

**Winter 2013**

**Social Work 521:** Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families and Small Groups

Richard M. Tolman

Wednesday, 9:10 a.m.-12 Noon, Classroom: B760 SSWB

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**OFFICE HOURS:** By appointment; I will also schedule some online chats to discuss class material, assignments and other issues arising from the class time. I hope to meet individually with each student in person at least once this semester.

### **1. Course Description:**

This course presents generalist 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.

### **2. 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.

### **3. Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students using a generalist social work practice framework will be able to:

- 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.
- Recognize the impact of race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, power and privilege on interpersonal practice by:
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - Recognizing the role of privilege in one's ability to assess needs and intervene in the helping process.
- Carry out the roles of advocate, broker, counselor, group facilitator, and mediator and assess the appropriateness of these roles in context.
- Demonstrate basic interpersonal practice skills including active listening, empathic responding, critical/creative thinking, case recording, and contracting.
- Conduct culturally sensitive and culturally competent interpersonal practice by:
  - Engaging diverse client systems
  - Employing assessment protocols of PIE, ecomaps, genograms, network maps, and group composition
  - 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.
  - Implementing treatment protocols consistent with treatment plans, current evidence based practice and sensitive to clients' situations
  - Recognizing basic termination issues that pertain to interpersonal practice.
- Operationalize the NASW code of ethics and other ethical codes, and recognize value dilemmas that emerge in interpersonal practice.

### **4. Course Design:**

This course will employ a number of pedagogical strategies to promote skill development such as: simulations, case analysis, interactive media simulations, exercises in vivo, practice within the classroom through role playing, didactic presentation of theory/models/procedures, modeling with demonstration on video, etc.

### **5. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:**

**Multiculturalism & 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** is 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 & 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.

**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.

#### REQUIRED TEXT

Hepworth, D H., Rooney, R. H., Dewberry-Rooney, G. Strom-Gottfried, K. & Larsen, J.A. (2012). *Direct Social Work Practice: Theory and Skills* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

*We will use the e-version of the text. It comes packaged with access to video examples, quizzes and other features we will use. You can download chapters for printing if you wish or for reading offline. You are welcome to buy a paper text version of the book as well if you prefer but the cost is higher. You should purchase the bundled Coursemate version so you have access to videos, quizzes and other features. The text can be ordered online at: <http://www.cengagebrain.com/micro/Tolman>*

#### **Learning Needs and 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 and the way that the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier that 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, 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

## **Session 1-January 9**

### **Introduction**

#### **Overview of Interpersonal Practice**

- Class Introductions
- Course Overview and Preparation
- Class Groundrules
- Preparing yourself for interpersonal practice
- Setting learning goals

## **Session 2 January 16**

### **Foundational Concepts**

#### **Ethics**

Chapter 1: The Challenges of Social Work

Chapter 2: Direct Practice: Domain, Philosophy, and Roles

Chapter 3: Overview of the Helping Process

Chapter 4: Operationalizing the Cardinal Social Work Values

National Association of Social Workers, <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

International Social Work Code of Ethics, <http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000015.html>

## **Session 3- January 23**

### **Relationship-Building Skills**

Chapter 5: Building Blocks of Communication: Communicating with Empathy and Authenticity

## **Session 4- Jan. 30**

### **Interviewing Skills**

Chapter 6: Verbal Following, Exploring and Focusing Skills;

Chapter 7: Eliminating Counterproductive Communication Patterns

## **Session 5- Feb. 6**

### **Assessing Intrapersonal and Environmental Systems**

Chapter 8: Assessment: Exploring and Understanding Problems and Strengths

See additional readings on ctools.

## **Session 6- Feb. 13**

### **Assessment in crisis, life-endangering and abusive situations**

Chapter 9: Assessment: Intrapersonal and Environmental Factors

See additional readings and resources on ctools.

Gilgun, J. F. (2005) "An Ecosystemic Approach to Assessment," in Compton, B., Gallaway, B. & Cournoyer, B. R., *Social Work Processes*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. CA: Brooks/Cole, pp. 349-360.

Newhill, C. (2003). Client Violence in Social Work Practice: Prevention, Intervention, and Research, New York: Guilford Press, Chapters 5 & 6, "Risk Factors" & "The Risk Assessment of Violent Clients," pp. 88-118 & 121-146.

Basile KC, Hertz MF, Back SE. Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence Victimization Assessment Instruments for Use in Healthcare Settings: Version 1. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2007.

*Simulation 1: Practice Assessment and Engagement*

**Session 7- Feb. 20**

**Negotiating Goals and Contracting, Task-centered approach**

Chapter 12: Negotiating Goals and Formulating a Contract

*Simulation 2: Assessment for ongoing client-*

*\*note that sessions 2 and 3 for your simulations will be arranged to take place outside of class between Feb. 21 and March 27.*

**Session 8- Feb. 27**

Planning and Implement Change-Oriented Strategies

- Motivational interviewing
- Solution focused methods

Chapter 13: Planning and Implementing Change-Oriented Strategies

Also: Cormier, S., Nurius, P.S., Osborn, C. J. (2009). Interviewing and change strategies for helpers. Belmont: Ca: Brooks/Cole. Chapter 18, Strategies for working with resistance: Solution-focused therapy and motivational interviewing. Pp. 562-601

**Session 9- March 13**

Cognitive-behavioral intervention

Also: Cormier, S., Nurius, P. S., Osborn, C. J. (2009). Chapter 13, Cognitive change and cognitive restructuring strategies. Pp. 382-415.

See additional resources on c-tools.

**Session 10 March 20**

- Individual intervention continued.
- Assessment, Planning: Groups

Chapter 11: Forming and Assessing Social Work Groups

**Session 11 March 27**

- Intervention-Groups

Chapter 16: Intervening in Social Work Groups

**Session 12: April 3**

**Assessment, Planning and Intervention: Families**

Chapter 10: Assessing Family Functioning in Diverse Family and Cultural Contexts

Chapter 15: Enhancing Family Relationship

*Simulation: Group Session*

**Session 13: April 10**

**Endings**

Chapter 19: The Final Phase: Evaluation and Termination

*Simulation: Family simulation*

**Session 14 April 17**

**Putting it all together**

- **Integration with macro strategies**
- **Putting it all together**
- **Final reflections**

Required reading:

Chapter 14: Developing Resources, Planning, and Advocacy as Intervention Strategies

**Assignments**

*All assignments will be submitted on c-tools with the exception of quizzes and final examination. You should paste assignments into the c-tools submission box and attach a document version as well. Due dates listed on c-tools are the binding dates. All assignments will have more detailed guidelines as attachments on c-tools as well as examples to guide you.*

**Assessment, Goal-Setting and Intervention Planning and Reflection on Engagement- 35%**

This paper is a three-part assignment based on your first two simulated client sessions. First, you will write a detailed bio-psycho-social assessment of your client. Second, you will describe the goal-setting process you have engaged in with your client and detail a tentative plan for intervention, including a specific plan for your third client session. Finally, you will reflect on your engagement and interview skills for the first two interview sessions. A more detailed rubric and examples will be distributed to guide you on this assignment.

Approximately 6-8 pages.

### **Case Summary-30%**

In this paper, you will summarize your work with your simulated client. In the form of a transfer summary—as if your client was going to continue with another social worker--describe the progress through your three sessions with the client. Evaluate your work with this client. How well did you engage the client, contribute to the client's motivation, and help them set appropriate goals? What intervention techniques did you use? How appropriate was the choice of those techniques? How effectively did you implement the intervention? What issues remain for this client? What next steps should be considered? Identify a segment from your video recordings that illustrates your most effective work and a segment that you feel needed improvement. Discuss your choice of each segment. A more detailed rubric and example will be distributed to guide you. Approximately 6-8 pages

### **Final reflection -15%**

Your final reflection provides the opportunity to review, integrate and deepen your learning for the semester. Suggested reflective prompts will be provided but you will not be limited to only those prompts. Creativity in your reflection is highly encouraged. Approximately 4-6 pages.

### **Participation and Active Engagement-10%**

**Class attendance is mandatory** as we will spend most of our class time doing activities that cannot be replicated outside of our class session. Missing more than two class sessions could jeopardize your ability to complete the class with a passing grade. Please inform me of any anticipated absences before the class session. If you miss unexpectedly, I will expect an email with an explanation for your absence. If you miss more than two class sessions, we will meet to discuss a plan for making up missed work or repeating the course. I expect you to get to class on time.

**Active engagement** in class can be demonstrated in several ways, some examples are: participation in discussion, volunteering for in-class exercises, bringing experiences or problems from field or other settings to class discussion, sharing techniques or information with class members, thoughtfully processing classroom experiences, taking risks in sustaining dialogue on difficult issues that arise in class. **Problems with engagement** include checking cell phones in non-emergency situations in class, using a personal computer or other device for any purpose other than note-taking or class exercises that require the device. I may ask you in class to turn off your device or to explain your use of a device if it appears it is not being used to support engagement in the classroom activities.

**You will reflect on your participation in your final reflection paper and that will provide a basis for evaluating and crediting your class participation.**

### **Final exam-10%**

This will be a comprehensive examination based on the text. It will be an in-class exam during final examination week. Alternatively, you can take the weekly online quizzes based on reading prior to class. If you score 80% or higher on the quizzes, you will not have to take the final examination and will receive full points for the final.

## Notes on Grading

All assignments earn points, which total to 100. The final grading scale is:

**A+ = 98-100, A = 94-97, A- = 91-93, B+ = 88-90, B = 83-87, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79,**

**C = 72-76, C- = 70-72; not passing = <70**

I strive to give substantive feedback on each assignment, and to use my comments as a way to continue to have a dialogue about what you are learning in the class. I may not give specific feedback about why an assignment didn't get a perfect score. For example if an assignment is worth 25 points and I give you a 23 (~an A) instead of 25 (an A+), I may not have written any negative feedback because a paper needn't have any major flaws to earn a lower A or A-. But if you ever have any questions or concerns about the grading, please contact me to talk more about it.