

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Number:** SW 360K/393R

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**Semester:** Summer 2004

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MAIN 101

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by appointment

**COUNSELING AFRICAN AMERICAN INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES, AND FAMILIES**

**I. Standardized Course Description**

Systems, risk and resilience, and Afrocentric theories frame a review of historical, sociological, familial, and societal influences on African American individuals, couples, and families, as well as the counselors who seek to provide mental health, case management, and other counseling services to this population.

This course is based the following assumptions: 1) membership in a historically oppressed population (e.g., people of color, women, gay and lesbian persons) significantly influences an individual's life experiences, world view, and increases risk factors for exposure to discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression; 2) professional social work ethics and values demand culturally competent practice; 3) it is necessary for students to learn to apply social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research; and 4) professionals and programs have strategies to critically analyze distributive justice, human and civil rights, and global interconnections of oppression. There is an emphasis in this course on the impact of discrimination and oppression by individuals and society on people of culturally diverse backgrounds and orientations.

**II. Standardized Course Objectives**

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

1. Critique and apply culturally competent and social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access of resources, intervention, and research;
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the history and heritage of African Americans in relation to mental health services and/counseling/treatment;
3. Understand the relationship between racial identity development and it's influence on help seeking decisions, motivation to change and behaviors, and subsequently the client-counselor interaction;
4. Differentiate between counseling and psychotherapy to then examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and socially just social work/counseling practices; and,

5. Assess the impact of discrimination (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia), and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, service delivery, and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice.

### III. TEACHING METHODS

The content of this course has the potential to be emotionally-charged. Guidelines will be established collaboratively by students and the instructor to create a respectful, safe and challenging learning environment. The instructor has the ultimate responsibility to manage differences and conflict that arise in the course. The instructor will incorporate a variety of teaching methods, including readings, lectures, discussions, audiovisual materials, guest speakers, field trips, small group activities, and experiential learning exercises. A variety of populations-at-risk groups will also be used to critically examine a social justice framework, with emphasis on values, diversity, power and oppression.

### IV. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS, AND MATERIALS

Department of Health and Human Services (2001). *Mental health: culture, race, and ethnicity: A supplement to mental health: A report of the surgeon general*. Chapter 1 Introduction, Chapter 2 Culture Counts: The influence of culture and society on mental health, and Chapter 3 Mental health care for African Americans. We want to be particularly familiar with this publication by the end of this semester.

Grant, D. (2001). The African American Baptist tradition. In Spirituality within religious traditions in social work practice. M. Van Hook, B. Hugen, and M. Aguilar (Eds.), pp. 205-227. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Harvey, A. R. (2001). Individual and family intervention skills with African Americans: An Africentric approach. In R. Fong & S. B. C. L. Furuto (Eds.), *Culturally competent practice: Skills, interventions, and evaluations*, pp. 225-240. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Lee, C. C., and Bailey, D. F. (1997). Counseling African American Men. In C. C. Lee (Ed), *Multicultural issues in counseling: New approaches to diversity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

Tatum, B. D. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism: The application of racial identity development theory in the classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62(1), 19-42.

### V. Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated on the following required assignments, as well as class participation and contribution.

#### 1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (15% of grade)

Students are expected to attend all classes, participate meaningfully in class discussion and exercises, and call upon life experiences and course readings for contributions. Students may be asked to complete class learning forms before the end of selected class sessions.

It is important for social workers to be aware of group dynamics including peer groups in which they participate. It is also important to contribute to the group process. A portion of the grade for this course will depend on your level of attendance, preparation, participation, and contribution.

For some, this means learning to speak up, to add comments or to raise questions. For others, it means being sensitive and allowing others to contribute.

## **2. Reaction Paper (30% of grade) Due Tuesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>**

Reaction papers are usually requested by instructors as a tool for assessing what you think or feel about different components of the course, and how you are interpreting and integrating that material. It is a vehicle for demonstrating your understanding of a specific topic that arises in the class. In this paper you can introduce one or two major theses, thoughts, arguments, questions, or comments about an article, speaker comments, video reviewed in class, or topic we covered in class. You may also relate several articles or a video and an article to each other.

The following guidelines are intended to be used for reacting to a reading, video, guest speaker, and class material. Please think about the following questions as you list and read.

- How do you feel about what you are reading, watching, viewing, hearing?
- What do you agree or disagree with?
- What questions arise for you?
- Can you identify with the situation?
- How does the information fit with the understanding about African American individuals, couples, and families that you brought to this class?
- Does this information help you begin to understand the counseling needs of this specific population? If you have aspirations of becoming a counselor, does it help you in formulating ways in which you would be effective in working with this population?

It is important that you devote the vast majority of space and effort in your paper to detailing precisely how the concepts you choose apply to your increasing understanding of the counseling needs of African American individuals, couples, and families. The most important goal in doing the assignment is for you to demonstrate to me that you have put considerable thought into the assignment. Don't summarize; I've read the handouts, viewed the videos, and have been in class. Show me that you can apply and think about the material well.

Your reaction paper should be concise (minimum 4 maximum of 8 full pages, double-spaced, 1" margins, not counting title page and references) and read more like reaction papers than term papers.

You are free to discuss any themes and/or concepts from the articles and handouts/class meetings from June 9 up through June 23. For instance, you might choose to relate what you have learned from Dr. Davis' presentation, about decision making about mental illness in Black families, to how the father in the Tulia video dealt with his son's incarceration on trumped up drug charges. You are also welcome to use course material to analyze your own family's response to mental illness as Dr. Davis so eloquently demonstrated by telling stories during his presentation.

The following outlines the general grading guideline for the reaction paper. These grading guidelines are approximate. Keep in mind that there are other factors that influence grades on each paper such as clarity . . .

- (35-33.25 points) -- insightful comments or really good observations with clear connection to course.

- (32.9-31.5 points) -- good observations or comments with connections to course material
- (31.15-29.75 points) -- adequate observations or comments; perhaps lacking depth or length
- (29.4-26.25 points) -- poor observations or comments connected to course material or something written but not explicitly
- connected to course, perhaps lacking much depth or length.
- (25.55-24.5 points) -- inadequate connections made to course materials, perhaps a simple restatement of definitions or simply the telling of a story or incident; perhaps lacking depth or length
- (less than 24.5) – these scores only given for papers not turned in, or turned in more than one day late with the minus 5 point penalty.

**3. Term Paper: Case Study: decision making, help seeking attitudes and behaviors, and perceptions of the influence of client-counselor characteristics on the counseling interaction (55% of grade) Due Wednesday, July 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments**

Your written work should be well-conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. Show evidence of your own creative and thoughtful analysis. Papers should follow the APA style format. Additional criterion and evaluation guidelines will also be provided.

**Grading and Weighting of Assignments**

Attendance, Preparation, Contribution	15%
Reaction Paper	30%
Term Paper	55%

GRADES WILL BE ASSIGNED AS FOLLOWS:

**A = 90-100    B = 80-89    C = 70-79    D = 60-69**

**A** = Significantly exceeds assignment/performance expectations (evidence of critical thinking and analysis that resulted in work additional to that laid out in the assignment directions);

**B** = Assignment/overall performance in course meets all the requirements with evidence of critical thinking and analysis (i.e. coherence and integration of ideas);

**C** = Average. Assignment/performance meets all the requirements but lacks evidence of in depth thinking and analysis;

**D** = There are important gaps in the assignment both in terms of requirements and critical thinking and analysis.

## VI. CLASS POLICIES

1. It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late. Any adjustments in due dates must be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled due date.
2. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than one class without a valid excuse, e.g., medical documentation) may receive one or more course grades lower than their final grade when points are totaled.
3. Social work practitioners assume responsibility for themselves. Therefore, it is expected that work handed in will be your own. Scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating during examinations, violates social work values and will result in recommendation for dismissal from the social work program and a referral to the Dean of Student's Office.
4. Social work practitioners are assertive and function as team members. Therefore, feedback about the course is welcome and the course will be viewed as a joint effort between students and the instructor.
5. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.
6. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.
7. The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY.

## VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
Week 1 6/2-6/3	Course Overview and Introductions	

<p>Week 2 6/7-6/10</p>	<p>Review of the socio-political context of African Americans using census, health disparities, and bureau of justice, data.</p> <p>Spirituality and other coping strategies given this socio-political context</p>	<p>2001 <i>report of the surgeon general</i>. Chapter 1 Introduction, and Chapter 2 Culture Counts: The influence of culture and society on mental health,</p> <p>Grant, D. (2001). The African American Baptist tradition.</p>
<p>Week 3 6/14-6/17</p>	<p>6/14 Guest Speaker: King Davis, Ph.D., African American Families and Severe Mental Illness: Exploration of Decision Theory</p> <p>6/15 Defining Counseling with African American Families. Review of decision theory using case example: Tulia <b>Video</b></p> <p>6/16 Racial Identity Development; Issues of cultural trust and mistrust in counseling (counseling processes and dynamics)</p> <p>6/17 Out-of-class exercises, applying racial identity development theory</p>	<p>2001 <i>report of the surgeon general</i>. Chapter 1 Introduction,</p> <p>Boyd-Franklin, N., and Shenouda, N. T. (1990). A multisystems approach to the treatment of a Black, inner-city family with a schizophrenic mother</p> <p>Tatum, B. D. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism,</p> <p>Thompson, C. E., Worthington, R., &amp; Atkinson, D. R. (1994). Counselor content orientation, counselor race, and Black women's cultural mistrust and self-disclosure.</p>

<p>Week 4 6/21-6/24</p>	<p>6/21 Guest Speaker: TBA</p> <p>6/22 <b>Video:</b> Aponte Therapy Interview with an African American Family: Spirituality and Mental/Physical Health</p> <p>6/23 <b>Field Trip:</b> Push Up Foundation: Interaction with African American women participating in a halfway house recovery program and their counselors. <b>Push-up Foundations</b> provides safe and drug-free transitional housing services to women with addictions. Counselor's Office 469-5958, 7100 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (grey building)</p> <p>6/24 Out-of-class assignment. Follow-up Push Up interviews, library research for related paper assignment</p>	<p>2001 <i>report of the surgeon general</i> Chapter 2 Culture Counts: The influence of culture and society on mental health,</p> <p>Harvey, A. R. (2001). Individual and family intervention skills with African Americans: An Africentric approach</p>
<p>Week 5 6/28-7/1</p>	<p>6/28 Guest Speaker: TBA</p> <p>6/29 <b>Reaction Paper Due</b></p> <p>6/30 <b>Video:</b> Listening to Children: A moral journey with Robert Coles, portrays art therapy with troubled African American children</p> <p>7/1 Continuing Listening to Children discussion, implications for counseling African American families</p>	<p>2001 <i>report of the surgeon general</i> Chapter 3 Mental health care for African Americans.</p>
<p>Week 6 7/5-7/7</p>	<p>7/5 Course Evaluation</p> <p>7/6 Guest Speaker: TBA</p> <p>7/7 Wrap Up; <b>Term Paper Due</b></p>	

## VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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