



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Course title:	Interpersonal Practice with Individuals Families and Groups/Interpersonal Practice Skills Laboratory	
Course #/term:	SW521/SW511 001	
Time and place:	Mondays, 9-12; 2-5; All online	
Credit hours:	3+3	
Prerequisites:	NONE	
Instructor:	Richard M. Tolman, Ph.D. Professor of Social Work	
Pronouns:	He, him, his	
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CANVAS site	https://umich.instructure.com/courses/380527	

1. Course Statement

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents foundation knowledge and skills essential to interpersonal practice with children, youth and their families 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.

COURSE CONTENT

Students will learn various social work roles (e.g. counselor/therapist, group facilitator, mediator, broker, advocate and resource planner), recognizing that these roles must be based on an

awareness of cause and effect and on the adherence to social work values and ethics. Students will understand 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 will also learn how self-awareness and the conscious use of self affect the helping relationship.

In this course all phases of the IP treatment and prevention process (i.e. engagement, assessment, evaluation, planning, intervention, and termination) will be presented with attention to how they are applied to work with individuals, families, and small groups. Students will learn 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 situational and environmental factors relevant to the client's social functioning. Students will understand patterns of functioning, to assess strengths and limitations, and to plan, implement and monitor change strategies. Students will learn the importance of evaluating methods of 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. Various prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation models will be covered as well as various IP skills. In subsequent IP courses, more emphasis will be placed on specialized assessment procedures, evaluation, treatment interventions, and termination.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

- (1) 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.
- (2) Recognize the impact of race, gender, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, power and privilege on interpersonal practice by:
 - (a) 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.
 - (b) describe how others who are very different may perceive them and how status and power issues impact professional relationships with clients, colleagues, and other professions.
- (3) Carry out the roles of advocate, broker, counselor/therapist, group facilitator, and resource developer and assess the appropriateness of these roles in context.
- (4) Demonstrate basic interpersonal practice skills including active listening, empathic responding, critical thinking, case recording, and contracting.
- (5) Conduct culturally sensitive interpersonal practice by:
 - (a) engaging diverse client systems
 - (b) employing assessment protocols of PIE, ecomaps, genograms, network maps, and group composition
 - (c) articulating treatment and prevention goals, developing measurable treatment and prevention objectives, and employing measurement tools to monitor and evaluate practice while maintaining sensitivity to the special needs of clients.
 - (d) implementing treatment protocols consistent with treatment plans and sensitive to clients' situations

- (e) recognizing basic termination issues that pertain to interpersonal practice.
- (6) Operationalize the NASW code of ethics and recognize value dilemmas that emerge in interpersonal practice.

Links to CSWE Practice Behaviors:

Practice Behavior 3

- Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
 - Distinguish, appraise and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom
 - Demonstrate effective oral and written communication
 - Analyze models of assessment, prevention, and intervention

Practice Behavior 4

- Engage diversity and difference in practice
 - Recognize and communicate understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
 - Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

Practice Behavior 7

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
 - Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention and evaluation
 - Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment

Practice Behavior 10

- Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate.
- Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
- Collect, organize and interpret client data
- Select appropriate intervention strategies

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. Critical consciousness about power imbalances between children and their broader systems, children/client and interventionist and between client and agency will also be explored.
- (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.

- (3) **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.
- (4) **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. In addition, issues that arise when working with colleagues, such as referral, consultation, dispute resolution, and mediation will be addressed.

2. Class Requirements

- a. Text and class materials

Required Texts:

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R., Rooney, G. and Strom-Gottfried, K. (2017). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (10th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Menakem, R. (2017). *My grandmother's hands: Racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies*. Central Recovery Press.

All other readings and resources are available on CANVAS or through other electronic access.

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before the class period for which they are assigned. Most classes will depend on prior reading rather than repeating material that is in the reading during the class session.

- b. Class schedule
- c. Assignments

The following is alist of each assignment

Detailed instructions and all due dates are posted on the CANVAS site. I do not put the final versions of the assignment or the due dates in the syllabus because from time to time those shift due to the flow of the class. I do not want a situation where the due dates and descriptions differ from the syllabus and the CANVAS site.

Assignment 1: Character Development Profile

This assignment helps you bring life to the simulated client you will portray in class. You will provide the following information:

Assignment 2: Practitioner Annotation of 1st Session

Interview focus: Engagement and Assessment; Key Skill: Empathic Responding

Assignment 3: Practitioner Annotation of 2nd session

Interview Focus: Goal-Setting; Key Skills: Collaboration and Partnership

- interviewing skills in the next session?

Assignment 4: Practitioner Annotation of 3rd Session

Interview Focus: Intervention; Key Skills: Deepening Collaboration, Focus

Assignment 5: Assessment and Intervention Plan

Write an assessment of your simulated client, using the outline from the form distributed in class. That form (assessment form worksheet) and a sample assessment paper (Valerie example assessment) are available in the files section. Also add a more formal intervention plan that builds on the brief one you included in the 2nd annotation:

Assignments 6-8: Observers Annotations 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sessions of a Colleague:

You will have the opportunity to observe and responsibility for giving feedback to a classmate on their practitioner interviews. You will do one observer annotation for each of the three sessions.

Assignments 9-11: Reflection of Anti-Racism Readings and Exercises

You will complete a reflection on *My Grandmothers Hands* and other anti-racism reading and materials to be turned in at three points during the semester.

Assignment 12: Final Reflection *(This assignment cannot be redone (due to time constraints) and will be graded for total points.*

Assignment 13: Participation and Active Engagement Reflection

You will submit a brief reflection focused on your participation and engagement during the semester.

Its important to attend every class, to be on-time for the start of class and after each break time, to be prepared for each class, and to be actively engaged. Preparation includes reading the assigned readings for the class and listening to asynchronous lectures and doing any assigned activities. Active engagement in class is expected. Active participation can be demonstrated in several ways, some examples are: participation in class discussion, completing Simmersion and Entertain Me Well assignments, volunteering for in-class exercises, bringing examples from previous experience to class discussion, sharing knowledge or techniques with class members, thoughtfully processing classroom experiences, taking risks in sustaining dialogue on difficult issues that arise in class, giving thoughtful feedback to your colleagues on their videos and learning contributions. We will develop class guidelines for discussion and participation, and you will be expected to honor those guidelines.

GRADING

I try to provide clear, thoughtful feedback that helps you to deepen your awareness of a number of points - the process of working with others, who you are in the work (i.e. what appear to be strengths and challenges for you), themes that arise in IP work, writing and communication skills, etc. ***If I write or say something that confuses or upsets you, please make an appointment so we can discuss it!*** If I help you deepen your understanding of something, that is helpful for me to know too.

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.

If you complete the assignment at an acceptable level, you will get the points allotted for that assignment. 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 not meeting expectations. You may then 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. Missed interviews must be rescheduled.
- Points for all assignments total to 95 (an A). Remaining 5 points reserved for exceptional performance.

Grading Scale:

98-100 =A+;

93-97 = A;

91-92= A-

90 =B+

88-89 =B,

86-87 =B-

86= C+

83-85= C

80-82= C-

Below 80; not passing

You will receive the same grade for 521 and 511. If your grade is on the border of two grades, I may split them to give you a higher grade in one class

Class Recording and Course Materials

We will record our synchronous online sessions so that class members who cannot attend will be able to see them. They should not be shared with anyone who is not a class member. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the Wolverine Culture of Care and the University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19. Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face

covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity. If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required.

Accommodations for students with disabilities If you need an accommodation for a disability please let me know as soon as possible. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and teaching methods can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. I will make every effort 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 chose to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 7633000 or go to <http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/> Note: I am committed to moving towards universal design for learning (UDL). If you have suggestions for how I can improve our classroom space, activities, and/or assignments to be more accessible now or in the future, please do not hesitate to let me know!

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*

- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*