Course title: SW 790-Advanced Topics in Interpersonal Practice: 
*The Graying of the Gay Community*

**Semester:** Winter 2015  
**Credits:** 1  
**Course number:** 27764  
**Section:** 10  
**Days & times:** Fri. Jan. 9th (5p-8p); Sat. Jan. 10th (9a-12n); Sun. Jan. 11th (2p-5p); Fri. Jan. 16th (5p-8p) & Sat. Jan. 17th (9a-12n)  
**Room number & building:** #B770; SSWB  
**Professor:** ShariLynn Robinson-Lynk, LMSW, ACSW, MA candidate-LEO Adjunct Lecturer  
**Email:** lynshari@umich.edu  
**Office hours:** By appointment only, please.

ABOUT YOUR PROFESSOR:

**Educational preparation:**  
- MSW (health care & gerontology); Wayne State University, Detroit.  
- MA (linguistic anthropology); Wayne State University, Detroit.  
- BSSW (gerontology & social work); University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**Teaching areas:**  
- Social work & diversity (particularly, TBLGQ & People of Color)  
- Social work & social justice  
- Social work & cultural competence  
- Social work & gerontology  
- Anthropology (cultural)

**Past teaching experiences:**  
- Adjunct faculty member; Social work, WSU, Detroit, MI  
- Adjunct faculty lecturer; Social work, EMU, Ypsilanti, MI  
- Continuing education instructor; Social work, WCC, Ann Arbor, MI  
- Part-time instructor; Anthropology; WCC, Ann Arbor, MI

PROFESSORS TEACHING STYLE AND PHILOSOPHY:

**HIGHER LEARNING (aka CRITICAL THINKING):**  
I very rarely use PowerPoint; however, for the sole purpose of guiding our discussions during this mini-course, I will. However, I will not stand before you & simply lecture “at you”, while you feverishly take copious notes. Instead, I prefer to be a caring & concerned
facilitator of your learning experience which you are responsible for. I do this best by bringing up points which I believe are pertinent & to encourage seminar-style discussions. You are always strongly encouraged to bring up any & all questions which you might have from the readings, as well. I will also often include my own experiences as a social worker & as a person with multiple intersecting identities. I strongly believe adult learners learn best when they understand concepts & ideas. Thus, I am more concerned with you understanding & applying the social work concepts, theories & methodologies more than I am concerned with your ability to simply regurgitate definitions & terms.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR PROFESSOR:

- Make every attempt to arrive to class on time & begin & end class as scheduled.
- Always treat each student with the dignity & respect she/he deserves.
- Make every/all attempts to ensure each student learns the most she/he can & performs at her/his greatest potential.
- Respond to all emails within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt.
- Willingly write letters of reference & agree to be an employment reference to those students who have demonstrated a dedication & adequate level of understanding of the course content.
- Make every effort to ensure the classroom is a safe, peaceful, guilt-free, non-judgmental learning environment.
- Comply with all pertinent FERPA (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 aka the Buckley Amendment) to the best of my ability.

STUDENTS ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS:

Successful completion of this mini-course requires every student attend all five (5) sessions, actively listen & participate in all class discussions & exercises, take notes as needed & submit all assignments on time. Arriving tardy to class or leaving class early, is not only disruptive to your classmates & professor, but negatively affects your learning experience. Not attending class at all means your voice & experiences will not be shared with your classmates & your professor. Thus, students enrolled in this course are required to attend each & every class session on time & are expected to remain in the class throughout its entirety; Any/all exceptions to this requirement must be pre-discussed & pre-approved by the professor. If, for whatever reason, you are tardy or absent, it is also your responsibility to connect with other students to receive any missed work. Please do not ask your professor.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS:
There are no formal assessments (quizzes, exams, papers or projects) for this mini-course.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:
There are no out-of-class assignments or exams required for this mini-course, however, there will be in-class experiences (exercises), along with required two (2) page reflections to be written after each session.

STATEMENT ON EXTRA CREDIT:
There are no extra credit assignments in this mini-course.
COURSE GRADING:
Grading for this mini-course will be satisfactory or unsatisfactory/credit or no credit.

COURSE MATERIALS:

- **Strongly suggested (not required) texts & course bibliography:**

- **Additional readings and handouts:**
  There will be additional readings & handouts from recent social science journals & pertinent social science texts distributed to students. The links will be found on CTools.

- **NASW Online readings:**
  There will be an assigned reading on the NASW website of the Code of Ethics & the Standards for Cultural Competence. The links will be found on CTools.

- **Speakers:**
  There will be a speaker joining us during this mini-course. Please be aware that the speaker is voluntarily offering his time. Your respect & appreciation of this through active listening & appropriate questions would be most appreciated.

- **Videos:**
  There will be three (3) related documentary videos shown during this mini-course.

Course Description:
With our increasing life span comes an increase in the number of older adults. This includes an increase in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer (LGBTQ) persons. However, older adults, who also identify as LGBTQ, are even less recognized & more vulnerable than their heterosexual counterparts, if not “invisible”. This mini-course will first invite participants to review their own level of cultural competence & humility by assessing their
personal & professional knowledge & biases about both older adults & individuals who identify as LGBTQ. It will also provide a review of LGBTQ terminology, with special attention being paid to LGBTQ people of color communities. We will also review what it means to be a LGBTQ older adult living both the “gay” experience, as well as the aging experience in comparison to our older heterosexual & younger LGBTQ counterparts. Additionally, we will review state & federal policies & social justice implications for LGBTQ older adults. Techniques & strategies for being an effective social worker with LGBTQ older adults will be provided with special attention being paid to Gay Affirmative Therapy Techniques. The NASW Code of Ethics & the Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice will be examined in terms of strengths & limitations regarding LGBTQ older adults.

Course Content:
The content of this course will include combined scholarly information on both older adults and those who identify as LGBTQ. There will be a concerted effort to ensure that the necessary overlap of both communities is reinforced. The course will be divided into five (5) sessions focusing on the following:
1. Foundational concepts & terminology.
2. Coming out late in life; including the effects on grand-parenting & retirement.
3. Historical movements & legal & political policies.
4. Therapeutic responses (Sex Therapy & Gay Affirmative Therapy techniques).
5. Moving forward: From cultural competence to cultural humility.

Course Objectives:
In keeping with the CSWE Core Competencies #4 (Engage Diversity & Difference in Practice) & #5 (Advance Human Rights and Social and Economic Justice), attendees will acquire knowledge of LGBTQ terminology, LGBTQ people of color communities and Gay Affirmative Therapy techniques to better serve their clients.

Course Design:
The instructor for this course will select required readings. In addition, the instructor will include a range of pedagogical methods, such as participatory discussions, films, guest speakers, written assignments, & experiential exercises related to course materials.

COURSE POLICY ON ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE CLASS PARTICIPATION:
Attendance:
As previously stated, attending all five (5) class sessions are required for your successful completion of this mini-course. All students are expected to sign in upon entering the classroom.

Additional notes on signing in:
1. It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet at the beginning of every class.
2. Students are not to sign in for one another.
3. Not signing in on the day you were present, means you will be marked absent for that day. Please do not expect me to remember you were present.
4. Signing in & then leaving the classroom, for any reason & for any length of time, without prior approval from your professor & unless during our agreed upon break time (s), will also constitute an absence.

**Participation:**
Attending every session without participating will also hinder you from successfully completing this course. Students should arrive to class prepared to *actively* participate in their learning process. This includes not simply sitting quietly & listening/observing, but posing questions & comments to the professor & other students, as well as answering questions & addressing comments posed by the professor & other students during our class discussions. Class participation also involves your active participation in class exercises & activities, as well as any take home assignments.

**Special note about tardiness & absences:**
With the full understanding that the culture of this university includes the observation of “Michigan Time” (meaning, classes generally begin 10 minutes passed the posted start time), anyone arriving to class *beyond* this time will be considered tardy. Likewise, anyone leaving earlier than our agreed upon ending time, for *any* reason which has not been previously discussed & agreed upon with the professor, will be considered having left class early. Both of these are distracting to your learning colleagues & your professor and it *will* affect your final grade.

In conclusion, please know, attending all five (5) class sessions & actively participating, will ensure that you earn the required points in order to satisfactorily pass this course.

**Special note regarding religious/spiritual observances:**
Please notify your professor, no later than the first day of class, if you have religious/spiritual observances which will prevent you from being present in class.

**Special note about inclement weather:**
Your professor will follow the standard inclement weather policies of the university. This means, if the university is closed on the day & during the time this class is to meet, there will be no class. If, however, the university is not closed & you still believe the weather to be too inclement for you to safely arrive to class, you are encouraged to notify your professor immediately.

**STATEMENT ON CONFIDENTIALITY AND CLASSROOM DECORUM:**
Due to the possible sensitive nature of some of this course content for some students, all students are expected to maintain confidentiality on all matters discussed in class; though there is no guarantee that all students will follow this expectation. All students are also requested to understand everyone has a different opinion & that we can, & will, discuss what may be perceived as controversial topics without being insulting or dismissive to your professor or fellow students. Students should also recognize that this is a social work course & we are learning what it means to be an effective social worker. With that, please remember, the professor is not asking you to alter your personal value system, opinions or ideas, but will be assessing whether, or not, you understand & comprehend the social work concepts, theories & methodologies discussed in this course. Additionally, all students are also expected to analyze & question information or opinions which vary from theirs through respectful & non-judgmental dialogue.
Lastly, all students are expected to refrain from intentionally stating stereotypical & prejudicial remarks, as well as engaging in any distracting side bar conversations.

**Additionally, students are asked to please adhere to the following requests:**

- Silence, or put on vibrate, all cell/mobile phones, and any other electronic devices, & limit all phone usage (including texting) to emergencies only; outside of the classroom, please.
- Permission is granted to eat/drink in class, with the request to please do so quietly & neatly & with the expectation that students will clean up after themselves.
- Permission is granted for laptop computer usage for note taking purposes only; completing other assignments or “surfing the net” during class time is not permitted, at any time.
- Please do not bring children or adult guests to this course without first consulting with the professor; ahead of time.
- **Any student not following the above will be asked to leave immediately & will be marked absent for that evening.**

**IMPORTANT STUDENT RESOURCES:**

**Add/Drop Period:**
Students may drop/add via Wolverine Access any time after they initially register up until the drop/add deadline (September 26 for fall). Any time students make a change to their original registration, it is their responsibility to notify their advisor of these changes. Once the drop/add deadline is past, students must obtain the signature of the course instructor, their faculty advisor and then the SSW Registrar on a drop/add form, and then they will need to take the form to 1207 LSA building for processing as Web registration will not be possible beyond the drop/add deadline. It is the student’s responsibility to register for the appropriate courses to fulfill the M.S.W. degree requirements.

**Incompletes (“I”):**
Students must finish incomplete coursework within two semesters of enrollment in the class in which they received their initial incomplete. Please see the 2013-2014 Student Guide, Vol. 1 Sec. 8.01.

*I* (Incomplete) is used when illness or other compelling reasons prevent completion of work, and there is a definite plan and date for completion of course or field work approved by the instructor/liaison. An "I" may also be issued when a student fails to submit required field paperwork by the published deadline. Any "I" grade remaining on a student's record more than two terms after the conclusion of the term in which the grade was awarded reverts to a permanent incomplete, and credit can be earned only by retaking the course. This limit includes the Spring/Summer term and applies regardless of the student's subsequent enrollment. However, if at the time the instructor agreed to the "I", an earlier date of submission and/or completion of final work was agreed upon, then this date takes precedent over the two-term policy. A change in grade will not be accepted after two terms for any reason other than clerical error. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Associate Dean for Educational Programs.
**Note:** A grade of "I" stays on a student's academic record permanently. Even if the student makes up the course or field work according to the guidelines stated above, the grade for the course will appear on the academic record as, for example, IB+ or IS. If the “I” is not made up in the approved time frame the grade is changed to an IPL (Incomplete Permanent Lapse) and is final.

**Academic Difficulty Procedure:**
When a student fails to maintain good academic standing, she/he is automatically placed on probation. Failing to maintain good academic standing is defined as:
- Having less than a B average (below an overall 5.0 GPA)
- Having accumulated 9 credit hours of incomplete grades
- Having a grade of U in Field Instruction
- Having a grade of marginal in Foundation Field Instruction (515) or Advanced Field Instruction (691).

A student is initially informed of automatic academic probation via a letter which informs the student of his/her responsibility to develop an academic plan with her/his academic advisor. For more information on academic difficulty and the procedures involved, please see the 2013-2014 Student Guide, Vol. 1, Sec. 15.

**Services for Students with Disabilities:**
The University's Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) provides assistance regarding academic, economic, social, and recreational activities to students who have documented disabilities. For more information, please visit their website at [http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/](http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/) or the SSWD Faculty Handbook at [http://ssd.umich.edu/files/SSD_Faculty_Handbook.pdf](http://ssd.umich.edu/files/SSD_Faculty_Handbook.pdf).

**Academic Conduct and Integrity:**
Please visit the Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct at [http://ssw.umich.edu/studentguide/2012/page.html?section=12&volume=1](http://ssw.umich.edu/studentguide/2012/page.html?section=12&volume=1) in the current Student Guide to the Master's in Social Work Degree Program 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.

**Special note about Plagiarism:**
Policies governing plagiarism can be found in 2013-2014 Student Guide, Vol. 1, Sec. 12.02. Plagiarism is taken very seriously at the University of Michigan and is grounds for expulsion from the University. It is students’ responsibility to become familiar with the information presented at [http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students](http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students). Another helpful resource is [http://guides.lib.umich.edu/content.php?pid=43469&sid=338261](http://guides.lib.umich.edu/content.php?pid=43469&sid=338261). It would be useful to discuss these issues with students in your classes to help prevent occurrences.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is representing someone else’s ideas, words, statements or works as one’s own without proper acknowledgment or citation. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Using or otherwise taking credit for someone else’s work or ideas.
- Using the language of another without full and proper quotation or source citation.
- Implicitly presenting the appropriated words or ideas of another as one’s own.
- Using Internet source material, in whole or in part, without careful and specific reference to the source.
- Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative material without proper reference, unless the information is common knowledge or in common public use.
- Self-plagiarism, this is, reusing one’s own work without acknowledgment that the text appears elsewhere (e.g. in a paper for another current or previous class).

Writing Help and Tutoring for Students:
Currently, Career Services is in the process of developing a writing assistance program for students who need remedial writing services. Graduate Student Assistants will be available to meet with students individually to help with writing problems. Tutoring in specific SSW courses is also available on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Michelle Woods at micwoods@umich.edu for details.

Advisors and instructors can also refer students to the Sweetland Writing Center, located at 1310 North Quad, 105 South State Street. Sweetland offers writing workshops, which are one-on-one meetings with Writing Workshop Faculty. They also offer services for non-native English speakers. For more information about Sweetland, please visit http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/, email them at sweetlandinfo@umich.edu, or call them at (734) 764-0429.

Another writing resource is the English Language Institute. For more information, please visit http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli.

Health and Wellness Services:
Health and wellness encompasses situations or circumstances that may impede a student success within the program. The Office of Student Services offers health and wellness services that are directed to the MSW student body. Often times, faculty becomes aware of students facing difficulties, and they may not know the best way to help a student. Faculty or students should feel free to contact Health and Wellness Advocates Lauren Davis, LLMSW or Nyshourn Price-Reed, LMSW (laurdavi@umich.edu, ndp@umich.edu, or 734/936-0961) regarding any health, mental health or wellness issue. This could include need for advocacy and referral to University or community resources, financial resources or counseling. Students and faculty can also contact Health and Wellness using ssw.wellness@umich.edu. The MSW Student Guide to Health and Wellness can be found at http://www.ssw.umich.edu/current/Health_Wellness_Guide.pdf.

Please note this syllabus serves as an agreement between the professor and the student, but is subject to change. However, the professor will make every attempt to give ample notification to students.