Course Description
This course will focus on experiential and adventure practice (theories, models, tools and techniques) that social workers may use in their work with individuals, groups, families, organizations and communities. Some particular focus will be given to their use in social work with groups. Students will be introduced to adventure through readings, discussions, guest speakers and experiences. This course is designed to provide the student with a theoretical, philosophical and experiential understanding of adventure and experiential learning and its application to Social Work Practice. Theoretical models of practice arising out of the adventure and experiential fields will be offered and discussed in tandem with current social work theories and models of practice. Evidence-based literature will be reviewed to promote experiential interventions that build on strengths and resources of individuals and their families, and that integrate components of evidence-based practice into the experiential methodologies.

Course Content
Course content will include:
- Theoretical and philosophical foundations of adventure based practice
- Discourse on the safe and appropriate use of adventure activities with different client groups
- Integration of evidence-based practice techniques in the application of adventure based practice
- Use of adventure activities in assessment and intervention
- The creation and maintenance of physical and emotional environment conducive to change and growth
- Impact of assessment data and environmental conditions on client outcomes
- The art of matching intervention tools with individual and environmental assessment
- Demonstration of a variety of facilitation skills using adventure activities
- Exploration of effective methods of processing experience and enhancing the learning from interventions
- Appropriate use of program evaluation to maintain personal and program efficiency
In this course the emphasis of intervention is as much on the context as on the individual. Intervention strategies focus on ways to bring about change at levels such as the classroom or school, the peer group, and the community or population, as well as at the individual level. Mezzo and macro practice skills covered in this course are aimed at promoting interpersonal competence, self-esteem, self-efficacy, achievement, and moral development by making the contexts within which they develop more responsive to their expressed needs.

Direct practice methods covered in this course provide students with the skills necessary to select and provide effective short-term interventions, evaluate direct practice, develop service delivery systems and work effectively with individuals, families and groups in society. Skills for engagement, assessment, intervention, prevention, and evaluation relevant to contexts such as families, neighborhood and community, schools, group care facilities, residential care, hospitals, correctional programs and institutions, courts, governmental and nongovernmental agencies will be covered.

Intervention strategies will be derived from the experiential and adventure approaches and theoretical perspectives. Students will learn to use the knowledge and skills to engage and communicate effectively with all consumers. The student will learn how to design individual programs of intervention that are based on clearly articulated goals and priorities, reflect an examination of the evidence base and are consistent with social work ethics and values. Throughout the course, cultural competence and sensitivity to differences among families and the impact of worker/client differences in values, experiences, and power will be analyzed. In addition, the student will learn to understand the significance of “multiple identities” (the interaction of factors such as the diverse dimensions: including 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) in shaping the uniqueness of families and individuals and in shaping power and privilege differences.

**Course Objectives**

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

- Describe the theoretical underpinnings of Experiential and Adventure Practice
- Apply relevant Social Work practice principles into Adventure Practice
- Demonstrate a model for adventure/experiential facilitation.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the tools and techniques of adventure practice
- Perform adventure-based assessments, formulate adventure-based plans and develop evaluation procedures.
- Understand the significance of environmental/ecological factors in individual assessment and interventions, as well as broader contexts of family, group, neighborhood, and society.
- Safely facilitate client systems through some of the common tools in adventure practice, including those that are found in Challenge Courses
- Demonstrate ways to help the participant(s) transfer the learning from the facilitated experience to other aspects of their life.
- Adapt adventure tools for use indoors, particularly for the counseling or therapeutic setting.
- Demonstrate appropriate use of adventure-based activities with diverse client groups and in different settings.
- Discuss typical ethical concerns related to adventure-based Social Work practice.

**Course Design:**

*THIS CLASS IS ABOUT LEARNING EXPERIENTIAL/ADVENTURE TOOLS. IT WILL BE EXPERIENTIALLY TAUGHT! EXPECT TO ENGAGE REGULARLY IN PHYSICAL AND INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES.* Other classroom teaching strategies may also be used, including lecture, multimedia presentations, small and large group discussion, presentations by students and guest lecturers. Students’ experiences in the field will be utilized as much as possible in assignments and case presentations and discussions.

**Relationship of Course to Four Curricular Themes:**

- *Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be addressed through careful analysis of how these models can be applied and modified to fit the special needs of various groups. Resistance and motivation of participants to interventions will be covered to demonstrate how effective intervention models must be adapted to fit the needs of various ethnic and racial groups. This course will emphasis that mono-cultural models must be adapted to fit the definitions of “problem” and “treatment” that exist in diverse groups in order for social workers to practice with assorted client systems from diverse backgrounds.
- Students will learn to recognize the existence of group differences in a number of areas (such as nonverbal communication, individual and family values, family and community structures, preferred and accepted responses to crisis, response to exclusion or oppression) and how these may impact intervention relationships with individuals and their families.
- Social change and social justice issues will be addressed by recognizing that historically poor and oppressed clients have been excluded from adventure and experiential programs. This course will also examine how socioeconomic exclusion arises in screening criteria that exclude clients because of intelligence, verbal ability, insight, and motivation. Advocacy for individuals, especially children and youth whose families and communities are particularly impacted by social inequality and social injustice, will be emphasized at individual, family, organizational, community, and policy levels.
- Promotion and prevention will be addressed through a focus on intervention models and procedures that can be used to prevent and treat psychosocial problems of all individuals including children, youth and adults. These areas are addressed in the micro practice areas through family life education, family preservation activities, early identification of children/youth at risk, and family. At the mezzo and macro practice levels, program development and evaluation, and staff and professional training (teambuilding, communication workshops, etc.), addresses the relationship between program decisions and risks to individuals and families.
- Social science knowledge is presented as the necessary basis for conducting empirically grounded assessment, intervention and evaluation practice at all levels of intervention. Course materials draw upon research knowledge from a variety of social sciences, as
well as other professions and disciplines (i.e., social work, education, psychology, sociology, etc.), and emphasize the need for multidisciplinary collaboration and communication around issues related to individuals, especially children and youth, and their ecosystems. Social science research concepts and methods are described in relationship to both social work practice and program and policy evaluation processes.

**Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values**
When working with adults, social workers must encourage self-determination while empowering them to choose and pursue their own goals. Ethical issues around management of boundaries, addressing physical space, touching, as well as encouraging clients to make choices and live by their consequences will be discussed as they impact individual clients. Practice with children and youth require considerable attention to issues of ethics and values, due to the special challenges these populations offer the social work practitioner. For example, issues of self-determination and autonomy often arise when an adolescent discloses important information that has not been shared with a parent or other responsible adult. Social work values and social science knowledge may also conflict with the child-rearing beliefs and practices of some cultural or religious groups. Social work values and ethics, as outlined in the professional Code of Ethics, are presented as the necessary and appropriate guidelines for practice when ethical dilemmas arise in social work practice.

**Safety & Emergency Preparedness**
In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any cell phone or campus phone. All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734) 764-SSWB (7793) for up-to-date School closure information. Be Prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least (2) emergency exits nearest the classroom. If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services and/or email ssw-ADAcompliance@umich.edu.
Office of Student Services
School of Social Work | Room 1748
734-936-0961
For more information view the annual Campus Safety Statement at http://www.dpss.umich.edu/.
Register for UM Emergency Alerts at http://www.dpss.umich.edu/emergency-management/alert/.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Let me know if you need an accommodation for a disability. All aspects of the course can be modified to facilitate your learning process. There are resources available to help us to meet your needs. Know that when you disclose a disability to me, I will treat that information as private and confidential.
Course Resources

Required Texts: (Instructor can get these books at a cheaper rate)

Strongly Recommended Texts:

Additional Texts:

CanVAS Site: Will provide access to many/most of our additional readings during the course. Several websites, which contain useful resources for our use, will be provided.

UM and Alvarez Libraries: A few texts and journals are available at the library and in the instructor’s personal library and can be borrowed for short periods of time.

Course Expectations

- Professional Accountability (see clarifications below)
- Out of class reading and preparation
- Completion on an individual project at the student’s field placement setting (or an alternative if the placement is unable to offer the experience)
- Completion of other assignments (more during class session)

Professional accountability will be based on the following criteria. The professional accountability points are assigned based on the collection of all of these factors NOT just attendance.

- Engagement: The appropriate, respectful, and relevant participation in one’s own learning as well as contributions to the learning of others. Inappropriate engagement can negatively affect your grade (disrespectful comments, side conversations and inappropriate comments, inappropriate use of computer and phone, etc.).
- Integration: The demonstration of appropriate efforts to make connections, both conceptual and practical, between the course curriculum and your experience. Inappropriate efforts (clear lack of having done reading, raising questions that are not related to the conversation or discussion) can negatively impact this portion of your
grade.

- **Attendance**: Attendance is required and is defined as being present for the entire class period. Points will be subtracted for each session (or significant time segment) missed. Participation in class discussions is contingent upon attendance and can be used to affect your grade. Although some absences are justifiable, that does not suggest that points will not be lost.

- **Timeliness**: Completion of assignments on date due, including coming to class prepared to discuss and apply assigned readings.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

- **Attendance & Participation** (10 points per class session, 110 points available)

  The following factors will be considered for these points:
  - Being present for the whole class period
  - Being prepared through readings etc. for the session
  - Engaging in the activities and discussions fully (Including Stick expectations)
  - Being "fully in the room" (this includes not being on the phone or computer attending to things that are not a part of being in class)
  - Helping to maintain and manage our desired environment

- **Facilitating your small group**

  Multiple due dates
  
  For this course, I am reserving several hours for opportunities for each of you to practice facilitating a session with your peers. You will join a small group in the class. Starting Session 5, I will provide your group an hour to circle up and engage in a complete adventure flow. Each member will choose a session to facilitate. Here are the tasks for each group facilitator:

  1. Choose one of the 60-minute blocks (Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9) for you to facilitate. Some blocks will have co-facilitators to accommodate everyone in class.
  2. Plan out a 60-minute group experience. As the class matures and develops, your assessment of the class and its abilities and capabilities will need to be addressed. In other words, if you are choosing to run an earlier session, you will need to consider "beginning group tasks" and create activities that will get you what you need. However, if you are doing a later session, you will need to consider all that has happened in class and make sure your session activities correspond with where the class is.
  3. As you plan your facilitation, pick 2-3 activities from the adventure manual (to use as a focuser and a primary challenge activity) and re-write them to include:
     1. Your objective for using the activity
     2. A brief that you intend to use
     3. Some (5-8) debriefing questions that you might ask to lead the reflection portion

  **Task 1: Upload your plan at least 3 days prior to your facilitation.**
4. I will provide each group access to my adventure bag and to additional tools; I will also make myself available to meet with you if so desired. Your stick(s) are mandatory tools during this facilitation. Do keep in mind that this is your opportunity to create actions for your group. In the past, many groups have spent a major chunk of their time sitting and talking. This practice will be discouraged and if it occurs will be noted in your evaluation.

5. Engage in facilitation. You will have 60 minutes from check in to check out so be mindful of the time.

**Task 2: Engage in facilitation**

6. At the end of the experience, collect written feedback from your colleagues (I have a sample form you can use). After reading them, **attach these to your written reflection submitted to me 7 days after your facilitation**. Include in your 3-page reflection paper your considerations of these questions: (Consider your thoughts on questions a & b but write mostly about your thoughts on question c)
   
   A. **What happened during session?** Your proposed agenda (support this with any readings, discussion points made in class). Your observations on how it went, on what happened (“the substance of the class interaction and what happened to the individuals”- Knapp) 1 page
   
   B. **What do you make of what happened?** Any generalizations made about the class’ experience ("pertains to the difference the experience made to the individuals, the consequences, and the meaning for them"- Knapp)
   
   C. **What will you take away from the experience?** Applicability of lessons learned (”The process of taking lessons from the experience and reapplying them to other situations”- Rhoades)? Your thoughts on co-facilitation, areas of strength, areas for improvement.

**Task 3: Complete a written reflection 7 days after your facilitation**

➢ **Paper, Poster & Slide Submission**

These are three tasks for you to engage in. Each one will gain a complete/incomplete rating. Once all three have received Completed rating, then you will earn up to 15 points for it. Points will be lost for late submissions, as well as for submissions requiring many revise/resubmit opportunities!

**Who showed up:**

Due 5.9

You will be given 5-7 minutes of class time to introduce yourself using pictures, cutouts, artifacts, drawings, poems, etc. Through this poster or on a PPT slide, share with us the following:

Who are you: What is important for us to know about you? (Often, this includes a little about where you are from, what you did before UMSSW, things you are good at, areas you need
improvement in, why you are in the S of SW, why this class, your passions- personal and professional.)

Hopes and Wishes: Tell us- how you hope this class will go, what you hope it isn’t, what kinds of things you are hoping to experience, what you want to leave this class with.

What is A/E SW Practice?  
Due 5.30

Write a paper (3-4 pages) sharing your ideas about what you believe this practice to be. What makes it social work? What factors constitute adventure practice? What differentiates experiential from adventure work? Use at least 3 references.

Final Slide  
Due 7.18

Choose 5 Take Aways from across the semester. These can draw from readings, class discussions, small group discussions, class project activities, and/or class assignments. Please use references as appropriate. Take all this content and create a 1-slide PowerPoint that you will upload onto CTools. Or create a poster and take a photo of it. Or upload a very short movie or video covering the content. Depending on the format of our last class, we may be able to hear from each of you then.

➢ The Stick Project

Our work is transformative. We guide our clients/consumers through the change process and observe as they transform into who they want to become. In the process, we, the guides, also transform as we do this work. This project offers you an opportunity to partake in the transformation of a stick. Here’s the intention behind this assignment- you have chosen to join this class that explores the use of an experiential/adventure approach to SW practice. It is a very different approach. If you end up infusing your practice with these tools and techniques, you will be a unique practitioner, one that will be asked often why you carry a bag of ropes and tennis balls, why you use the outdoors intentionally, and why you invite nature and ritual into your practice. To have the opportunity to engage in a parallel learning process, you will:

1. **Choose** a stick

Be intentional. Look for the stick from a place of importance- a park you exercise in or walk the dog at. It has to be **at least** 3 feet (36 inches) long. Consider how safe it will be when you carry it around- the more brittle, the more likely it could accidentally break. If you are a walker or a biker, consider how you’d carry it around.

2. **Observe** it and observe others as they interact with it

3. **Journal** about it all semester. Journal entries can focus on what the stick’s life has been, what role it is playing in your life, how your friends and family are accepting it into your
life and. An entry every two weeks should suffice. Additionally, write about things like-what made you choose this particular stick? Any stick characteristic that strikes you? Did you give the stick a name? Why? Why not? Talk about how you decided to transform the stick, or how you changed your mind midway, or what you needed to do when the stick wasn’t cooperative. Feel free to take photos of the process of the transformation. Journal must be in writing, although supporting documentation (audio/photo/video forms) is acceptable. One of the journal entries can be the poem/story that you have created. Journal entries are to be uploaded at the end of each month

4. **Spend time** with it.

During the term, and not taking into account the time you spend working on the stick, spend purposeful time weekly with it (E.g. go for a walk with your stick; introduce your stick to others; make a game using the stick as a central prop; invite others to comment on your stick; take it home or to placement.)

5. **Use it**

The stick will be a prop when you solo/co facilitate in class and out of class

6. **Write** about it

Write a short story/poem using the stick as the main character

7. **Physically transform** it and present it to the class

By the semester’s end, your stick will have physically transformed into something that you intended.

8. **Present** it to the class (7.11). Upload your final journal (7.18)

The points you receive will come from the intention you put into this endeavor (having it in class, meeting the expectations of the assignment), the content of your journals, the clarity in your final presentation about the transformation process that you observed.

➢ **Intervention Assignments**

Engaging in an intervention/action is good practice; the more you practice, and receive feedback, the better you will become. In place of a 40 point final paper, I am offering each of you the choices listed below. How many you decide to do is up to you; however know that your final grade will require up to 40 points from this section of the assignments. If you expect to do three of these, submit one each in May, June and July. If you are doing two, then get them uploaded in June and July. If you are doing just one, then submit that in July.
1. Attending the Best Practices in Adventure Therapy Conference- 45 points
2. Interviewing a Wilderness Adventure Practitioner- 10 points
3. Read a book- write a paper - 10 points
4. Visit a program- 10 points
5. Facilitate an experience- 15 points
6. Do a 4-corners with a client- 15 points
7. Read peer-reviewed articles in adventure or wilderness practice- 15 points
8. Others listed on Canvas

Assignment Addendum
All these items are described in some detail in Canvas under Assignments. This paper will offer a summary of all possible points that can be earned and how it transfers to your final grade.

1. Attendance and Participation  
   110 Points can be earned
   10 points for every class session where you arrived on time, left when we were done and engaged in the classroom activities.

2. Class Facilitation
   10 Points can be earned
   These points will go for timeliness, for the strength of your agenda, your facilitation and your reflection

3. Paper, Poster and Slide
   15 Points can be earned
   Full points for timeliness, clarity of poster and slide  
   And a well thought out and researched paper

4. The Stick Project
   20 Points can be earned
   Full points for the regular presence of the stick
   In class, for timely and complete journals, and for an intentional presentation in the end

5. Intervention Assignments
   45 Points can be earned
   Many choices abound for you to choose from.
   All depends on you, your efforts and your thoughtful reflection papers.

   Total Possible Points 200 Points
Grading Scale

A+     200 Points
A     190-199
A-     180-189
B+     170-179
B     160-169
B-     150-159
C+     140-149
C     130-139

Session Outline

The (hoped for) flow for the class

(Be ready to adapt when the need requires it!)  Note: Readings for each class session will be found in our Canvas site, under Session Resources.

The required readings for each session are those with a number in front of it!

Session 1~ 5.9

Point A! (Who’s in the room?) The Environment (What else is in the room?)

To cover:

- Defining the scope of our class
- A/E-b SWP
- Clarifying assignments and expectations
- Poster: Introducing ourselves to each other
- Stick: Introducing our sticks to each other
- Shelter Making:

Important: Have your stick and your poster

Session 2~ 5.16:

Point B; Goal Setting, Intentionality

When is a game not a game? Notions of intentionality and purpose; B’s
To cover:

- What is Experience?
- Intentionality
- Outcomes/Point B

Important: Have your stick; choose a group

Session 3/4 ~ 5.21

Experience our tools: Our Outdoor Day

Best to be done reading these two resources: Adventure Facilitation Manual, Tips and Tools 2

To cover:

- Flow and pace
- Managing levels of challenge
- Working on the norms
- Clarifying outcomes/Point B’s

Important: Have your stick; bring the food and drinks that you signed up to bring; dress appropriately for the day outside

Team 1 Flow due 5/21

Session 5 ~ 5.23:

Ethical Considerations: Resistance

As a social work approach, learning where ethical issues might surface is important. Considering this and other factors that might invite resistance into the room

To cover:

- Consider NASW code in light of adventure practice
- Where might ethical considerations surface?
- Some areas to consider: Boundaries/touching; Facilitator as participant; Physicality of it all; Re-introducing trauma due to unknown Pt. A
The gift of resistance

Important: Have your stick  Team 1 facilitates; Team 2 Flow due 5/28

Session 6~ 5.30-

Assessing Point A and the environment

To do effective guiding, we need to know all we can know about the people we are guiding and the context from which we are doing this work.

To cover:

- Assessing who is in the room and what came with them
- Figuring out what the desired environment might be
- Learning ways to manage the desired environment
- Knowing what to do when resistance is in the room

Important: Have stick

A / E SWP Paper due; Stick Journal 1 is due May 31  Team 1 Reflection paper due: Team 2 facilitates; Team 3 Flow due 6/4;

Session 7~ 6.6-

Context/Environment/Setting

Knowing what is in the room is a good first step; determining if that is what is important to be in the room is the next step; finally, learning ways to enhance the opportunity for the desired context to be present is critical

To cover:

- Adventure Beliefs and Contract
- Focusing activities; Squiggles
- Figuring out the challenge level
- Enhancing buy in; keeping the participant focused

Important: Have stick
Session 8 – 6.13 –

Matching action with assessments

What factors determine what we do with our clients in session?

To cover:

- The factors: Point A, Context; Point B Choosing activity, flow, facilitation style, facilitator role
- Using our creativity
- Mindfulness and Meditation practice within the E/A approach

Important: Have stick

Team 3 Reflection paper due; Team 4 facilitates, Team 5 Flow due 6/25

Session 9: 6.27-

Guiding the Learning

What do we do with everything that occurs? How do we guide the client towards learning? Which lessons do we highlight? Tonight we will learn about which observations and noticings will help us

To cover:

- Choosing proper tools (debriefing versus thumbs up/down)
- Making meaning of our observations
- Offering an observation without judgment
- The experiential learning cycle
- What, so what, and now what?

Important: Have stick

Team 4 Reflection paper due; Team 5 facilitates; Stick Journal 2 is due June 30
**Session 10: 7.11: Stick Presentation**

Opportunity to share about your stick’s journey

**Important: Have stick**

**Team 5 Reflection paper due; Stick Presentation**

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**Session 11: 7.18: Endings/Evaluations**

To cover:

- Importance of endings
- Transformation on the Wave
- Bridge building
- Gifting of Kukui
- Evaluating our efforts

**Final stick journal is due; Final slide is due**