1. COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will employ multicultural and critical perspectives to understand individuals, families, and their interpersonal and group relationships, life span development, and theories of well-being, stress, coping, and adaptation. This course will emphasize knowledge about individuals and small social systems and the implications of this knowledge for all domains of social work practice. Students will be introduced to the concepts of risk and protective factors, with relevant examples at the individual and small system levels. Students will also consider the implications of this knowledge for intervening in social problems and supporting rehabilitation once problems have developed. Major components of the course will be concerned with the processes of oppression, privilege, and discrimination and factors that help people and small social systems to change. The knowledge presented will include the interrelationships between smaller and larger social systems, and in particular, how biological factors and the larger social and physical environments shape and influence individual and family well-being.

2. COURSE CONTENT
Content will include selected theories of human behavior, human development, families and small groups, and individual and small system change. Students will consider the processes through which relevant concepts have been developed, the types of knowledge and data that inform different theories, and the current gaps and controversies in biological, behavioral, and social science knowledge and theory. Emphasis will be placed on similarities and differences related to human diversity and dynamics of oppression and privilege, including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation. In addition, this course will focus on how individual-level and small system-level factors and processes can facilitate attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, family characteristics, and
group processes that either promote multicultural human well-being and social justice or help to recreate inequities and problems.

3. COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Demonstrate knowledge about and be able to critically analyze relevant theories of human behavior, human development, families and small groups, and individual and small system change through the life course emphasizing similarities and differences and the effects of oppression and privilege.
2. Articulate the concepts of risk and protective factors and give examples at the individual, group, and family levels.
3. Describe the impact of diverse dimensions such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation on risk and protective factors, human development, human interactions, and the structures of small social systems.
4. Identify the interrelations among smaller and larger social systems and describe how biological factors and larger social and physical environments interact to influence individual and family well-being.
5. Describe how relevant concepts have been socially constructed, what knowledge and empirical evidence support selected theories, some current gaps in knowledge, and key controversies about these theories and related knowledge.
6. Conceptualize how individual and small system factors and processes can either promote multicultural human well-being or recreate inequities and problems.
7. Examine theories of individual, family, and group change and their relevance for all types of social work practice towards a multicultural and socially just world.
8. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to human differences, social relationships, well-being, and change through the life course.

4. COURSE DESIGN
The instructor for this course will select required and recommended readings. In addition, the instructor will include a range of pedagogical methods, such as participatory discussions, films, written assignments, and experiential exercises related to course materials. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

5. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO CURRICULAR THEMES
Multiculturalism & Diversity:
Students will examine the ways in which the diverse dimensions affect individuals and small social systems. Emphasis will also be placed on the processes of oppression, privilege, and discrimination, as well as the factors that help people and small social systems to change.

Social Justice and Social Change:
Students will analyze selected theories in terms of the factors and processes that either promote social justice and change or help to perpetuate inequities and problems.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation:
Students will learn about social problems, as well as the spectrum of interventions and supportive rehabilitation currently used to alleviate these problems.
Behavioral and Social Science Research:
Students will critically analyze relevant theories of human behavior, human development, families and small groups, and individual and small system change through the life course. The research supporting these theories will provide a foundation for the content in this course.

6. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES
As human development throughout the life course is so profoundly impacted by environmental and social conditions, this course will emphasize the critique and evaluation of various developmental theories from a multicultural perspective and a social justice perspective. This course will also consider potential ethical dilemmas that may arise for social workers working with individuals, families, and small groups. The impact of social conditions and social policy and the need for macro and micro intervention to improve the lives of clients will also be addressed.

7. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Academic Conduct and Integrity
Please see the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct in the Student Guide to the Master's in Social Work Degree Program (http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2007/) for a discussion of student responsibilities for academic conduct and integrity. Students who are found responsible for academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the School of Social Work, revocation of degree, or any other sanction deemed appropriate to address the violation.

B. Attendance and Participation (10% of your course grade)
Attendance at all classes is required. More than two absences may result in a lower grade. You are responsible for obtaining lecture notes and handouts from your classmates if a class is missed. You are expected to read the assigned readings prior to class each week and to actively participate in all class discussions and activities. In consideration of your classmates, please arrive on time and turn off cell phones, pagers, and all other potentially distracting devices during class. If you are on call, please set your pager to vibrate.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
If you need accommodation for a disability or other special need, please let me know so that we can work out the necessary arrangements.

Religious Observances
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.


C. Assignments (All written assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced using a 12-point font and one inch margins, and submitted on time. APA style should be used (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 5th ed (2001). Washington, D.C.: Author).

1) Multidimensional Assessment (40%)--write a paper in which you apply a multidimensional framework to evaluate the social functioning of a current or former client. A proposal for your assessment is due on November 4. The final paper is due on December 9. (Detailed instructions in a separate handout.)

2) Critical Analysis Assignment (10% each). Choose two articles from the required reading list and write a critique of each. Post the critique on CTools 48 hours prior to the corresponding class session. (Detailed instructions in a separate handout.)

3) Presentations of the Critique (10% each). Present your critique to the class, in collaboration with the other students who chose the same article to critique.

4) Final Exam (10%)—Exam questions will be posted on CTools on December 10. Submit answers via CTools, by December 16. The questions will require you to apply course content to written case material or scenario. You will find instructions related to the technical and ethical aspects of taking the exam when receiving the questions.

D. Grading
Letter grades from "A" through "E" are given for class performance. "A" grades are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of "A+", "A", and "A-" distinguish the degree of superiority. "B" grades are given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material. "B+" is used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. "B-" is used for students just below the mastery level. "C" grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal. A "C-" is the lowest grade which carries credit. "D" grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit. "E" grades indicate failure and carry no credit.

8. REQUIRED TEXT AND ARTICLES

Required articles are available on our course website in CTools.

Other readings, in addition to those listed in this syllabus, may be assigned. They will be announced and posted on CTools.
9. COURSE CALENDAR AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
This schedule is preliminary; any changes will be announced in class and on CTools in advance of the session.

September 9: Introduction and Overview
No assigned readings.

September 16: Multidimensional Approach to Assessment in Social Work
Chapter 1 of text

September 23: Biophysical Development and Functioning
Chapter 2 of text

September 30: Psychological Development and Functioning
Chapter 3 of text

October 7: Social Systems and Human Development
Chapter 4 of text
October 14: Preconception, Pregnancy, Birth, and the Newborn

Chapter 5 of text


Life’s Greatest Miracle (PBS online program):

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/miracle/program.html

October 21: Infancy

Chapter 6 of text


October 28: No class - I will be away

November 4: Early Childhood

Chapter 7 of text


November 11: Middle Childhood

Chapter 8 of text

Monks C. P. et al. (2009). Bullying in different contexts: Commonalities, differences and the role of theory. Aggression and violent behavior, 14, 146-156.

**November 18: Adolescence**

*Chapter 9 of text*


*Inside the teenage brain (PBS online program)*
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/view/

**November 25: Young Adulthood** (might have to adjust for Thanksgiving departures)

*Chapter 10 of text*


**December 2: Middle Adulthood**

*Chapter 11 of text*


**December 9: Late Adulthood**

*Chapter 12 of text*
