intervention Plan and Contract

Goals:

- a. Purposes and types of goals
- b. Process of mutual selection of goals
- c. Behavioral specificity, frequency, duration, maintenance, when accomplished
- d. Anxiety hierarchies
- e. Methods of measuring non-behavioral, non-observable aspects of

persons

Readings:

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 6

Oct 20 - 27

Intervention Strategies:

- a. Planning strategies and matching these strategies to the target system, problems, and developmental phases with respect to diversity and populations at risk
- b. personal and environmental resources and barriers to be used or avoided in reaching these goals,
- c. direct and indirect strategies to be implemented.
 - behavioral strategies
 - rational emotive strategies
 - imagery strategies
 - social modeling strategies
 - simulations and behavioral rehearsal strategies
 - decision-making and problem-solving strategies
 - a process-stage approach with people of color
- d. Specific skills and techniques

Readings:

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 7, 14, & 15.
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Oct 29

PAPER #2

Oct 29 - Nov 19

Topic 8: Sustaining Interventions

Barriers to sustaining interventions

- client system motivation or support for intervention
- conflicting or more immediate needs of the client system
- conflicting agency interests, limited resources, motivation of the agency or worker, agency policy
- community and political interests and perspectives
- other agencies and organizations in the community who are also involved

with the client system
-institutional oppression and discrimination

Strategies for sustaining interventions

- reevaluate goals and client systems commitment
- analyze the conflicting agency interest etc.
- analyze types and styles of organizational and economic discrimination and oppression
- evaluate opportunities to collaborate and cooperate, compromise, or finally, to meet goals through conflict and conflict resolution

Outcome: Student will be able to:

- a. Generate a list and comprehensive description of strategies that may be utilized to sustain intervention.
- b. Suggest specific strategies for implementation and explain implementation process in a case to be analyzed.

Reading:

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 7.

Nov 14 – Dec 10

Topic 9: Evaluation and Termination

Evaluation:

- a. Baseline measurement
- b. Quantitative outcome measures
- c. Single subject design
- d. Goal Attainment Grids
- e. Monitoring and data collection methods
- f. Graph construction and utilization in the evaluation process.

Termination:

- a. Reasons for planning termination.
- b. Potential difficulties associated with termination.
- c. Types of termination
- d. Client system reactions
- e. Worker reactions
- f. Systematic termination procedures
- g. Consolidating gains and planning maintenance strategies
- h. Follow-up sessions and contacts
- i. Resources and methods which can aid the client during transfer and referral.

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, Chapter 8.

Dec 10

****Paper #3****