SW521-02. Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups

WINTER 2012

Time: Wednesdays 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
Location: SSWB B760

Professor Mieko Yoshihama, Ph.D., LMSW, ACSW  
Office hours: Wednesdays 5pm-6pm & Thursdays 12 noon – 1pm and by appt.  
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Course Description:
This course presents generalist social work foundation knowledge and skills essential to interpersonal practice while considering the community, organizational, and policy contexts in which social workers practice. It integrates content on multiculturalism, diversity, and social justice issues, and it relies on the historical, contextual, and social science knowledge presented concurrently in the foundation SWPS and HBSE courses. The student's field experience and future practice methods courses will build upon the skills presented in this basic course. Throughout this course, students examine social work values and ethics as well as issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, religion, and ability as these relate to interpersonal practice.

Course Content:
This course builds a base from social science theories of ecological/systems theory; social role theory; and stress, trauma and coping theory which inform the practice concepts and skills taught in this course. Students learn how to perform various generalist social work roles (i.e. counselor, group facilitator, mediator, broker, and advocate), recognizing that these roles must be based on the adherence to social work values and ethics. Students learn the importance of developing relationships with clients, colleagues, supervisors, other professionals, and many other constituencies that make up the organizations in which they work. Students also learn how self-awareness and the conscious use of self affect the helping relationship and how to apply practice skills such as active listening, empathic responding, contracting, critical and creative thinking in practice.

In this course all phases of the IP treatment process (i.e. engagement, assessment, evaluation, planning, intervention, and termination) are presented and applied to generalist social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups. Students learn how to assess various role problems and stressful events/conditions in clients' lives that relate to attributes (e.g. 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) as well as situational and environmental factors relevant to the client's social functioning.

Students learn how to assess risks, strengths and limitations, and to plan, implement and monitor change strategies. Students learn how to apply various evaluation techniques (such as Hudson scales, SUDS, etc.) in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of change efforts. In subsequent IP courses, more emphasis will be placed on specialized assessment procedures, evaluation protocols, treatment interventions, and termination issues.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of this course, students using a generalist social work practice framework will be able to:
1) Describe ecological-systems, bio-psycho-social, problem solving, structural, and pathology versus strengths based frameworks in practice with individuals, families, and small groups and critique the strengths and weakness of these various frameworks.

2) Recognize the impact of race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, power and privilege on interpersonal practice by:
   a. Demonstrating self-awareness about how their attributes and life experiences impact on their capacity to relate to others with different personal attributes and life experiences.
   b. Describing how others who are very different may perceive them and how status and power issues impact professional relationships with clients, colleagues, and other professions.
   c. Recognizing the role of privilege in one's ability to assess needs and intervene in the helping process.

3) Carry out the roles of advocate, broker, counselor, group facilitator, and mediator and assess the appropriateness of these roles in context.

4) Demonstrate basic interpersonal practice skills including active listening, empathic responding, critical/creative thinking, case recording, and contracting.

5) Conduct culturally sensitive and culturally competent interpersonal practice by:
   a. Engaging diverse client systems
   b. Employing assessment protocols of PIE, ecomaps, genograms, network maps, and group composition
   c. Articulating treatment goals, developing measurable treatment objectives, and employing measurement tools to monitor and evaluate practice while maintaining sensitivity to the special needs of clients.
   d. Implementing treatment protocols consistent with treatment plans, current evidence based practice and sensitive to clients' situations
   e. Recognizing basic termination issues that pertain to interpersonal practice

6) Operationalize the NASW code of ethics and other ethical codes, and recognize value dilemmas that emerge in interpersonal practice.

Course Design:
This course employs a number of pedagogical strategies to promote skill development such as: gamed simulations, case analysis, interactive media simulations, exercises in vivo, practice within the classroom through role playing, didactic presentation of theory/models/procedures, etc.

Relationships to Curricular Themes
Multiculturalism and Diversity are included in the topics of relationship building, communication, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation. These topics explore how the differences between worker and client impact and shape these critical dimensions of social work practice. Critical consciousness about power imbalances between worker and client and between client and agency are explored.

Social Justice and Social Change are central to the topic of various roles assumed by social workers and in the clienthood process in social agencies. The focus of the course is on small system change (individual, families, and groups) but the larger social context and implications for change is reflected in PIE, ecological assessment, and in the experience of applicants as they enter social agencies. These themes are integrated into this course through the use of case examples and case scenarios that will be selected by the instructor to exemplify skills in practice.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation are themes reflected in various purposes and models of contemporary social work practice. In addition, this course emphasizes skills that can be implemented with promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation as practice goals and outcomes.

Behavioral and Social Science Research is reflected in the theoretical base developed in this course to support practice methods, skills and assessment procedures.

Relationship to Social Work Ethics and Values
Social work ethics and values are addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working
with clients and colleagues. The NASW Code of Ethics and other ethical codes are presented to give
students direction about these ethical issues. In particular, this course focuses on client issues, such as
confidentiality, privacy, rights and prerogatives of clients, the client’s best interest, proper and improper
relationships with clients, cultural sensitivity and competence.

Text Book & Course Reader
Required texts:
• Other required readings will be available at the CTools course site.

Recommended books and readings:
  Norton & Co.
• Other recommended readings will be available at the CTools course site.

Course Schedule Overview
Session 1 (1/4)   Introduction to the Course and Social Work Practice
Mission, Purposes and Roles of (direct) Social Work Practice
Ecological Systems Model and Person-In-Environment

Session 2 (1/11).  Historical Evolution, Philosophies, Values, & Ethics
Culturally Relevant/Competent, Multi-Level Practice

Session 3 (1/18).  Overview of Helping Processes
Relationship-Building and Listening

Session 4 (1/25). Relationship Sustaining & Enhancing

Session 5 (2/1). Multidimensional Assessment

Session 6 (2/8). Multidimensional Assessment & First Interviews

Session 7 (2/15). Multidimensional Assessment

Session 8 (2/22). Assessment of Families

2/29/11 Spring Break

Session 9 (3/7). Formulation of Intervention Goals, Plans and Contract

Session 10 (3/14). Self Awareness, Self Care, Critical Reflection

Session 11 (3/21). Forming and Conducting Groups

Session 12 (3/28). On-going, Change-Oriented Professional Action +

Session 13 (4/4). Students’ Group Presentations

Session 14 (4/11). Monitoring, Evaluation, Termination & Integration/Celebration
Course Requirements
The University of Michigan expects a student to put in a minimum of two hours weekly preparation for each credit awarded in a graduate/professional school. Thus, you are expected to spend a minimum of six hours per week of preparation for this class. The assignments in this class have been developed to help the student systematically strengthen social work knowledge and practice skills and to enable the student to achieve successfully the goals and objectives of the course.

A Note on Scholarly Discourse
What we will discuss in the class involves controversial issues, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, immigration, and sexual orientation. All of us come to this course with various experiences and values, as well as assumptions, prejudices, and stereotypes. Disagreements are expected and even welcomed as long as we respect diverse opinions and perspectives and refrain from attacking one another personally. Let us strive to remain open to diverse perspectives, which may conflict with our own.

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES (see pp. 11-12 for more detail)
We will be using a mastery-based, not a competitive, grading system. In other words, the grade you get will not depend on how well others in the class have done, but on how well you have mastered the materials.

1. Class Attendance, Participation & Reflection Papers 15%
2. Positionality Paper 15% Due Session 4, 1/25/12
3. Tape Recording & Critique of a First Interview 20% Due 2/17/12
4. Group Presentations 20% During Session 13, 4/4/12
5. Assessment & Intervention Plan Paper* 30% Due Session 14, 4/11/12

* Details of the assignments are presented in class

For Tape Recording & Critique of a First Interview and Group Presentations, you are encouraged to share your ideas and plans in advance with your instructor.

Grading: Letter grades ranging from “A” to “E” are earned, with “+” or “-” distinguishing the degree of performance. Specific expectations for each assignment are provided in a later section of this syllabus.

Accommodations: Any student who feels that he/she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment to see me as soon as possible.

Class Attendance & Participation: This class involves a wide range of experiential learning exercises, and therefore, class attendance and participation are critical to achieving the full impact of the course. You are expected to actively participate in class discussions, small group discussions, and various in-class exercises, some of which will require submitting a written report at the end of the class. Class attendance will be taken at random, and any unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. You need to inform the instructor of your absence as soon as practical.

If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information is kept confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office at G664 Haven Hall, G-664 Haven Hall, 505 South State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045, TEL 734-763-3000, http://ssd.umich.edu/. Email ssoffice@umich.edu.

If you have difficulties participating in discussion for linguistic, cultural or other reasons, let’s discuss them individually and explore ways in which you may become a more active participant in class.

Incompletes: Incompletes are given only when it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the stated time limits of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.
SELF and GROUP CARE
The course topics and materials have the potential to elicit distress, anxiety, a sense of helplessness, rage, and other strong and/or traumatic reactions. While these reactions are common and natural, they may be intense and may interfere with your personal and academic life. It is important to recognize your reactions (in other words, do not deny them, but explore and develop ways to process them). We as a group will acknowledge and address our reactions through class discussions, reflective writings and other means. I hope we can create a mutually supportive learning environment for all of us in the class.

If you experience a persistent and increasing sense of distress, anxiety, or trauma, it is important to seek assistance. The following are some of the resources available on and off campus. The instructor is happy to assist you in locating any additional resources you may need.

- UM Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). 734-764-8312; http://www.umich.edu/~caps/
- UM Medical Center Psychiatric Emergency Services. 734-996-4747; 734-936-5900 (Crisis phone service, 24 hour/7 days); http://www.psych.med.umich.edu/pes/
- UM Sexual Assault Prevention & Awareness Center (SAPAC). 734-998-9368, 734-936-3333 (Crisis line); 800-649-3777 (MRC); http://www.umich.edu/~sapac/
- UM Center for Education of Women. 734-764-6005; http://www.umich.edu/~cew/
ASSIGNED READINGS

Session 1 (1/4)  Introduction to the Course and Social Work Practice
Mission, Purposes and Roles of (direct) Social Work Practice
Ecological Systems Model and Person-In-Environment

Required:
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 1 Challenges of Social Work (pp. 4-6; 15-18)
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 2 Roles of direct practitioners (pp. 26-31)

Recommended:

Session 2 (1/11).  Historical Evolution, Philosophies, Values, & Ethics
Culturally Relevant/Competent, Multi-Level Practice

Required:
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 1 Challenges of social work (pp. 6-14)
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 2 Direct practice: Domain, philosophy and roles (pp. 23-26)
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 4 Operationalizing the cardinal social work values (pp. 53-76)
- NASW Code of Ethics. (Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2008 NASW Delegate Assembly)

Recommended:

Session 3 (1/18).  Overview of Helping Processes
Relationship-Building and Listening

Required:
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 3 Overview of helping processes (pp. 33-42).
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 5 Building blocks of communication: Communication with empathy and authenticity (pp. 88-122).


**Recommended:**


**Session 4 (1/25). Relationship Sustaining & Enhancing**

**Required:**

- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 6 *Verbal following, exploring and focusing skills*.
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 7 *Eliminating counterproductive communication patterns*.

**Recommended:**


**Session 5 (2/1). Multidimensional Assessment**

**Required:**

- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 8 *Assessment: Exploring and understanding problems and strengths*.

**Recommended:**


**Session 5 (2/8). Multidimensional Assessment & First Interviews**

**Required:**

- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 3 *The interviewing process: Structure and skills* (pp. 42-51).

**Recommended:**


**Session 7 (2/15). Multidimensional Assessment**

**Required:**

Recommended:

Session 8 (2/22). Assessment of Families
Required:
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 10 Assessing family functioning in diverse family and cultural contexts.

Recommended:

Spring Break (2/29)

Session 9 (3/7). Formulation of Intervention Goals, Plans and Contract
Required:
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 12 Developing goals and formulating a contract (pp. 303-351).

Recommended:
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 14 Developing resources, organizing, planning, and advocacy as intervention strategies (pp. 411-454)

Session 10 (3/14). Self Awareness, Self Care, Critical Reflection
Required:

Read one or more of the following:

Recommended:

Session 11 (3/21). Forming and Conducting Groups  
**Required:**
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 11 *Forming and conducting group*
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 16 *Intervening in social work group*

**Recommended:**

Session 12 (3/28). On-going, Change-Oriented Professional Action +  
**Required:**
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 17 *Additive empathy, interpretation, and confrontation*
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 18 *Managing barriers to change*

**Recommended:**
- Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 15 *Enhancing family relationships*

Session 13 (4/4). Students’ Group Presentations  
**Required:**
- (n.a.). Understanding privilege.

**Recommended:**

Session 14 (4/11). Monitoring, Evaluation, Termination & Integration/Celebration

Required:
• Hepworth et al. (2010). Chap. 19 The final phase: Evaluation and termination
• Review Hepworth et al. (2010). Chapter 12 Measurement and evaluation (pp. 331-341)

Recommended:
• How to figure out when therapy is over. NYT, October 30, 2007
ASSIGNMENTS

Guidelines for Written Assignments

All written assignments will be evaluated for organization, clarity, and written quality, as well as for substantive content. In addition, they must:

- Be typed and double-spaced.
- Page number on each page.
- Be submitted via Ctools Drop Box by 6 pm on the due date (late papers will result in the deduction of 1/2 a letter grade).
- Follow an established academic convention for organization, pagination, footnoting, and bibliographic references (e.g., APA style). Papers that do not comply with an established convention will be returned, and a penalty for late submission will be applied.
- Consult the Student Guide to make sure you are citing others’ work appropriately and not committing plagiarism.

1. Class Attendance, Participation & Reflection Papers (15%)

You need to come to class well-prepared, which means doing all the readings and identifying issues for which you need clarification or further exploration. You are expected to actively participate in class discussion, small group discussion and various in-class exercises (e.g., role-plays).

At the end of each class, you will write and submit a short reflection of your learning. Some of the reflections will be shared anonymously in the class to aid mutual learning.

2. Positionality Paper. 3-5 typed pages (15%). Due 1/25/12

Based on the social identity inventory (to be provided in class), you create an imaginary client who least embodies who and what you are socio-culturally. Imagine you are asked to work with that person. Explore and discuss the nature of your feelings and thoughts (both positive and negative) as well as difficulties you may experience and how you might deal with them inside and outside the session. In addition, explore and discuss what might be possible reactions by the client and how you might address them.

3. Tape Recording & Critique (2-3 pages) of a First Interview (20%). Due 2/17/12

1) Ask an acquaintance, friend or distant family member (AVOID your own partner, child, parent. or sibling) to play the role of a distressed client who comes to see you for the first time. The less well-acquainted you are with your “client,” the better. You might want to pair up with another social work student whom you don’t know that well. Conduct a 10-15 min. taped interview with this person. Your interview begins from the very first contact you make with the client (e.g., introducing yourself). Focus on relationship building and preliminary exploration of the client’s feelings and presenting problem(s).

2) Listen to the tape and discuss your feelings and thoughts (e.g., you did X and felt Y; you asked X because you thought Y). Reflect upon and analyze the use of (or lack of) relationship building skills, e.g., empathy, active listening.

- You need to submit both the tape and written critique.
4. Group Presentation (20%). 4/4/12 (in class)

Objectives: The goal of this group role-play project is to increase the students’ sensitivity and competence in working with clients from various socio-cultural backgrounds.

Role play is a format for your group to demonstrate competency in interpersonal practice with diverse populations. Role-play—its preparation and presentation—represents integration of readings, lectures, in-class exercises and discussions, and personal and collective reflections.

One of the best ways to assess whether you understand a given concept or master a specific skill is how well you can teach it to others. Thus, I encourage you to approach to this group role-play as though you were teaching your fellow students. Think about what aspects of social work processes you want to emphasize if you were to teach the introduction to interpersonal practice and had only 10-15 minutes to do so.

You and your group members will create and present a skit (in-class role play of a social worker and a client(s) (10-15 min) which addresses:

* specific aspects of the social work values, e.g., acceptance, empathy, authenticity, self-determination,
* specific aspects of social work skills e.g., active listening, verbal following
* barriers to effective worker-client relationships, e.g., socio-cultural differences

Procedures
1. Form a pair or small group with other student(s) in the class. Ensure that your partner/group members differ(s) from you in some aspect, e.g., gender, ethnicity, race, class, age group, sexual orientation, (dis)abilities.
2. Select aspects of social work processes and identify socio-cultural differences between the worker and the client(s) and other barriers to effective intervention. The role play should address the application of specific interpersonal practice skills in dealing with such barriers and their underlying professional values (e.g., why specific approaches are recommended). Single or multiple types of skills may be applicable and relevant.
3. Prepare for an in-class role play of a social worker and a client or clients (10-15 min). Explore creative ways in which you can highlight and articulate the above issues within the short amount of time available, e.g. contrasting effective and ineffective ways of working, interspersing personal reflections, using narration, handouts, overhead, etc.

* The role play will be videotaped and followed by debriefing/reflection and class feedback.

Note
1) Social work processes may include the preparation, the initial contact and/or relation-building, preliminary assessment, active working phase, etc.; see Hepworth et al. for more details.
2) Specific skills used in interpersonal practice include relationship-building skills, verbal following, exploring, focusing, etc.; see Hepworth et al. for more details.

5. Assessment & Intervention Plan Paper (30%). Due 4/11/12
You will watch a video-taped interview and develop a multi-dimensional assessment and plan for intervention. Detailed guidelines for the paper will be provided in class.
SW521 WINTER 2012 Student Profile

Name: ___________________________ Phone (_____) __________________

E-mail: ___________________________ Current Address (City) __________________

Where (city, state, country) are you from? ___________________________

Area of Concentration or Undergrad. Major ___________________________

Practice Method: Major: IP  CO  MHS  SPE Minor (if any): IP  CO  MHS  SPE

First Year or Second Year?  1    2  Track: 16mos. 20mos. AS  ED  PT

Field Placement (if any) ___________________________

Reason(s) for choosing Social Work ___________________________

Please list any undergraduate and graduate degrees:

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Please list any previous “Social Work” experiences (please circle ones that are related to interpersonal practice):

| 1.                     |                    |
| 2.                     |                    |
| 3.                     |                    |
| 4.                     |                    |

Please describe your reason(s) for taking this course.

Please list two objectives you have for this course:

| 1.                     |                    |
| 2.                     |                    |

Anything else about you that you want the instructor to know?