

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT
AUSTIN**

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

***SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH
INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES***

SW 332

DINA M. KASSLER, PH.D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families

Course Number:	SW 332	Instructor:	Dina M. Kassler, Ph.D.
Unique Number:	63480	E-mail:	DinaKassler@yahoo.com
Semester:	Fall 2009	Contact #:	512-809-3407
Meeting Time:	M/W, 12:30 – 2:00 pm	Office Location:	SSW 3.104A
Meeting Place:	SSW 2.118	Office Hours:	Mondays 4:00 – 5:00 pm

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds extensively on content in SW 312 (Social Work Generalist Practice: Knowledge, Values, and Skills). This second course in the practice area focuses on the integration of theory, methods and skills as they apply to practice with individuals and families. The foundation of the course is social work values and the ethical decision making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics. The course provides an in-depth examination of the helping process within the context of an ecosystems/developmental framework. This course encompasses engaging clients in an appropriate working relationship, communication skills, identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets, and planning for service delivery. The course is built on the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals including problem solving and case management. The development of skills in data collection, assessment, and problem identification is also emphasized. Throughout the course, special attention is given to understanding, affirming, and respecting people from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin. Prerequisites for this course are SW 325 and SW 327.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Demonstrate a generalist knowledge of the relationship between theory and social work practice as it relates to the strengths capacities and resources of individuals and families.
2. Develop generalist social work skills in identifying client issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets in order to help alleviate critical social problems and enhance human well-being.
3. Develop skills in identifying, analyzing and implementing empirically-based interventions and evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness.
4. Develop tools and techniques for understanding, affirming, and respecting people from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.
5. Demonstrate a knowledge base of social work values and the ethical decision making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the pursuit of social and economic justice including strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation for individuals and families.

III. REQUIRED TEXT

Hepworth, D.H, Rooney, R.H., Dewberry Rooney, G., Strom-Gottfried, K., & Larsen, J.A. (2010). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to attend class sessions promptly and regularly, and participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor.
2. Please turn off cell phone ringers and refrain from text messaging and other non-class activities during the class period.
3. Students are expected to **complete the readings prior to class**, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments.
4. Failure to regularly attend class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade. Students will be allowed 2 absences. Informing the professor of upcoming absences is expected, but does not excuse such, i.e., all absences will count towards the two that are allowed across the semester.
5. In cases where a student missed more than the allowed two absences, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade. In extenuating circumstances of absence, students are to notify the professor. Students are responsible for any material missed due to absences.
6. Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, **late assignments will not be accepted without penalty**. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date **at the beginning of class**. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.
7. Regardless of the reason, even if excused, students that miss taking an exam on the scheduled date as outlined below in the course schedule will take a make-up exam that may be essay in nature. The make-up exam will be taken by the student as soon as possible following the administration of the regularly scheduled exam.
8. Students are expected to both learn and demonstrate knowledge of intervention theories and skills specific to work with individuals and families. This may entail a search of the literature in a defined area (as part of the paired role play) in order to develop specialized knowledge regarding treatment of a specific problem area and/or for a specific population. In addition, students will demonstrate their level of applied knowledge of interventions and skills on exams.
9. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades *prior to the end of the semester*. **FINAL GRADES ASSIGNED IN THE COURSE ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.**
10. The professor and students have the ethical responsibility to their colleagues to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and confidential setting.

V. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class Attendance and Contribution

Due to the format and content of this course, both attendance and contribution are imperative. The other students in your class are dependent on you for a quality learning experience. If too many students are absent, the class as a whole suffers.

Thus, students are expected to be in class, or in extenuating circumstances, to notify the professor when they will be absent. Attendance and quality of contribution, as demonstrated by student preparation level, will determine grades. Students will be allowed **two (2) absences**. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class period (*N.B.* once students are known to the professor, this will not be verbal but will still be noted every class period). In cases where a student misses more than the allotted two absences, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade by **3% points for each class missed** after two.

2. Exams, 75% (3 @ 25%)

There will be three (3) exams. Each exam will be worth 25% of the total course grade (for a cumulative worth of 75% of final grade). The exams will be based on readings, discussions, presentations, videos, experiential exercises, and lecture material. The exams will be objective in nature, and consist of multiple choice questions. Exams will cover the material indicated at the end of this syllabus – they will not be cumulative and no comprehensive final exam will be scheduled. Make up exams will not be given unless there are unusual extenuating circumstances. The professor reserves the right of final approval of what an unusual extenuating circumstance might comprise. In the event that a make-up is deemed appropriate, it may be essay in nature.

3. Social Worker Interview Assignment, 10%

Students will schedule an appointment to talk **in person** with a currently employed social worker in an agency of your choice. Interview him or her about the agency for whom they work as well as the job duties that he/she performs. Summarize the information obtained and submit a typed synopsis of the interview. This paper should be 3 - 4 pages, typed, double spaced and should include the following:

- The social worker's name and position with the agency
- The date of the interview and the worker's contact information (e-mail or phone #)
- Agency name/type and population served
- Social worker's job duties
- The worker's most memorable moment as a social worker
- Major challenges experienced by the social worker in practice
- Strengths and solutions utilized by the worker for successful practice
- The worker's perceptions of the best and worst parts of his/her current position
- Your own personal reactions/observations re: what the experience was like for you and how this may have differed from what you expected

This synopsis is due at the start of class on **Monday, October 26th** and will be worth 10% of the total course grade. Late assignments will be assessed penalties at the rate of **5 points for each calendar day late** (not per scheduled class day). Late papers will be accepted as e-mail submissions with penalties assessed based on arrival time.

4. Paired Role Play, 15%

Students will be required to team up in groups of twos and role play two mini treatment sessions (one as social worker and one as client) in front of the class utilizing a specific theoretical framework(s). This assignment is designed to help you improve your interviewing skills and is a multi-step assignment that will result in two products for evaluation: the role-play itself and a synopsis/self-evaluation paper. The descriptions of these evaluation components are as follows:

Role Play: Student pairs will alternate in roles, with each student taking on the role of social worker and client for at least 5 minutes in each role. As the social worker it is expected that your role play will reflect adherence to social work values and ethics. As the client, you should develop a specific “character” with identifying information (e.g., gender, age, marital status, children, ethnicity, presenting problem).

Synopsis/Self-evaluation Paper: In a typed, double spaced, 3 - 4 page paper, summarize both role plays in which you took part. Honestly evaluate your role as the social worker. Include what you really liked about your performance as well as what you might do differently given similar circumstances in your future career. Additionally, describe what it was like for you to be in the role of the client.

Important guidelines for this assignment:

- Begin planning this project as soon as possible. Choose a partner with whom you will work well and who will respect your desire to act professionally (and not try to crack you up!). Each partner will play the role of the social worker as well as the client.
- Outline only basic client information with your partner (e.g., client’s gender, age, marital status, children, ethnicity, presenting problem). Avoid scripting the role-play, as it tends to constrict the interview.
- Treat the role-play as a real situation with a real client. You are more likely to use your skills as you would with actual clients if you do so.
- To protect your own privacy and to maintain a level of objectivity, do not role-play situations from your personal life. The purpose of this exercise is for learning and practicing your interview skills and should not have students’ self-disclosures that could put them at risk in any way.
- Do not role-play situations that would violate the privacy or confidentiality of a client or a social work student.
- Keep role-play scenarios simple. Avoid very difficult situations like those involving suicide or homicide.
- Avoid role-play perfectionism! Your honest self-appraisal and overall student professionalism count more than the content of your role-play.

Role plays will take place across several class periods, starting on Wednesday, November 4th and concluding by Wednesday, November 18th. The synopsis/self-evaluation paper will be due at the start of class on **Monday, November 23rd**. In total, this assignment will be worth 15% of the final course grade. Late written assignments will be assessed penalties at the rate of **5 points for each calendar day late** (not per scheduled class day). Late papers will be accepted as e-mail submissions with penalties assessed based on arrival time.

5. OPTIONAL Assignment for Extra Credit (Up to 5 points on final grade)

Attend, and then write a brief reflection paper on, the following Fairbanks endowment lecture: *Psychoanalytic Theory in a New Key: Implications for Contemporary Social Work Practice*. This talk by Carol Tosone, Ph.D. is scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2009, from 1:00 – 4:00 pm at Utopia. The summary paper should be reflective in nature, synthesizing the material Dr. Tosone discussed with each student’s unique perspective on the topics covered and is expected to be 2 – 4 pages in length. This assignment will be graded based on the student’s clarity of thought regarding the topic as well as overall writing (i.e., spelling, grammar, and punctuation) and is due at the start of class on **Wednesday, September 30th**. **NO LATE SUBMISSIONS OF THIS ASSIGNMENT WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

<u>Course Requirement</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Exams (3 @ 25% each)	75%	A = 94.0 – 100%
Social Worker Interview Assignment	10%	A- = 90.0 – 93.9%
Paired Role Play	15%	B+ = 87.0 – 89.9%
TOTAL	100%	B = 84.0 – 86.9%
		B- = 80.0 – 83.9%
		C+ = 77.0 – 79.9%
		C = 74.0 – 76.9%
		C- = 70.0 – 73.9%
		D+ = 67.0 – 69.9%
		D = 64.0 – 66.9%
		D- = 60.0 – 63.9%
		F = 59.9% and below

N.B. Grading of all written assignments will take into account the **quality** of the writing as well as the **content**. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association – Fifth Edition* format should be used. Assignments should be carefully proofread and errors corrected (e.g., punctuation, typos, spelling) or points will be lost.

VII. ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**1. The University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

2. Professional Conduct in Class

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

3. Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

4. Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before exams. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

5. Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

6. Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently — daily, but at minimum twice a week — to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

7. Safety

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 notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

8. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

9. Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

10. Use of Blackboard in Class

In this class the professor uses Blackboard – a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu> – to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, and to post grades. Blackboard is used to provide access to PowerPoint presentations of lecture materials and pre-exam review materials. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is intended only as a guide. Students should complete the readings as they are outlined, in order to space them evenly throughout the semester. This is especially important since the exams will cover the required readings for that period of time. The student is responsible for all readings whether or not the material is covered in lectures.

WEEK	DAY/DATE	DESCRIPTION/TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
1	Wed, 8/26	Introduction & Overview of Course	Syllabus
2	Mon, 8/31	The Challenges of Social Work	Chapter 1
	Wed, 9/2	Direct Practice: Domain, Philosophy, and Roles	Chapter 2
3	Mon, 9/7	<i>NO CLASS – Labor Day Holiday</i>	
	Wed, 9/9	Overview of the Helping Process	Chapter 3
4	Mon, 9/14	Operationalizing the Cardinal Social Work Values	Chapter 4
	Wed, 9/16	Building Blocks of Communication	Chapter 5
5	Mon, 9/21	“Jeopardy” for Exam #1	
	Wed, 9/23	Exam #1	Covers Chapters 1-5
6	Mon, 9/28	Review Exam #1 Verbal Following, Exploring, & Focusing Skills	Chapter 6
	Wed, 9/30	OPTIONAL Extra Credit Assignment Due Eliminating Counterproductive Communication Patterns	<i>Extra Credit Due Today</i> Chapter 7

7	Mon, 10/5	Assessment: Exploring and Understanding Problems and Strengths	Chapter 8
	Wed, 10/7	Assessment: Intrapersonal and Environmental Factors	Chapter 9
8	Mon, 10/12	Assessing Family Functioning in Diverse Family and Cultural Contexts	Chapter 10
	Wed, 10/14	Jeopardy” for Exam #2	
9	Mon, 10/19	Exam #2	Covers Chapters 6-10
	Wed, 10/21	Review Exam #2 Planning and Implementing Change-Oriented Strategies	Chapter 13
10	Mon, 10/26	Social Worker Interview Paper Due	<i>Social Worker Interview Paper Due Today</i>
		Empathy, Interpretation, and Confrontation	Chapter 17
	Wed, 10/28	Managing Barriers to Change	Chapter 18
11	Mon, 11/2	Video Day	Video TBD
	Wed, 11/4	Paired Role Plays	Pairs #1 and 2
12	Mon, 11/9	Paired Role Plays	Pairs #3 and 4
	Wed, 11/11	Paired Role Plays	Pairs #5 and 6
13	Mon, 11/16	Paired Role Plays	Pairs #7 and 8
	Wed, 11/18	Paired Role Plays	Pairs #9 and 10
14	Mon, 11/23	Paired Role Play Synopsis/Self-evaluations Due	<i>Paired Role Play Synopsis/Self-evaluations due today</i>
		Evaluation and Termination	Chapter 19
	Wed, 11/25	<i>NO CLASS – Library/Research Day</i>	
15	Mon, 11/30	“Jeopardy” for Exam #3	
	Wed, 12/2	Exam #3	Covers Chapters 13, 17-19, Video, and Role Plays