SW 521 - Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups
Fall 2012, Section 006; Mondays 5:00-8:00 PM
Tony Alvarez, MSW, LMSW
2760 SSWB O: (734) 635-6508
Office Hours: M: 12-2pm, (Other days and times possible by appointment)
E-mail: aalvarez@umich.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course presents 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 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 work 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 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 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 multiple social worker roles (e.g. advocate, broker, counselor, 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 will employ a number of pedagogical strategies to promote skill development including the engagement/participation in experiential/adventure experiences, case analysis, interactive media simulations, practice within the classroom through role playing, didactic presentation of theory/models/procedures, etc.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

Multiculturalism and Diversity is 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 OF THE COURSE TO 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.

INTENSIVE FOCUS STATEMENT ON PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION, DIVERSITY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (PODS)

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

This course presents 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, social justice, and social change 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, religion, and ability as these relate to interpersonal practice.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, student performance evaluations (e.g., exams) and the way the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier you make me aware of your needs the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, Sweetland Writing Center, and
the like. If you do decide to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. Also, please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

REQUIRED TEXT
None required. Readings and other resources will be posted on our CTools site

TOPICAL OUTLINE
Cluster I: Session 1-4 Understanding our Context
Introduction; CTE; Defining Social Work Interpersonal Practice; Social Work Interpersonal Practice Frameworks; Values and Ethics in Interpersonal Practice; Diversity in IP: Working with Differences

Cluster 2: Session 5-8 Assessment and Planning
Knowledge and Skills for Assessment and Planning; Exploring and Understanding Problems and Strengths; Assessing Family Functioning in Diverse Family and Cultural Contexts

Cluster 3: Session 9-11 Taking Action
The Change-Oriented Phase; Intervening in Social Work Groups; Managing Barriers to Change; Knowledge and Skills for Monitoring and Evaluation

Cluster 4: Session 12-13 Evaluating our Actions
Self Care in Practice/ Termination
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1 (09-10)</td>
<td><strong>Cluster 1: Understanding our Context</strong></td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introductions; Creating our desired environment; Defining IP,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2 (09-17)</td>
<td>The Helping Process; Social Work values,</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3 (09-24)</td>
<td>IP frameworks, (including The Experiential Wave)</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 3 Assignment 1: Values Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4 (10/1)</td>
<td>Diversity, Critical Consciousness; Working with Differences</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 4 Assignment 2: My Cultural DNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5 (10-8)</td>
<td><strong>Cluster 2: Learning Assessment and Planning</strong></td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic interviewing, Strengths/Areas for improvement</td>
<td>Assignment 3: Helping Model Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 6 (10-22)</td>
<td>Goals and objectives; Seeking commitment,</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 6 Assignment 4: 4-Corners Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 7 (10-29)</td>
<td><strong>Class Will Not Meet</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 8 (11-5)</td>
<td>The Matching Process</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 8 Assignment 5: Learning to Listen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 9 (11-12)</td>
<td><strong>Cluster 3: Taking Action</strong></td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Interventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 10 (11-19)</td>
<td>Group interventions</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 10 Assignment 6: Observation Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 11 (11-26)</td>
<td>Family interventions</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 12 (12-3)</td>
<td><strong>Cluster 4: Evaluating our Actions</strong></td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 12 Assignment 7: An Action Plan Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 13(12-10)</td>
<td>Termination; Evaluation</td>
<td>CTools Site- Session 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>