

Indiana University  
School of Social Work

S541  
Summer I, 1997  
TR 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

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Office Hours: Tues.: 12-3  
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**Social Work Practice II:  
Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups**

**Course Rationale and Description**

In the context of generalist social work practice, this course builds upon the practice theories and principles and skills addressed in Social Work Practice I, the knowledge bases explored in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses and the content examined in the initial Social Policy course. This course has integrated practice with individuals, families and groups because social workers always consider the person-in-environment as the basic unit of attention; because the family system is the most typical and significant primary group for most individuals; and because individual, family, and group functioning reflect parallel processes.

The general purpose for this three-credit course is to provide MSW students with opportunities to further develop the knowledge, skill, and judgment necessary for competent generalist social work practice with individuals, families and groups. Increasingly, social workers in various settings practice with individual clients, with couples, with a dyadic or triadic subsystems of families, with nuclear families as a whole, with portions of extended families, sometimes with several generations of a family, and with groups. Often the complex characteristics of the client system, the ecological situation, and the presenting problems require that the social worker assess and intervene in several individual, familial, and/or group arenas. 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.

In a course which seeks to examine the complex nature of social work with individuals and families and groups, it is difficult for students to avoid becoming confused by the multitude of theories and the relevance of those theories to actual practice with a unique individual, family, and/or group. It is, however, possible to conceive of social work practice with individuals, families, and groups as a form of professional helping that (1) follows a predictable process (preparing, beginning, exploring, assessing, contracting, working and evaluating, and ending), (2) is based upon clear values and guided by the ethics and obligations of the social work profession, (3) is supported by theoretical conceptualizations and validated by research, and (4) incorporates both direct and indirect means of

intervention. These common elements are evident in social work practice with any and all individuals, families, and/or groups. They are also reflected throughout the various aspects of this course.

The content of this course includes concepts and principles necessary for competent generalist social work practice with individuals, families, and/or groups. 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, live or recorded case vignettes, role play enactments, case presentations, simulated staff conferences, and various written assignments. The course also relies upon students' experiences in field placement for case examples from which relevant theoretical concepts and principles for practice with individuals, families, and/or groups can be identified and developed.

### **Course Objectives**

Through completion of the course and its assignments, students will become prepared for competent generalist practice and are expected to demonstrate

1. Understanding of 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. Ability to 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. Ability to apply person-in-environment knowledge that affects human development and behavior, in the context of generalist social work practice with people of color, women, lesbian and gay people as well as those groups distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability;
4. Ability to assess and critique practice with diverse populations
5. Ability to 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. Ability to 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); and

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

## **Outline of Content**

Students are expected to read the assigned texts chapters and additional readings from the bibliography.

- I. Overview of course and review of basic practice skills (May 15)
- II. Understanding Groups (May 20-22)  
Required readings: Hepworth, Rooney, & Larsen, Review Chapters 1-7  
Toseland & Rivas, Chapters 2-6 & 10 & 11
- III. Assessment (May 27 & 29)  
Required readings: Hepworth, Rooney, & Larsen, Chapters 8-12  
Toseland & Rivas, Chapter 7
- IV. The Change Oriented Phase (June 3 thru 12)  
Required readings: Hepworth, Rooney, & Larsen, Chapters 13-19  
Toseland & Rivas, Chapters 8 & 9
- V. Evaluation and Termination (June 17)  
Required readings: Hepworth, Rooney, & Larsen, Chapter 20  
Toseland & Rivas, Chapters 12 & 13
- VI. Class presentations (June 19 & 24)
- VII. Course evaluation (June 24)

## Required and Recommended Readings

### Required:

Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R. H. & Larsen, J. A. (1997). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Toseland, R. W. & Rivas, R. F. (1995). *An introduction to group work practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

### Recommended books on two-hour library reserve under instructor's name:

Brown, N. (1991). *Groups for growth and change*. White Plains, NY: Longman. (HV 45. B745)

Compton, B. R. & Galaway, B. (1989). *Social Work Processes*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Corcoran, K. & Fischer, J. (1987). *Measures for clinical practice*. New York: The Free Press (#BF176.C66)

Corey, M. S. & Corey, G. (1987). *Groups: Process and practice*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Corsini, R. J. & Wedding, D. (1989). *Current Psychotherapies*. Itasca, IL; F. E. Peacock.

Cournoyer, B. (1996). *The social work skills workbook*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Devore, W. & Schlesinger, E. G. (1996). *Ethnic-sensitive social work practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Dorfman, R.A., (Ed.). (1988). *Paradigms of clinical social work*. New York: Brunner/Mazel. (#HV43. P35).

Fatout, M. F. (1992). *Models for change in social group work*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Gitterman, A. & Shulman, L. (Eds.). (1994). *Mutual aid groups, vulnerable populations, and the life cycle*. Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock. (HV45. M88)

Green, J. W. (1995). *Cultural awareness in the human services: A multi-ethnic approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Gurman, A. & Kniskern, D.P., (Eds.). (1981). *Handbook of Family Therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel. (#RC488.5.H33)

Hartman, A. (1983). *Family-centered social work practice*. New York: The Free Press. (#HV699.H35)

Kirst-Ashman, K. K. & Hull, G. H. (1993). *Understanding generalist practice*. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.

Kilpatrick A. C. & Holland, T. P. (1995). *Working with families: An integrative model by level of functioning*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

McGoldrick, M. & Carter, B. (1988). *The changing family life cycle*. New York: Gardner Press. (#HQ536.C425)

- Miley, K. K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B L. (1995). *Generalist social work practice: An Empowering approach*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- National Association of Social Workers. (1995). *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (19<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Shulman, L. (1992). *The skills of helping individuals and groups*. Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock. (HV11. S493).
- Tolson, E.R., Reid, W. J. & Garvin, C. D. (1994). *Generalist Practice: A Task Centered Approach*. New York: Columbia University Press. (HV43. T6).
- Turner, F. J., (Ed.). (1989). *Child psychopathology: A social work perspective*. New York: The Free Press. (#RJ499.C4864)
- Turner, F. J. (Ed.). (1986). *Social Work Treatment: Interlocking Theoretical Approaches*. New York: FreePress. (#HV37.S579)
- Wilson, S. J. (1980). *Recording: Guidelines for social workers*. New York: The Free Press.

The following journals are recommended. Specific articles will be listed in the bibliography.

Journal of Continuing Social Work Education  
 Journal of Counseling Psychology  
 Journal for Specialists in Group Work  
 Journal of Gerontological Social Work  
 Journal of Marital and Family Therapy  
 Journal of Personality and Social Psychology  
 Journal of Research in Personality  
 Journal of Social Service Research  
 Journal of Social Work & Human Sexuality  
 Journal of Social Work Education  
 Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare  
 Prevention in Human Services  
 Research on Social Work Practice  
 Small Group Behavior  
 Small Group Research  
 Smith College Studies in Social Work  
 Social Service Review  
 Social Work  
 Social Work in Education  
 Social Work in Health Care  
 Social Work Research & Abstracts  
 Social Work with Groups

### **Assignments and Grading**

## Assignments

1. Each person in the class will be part of a problem-based learning task group. The task groups will meet during the second half of every class. I will act as a consultant to the task groups. You can come to me with questions or ask me to meet with your group.
2. The first meeting of the task group (5/15) will be an organizational meeting. In this meeting you will need to take care of organizational functions such as creating a name, address and phone number list; deciding how to handle group leadership; identifying your goals including what grade you plan to get on each project and what you are willing to do to achieve your goals; and deciding on the ground rules for your group.
3. In the second meeting of the task group (5/20), you will write three case vignettes using cases you are familiar with from your field placement. Each case vignette will include ten to fifteen core facts about the case. Do not include evaluative statements. Choose at least two cases in which the individuals are in an oppressed group. You should have one case in which individual treatment might be appropriate, one in which group treatment might be appropriate, and one in which family treatment might be appropriate. The case summaries are due in the next class (5/22).
4. In the remaining time in the second meeting and in the next three meetings (5/22, 5/27, 5/29), you will have three assignments. All three assignments are due in the seventh class period (6/3).
  - a. You will develop an assessment plan for each of the three cases. You can choose any model for assessment, but it must include discussion of the problems, environmental forces, strengths, issues related to the tasks of human development, and possible values and ethical dilemmas. You will need to decide what specific types of information should be gathered. Include your rationale for determining what information would be important. End the assessment by identifying the three problems or challenges for work and the goals for each problem/challenge. The goals should meet the MAPS criteria, measurable, attainable, positive, and specific. Discuss your assessment of each client's motivation, capacity and resources, and stresses and demands related to each goal.
  - b. You will decide on the method of treatment to be used with each case. One should be individual, one group, and one family. Using the literature to support your evaluation, discuss your rationale for choosing a particular method for a particular case. In the case of group treatment, discuss what type of group would be appropriate for this client. Include such information as open or closed group, time limited or open-ended, type of membership (homogeneous or heterogeneous), and type of group (mutual aid, psycho-educational, empowerment, psychotherapy, etc).
  - c. Discuss how you will address issues of race, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, ableism, ageism and any other type of oppression. Discuss how you will prepare yourself to work with someone from a different race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, class than your own. Consider how your personal beliefs, stereotypes,

- biases and prejudices may affect your work with each case. Discuss specific ethnic-sensitive ways of working with these clients.
5. In the next three task group meetings (6/3, 6/5, 6/10), you will have two assignments that are due in the ninth class period (6/12).
    - a. Write a treatment plan for each case. Your treatment plan should be based on using a specific theory. You can use the same theory for all three cases or different theories. Begin by discussing why you chose the particular theory. Discuss the connection of this plan to the goals of the individual, family, or group. Then discuss the role of the worker; strategies you plan to use in order to facilitate clients changing dysfunctional patterns, thoughts, behaviors, and feelings and to facilitate necessary changes in the situation or environment; the phases of treatment; and ways to manage barriers or opposition to change.
    - b. Develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating both the client's goal achievement and your work with the client. Discuss your plan for evaluating your overall practice with this individual, family, or group and your plan for engaging the individual, family or group in evaluation of their progress toward goal attainment
  6. In the ninth task group meeting (6/12), each task group has three assignments.
    - a. Create a three page summary of your work to be copied and distributed to each class member at the time of your presentation.
    - b. Develop a presentation that will include reading each case vignette, discussing your assessment plan, the method of treatment, issues related to ethnic-sensitive practice, your treatment and your evaluation plans for each case, and then doing a role play of each case. One case will show you working individually, one case with a family, and one case with a group.
    - c. Do an analysis of your task group. Identify what roles each member played, discuss how your group went through the phases of group process, identify ways that you effectively and ineffectively worked on the tasks, and identify three things you will do differently the next time you are in a task group. Identify in what ways the group was a better method for completing the required tasks. Due in the tenth class period (6/17).
  7. In the last two class sessions (6/19 & 6/24), each task group will make their presentations. Each group will have one hour to discuss their cases and do the role plays.
  8. In the final class (6/24), each class member will complete an evaluation of their own and the other task group members' contributions, involvement, and attendance in their task group

## EVALUATION

All written assignments will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

1. Completion of the all required components of the paper (necessary to get a C or above)
2. Use classroom learning and learning from the textbooks to support your positions

- (necessary to get a B or above)
3. Demonstration of a thoughtful, in depth response to the assignment (necessary to get a B+ or above)
  4. The extent, relevance, and quality of the research and scholarship including use of other professional journals and other supporting literature (necessary to get an A)
  5. Overall organization, quality of the writing and editing of the paper, and presentation of the paper. APA form is required. (Should be very well done to get an A)

## GRADING

Case Vignettes	12 points
Assessment plan	30 points
Method of treatment	21 points
Ethnic-sensitive practice	21 points
Treatment plan	36 points
Evaluation plan	21 points
Task group analysis	20 points
Summary and presentation	30 points
Participation in task group	<u>9 points</u>
	200 points

200-195	A+	160-155	C+
194-188	A	154-148	C
187-181	A-	147-141	C-
180-175	B+		
174-168	B		
167-161	B-		

### Course and Instructor Evaluation:

Students are strongly encouraged 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. During the final class session members will be encouraged to participate in a group discussion for the purpose of providing valuatve feedback to the instructor. In addition, formal evaluation instruments will be distributed for each student's use. 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.

## **Course Policies and Expectations:**

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 for an additional reading list: (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, contracting, working and evaluating, and ending phases of social work practice, and (6) the values and ethics of the social work profession.

It is also expected that students are concurrently working with individuals, families and groups through their field placements in human service agencies. Any student who does not receive case assignments through the agency should contact the course instructor immediately.

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**.

Attendance at class sessions is viewed as the personal responsibility of each individual student. Each student is expected to arrive on time. Students are expected to return promptly from the breaks.

Students are expected to participate fully in class activities and discussions. These include a range of experiential as well as cognitive exercises. role play enactments, case presentations, staff conference simulations, and personal work toward goal achievement represent 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.

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 not be accepted for credit toward the course grade.

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.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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