SW 511-002  Interpersonal Practice Skills Lab

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OFFICE HOURS: Appointments Upon Request

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers students the opportunity to practice the assessment, engagement, intervention, and evaluation skills essential to interpersonal practice with children, youth and their families while considering the community, organizational, and policy contexts in which social workers practice. The student's field experience and future practice methods courses will build upon the skills rehearsed 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.

COURSE CONTENT

In this course all phases of the IP treatment and prevention process (i.e. engagement, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, and termination) will be taught and rehearsed, with attention to how they are applied to work with individuals, families, and small groups. Students will learn and practice specific skills, such as empathic inquiry and collaborative exploration to assess problems in clients' lives that relate to attributes of the client (e.g. age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability) as well as the historical, political, situational, environmental and psychological factors relevant to the client's functioning. Students will practice the use of specific assessment tools, such as biopsychosocial assessment, genograms, ecomaps, and family sculpting to discern patterns of functioning, to assess strengths and vulnerabilities, and to plan, implement and monitor process of growth or change strategies. Students will practice methods of intervention specific to three modalities of intervention, such as CBT, Motivational Interviewing, and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy. Additionally, students will learn strategies of self-regulation in order to stay cognitively and emotionally able to effectively intervene in therapeutic relationships. Students will practice methods of evaluating change based on situational effectiveness and on whether their implementation enhances the client's capacity for self-determination and the system's capacity for justice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

(1) Demonstrate skills for engagement such as empathic inquiry, active listening, collaborative exploration, case recording and goal setting.
Utilize three assessment tools to identify client strengths and vulnerabilities, as well as sources of biopsychosocial, cultural, sociopolitical and spiritual risks and supports.

Recognize the impact of age, race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, power and privilege on interpersonal practice by
(a) Demonstrating self-awareness of their own privilege, identity, positionality and life experiences impact on their capacity to relate to others with different personal privilege, identity, sociopolitical 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.

Conduct culturally sensitive interpersonal practice by:
(a) Articulating socio-political, environmental, family and/or individual-level contributing factors of at least two specific disorders, prevention and/or treatment goals, developing measurable prevention and treatment objectives, and employing measurement tools to monitor and evaluate practice while maintaining sensitivity to the individualized needs of clients.
(b) Implementing treatment protocols consistent with treatment plans and sensitive to clients' situations
(c) Recognizing basic termination issues that pertain to interpersonal practice.

Demonstrate intervention skills specific to two evidence informed treatment modalities such as CBT, Motivational Interviewing, and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy.

Demonstrate capacity for strategic use of self in the therapeutic relationship by identifying their own sociopolitical, environmental, and experiential or emotional/cognitive factors that may support or impede the therapeutic relationship.

COURSE DESIGN

This course will use various methods such as individual exercises, simulations, class discussion, and small group work to examine and practice the material presented.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

(1) Multiculturalism and Diversity will be concentrated in the topics of relationship building, communication, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation. These topics will explore how the differences between worker and client impact and shape these critical dimensions of social work practice.

(2) Social Justice and Social Change will be central to the topic of various roles assumed by social workers and in clienthood. The focus of the course is on small system change (individual, families, and groups) but the larger social context and implications for change will be embedded in person in the environment (PIE) ecological assessment, and in the experience of applicants as they enter social agencies. These themes will be 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 will be themes reflected in various purposes and models of contemporary social work practice. In addition, this course will emphasize skills that can be implemented with promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation as practice goals and outcomes.

Behavioral and Social Science Research will be presented in this course to support practice methods, skills and assessment procedures. Planning, decision-making and intervention procedures will be directly borrowed from the behavioral and social sciences.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO ETHICS AND VALUES

Social work ethics and values will be addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working with clients and colleagues. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to give students direction about these ethical issues. In particular, this course will focus on client issues, such as confidentiality, privacy, rights and prerogatives of clients, the client’s best interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, interruption of services, and termination.

Competency Practice Behaviors

Competency #3 - Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers
- distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom;
- analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation;
- demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

Competency #4 - Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Social workers
- recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power
- gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups
- recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
- view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

Competency #6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Social workers
- use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry
- use research evidence to inform practice.

Competency #7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.

Social workers
• use conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation
• critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

Competency #10 (a)–(d)—Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

Assessment
Social workers
• collect, organize, and interpret client data;
• assess client strengths and limitations;
• develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives;
• select appropriate intervention strategies.

Required Text:
There are no required texts. There are, however, texts that we will be drawing from, in particular the DSM 5. The DSM 5 is available online:
http://www.psychiatryonline.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/. Other relevant articles and resource will be posted on Canvas.

Learning Needs and Accommodations:
If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let us 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 us 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, we will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential.

Also, please notify us if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Attendance and participation: Attendance is paramount to a Lab experience. Please attend all Lab Classes. If you are unable to attend a Lab Class please contact me beforehand.

Session Agendas:

Session 1: 9/21/15
Introduction to Class, Community-Building; Listening, Empathy and Engagement

Session 2: 9/28/15
Ethics, Social Identity, Client Character Development Work

Session 3: 10/5/15
Assessment, Client Character Development Work
Session 4: 10/12/15  
Assessment, In-Class Simulations  

10/20/15 Fall Break No Class  

Session 5: 10/26/15  
Goal Setting, Motivational Interviewing  

Session 6: 11/2/15  
Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention  

Session 7: 11/9/15  
Cognitive-Behavioral Intervention, continued; Case Reviews.  

Session 8: 11/16/15  
Group Work, Case Review  

Session 9: 11/23/15  
Family work, Case Review  

11/25/15 Thanksgiving Recess Begins at 5:00pm  

Session 10: 11/30/15  
Case review  

Session 11: 12/7/15  
Closing stage  

Session 12: 12/14/15  
Integration, Class Sharing  

Assignments:  

Due dates for assignments are NOT listed here. You will find them on the CANVAS site. Since revisions must sometimes be made in deadlines, I do not list them here. CANVAS provides a very handy list of due dates and will be the definitive source for when assignments are due.  

The details of the assignment also may evolve or change during the semester. Therefore, always refer to CANVAS for the definitive description of what is required in each assignment and for resource materials for completion.  

Simulated Client Work: The core pedagogy for this class will be simulated client interviews. You will be the social work practitioner for a simulated client AND a simulated client for a social work practitioner from a different section of 511. In each case you will complete three sessions (approx. 50 minutes long) outside of class and video record those sessions. The
practitioner will then post the video and it will be available to be viewed by you, the client, and the instructors of both the practitioner and the client. Another student will also be designated to do peer review of the video. All assignments for the lab relate to these simulated interviews.

1. Character Development Workup-5 points
These assignments help you prepare to play the role of a simulated client.

- Write a 1-2 page description of the client you will simulate.
- List the sources you have used to gain understanding of the client and the client’s life circumstances. Ideally, you will have at least 3 professional sources and also some lay resources.
- Attach your answers to the Gotham Character Development Checklist (see resources).
- Finally, post a 2-3 minute video of you portraying your character as a self-introduction. These should be recorded on the same device you will use to record your sessions as practitioner. Upload these to the My Media section of Canvas, and add me as a collaborator to view the video. Instructions for doing this will be distributed in class.

2. Session 1 Reflection Paper-10 points; 3-4 pages
After reviewing the video of your first session, write an essay answering the following questions:

- Overall, how effectively did you engage your client in the session?
  - Give examples to illustrate your conclusions.(and refer to time-stamped comments when feasible)
  - Describe factors that contributed to or detracted from effective engagement.
- Describe at least three “strengths” and three “areas for improvement” for your interviewing during this session.
- What goals do you have for your interviewing skills in the second session?
- Several additional questions related to client feedback will be added.

3. Psycho-Social Assessment of Simulated Client (see separate document for detailed rubric for this assignment) 15 points; 5-7 pages
Complete a write-up of your assessment of your simulated client. The detailed rubric for completing this assignment will be distributed in class and posted on Canvas. An example assessment paper will be posted to aid in your write-up.

4. Intervention Plan (after 2nd session) 5 points; 2-3 pages
Based on your assessment and second session, develop an intervention plan for your third session with the client

- Specify goals for your work with the client as you understand them at this point.
- Clarify how the client sees them and conceptualizes them, as well as how you see them.
- There are likely to be multiple goals so specify each of them.
- To the degree possible, specify tasks (subgoals, objectives) to be worked on as intermediate steps.
- What intervention techniques, models will you apply in the third session?
• Specify what model you chose and why you think it’s appropriate for this client at this time.
• Give some detail about how you plan to implement the intervention in the session.

5. Session 2 Reflection Paper 10 points; 3-4 pages
- Overall, how effectively did you engage your client in the session?
  o Give examples to illustrate your conclusions. (add time-stamps when warranted)
  o Describe factors that contributed to or detracted from effectiveness in engagement.
- Name at least three strengths and three “areas for improvement” for your interviewing during this session.
- How did your performance on the second interview differ from the previous interview? What key things did you learn by comparing and contrasting the two interviews.
- What goals do you have for your interviewing skills in the next session?
- Several additional questions related to client feedback will be added.

6. Final Reflection Paper 20 points, 6-10 pages
This assignment will be based on your final session with your simulated client and also incorporate some reflection on the lab experience overall. This assignment will NOT be returned if unacceptable, rather I will deduct points for each section that is not acceptable.

Engagement and Ethics
• How well did you engage the client, contribute to the client’s motivation, and help them set appropriate goals?
• Describe your efforts to address power dynamic in your work? What did you do to balance power of worker role? What did you do to maximize client empowerment?
• What ethical issues, if any, arose in your work with this client? How were they addressed?
• What issues arose for you as a worker that contributed to how you managed your relationship with this client?
• Several additional questions related to client feedback will be added.

Intervention
• What intervention techniques did you use?
• How appropriate was the choice of those techniques?
• How effectively did you implement the intervention?

Plans for continued work with this client
• What would be your plan for your next session?
• What would be your plan for ongoing work with this client?
  o How would you continue work on current goals?
  o What other or new directions might be explored?
  o What additional interventions might be tried (e.g. group, family, other models, etc.)

Client Role Reflection
What did you learn from the client role?
• From the client life your simulated
• About intervention
• About yourself

Other Final Reflections—see list of questions on CANVAS
7-9. Video Mark-Up—Reviewing your own sessions- 5 points each
Complete for all 3 sessions—see due dates on CANVAS

Mark videos with the following, using time-stamped comments

- Identify a block of video that illustrates a positive portion of your work with the client
  - Put a comment at the start that says “High water mark begin”
  - Put a comment at the end that says “High water mark end” and discusses how that segment represents effective practice skills.
- Identify a 5-10 minute block of video that illustrates a point of difficulty or less effective practice with the client
  - Put a comment at the start that says “Low water mark begin”
  - Put a comment at the end that says “Low water mark end” and discuss how you might have improved on that segment.
- Mark at least 10 examples of intervention techniques used (see resources for checklists to aid in this)
- Add queries for peer review, an in-class discussion.

10-12. Video Mark-up—Peer Review 5 points each
Complete 3 (one for each of session 1, 2 & 3) for a colleague in your peer supervision group. See due dates on CANVAS.

Add at least 10 meaningful time-stamped comments to your colleague’s video

- Stars and Wishes
- Answer queries
- Additional questions for discussion

GRADING

In the spirit of a lab experience that encourages you to stretch and develop, grading will be mainly on a credit/no credit basis for each assignment. If you make a strong and timely effort on each assignment, you will do well in this class in terms of grading. Everyone starts with 95 points. Students can lose points by not doing acceptable work and not participating at an acceptable level.

- I will occasionally award a bonus point for assignments that are exceptionally well-done and for exceptional class participation and contributions.
- You will lose 1 point for the 1st assignment that I judge as unacceptable. If may resubmit the assignment in acceptable form for credit. If not returned, you will get no credit for the assignment. You will lose 2 points for the 2nd unacceptable assignment and 3 points for the 3rd unacceptable assignment and so on.
- You will lose 1 point for a late assignment. An additional point reduction will be made when an assignment is more than one week late. Longer than that, no credit will be earned for the assignment.
- You will lose 1 point if you miss a scheduled client interview or do not post your video in a timely manner for your colleagues to comment on it.
• Lose 1 point for a missed class. Upon 3rd absence, 5 point deduction for each absence. Be signed in by start of class at 2:10. One point deduction for two late arrivals.

Grading Scale:
98-100 = A+; 94-97 = A; 93 = A-
91-92 = B+, 88-90 = B, 86-87 = B-
86 = C+; 83-85 = C; 80-82 = C-
Below 80; not passing