

Indiana University School of Social Work
MSW PROGRAM

S694 PRACTICE WITH OLDER ADULTS

Spring 2009

Wednesdays 6 – 8:40 pm

Room

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide health practice concentration students with increased depth of knowledge in the area of practice with older adults in healthcare areas, such as acute care hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, adult day care and long-term care facilities. Effective social work practice relies on evidence-based theories on aging, biopsychosocial assessment, and relevant research on aging.

Older adults are one of the fastest growing populations in the United States, and advances in technology have enhanced longevity. However, increased longevity has engendered complex and demanding issues, such as quality of life, right of self-determination, biopsychosocial issues and the responsibility to protect a vulnerable population. The course is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to effectively work with older adults.

Course Objectives

As a result of having completed the requirements of this course, the students will be able to:

1. Examine one's own feelings and attitudes regarding aging and older adults
2. Demonstrate a knowledge of the prevalent disease entities and the course of those disease entities that affect older adults
3. Demonstrate an ability to analyze current social services and policies that relate to the needs of older adults, such as Medicare D.
4. Demonstrate an ability to devise and utilize comprehensive biopsychosocial assessments that examine the myriad domains of the lives of older adults.
5. Analyze and implement effective evidence-based practice.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the needs of caregivers
7. Develop an awareness of older adults as a vulnerable population and an awareness of diverse groups within this population (including, but not limited to people-of-color, women, GLBT individuals).

Required Textbook

McInnis-Dittrich, Kathleen. (2008). *Social Work With Elders: A Biopsychosocial Approach to Assessment and Intervention*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Berkman, B. (Ed.). (2006). *Handbook of Social Work in Health and Aging*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Conduct of Course and Assignments

This course will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, and experiential activities. Because of the nature of the material and because we all have resources to share, either from readings or personal experiences, *everyone* will be expected to play an active role in his/her own learning process.

Instructor's responsibilities:

1. Provide clear expectations.
2. Respect students' opinions and be open to new ideas.
3. Provide assistance when needed.
4. Provide timely feedback on all written material submitted.

Students' responsibilities:

1. Attend class and be on time.
2. Complete reading assignments.
3. Complete written assignments by due date.
4. Actively participate in class discussions by sharing experiences, thoughts and values.
5. Respect differences of opinions of classmates, guest speakers and instructor
6. Respect fellow students and instructor by deactivating pagers and cell phone while class is in session.

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Due today
1/14/09	Debunking “Oldness”: Myths and Facts about Older Adults How is Working with Older Adults Different than other Populations?		
1/21/09	What Does it Mean to Age?: Reconstructing Self	McInnis, chapters 1 & 3; Introduction in Berkman & chapter 16	When I am 90
1/28/09	Common Disease Entities Among Older Adults: Living with Chronicity	McInnis, Chapter 2; Berkman, Chapters 1-8	
2/4/09	An Analysis of Services & Resources Targeted to Older Adults Speaker: CICOA	Berkman, chapter 49, 82	
2/11/09	The Biopsychosocial Assessment	McInnis, chapter 4;	
2/18/09	Changes in Cognition: Assessment and Intervention	McInnis, chapter 5; Beckman, chapter 9 – 10; 58, 65	
2/25/09	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Issues: Depression & Suicide Among Older Adults; Pharmacology	McInnis, chapter 8; Beckman, chapters 11-13, 23.	
3/4/09	Working with Diverse Groups within the Older Adult Population	Beckman, chapters 20-22, 24-25	
3/11/09	Midterm Evaluation		
3/18/09	Spring Break		
3/25/09	Effective Interventions	McInnis, chapters 6 & 7; Beckman, chapters 68-74.	
4/1/09	End of Life Issues & Spirituality	McInnis, chapter 13; Beckman, chapter 38, 26-27	
4/8/09	Sexuality	Article on Sexuality and Older Adults;	
4/15/09	Caregivers & Elder Abuse/Neglect How Much Do You Know About Your Parents?	McInnis, chapter 11 & 12; Beckman chapters 28-33	
4/22/09	Evaluation of Practice		
4/29/09	Final Exam		

Assignments:

1. “When I Am 90” Reflection paper. Should be 4-6 pages, double-spaced.

Assignment: Think about yourself as an older adult and what your life will be like when you are 90 years of age. Assume you will live to be ninety, even though that may not be true for you. This paper should be 2-3 pages typed and include as much of the following information as possible. You may be creative and write this as a journal entry or as a letter to one of your family members or friends, or just simply as a narrative. Write about what your life will be like in the following areas:

- 1) **Physical:** Assume that you will get at least one major disease that runs in your family. You may already have some beginnings of that illness or debility now. Look at the members of your family, even if you are adopted, and extrapolate what physical problems you will have as well as physical advantages. Discuss your five senses and which of them will have been impacted by aging and to what degree. Will you be able to communicate verbally or have to rely on non-verbal means of communication (i.e., due to stroke, etc...)
- 2) **Social:** What kind of a family and personal situation will you have when you are older? Will you be married? Single? Have a significant partner? What type of living situation will you be in? Will you be living with one of your children or on your own? Will you have any hobbies (this may depend on your sensory impairment)? Where will you go when/if you go out?
- 3) **Financial:** What will your finances be like when you are older? Extrapolate from how you handle money currently in your life. Are you a saver or a spender? Will you have retirement or just have to rely on Social Security (if it exists then).
- 4) **Emotional/Mental:** What kind of person will you be? It is my experience that our personalities do not change significantly as we age, but may become magnified as a result of loss, change, stress and illness. For example, if you can become irate fairly easily in traffic, what will you be like in the dining hall waiting on your food when you are 90? What will you do to entertain yourself mentally?
- 5) **Spiritual:** How important will this be to you? Extrapolate from how important it is to you now. How will you practice your faith or if you have none, what will be most important to you as you think of your own death?
- 6) **Legacy:** Since you are 90, you are thinking about what you will leave behind, both in terms of tangible items and intangible qualities. What will you be known for? What will you have left those that you cared about or society at large?

Feel free to add in things that you feel will be important to you at that age, or concerns that you will have that are not on the list. Good luck, senior citizen!

2. Biopsychosocial Assessment

Students will conduct a comprehensive bio-psycho-social assessment on an older adult with whom they are currently working. The assessment should include, but is not limited to, exploration of the following domains: *(If a student does not have a pt for this assignment, a vignette will be provided or we will try to find a client. The preference is to use an actual case).*

- Hx of past illness and how pt coped
- Meaning assigned to past illness and current illness
- How pt sees current illness affecting functioning and lifestyle
- Exploration of Social Capital (*e.g., who is in pt's human support network?*)

- Issues of Spirituality and/or Religious Affiliation
 - Level of Cognition
 - Issues of discrimination and/or oppression
 - Physical layout of pt's living space
 - Financial Resources
 - Are there any psychosocial problems at this point? If so, does the pt. want to address them?
 - Strengths & barriers of the pt system
 - Issues of your own self-awareness
 - Summary to include: Recommendations, Treatment Model to be used which will include a discussion of the major assumptions of the model, techniques and 'fit' with the pt system, Discussion of how a pt system strength can be used as an interventive tool
3. Group Presentation: Students will conduct a group presentation related to health issues of older adults. This case presentation is more deductive (*that is, it is not case specific*); however, students should be able to demonstrate how presented information might be used in an actual case. Students may report on disease entities that are prevalent among older adults (*i.e., DM, HTN, Arthritis, etc.*) Students may also report on topics that interface with physical well being (*i.e., violence against older adults, poverty, isolation, homelessness, etc.*) Each group will compose a portfolio of eight to ten community resources, related to the presentation topic, which will be shared with classmates. The presentation should address, but is not limited to, the following areas:
- What is known about the disease entity or social phenomenon?
 - What is the impact on older adults?
 - What are the most effective interventions? (*that is, best practice, research or evidence-based*)
 - What is the relevance of this information to one's practice? How might one modify her/his practice based on the information presented?
 - What resources might be helpful to someone with this illness?
3. Reflection paper on older adult speaker or movie:
The paper should address the following areas:
- Stereotypes about older adults that might have been challenged by the presentation
 - Include how the narratives resonated with textbook, articles, lectures and/or class discussions
 - Narratives of the presenters that were dissonant with textbook, articles, lectures and/or class discussions
 - Issues of self-awareness
 - Ways that interaction with older adults might change

4. Students will participate in simulations throughout the course of the semester. The purpose of these simulations is to critically assess and facilitate improvement of students' assessment and intervention skills. If you miss the class in which we are doing simulations, your participation grade will reflect your absence. Examples of possible simulations are the following scenarios:
 - Working with a confused older adult
 - Working with difficult families
 - Residential placement
 - End-of-life issues
 - Adjustment to limitations of an illness
 - Using reminiscence to reconstruct self

5. Midterm Exam
The midterm exam will be in class essays on topics that we have covered in class and in the reading. Students will have the whole class period to respond to 3 of 5 essay questions.

6. The final exam in this course will be a case study that will be from to 10-12 pages in length. A case study will be presented in April and students will have two weeks to look at the case study, assess the older adult's life situation and make recommendations on a number of levels which will be identified in the assignment. The case study should cover the following areas:
 - Comprehensive bio-psychosocial assessment
 - Goals and contract with patient system
 - Discussion of Intervention to include treatment model used with pt system.
 - Rationale for use with pt system
 - Demonstration of integration of model's techniques in working with pt system
 - Evaluation of Intervention
 - Reflective Analysis
 - Issues of self-awareness
 - Methods of Self Nurturing
 - What could have been done differently?

Summary of Points for Semester Grade

When I Am 90	50
Presentation	75
Biopsychosocial Interview	100
Movie/Speaker Reflection	50
Midterm	100
Final Exam	100
Participation	25
TOTAL POINTS	500

A+		C+	
A		C	
A-		C-	
B+		D+	
B		D	
B-		D-	

Course Policies

1. Students should have read assigned materials in the order specified by the instructor and should be ready to participate knowledgeably and constructively in class activities.
2. Students are expected to be present when class begins and to hand in all assignments on time. Failure to observe these requirements will be considered in assigning final grades.
3. **Indiana University School of Social Work Policy on Plagiarism - 2007**

The School of Social Work follows the Indiana University policy on plagiarism which states:

Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else’s work, including the work of other students, as one’s own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered “common knowledge” may differ from course to course.

- a. *A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment.*
- b. *A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge indebtedness whenever:*
 - (1) *Directly quoting another person’s actual words, whether oral or written;*
 - (2) *Using another person’s ideas, opinions, or theories;*
 - (3) *Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;*

(4) *Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or*

(5) *Offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment.*

In addition to the university statement on plagiarism which is published in the IU Student Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct (<http://www.iupui.edu/code/>) the School of Social Work also abides by the following addendum regarding plagiarism:

IU School of Social Work Addendum to Indiana University Policy on Plagiarism

In addition to the university statement on plagiarism which is published in the IU Student Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, the IU School of Social Work defines plagiarism as including:

The intentional or unintentional use of information from another person without full acknowledgment. Such use, even when unintended, causes the work to appear to be the student's own work and thus the student, not the original author, benefits from the omission of proper acknowledgment.

Copying or using information from web sites without appropriately documenting the internet source.

Buying or using a document written by another person.

Submitting any part of the student's own work which has been previously submitted, unless one's own prior work is fully acknowledged and appropriately cited.

4. Students are expected to respect the opinion and feelings of other students, instructor and guest speakers, even though those opinions and feelings might differ from students' own.
5. In accordance with the Indiana University School of Social Work grading policy, students must earn at a "C" to pass this course.
6. A formal evaluation of the course and its instructor will be completed at the end of the course, consistent with the School's academic policy.

Assignment Guidelines and Grading

Grading Criteria for Papers

Effective generalist social work practice requires good writing skills to communicate information accurately and concisely to others involved in helping client systems. For this reason, formal writing assignments in social work courses will be evaluated both for the content and ideas presented and for the clarity of that presentation. The grade for a paper will be based on the following criteria:

Presentation and Appearance

Neatness

Correct grammar, syntax (e.g., noun-verb agreement, sentence structure, proper and consistent verb tense, etc.)

Spelling

Punctuation

Correct usage of APA style

Organization

Structure and format of the paper

Logical sequencing and continuity of ideas

Clarity of expression

Conciseness

Content as indicated by specific paper assignment

All formal papers will be typed, double-spaced, and paginated. APA style is to be used, including in-text references and a reference page. APA manuals are available at the bookstore and would be a valuable resource in your library.

Writing Assistance

Students experiencing writing difficulties are advised to seek assistance at the University Writing Center in Room 427 of Cavanaugh Hall. Please call **274-2049** to schedule an appointment or drop by to pick up available written handouts

Americans with Disabilities Act Policies

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. This should be discussed with the instructor within the

first three (3) weeks of class. Adaptations of teaching methods and class materials, including text and reading materials or testing, will be made as needed to provide equitable participation.

Grade of Incomplete [excerpt]

The grade of Incomplete used on the final grade report indicates that a substantial portion of the course work has been satisfactorily but not entirely completed as of the end of the semester. The grade of Incomplete may be given only when the completed portion of the student's work in the course is of passing quality. Instructors may award the grade of Incomplete upon a showing of such hardship to a student as would render it unjust to hold the student to the time limits previously established for the completion of his or her work.

Should the faculty member agree to assign a grade of Incomplete, he or she also has the right to set a specific date (up to one year) by which all unfinished work must be completed.

.... Please note that by agreeing to assign a grade of Incomplete, the instructor is not required to give the student a year to finish the work. The instructor has the right to set a shorter-term deadline as deemed appropriate. ...

From Office of the Registrar Website: <http://registrar.iupui.edu/incomp.html>

**S422 Practice/Policy Seminar on Aging
Resource List**

Ellis, Neenah. *If I Live To Be 100: Lessons from the Centenarians*. (2002). NY: Crown Publishing.

Rosengarten, L. (2000). *Social work in Geriatric Health Care: The Blending of Traditional Practice with Cooperative Strategies*. NY: Haworth.

Schneider, R., Kropf, N., & Kiser, A (Eds.).(2000) *Gerontological Social Work*. (2nd ed.). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Scutton, S. (1999). *Counseling Older People: A Creative Response to Aging*. (2nd ed.). London: Arnold.

Sharlach, Andrew E. and Lenard W. Kaye. (1997). *Controversial Issues in Aging*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Mellor, M.J. (1998) The role of the social worker in interdisciplinary geriatric teams. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 30(3/4), 3-.

Holland, D. (2003). Prospective evaluation of a screen for complex discharge planning in hospitalized adults. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 51(5), 678-.

Cummings, S. (2002). Predictors of graduate social work students' interest in aging-related work. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 39(3), 7-.