

**The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work
Fall 2009**

Syllabus for: **SW332 Social Work Practice with Individuals & Families**
Unique number 63485
Mondays/Wednesdays 12:30p – 2:00p
Room 2.130

Instructor: **Robin M. Smith, MSSW, LCSW**
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Office Hours: Regular hours TBD and by appointment

“You can’t lead people if you don’t love them. And you can’t save people if you don’t serve them. The question for leadership (today) is, How deep is your love for everyday people? What is the quality of your service?”

Tavis Smiley paraphrasing Cornell West at the Texas Book Festival,
Austin American Statesman, November 7, 2006

I. Standardized Course Description

This course builds extensively on content from 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 ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.

This course satisfies the University requirements for an Ethics and Leadership flag.

II. Required Text:

Direct Social Work Practice: Theory and Skills (8th Edition), by Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney, Strom-Gottfried and Larsen. Thomson Brooks/Cole, Publisher.

Additional readings (6). See Calendar for assigned dates. Articles posted on Blackboard.

III. Standardized Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate generalist knowledge of the relationship between theory and practice as it relates to the strengths, capacities and resources of individuals and families.
2. Develop generalist 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 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.

IV. Teaching Methods

I use a combination of PowerPoint lectures, class discussions and interactive tasks and role plays to present the content of this direct practice course. The Lab Project and writing assignments are designed to help you hone your interviewing techniques, documentation skills and self awareness.

I consider **Blackboard** to be an extension of the classroom and frequently communicate with the class using this tool. For this reason, you must have access to a computer and check your email and Blackboard regularly. If you do not have a computer with Internet access, computers are available for your use at the Social Work Learning Center (LRC) in the basement of the SSW building, the Flawn Academic Center and campus and public libraries. Computers with text readers are available. Contact the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 for assistance with Blackboard.

V. Course Grading

You will be graded on performance in the following areas for a total of 104 possible points: Professional Accountability 10 points; Exams 60 points; Lab Project 20 points; Social Worker Interview Paper 10 points; Extra Credit 4 points. Every attempt will be made to return graded work to you 1 week from the day you turn it in, or earlier. Grades will be posted on Blackboard as soon as grading is completed. Keep up with your own grade tally and check in with me periodically if you're unsure about your attendance or participation grades. The following scale will be used to determine your final letter grade:

100 – 94 points	= A (excellent work)
93 – 90 points	= A-
89 – 87 points	= B+
86 – 84 points	= B (above average work)
83 – 80 points	= B-
79 – 77 points	= C+
76 – 74 points	= C (average work)
73 – 70 points	= C-
69 – 67 points	= D+
66 – 64 points	= D (below average work)
63 – 60 points	= D-
59 & below	= F (class failed/no credit)

VI. Course Requirements

A. Professional Accountability (10 points)

Because a social work degree is a professional degree, and because many of you are entering field next semester, it is very important that you understand and begin to practice professional accountability now. Professional accountability means that you comport yourself like a professional, take responsibility for your behavior and are accountable to others. Examples include, addressing me and other students with respect (this includes using greetings and closings in all your email correspondence), coming to class prepared, actively participating in activities and discussions, anticipating problems and communicating about them in a timely manner, and being on time. I will look primarily at your attendance and class participation to assess your professional accountability.

Attendance:

Good attendance is essential to earning an “A” in this course. I take roll at the beginning of each class period. Late arrivals/early departures and absences will be excused at my discretion and only with a timely, *emailed* explanation. This semester, there will be two “Class Work Days”, **Oct. 19 & Nov. 25**. To get credit for attendance on those days, you must submit a brief written plan for how you intend to use each class time. Plans may be emailed to me, and are due prior to each class period.

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

Attendance Grading:

- **1 point** for each unexcused absence (.5 point for late arrivals/early departures without an explanation)

Participation:

Because so much of your learning in this course will involve doing activities in class, and because those activities relate to the reading, it is critical that you come to class on time and prepared. I routinely do reading “spot checks” (mini quizzes) to see who is keeping up with the reading and who is not, to prompt a review of the day’s literature and to gauge your level of reading comprehension. Failure to pass a reading “spot check” may result in the loss of a participation point.

I also ask that you give me your full attention during lectures and participate in class discussions with thoughtful and appropriate comments, being careful to keep an open mind and resist dominating discussions (“step up, step back”). You may lose points from your participation grade if I observe you reading, chatting, dozing, etc. during lectures or class discussions, or if you never or rarely participate in class discussions.

Another important aspect of participation is being a partner in your own learning experience. Therefore, if at any time during the semester you feel something is getting in the way of your best academic performance, please take the initiative to arrange a time to meet with me so we can discuss and problem solve together. I also welcome the opportunity to get to know you better and answer questions you might have about social work as a career. I welcome your constructive feedback about the course, too.

Participation grading:

- **1 point** for an incident of behavior in the context of the class that reflects lack of preparation, disregard for participation or student un-professionalism. (Examples include, but may not be limited to: dozing in class; having side conversations or reading during lectures, class discussions or group exercises; addressing me or another student disrespectfully; using banned electronics during class; coming to class unprepared to participate.)

B. Exams (60 points)

There will be three exams, each consisting of 50 multiple choice, short answer and/or essay questions worth .4 points, for a total of 20 points per exam. Questions on the exams will be based on assigned readings, PowerPoint presentations and in-class activities. A study guide will be provided for each exam and some class time will be devoted to a review. Make up exams are only given when a student contacts me directly and in a timely manner with a very unusual extenuating circumstance, and then only at my discretion. **See Course Calendar for exam dates.**

C. Lab Project (20 points)

This assignment, designed to help you improve your interviewing, assessment and self reflection skills, is a multi-step assignment that will result in three products for evaluation:

- 1. Videotaped Role Play.** Find a partner, outline a fictional client situation and videotape yourselves doing the interview for approx. 20 minutes (each person plays the social worker). Choose a short segment (5 minutes) from the video to show to your feedback group. Video must be completed by the date your feedback group meets on **Oct. 28, Nov. 2 or Nov. 4** (students will sign up for dates in class). Self-reflection *notes* are also due the day your feedback group meets.
- 2. Self-Reflection Paper.** Reflect on the experience of interviewing a “client” and watching your tape by writing a 3-page double spaced typed paper.
- 3. Client Assessment.** Write up your “client’s” assessment in a formatted 3-page double-spaced typed report.

Specific guidelines for this assignment are posted on Blackboard; please review them carefully. Begin working on this project as soon as possible by choosing an interview partner, getting a videotape and scheduling time in the LRC to tape your interview. Eve is the director of the LRC and can help you with equipment and technical difficulties. All 3 products, including self-reflection notes, are **Due Nov. 16.**

D. Social Worker Interview Paper (10 points)

Schedule an appointment to interview a licensed social worker in person at his or her place of employment. Interview him/her about the agency and his/her job duties. The 2-3 page, double spaced, typed summary of this conversation must include the following:

- Agency name, type of agency, populations served
- Social worker’s day to day activities
- Most memorable moment as a social worker
- Major challenges experienced by the social worker
- Theories or practice approaches that guide the social worker’s interventions
- “Words of wisdom” for the beginning social worker

“A” papers will clearly demonstrate an attempt to go beyond these minimum requirements, and will be well organized, well edited, and clear. “A” papers will also include good detail and reflect a capable interview style. **Due Nov. 30.**

E. Extra Credit (4 possible points)

- “Psychoanalytic Theory in a New Key: Implications for Contemporary Social Work Practice”, by Carol Tosone, PhD. See calendar for date and time. Provide proof of attendance and type a one-page summary of Dr. Tosone’s presentation with your own impressions for possible 1 point credit. **Due Sept. 21.**
- “Heloise” is a client with a number of challenges. Can you help her? See assignment details on BB and complete for possible 3 points credit. **Due Dec. 2.**

VII. Class Policies

Student Professionalism: Social work students must adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the UT School of Social Work and the NASW Code of Ethics (both may be found in the BSW Handbook at the UT SSW website, see addresses below) and assume responsibility for their own conduct.

Communication: I strongly encourage student/instructor communication *throughout* the semester, especially if you intend to earn an “A” in the course. Office visits help me get to know you better and are best for discussions about your grades and career options, so please drop by during office hours or email me to arrange a time to meet. For routine questions or explanations about absences or late arrivals/early departures from class,

email is best. I do not accept last minute or end-of-semester explanations related to grades.

Late Assignments: It is expected that all assignments will be turned in on time. Assignments are due at the *beginning of the class* on the due date indicated. Late assignments will be penalized 5% of the assignment point value for each day late. On days subsequent to the due date, papers must be submitted before 5:00 pm to avoid an additional deduction. Late papers may be submitted by email or to the front office at the SSW where staff will place them in my box.

Papers: Students are expected to produce high quality written work in terms of appearance, style, and content (see individual assignment guidelines for details). Papers submitted after the start of class on the due date or subsequent to the due date will be penalized (see above). When using information from other sources to complete a paper, references and the bibliography should conform to current APA style (refer to School of Social Work handout). Instances of plagiarism will be dealt with according to University policy (see below).

Use of Computers/Cell Phones in the Classroom: Turn off and put away your cell phones and laptops before class begins. I only permit the use of laptops in the classroom if you have a special need and discuss this need with me at the beginning of the semester.

Feedback: You will have at least two formal opportunities – mid semester and end of semester – to give anonymous feedback about the course, and a number of informal opportunities throughout the semester during class. I encourage you to participate in this process by giving thoughtful, constructive and specific feedback. Not only is it helpful to me as the instructor, it helps future students and is a great way to practice giving constructive feedback, a useful skill in direct practice with clients.

Student Privacy & Confidentiality: Class discussions or role plays can on occasion bring up strong emotions or raise issues of a personal nature. For your own privacy, please avoid discussing these matters in class, and, if you choose, talk with me instead. I will respect and protect your confidentiality/privacy unless the matter must be reviewed by the School of Social Work or must be reported by law (please refer to the BSW Handbook). I am happy to connect you with resources in the community if your personal needs exceed what I can provide as your instructor.

Client Privacy & Confidentiality: If your class work causes you to reflect on past or current client contact, and sharing information about that contact is necessary for your learning process, please remember to protect the client's privacy and confidentiality by sharing information judiciously and anonymously.

Academic Withdrawals: Students who cannot, for any reason, complete the course are advised to withdraw in order to avoid a grade of "F". The instructor will not withdraw a student unless specifically requested to do so by the University.

VIII. University Policies

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.

Professional Conduct in Class: The instructor 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 instructor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

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 an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

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/>).

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.

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, or 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>.

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're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

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>.

IX. Changes to Syllabus Disclaimer

I, the instructor, reserve the right to modify this syllabus as needed to correct errors and to best meet the learning objectives of the class. Changes will only be made when necessary and if they are made at all, students will be notified promptly.

The BSW Handbook can be found online at www.utexas.edu/ssw

This syllabus can be found online at www.utexas.edu/ssw/eclassroom/ & on Blackboard



DON'T BE LIKE THIS CAT
Check due dates and plan accordingly

SW 332 Fall 2009 Course Calendar

Section 63485

Instructor: Robin Smith, LCSW

The following is a general guide to the 15-week fall semester. I, the instructor, reserve the right to modify the calendar as needed to correct errors, meet learning objectives and to accommodate guest speakers and in class discussions and tasks. Changes will be made only when necessary and, if made, you will be notified about them in class or by group email. Please be in the habit of checking your email and Blackboard for updates.

Week One

Aug 26 Introduction to class
Review syllabus

Week Two

Aug 31 Hepworth Chapter 4 **Reading 1: The Ethical Eye**
Sep 2 Hepworth Chapter 4

Week Three

Sep 9 Hepworth Chapter 5 **Reading 2: How to Talk...Read Ch 1 & Complete Exercises**



Week Four

Sep 14 Hepworth Chapter 5
Sep 16 Hepworth Chapter 6

Inaugural Sue Fairbanks Lecture
Carol Tosone, PhD
Friday 9/18/09, 1-4pm, Utopia Theater

Week Five

Sep 21 **DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS: TOSONE EXTRA CREDIT**
Hepworth Chapter 7 **Reading 3: Honoring the Mission**
Post Exam Study Guide
Sep 23 Hepworth Chapter 7
Exam review

Week Six

Sep 28 **EXAM I** (Hepworth Chapters 1-7, readings, handouts & lectures)
Sep 30 Hepworth Chapter 8

Week Seven

Oct 5 Hepworth Chapter 8
Oct 7 Hepworth Chapter 9 **Reading 4: Spiritual Assessment Template**

Week Eight

Oct 12 Hepworth Chapter 10
Oct 14 Hepworth Chapter 12

Week Nine

- Oct 19 Class Work Day – Must submit plan prior to class to get credit for attendance
Post Exam Study Guide
- Oct 21 Hepworth Chapter 12
Exam Review
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Week Ten

- Oct 26 **EXAM II** (Hepworth Chapters 8, 9, 10 & 12, readings, handouts & lectures)
- Oct 28 **FEEDBACK GROUP 1 MEETS IN LRC**
Copy of Self Reflection Notes Due
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Week Eleven

- Nov 2 **FEEDBACK GROUP 2 MEETS IN LRC**
Copy of Self Reflection Notes Due
- Nov 4 **FEEDBACK GROUP 3 MEETS IN LRC**
Copy of Self Reflection Notes Due
-

Week Twelve

- Nov 9 Hepworth Chapter 13
Speaker: Jennifer Graham about CWEC
- Nov 11 In lieu of Ch 14 read... **Reading 5: Principled Negotiation**

Speaker: Ramon Gomez about graduate school
-

Week Thirteen

- Nov 16 **DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS: LAB PROJECT**
Hepworth Chapter 15
- Nov 18 Hepworth Chapter 17
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Week Fourteen

- Nov 23 Hepworth Chapter 18 **Reading 6: The Concept & Techniques of Validation**

Post Exam Study Guide
In class video: "Looking for Yesterday"
- Nov 25 Class Work Day – Must submit plan prior to class to get credit for attendance
-

Week Fifteen

- Nov 30 **DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS: SW INTERVIEW PAPER**
Instructor Survey
Exam Review
Termination activity
Chapter 19
- Dec 2 **DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS: HELOISE EXTRA CREDIT**
EXAM III (Hepworth Chapters 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, readings, handouts & lectures)

Congratulations and have a fun and safe winter break!