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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

S541 Social Work Practice II
Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups

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Course #: S541, R215, Classroom: LD020
Semester: Spring, 2003, Day/Time: Thursdays 1:00 – 3:40 p.m.
Instructor: **Philip M. Ouellette, Ph.D., A.C.S.W.**
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Office Hours: Thursdays: 10 to 12 noon: Note: Student can feel free to contact the instructor at any time via e-mail. Meetings can also be arranged using chat room facilities.

I. Course Rationale & Description

This course builds upon the practice theories, principles and skills addressed in Social Work Practice I (S540). This course provides students with opportunities to further develop the knowledge, skill, and judgment necessary for competent generalist social work practice with individuals, families, and groups. Although multiple perspectives are necessary for adequate understanding, assessment, intervention, and evaluation, a strengths perspective will be emphasized. Students will be expected to develop skills to facilitate individual, family, and group experiences, which can empower people to change themselves and their environment.

A variety of teaching-learning methods and experiences are utilized throughout the semester in an effort to address this content and to help students meet course objectives. Learning experiences include readings, lectures, films, discussions, case vignettes, role-play enactments, case presentations, and written assignments. The course also uses students' experiences in field placement for case examples from which relevant theoretical concepts and principles for practice with individuals, families, and groups can be identified and to which course content can be applied.

In this course, students are required to demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations. Students will be prepared to complete differential assessments and to use intervention skills that will serve diverse populations which include, but are not limited to, groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin. Content includes strategies of intervention for achieving social, political, and economic justice and for combating the causes and effects of institutionalized forms of oppression.

II. Objectives

Students are expected to show mastery of the following objectives:

1. Understand both common and unique concepts, principles, and processes relevant for competent generalist social work practice grounded in a strengths perspective with individuals, families, and groups.

2. Apply and analyze social work values and ethics, including an understanding of and respect for human diversity, in the context of generalist social work practice with individuals, families, and groups.

3. Apply person-in-environment knowledge that affects human development and behavior, in the context of generalist social work practice with people of color, women, lesbians and gay men as well as those groups distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability.

4. Assess and critique practice with diverse populations.

5. Access relevant, timely, and appropriate theory and research in the professional literature for use in generalist practice with client systems addressing various prevalent psychosocial problems.

6. Apply critical thinking skills within professional contexts, including the application of appropriate theories, models, and knowledge for generalist social work practice throughout all phases of generalist social work practice (e.g. preparing, beginning, exploring, assessing, contracting, working, evaluating, and ending).

7. Develop (A) self-understanding of one's personal motivations, characteristics, and habitual psychosocial patterns of behavior; (B) disciplined use of self in professional relationships including awareness and management of one's own personal beliefs, stereotypes, biases and prejudices; and (C) ability to assess the quality of one's own practice.

III. Required Readings

Tohn, S. L., & Oshlag, J.A. ((2000). Crossing the bridge: Integrating solution focused therapy into clinical practice. Sudbury, Mass: Solutions Press.

Goldenberg, I., & Goldenberg, H. (2000). Family Therapy: An Overview. Belmont, CA, US: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.

Bertcher, H.J. (1994). Group Participation: Techniques for Leaders and Members. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Saleebey, D. (2002). The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

IV. Recommended Readings

Note: Other optional supportive reading materials will be recommended on the Course Web Site.

V. Course Evaluation and Instructor Feedback

Students will have the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the content and instruction of class sessions. Students may do so verbally in face-to-face contact with the professor or in writing, anonymously if they prefer, as frequently as they wish. At mid-semester, students will be required to complete a mid-semester feedback questionnaire which will be available online. The feedback questionnaire will be one way to communicate and give anonymous feedback to the instructor regarding the student's learning progress and the course's instructional content. A class member will be selected by students to serve as the *"learning community representative"*. Mid-semester feedback questionnaires will be submitted to the LCR. He/she in turn will be responsible to compile and submit all questionnaires to the instructor while ensuring anonymity. During the final class session, students will be encouraged to participate in a group discussion for the purpose of providing evaluative feedback to the instructor. In addition, formal evaluation instruments will be distributed to each student. These computerized rating forms are delivered (unseen by the instructor) to the Dean's Office where they are processed and reviewed before being returned to the professor.

VI. Course Format, Policies, and Expectations

Instructional Format:

Overall emphasis of this course is on broadening student competence in helping clients in differing system context. (ie. individual, family, and groups). The expectation is for students to become progressively more knowledgeable about the components of effective individual, family, and group practice and skillful at assisting clients in these contexts.

An experiential instructional format will be used to advance course objectives. Instructional learning activities will be delivered both in a classroom-delivered setting and online via the use of OnCourse (see course Web site below). Whether face-to-face or in a "virtual classroom environment", instruction will encompass and combine the following activities: (1) presentations by students, (2) presentations by the instructor, (3) discussion of readings and practice experiences both in class and online, (4) case presentations, (5) video tape demonstrations, (6) participation in task group learning activities, (7) structured role-plays and simulations, (8) written exercises and assignments, (9) videotape skills practice exercises, and (10) self-evaluation questionnaires. Students are expected to participate fully in all activities and discussions. When possible, practice simulations will be implemented to afford opportunities for skill-building. The nature and extent of practice activity will, in part, be influenced by time constraints as well as developments in the class process. While involvement in experiential activities requires a measure of risk-taking, generally, learning from most educational endeavors is a function of the level of one's involvement in the process.

Pre-requisites:

Each student who enrolls in the S541 course should have a solid understanding of the substantive areas addressed in the courses of the first semester of the initial MSW academic year. Any student who does not believe that s/he is adequately prepared in any or all of the subject areas

identified below should contact the professor: (1) human growth and life-cycle development; (2) the dynamics and significance of the worker-client relationship; (3) theories of human behavior - including personality theories; (4) the patterns and consequences of various manifestations of oppression and their implications for practice; (5) the processes associated with the preparing, beginning, exploring, assessing and contracting; (6) the values and ethics of the social work profession.

Values and Ethics:

It is expected that students who enroll in the S541 course are pursuing the MSW degree and aspire to become professional social workers. Congruent with those factors, the fundamental values and the ethical code of the social work profession apply to the actions of students enrolled in the course. Therefore, all students should be knowledgeable of the **NASW Code of Ethics**.

Class Attendance:

Attendance at all class sessions is expected unless specified otherwise by the instructor. Attendance at class sessions is viewed as the personal responsibility of each individual student. Roll will not be taken. Each student who chooses to attend class meetings, however, is expected to arrive on time and to return promptly from the breaks.

Course Web Site:

In addition to classroom attendance, the course will include a course Web site (Oncourse). The course Web site will be used as a learning medium to enhance the instructional activities of the classroom. Course syllabus, course assignments, supportive reading materials and, the instructor's handouts will be made available "on-line" through the course Web site. Students are expected to visit the course Web site regularly each week between class meetings. Some graded assignments will be conducted online. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to submit all written assignments via the electronic medium. Instructions will be provided on how to do this.

Guidance and consultation on the use of technology and the course Web site is available upon request. No punitive means will be used such as a reduction in grade points for students experiencing legitimate technological difficulties when submitting assignments. Problems, however, must be reported to the instructor as soon as they happened either by telephone, via e-mail, or in writing. In addition, a troubleshoot discussion forum will be established on the course Web site to post questions and to report difficulties.

Participation:

Students are expected to participate fully in both classroom and "on-line" activities and discussions. These include a range of experiential as well as cognitive exercises role-play enactments, case presentations, staff conference simulations, and work toward goal achievement represents some of the potential learning experiences. In participating, it is expected that the student reflect interest in, and respect for other class members in a manner that is congruent with the values, ethics, and skills of the profession.

Assignments:

In written assignments, students are expected to prepare documents in a professional manner. Submissions should be typewritten in double-space format and *carefully edited for spelling and grammar*. Papers that are poorly written or edited will result in a significant penalty. Students should closely follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) in the citation of sources and preparation of bibliographies. The quality of the citations will be counted toward the grade. *Plagiarism, whether intentional or as a result of ignorance, and other forms of cheating are unacceptable and will result in a failing grade for the course.* In general, professionally ethical behavior and graduate level scholarship are the expected norms. Unless an emergency situation exists, *written assignments that are submitted after the due date will result in a reduced grade. One point will be deducted for each day late.*

VII. Course Outline:

Session #1: Introduction • Introductions • Development of work teams • Setting course goals • Overview of course syllabus and general expectations	*Session #9: The Family Interactional Context* • Structural model of family intervention • Conducting a structural family assessment • Structural intervention • Video demonstration Team project – Part III – IV
Session #2: Practice Orientation • Elements of any model of intervention • From Psyche to Systems • Team Project – Working with Individuals – Part I	*Spring Break – Enjoy!*
Session #3: Principles of Solution-focused intervention • The initial interview process • Team Project – Working with Individuals Part II-III	*Session #10: Leading Effective Groups* Team project – group skills **Materials for Learning Activity #2 Due**
Session #4: The Strengths Perspective • Systems vs Strengths • Team Project – Working with Individuals – Part IV	*Session #11: My Leadership Behavior* Team project – group skills
Session #5 Working with resistance • Interview Demonstration (I don't want to be a fool) • Team Project – Working with Individuals – Part IV	*Session #12: Group Goals* Team Project – groups skills
Session #6: No Class Seminar Team Project – Working with Individuals – Self-appraisal and Bonus	*Session #13: No Class Seminar* Team Project – group skills
Session #7: The Initial Family Interview • Preparing/conducting the initial family interview • Stages of the family interview process • Video demonstration **Materials for Learning Activity #1 Due** Family project – Part I & II	*Session #14: Group Presentations*
Session #8: The Family's Developmental Context • Family transitions and adaptations • Assessment of family transitions • Use of the family genogram and eco-map • Family-life cycle interventions Family project – Part III	*Session #15:* Final Class • Review of course objectives • Self-evaluation exercises • Course evaluation and feedback **Materials for Learning Activity #3 Due**

VIII. Method of Evaluation

Students may earn a total of 100 points through the completion of six (6) learning activities. *Critical Thinking Questionnaires*, which represent 10% of the course grade, are short online questionnaires pertaining to the required readings. Students will be expected to complete these questionnaires during a set time frame. *Three Practice Skills Projects* aimed at enhancing interviewing skills with individuals, families and groups will represent 75% of the course grade. Projects will require that students work as part of a learning team as well as individually. A detail course guide with respect to each practice skills project will be provided. Each practice skills project guide will outline expected outcomes, required readings, definition of tasks, and evaluation criteria. Opportunities to earn *10 additional optional points* will be made available during the course of these projects. *Self-evaluation questionnaires*, which represent 5% of the course grade, are a series of short self-evaluation instruments to measure student progress with learning objectives of assigned learning activities. The last learning activity is student participation in *online discussion groups* on various practice themes discussed in class presentations. This will represent 10% of the total grade. The point values of each of the learning activities are outlined below.

Learning Activities**	Point Value	Bonus***
1. Critical Thinking Questionnaires (Required Readings)	10	0
2. Individual Practice Skills Project *	25	5
3. Family Practice Skills Project *	25	5
4. Group Practice Skills Project *	25	0
5. Self-evaluation questionnaires	5	0
6. Online Discussion Groups	10	
Totals	**100**	**10**

* **See Course Guide for details**
** To earn an "A" in this course your total score of 90+ must be from points accumulated from all six learning activities.
***Please be reminded that no individual learning project can exceed the maximum allotted score of 25 points. Bonus points earned will be applied to a score earned on a project up to the maximum allotted amount.

Grading:
Consistent with University policy, grades of "Incomplete" will be granted by the instructor only when a student provides a satisfactory reason for the request (e.g. sickness, family crisis, etc.), preferably well in advance of the end of the course, and when the student has satisfactorily completed at least three-quarters of the course requirements.

Grading Scale:
A = 93+   Outstanding/Excellent
A- = 90-92   Superior
B+ = 87-89   Very Good
B = 83-86   Good

B- = 80-82   Fair
C+ = 77-79   Acceptable (not acceptable for MSW)
C = 73-76   Minimally Acceptable
C- = 72-70   Unsatisfactory
D = 69-60
F = 59-