COURSE TITLE: Advanced Topics in Social Work: An Africentric Approach to Interpersonal Practice with African American Families

Winter 2014

COURSE NUMBER: 713 (Section 003)
CREDIT HOURS: 3
PREREQUISITES: INTP 521, Comparable course or permission of instructor
METHODS TYPE: Advanced IP Methods, Elective
INSTRUCTOR: Leslie Doty Hollingsworth, PhD, ACSW, LMSW
CLASS MEETS: Tuesdays, 6:00PM-9:00PM
PLACE: 3816 SSWB
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OFFICE HOURS: Mondays, 10:45AM-12Noon or by appointment.

SYLLABUS OUTLINE

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will apply African-centered values and principles in historical and contemporary context to the implementation of methods in interpersonal practice with African American families. The course is bounded by a strengths and resilience framework in which students will 1) obtain an overview of the African worldview and the history, culture, and contributions to world civilization of African-descended people; 2) become familiar with literature that exemplifies the integration of the Africentric perspective in practice with African American families; and 3) utilize the case study method to apply knowledge gained. Throughout the course, students examine 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 with African American families.

COURSE CONTENT:
This course builds on theoretical and practice-related concepts associated with African-centered social work and African psychology. African American families are considered as having their source in the highest forms of health and excellence. Behavioral and social problems are understood within the context of the social devastation suffered historically and contemporarily by African descended people throughout the diaspora. Therapeutic intervention involves a cleansing of these effects and a return to families’ original inspirational source of health and excellence.
COURSE OBJECTIVES:
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Summarily describe the historical contributions of African people to world civilization.
2. Explain the African worldview and its components
3. Explain the Africentric perspective including:
   a. The concept of Maat and its historical and contemporary meaning.
   b. The concept of the Maafa and the way it is reflected in the problems presented by families of African descent who seek or are referred for interpersonal social work practice services.
   c. The concept of Sankofa and the way it is reflected in the history and progression of African descended people.
   d. The Nguzo Saba.
4. Explain African-centered (black experience-based) social work and its relation to African psychology.
5. List and describe the origin and principles underlying the Ntu model of psychotherapy and their relation to traditional African values.
6. List and describe the phases of the Ntu model of psychotherapy.
7. Apply the Ntu model in interpersonal social work practice with African American families, including
   a. Engaging
   b. Assessing
   c. Planning
   d. Intervening
   e. Evaluating, and
   f. Terminating the intervention relationship.
8. Describe the empirical basis of the Ntu model specifically and Africentric models broadly as they have been applied in at least one problem area or practice area surrounding African American families.

COURSE DESIGN:
The course will be offered in a seminar format in which students have an active role in structuring their own learning, building on content delivered by instructor and guest lecturers and utilizing relevant reading materials (placed on CTools), experiential activities, and electronic media. In-class activities will build on extensive pre-class work. The course is divided into two general modules – the first focusing on the Africentric perspective (African and African American history, culture, and worldview) and the second focusing specifically on interpersonal (clinical) practice with African American families using an Africentric model.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO THE SCHOOLS’ FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES AND TO SOCIAL WORK VALUES AND ETHICS:
Multiculturalism & Diversity is included in the topics of relationship building, communication, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation. These topics explore how the difference 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 (individuals, families, and groups) but the larger social context and implications for change is reflected in 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 and with and regarding African American clients in particular. The NASW Code of Ethics and other ethical codes are available to give students direction about these ethical issues. In particular, this course focuses on personal and social issues as they have implications for African American clients in particular. Examples of such issues are confidentiality, privacy, client rights and prerogatives, the client’s best interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, and sensitivity to the culture of African American clients and to their own competence as sources of knowledge and experience in African and African American culture.

Required Readings:
This book contains information that will be useful throughout the course and afterwards. Although more recent editions are available, reviews indicate that the 2nd edition is most useful for the purposes of our course. It can be purchased used or new through Amazon. All other readings, videos, and other course materials will be available on our CTools site. Assigned readings, videos, and other course assignments will be posted weekly on CTools.

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 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, 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 we can make appropriate arrangements. NOTIFICATIONS TO ME OF YOUR LEARNING AND ACCOMMODATION NEEDS MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE THE END OF THE DROP-ADD PERIOD.
Assignments:

- Weekly
  - Class attendance and participation in pre-class and in-class learning activities. Three points for full attendance at, and active preparation for/participation in each of 13 classes beginning January 14th through April 15th, 2014 (Maximum available: 39 points).

- Mid-term paper
  - Philosophy Statement Mid-term Draft (20 points maximum). Due Tuesday, February 25th, 2014, 6:00PM. A template will be distributed to guide the writing of weekly journal entries regarding experiences related to course work. Prior to the time for submission of the philosophy statement, students will be paired by assignment and will take turns facilitating an integrative interview with the partner. (Questions to guide the integrative interview will be placed on CTools.) This interview will be used in the preparation of the 4-6 page statement of the student’s emerging philosophy of interpersonal practice with African American families from an Africentric perspective.

- Presentations of research on the application of Africentric practice models to special problems and populations involving African-descended persons. (11 points maximum) Students will have the opportunity to select a specific practice area in which Africentric practice methods have been tested. The student will make a brief oral presentation to the class regarding the specific problem or population involving persons of African descent, the Africentric practice method used, the type of research conducted, and details and findings from the research, and will critique the research in-terms of quality and outcome.

- Final philosophy statement paper.
  - Philosophy Statement Paper – Final version – 30 points maximum. Due Tuesday, April 22, 2014. Students will independently write an 8-10 page final philosophy statement paper. This paper will build on, not duplicate, the mid-term philosophy statement to integrate the student’s further development as it has occurred during the second half of the semester. However, the assignment will also call for a detailed demonstration of how the student would apply an Africentric practice model to engage, assess, plan, intervene with, evaluate, and terminate with an African American family presented in a case study.

Assignment Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Class attendance/participation</td>
<td>39 points maximum possible (3 per class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Mid-term philosophy statement draft</td>
<td>20 points maximum possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Class presentation on research</td>
<td>11 points maximum possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Final philosophy statement with case study application</td>
<td>30 points maximum possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 points maximum possible</td>
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*Please note that grades are based on a 100 point system.*
Grading
Grades are earned by successfully completing the assignments as described above.
A+  100-99
A   95-98   C+  78-79   F   <50 (no credit)
A-  90-94   C   74-77
B+  87-89   C-  70-73
B   84-86   D   60-69 (no credit)
B-  80-83   E   50-59 (no credit)

Course Outline

January 14th  Introduction. Orientation to the course.
   Pre-surveys are completed. Discussion of goals of, approaches to the course. (What this
course is and is not.)
   In-class activity:
   Pouring Tambiko (Libation), using Tamshi La Tambiko (The Libation Statement).
   Discussion to follow.
   Required reading:
   Angeles: The University of Sankore Press.
   In-class Video, followed by identification and discussion of practice tools used; practice
   application.

January 21st  Maat and historical contributions of African people to world civilization.

January 28th  The Maafa in America and on the African continent

February 4th  Sankofa and the resistance movements.

February 11th. The African worldview and the Africentric social work perspective

February 18th  Conducting the integrative interview (final preparation for philosophy
   statement)

February 25th  African psychology          Philosophy Statement is Due

March 4th  SPRING BREAK. CLASS WILL NOT MEET.

March 11th  Black experience-based/African-centered social work practice

March 18th  The Ntu model: Principles and values

March 25th  The Ntu model: Phases of practice

April 1st  Integration of NTU principles and practice with evidence-based models:
   Functional family therapy
April 8th  Student presentations of research on application of Africentric practice models to special problems and populations.

April 15th Student presentations continue. Last class. Evaluations are completed.

April 22nd Class will not meet. Final philosophy statements papers are due.

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\[1\] The four curricular themes are addressed within the context of the focus on Africans and African Americans as one specific population group.

\[2\] Attendance and participation points are based on full attendance. If you must miss up to two classes, you’ll be responsible for making up the missed readings and in-class activities. Please see me for instructions. Classes missed beyond the two allowed for make-up will result in a deduction of attendance and participation points for the day missed. Missing one-half of a class will count as one of your two missed classes for which make-up work is allowed.

\[3\] Instructions for the Integrative Portfolio (mid-term and final) will be posted on our CTools site but will require weekly logs (personal journal entries).