Course title: Essentials of Interpersonal Practice
Course #/term: SW506  Class #33034, Section 007,  Fall Term 2021
Time and place: Mondays, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  Room B770  SSWB (lower level atrium area)
Credit hours: 4
Prerequisites: None
Instructor: Karyn Gendreau
Pronouns: she / her / hers
Contact info: Email: kgendrea@umich.edu  Phone: (734) 664-2050
OR: karyn.gendreau@va.gov
Office: [shared office: 3764 SSWB]
Office hours: By appointment, in-person or via phone, Zoom, FaceTime

You may expect a response within 24-48 hours

Course Statement

a. Course Description

This course presents knowledge and skills essential to interpersonal practice while considering the community, organizational, and policy contexts in which social workers practice. Students learn how to perform various social work roles (i.e. counselor, group facilitator, mediator, broker, and advocate), recognizing that these roles must be based on the adherence to social work values and ethics. All phases of the IP treatment and prevention process (i.e. engagement, assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, and termination) will be presented with attention to how they are applied to work with individuals, families, and small groups. Using an evidence informed approach, 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 and spirituality) 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 also learn how self-awareness and the conscious use of self can affect the helping relationship and how to apply practice skills such as active listening, empathic responding, contracting, problem-solving, critical and creative thinking in practice. Students learn how to apply various evidence-informed strategies in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of change efforts based on whether their implementation enhances the client's capacity for self-determination and the system's capacity for justice.
b. Course Objectives and Competencies

- Apply inclusive engagement, assessment, and intervention strategies with diverse clients with empathy and cultural humility, based on an intersectional analysis of systems of power, privilege, and oppression in interpersonal practice settings (Essential 11, 13, 14, 15; EPAS 2, 6, 7, 8).
- Articulate social work values and ethics in all interpersonal practice strategies to address client issues. (Essential 9, 40, 44; EPAS 1, 5, 6)
- Assess client needs using a biopsychosocial spiritual and ecological frameworks to effectively identify and address client and environmental change strategies including in high risk situations such as suicide, interpersonal violence, substance abuse and trauma. (Essential 2, 4, 7, 16; EPAS 4, 7, 8, 9)
- Develop intervention plans that incorporate evidence informed practice with diverse clients based on an intersectional analysis of systems of power, privilege, and oppression in interpersonal practice settings that can target environmental as well as intra and interpersonal levels of change. (Essential 18, 20, 21, 27; EPAS 4, 7, 8)
- Practice engaging, assessing, intervening and evaluating with client systems using evidence informed strategies in each phase of intervention. (Essential 22, 23, 27; EPAS 4, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- Demonstrate effective communication to document services and intervention and facilitate interprofessional collaborative practice. (Essential 12, 17; EPAS 6, 8)
- Apply anti-racist frameworks to social work practice and utilize skills to intervene, disrupt, and undo racism. (Essential 1, 11, 14, 22, 44, 45; EPAS 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9)

c. Course Design

This course will incorporate mini-lectures, role plays, simulations, and applied case examples to demonstrate the core objectives. Using a flipped class approach, class sessions will emphasize skill development and applied learning activities related to all aspects of the change process when working with individuals, families, and small groups.

d. Rigorous focus on PODS

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate every aspect of professional interpersonal practice.
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 Text:

Supplemental (suggested but not required) text:

All other readings and resources will be made 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/viewing rather than repeating material that is in the reading during the class session.

We will be using articles, videos, and podcasts that can be easily accessed via links provided. I will place all required readings/videos/podcasts on our course Canvas site in the assignments section that correspond to the weeks they are due.

To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required readings and view or listen to the required videos/podcasts in order to be prepared for class discussion. We will discuss readings/videos/podcasts in class and at times these will be used to reflect upon for written assignments or breakout discussions.

- Additional readings/videos may be assigned or readings/videos may be changed from what is listed on the syllabus on occasion. If this happens the new or changed reading will be posted on Canvas at least 1 week prior to the class session and I will alert you to this change.
- In general the standard will be that all readings/videos/podcasts will be posted at least 2 weeks in advance of the class session in which they will be used or discussed.
### Class schedule

If for some reason a change to the course schedule needs to be made, whenever possible, alerts will come over email at least a week in advance; changes will also be posted to Canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Agenda</th>
<th>Required Readings and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8/30   | Session 1: Intros to each other Introduction to Course Cultural Humility and Privilege Self-care and positive coping Client Systems & Ecomaps | • Review Syllabus and course expectations  
 • In-class discussion and activities  
 • In-class Video: Beyond the Cliff (Laura van Dernoot Lipsky) |
| 9/6    | **NO CLASS – **LABOR DAY**                                                    | • Enjoy the time off! 😊                                                                         |
| 9/13   | Session 2: Engagement, Empathic Responses, Active Listening and Reflective Thinking | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
| 9/20   | Session 3: Biopsychosocial(cultural-spiritual) Assessments                    | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
| 9/27   | Session 4: High Risk Assessment: Suicide, Interpersonal Violence, Substance Use | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
| 10/4   | Session 5: Culturally Responsive Care Goal setting and Planning                | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
| 10/11  | Session 6: Engagement and Assessment SIMULATION 1                             | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
| 10/18  | Session 7: Evidence-Informed and Anti-Oppressive Practices                    | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
| 10/25  | Session 8: Evidence-Informed and Anti-Oppressive Practices 2                  | • Reading  
 • Video                                                                                     |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>Session 9: Simulation 2</td>
<td>• Reading • Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8</td>
<td>Session 10: Interventions for Children and Youth</td>
<td>• Reading • Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/15</td>
<td>Session 11: Family Interventions</td>
<td>• Reading • Video</td>
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<td>11/22</td>
<td>Session 12: Group Interventions</td>
<td>• Reading • Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>Session 13: Ending Stage, Integration across levels of Social Work Professional Development and Self-Care</td>
<td>• Reading • Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/6</td>
<td>Session 14: Dealing with Systemic and Environmental barriers or obstacles to change</td>
<td>• Reading • Video</td>
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c. **Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>How to submit/where</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character Development Paper</td>
<td>9/27</td>
<td>Turn in paper as a Word or PDF document in Canvas under the Assignment Tab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practitioner Annotations I</td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>Upload simulation video and make annotations (we will discuss details).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer Annotation I</td>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>Title this ‘Observer Annotation I’ and submit under the Assignments Tab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practitioner Annotation II</td>
<td>11/15</td>
<td>Upload simulation video and make annotations (we will discuss details).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer Annotation II</td>
<td>11/22</td>
<td>Title this ‘Observer Annotation II’ and submit under the Assignments Tab.</td>
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Assignment Descriptions

Character profile, research, and reflection

In this initial reflection, consider what you have learned during the actual process of developing your character.

1. Please answer the following questions.
   a. Demographics - age, preferred pronoun, work/education status
   b. Presenting Problem
   c. Possible DSM V diagnosis
   d. Ways client identifies in terms of key social identities
   e. Important and relevant family information
   f. Important and relevant Life circumstances

Make sure you identify one social justice issue/marginalized positionality that impacts your client. Be intentional and create a character that is similar to your own intersectionalities

2. Detail and discuss the sources that you used to develop your client/character - memoirs, movies, clinical articles, etc. Please be specific about this, referencing at least 3 current articles or sources that explore/examine either a DSM diagnosis or set of life circumstances which are relevant to your client/character. Also, please be precise in connecting which examples from your articles, memoirs, videos, etc., influenced and were useful in character development.
3. Consider what you have learned about your character from the classroom exercises, paying particular attention to issues of privilege and oppression.

4. Incorporate a discussion of what personal and professional experiences you called upon to develop your client/character, both respecting client confidentiality and only sharing personal material that you feel comfortable sharing. We certainly welcome the kind of personal reflection that helps you to integrate how this character exploration impacts you in your personal and professional lives.

5. Fill out the intake form (provided by instructor) to share with your "practitioner" and your instructor via email

**Simulation Assignments, Annotations, & Peer Feedback**

**Practitioner Annotation I**

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

- Identify a 5-10 minutes block of video that illustrates a positive portion of your work with the client
  - Your annotations throughout the segment should reflect some of those effective skills.
- Identify a 5-10 minute block of video that illustrates a point of difficulty or less effective practice with the client
  - Your annotations throughout that segment should reflect what might have been improved throughout the segment.
- Identify a 10 minute segment of the interview that you would like me to watch in depth. It can be your positive or difficulty segments, or another segment of your choosing.
  - Note the segment and indicate: “Please watch this segment.” Write a summary of what you would like feedback on in that segment. Why did you choose this segment specifically for me to watch. If you want specific feedback or advice on some aspect, please note that.
  - Specific annotations during the segment can be marked as places you want feedback, alternatives, etc.
- Mark at least 10 examples of interview techniques used (see Folder in Files named Interview Annotation and Reflection Resources for checklists to aid in this).
  - Label the technique you used
  - Discuss how effectively you used it—could be a star or a wish
  - *The best annotations will have many more than 10 examples. That is the bare minimum.*
  - Note at least 3 times where client difference or similarity or perceived similarity impacted engagement
+OVERALL ENGAGEMENT: Overall, how effectively did you engage your client in the session? Describe the factors that contributed to or detracted from effective engagement. What interviewing techniques did you employ to establish rapport? How did your client respond?

+EMPATHIC RESPONDING: Do you think your client felt understood by you? Why or why not? Describe. Were there any specific strategies or techniques you used to demonstrate empathy and understanding? (e.g. reflective listening, responding to verbal/physical cues, body language, etc.) How were you able to maintain authenticity in your responses? (e.g. responding naturally and organically) How would you describe the balance between authenticity and deliberate application of techniques in this session? What would you like to do next time to improve this balance?

+ETHICS: Did any ethical issues arise this session? How did you navigate any ethical issues that came up?

+CULTURAL AWARENESS: Did your client identify any specific identities and/or experiences that are relevant to them? (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, relationship status, religion, SES, ability, education level, etc.) Broadly, how have your client’s cultural identities and/or experiences impacted their decision to seek help? (It is okay to consider subculture as well.) How do the people in your client’s life feel about them seeking support? How does your client feel about their connection to their cultural community? What steps might you take to ensure services are culturally responsive and affirming to the client’s important identities? Attending issues of privilege, oppression diversity and social justice (PODS), consider your own identities and positionality in this context. How might your identities intersect with the identities of your client in ways that may influence engagement?

+PRACTITIONER INSIGHTS: How “present” were you as a practitioner? Were you able to attend fully to your client? Why or why not? What was this process like? How did you prepare for the session beforehand – did you try any centering or grounding techniques? How did you “make space” for yourself in order to be able to attend fully to your client? Do you think you will do the same thing next time, or will you try something different?

+PRACTITIONER OBSERVATIONS: What were you most aware of about your client during the session? How would you describe their overall mood? What do you think they hope to hear from you? (e.g. Sometimes clients look for advice – but as we will
discuss in class, “advice” is usually not as helpful as it might sound.) Do you think they are comfortable seeking support? Why or why not? Did you notice any verbal or physical cues – were these connected to a feeling? Did your client articulate this? How did you respond? What might you do differently to support engagement next time?

**Observer Annotation I**

*Add at least 10 meaningful comments (noting the segments you are referring to) to your colleague’s video*

- Stars and Wishes
- Respond to comments that your colleague or instructor has made if you have something to add or challenge.
- Answer queries or questions your colleague has put in the annotation.
- Add additional questions for discussion with your colleague and team

**Practitioner Annotation II**

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

- At the start of the annotation, give a summary of the goals you set for your interview, based on your first reflection. Label it: Interviewing Goals.
- Identify a block of video that illustrates a positive portion of your work with the client
  - Your annotations throughout the segment should reflect some of those collaboration and partnership skills.
- Identify a 5-10 minute block of video that illustrates a point of difficulty or less effective practice with the client
  - Your annotations throughout the segment should reflect some of those difficulties you can identify
- Identify a 10 minute segment of the interview that you would like me to watch in depth. It can be your high-water or low-water segments, or another segment of your choosing.
  - Note the segment and indicate: “Please watch this segment.” Write a summary of what you would like feedback on in that segment. Why did you choose this segment specifically for me to watch. If you want specific feedback or advice on some aspect, please note that.
  - Specific annotations during the segment can be marked as places you want feedback, alternatives, etc.
- Mark at least 10 examples of intervention techniques used (see folder in Files named Interview Reflection and Annotation Resources for checklists to aid in this)
- **BE SURE TO ANNOTATE THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE SESSION**-This means you likely will have more than 10
- Use the following labels to highlight work on your interviewing goals
- “Progress”-to show where you made some progress on your interviewing goals.
- “Needs Improvement” to highlight a place where you see need for some improvement. Give explanations at those annotations.

- Add queries for peer review, and in-class discussion.
- At the end of the annotation, add annotations with the following labels
  - Partnership and Collaborations- Did you acknowledge client courage, perseverance, success? Does the Client FEEL this acknowledgment from you?
  - Overall engagement--Overall, how effectively did you engage your client in the session?
  - Client Goals: Summarize the key goals that the client wants to work on.
  - Session Plan: What will be the key focus for the next session? What are your initial ideas about how you will intervene? Name the intervention approaches you will draw from and give some detail about how you think you will implement them during the session.
  - Skills insights--What key things did you learn by comparing and contrasting the two interviews?
  - Skills Goals for next session--What goals do you have for your interviewing skills in the next session?

**Observer Annotation II**

*Add at least 10 meaningful (identify the segments you are referring to) comments to your colleague’s video*

- Stars and Wishes
- Respond to comments that your colleague or instructor has made if you have something to add or challenge.
- Answer queries or questions your colleague has put in the annotation.
- Add additional questions for discussion with your colleague and team

**Biopsychosocial-spiritual (BPSS) Assessment**

Upload your document to CANVAS. The assessment should be written in a professional style, attending to grammar, punctuation and use paragraphs and complete sentences. The final document, including the intervention plan will be 8-10 single-spaced pages.

Your BPSS assessment should include the following elements: Refer to master BPSS grid for detailed areas to consider for your assessment. You needn’t cover every aspect of every issue listed, but that can serve as a guide for organizing your BPSS report. One general format for the assessment write-up is the following based on this document

1. **Basic Information**
   a. Identifying Information
b. Referral
c. Presenting Problem
d. Sources of Data
e. General Description of Client

2. Background and Current Functioning
   a. Client Strengths, Capacities, and Resources
   b. Family Composition and Background
   c. Developmental history in a trauma-informed context
   d. Educational Background
   e. Employment and Vocational Skills
   f. Religious/Spiritual Involvement
   g. Physical Functioning, Health Conditions, and Medical Background
   h. Psychological and Psychiatric Functioning and Background
   i. Social, Community, and Recreational Activities
   j. Basic Life Necessities
   k. Legal Concerns
   l. Other Environmental or Psychosocial Factors

3. Impressions, Assessment, and Recommendations
   a. Clinical Summary, Impressions, and Assessment
   b. Goals and Recommendations for Work with Client (this section will be covered in
detail in the intervention plan section)

Additional guidelines for assessment write-up

1. Brief summary: In about three to five sentences, summarize what you discovered
during your assessment. Your summary should include the client’s reason for seeking
services, including exploration of client’s background information, presenting concerns,
and strengths/resources.
   a. Summarize the client’s level of urgency regarding concerns. Mention any
   secondary issues or concerns your client shared.

2. Client experiences: Summarize client emotional, behavioral, and physiological
functioning
   a. Note client interpersonal relationships, social supports, hobbies or other coping
mechanisms, strengths, resources, and other factors that influence the client’s
overall health experience
   b. Incorporate the client’s positionalities/intersectionalities from an
ethnic/cultural/gender and spiritual perspective
   c. Summarize client’s awareness of the problem, interest in treatment, and
motivation toward change

3. Client’s appearance: Describe how your client appeared during the interview, including
physical appearance, thought processes, emotional tone or affect, awareness, and
cognitive functioning. If you also conducted a mental status exam during your initial
meeting with the client, include it in this section.
4. **Impression**: Provide your impression of the client and their current state and identify strengths the client has in addressing presenting concerns. Discuss your assessment of the client's motivation to continue seeking support and motivation to address presenting concerns. It’s okay if the client isn’t ready. We meet the client where they are.

5. **Diagnosis**: Include your anticipated diagnosis and any prior diagnoses the client had been given in the past by other therapists. Check out the DSM-5 to explore diagnostic possibilities. Provide a brief rationale of your decisions.

**Tips to consider when writing a biopsychosocial-spiritual-cultural assessment**

1. Create a balance of information, including client strengths and difficulties as well as objective facts and subjective impressions
2. Explicitly differentiate between objective facts and subjective impressions
   a. Objective facts are what the client actually says vs. subjective impressions by the provider, including insights, beliefs, hunches, inferences, or speculations
      i. e.g. “The client smiled when talking about their child” vs. “The client appeared to be happy as they spoke of their child because they were smiling”
3. Present information based on priority, especially in complex cases
   a. It’s critical to start where the client is at to prevent them for becoming overwhelmed or discouraged
   b. Explore concerns that are most distressing first and work to resolve additional concerns over time; assess for the potential that one problem may be caused or exacerbated by another
4. Include only the facts when documenting the assessment to protect the client’s privacy and that only first-hand information is reflected in the patient’s medical record
   a. Keep speculative therapy notes separate from official therapy documentation

**Your intervention plan should include the following elements:**

1. **Goals and recommendations**: 
   a. Identify overarching strengths-based goals, which include 2-3 SMART objectives per overarching goal 
   b. Identify short-term and long-term goals 
   c. Note clearly which goals the client explicitly endorses 
   d. Note any discrepancies between what you see as the goals for intervention and how the client views those goals
2. Describe the type of intervention you think is best for your client or anything the client has identified might be helpful in achieving their goals
3. What additional services, resources or referrals may be necessary?
4. What is the anticipated length of treatment?
5. How will you evaluate outcomes of the intervention?
Grandmothers Hands reflection

Submit a reflection on your reading and response to the exercises described in the second section of the book. (Length: 3-5 pages but longer is okay. Style can be informal and personal).

- What was new and important that you got from reading this section of the book?
- In what ways did these chapters validate or reinforce your own experience?
- In what ways did you feel most challenged?
- Describe your choice to do (or not do the exercises). List the ones you did do.
- What reflections do you have on doing these exercises? Which were most impactful? Which did you find not relevant or useful?
- How might this section of the book and the exercises apply to your work with clients (including your simulated client)?
- What next steps or development tasks do you plan based on what you have read and experienced so far?

Here are two versions of a log form to help you keep track of your practice with the exercises in My Grandmother's Hands

- My Grandmother's Hands Body Practice Log.xlsx
- My Grandmother Hands Exercise Log.docx

*Submit a reflection on your reading and response to the exercises described in the second section of the book.

Final Reflection (3-4 double spaced pages)

Client Role Reflection: What did you learn from the client role?

- From the client life your simulated
- About intervention
- About yourself
- How did social identities/positionalities impact your experience as a client? Consider your social identities and the practitioners reflect on the impact.
- Please be sure to share any concerns or difficulties you experienced in carrying out the simulation as a client.

Practitioner role reflection

- In what ways did the simulated client work in specific, contribute to your development as a social worker this semester?
- What issues arose for you as a practitioner that contributed to how you managed your relationship with this client?
- How did social identities/positionalities impact your work with this client? Consider both your social identities and your client's and reflect on the impact.
Anti-racist/Anti-oppressive practice reflection (do not have to repeat all you wrote in your reading reflections. Just emphasize new insights and/or major takeaways)

- What most impacted your growth as an anti-racist practitioner this semester? What barriers did you encounter?
- What areas will you continue to work on?
- What is one message you would pass on to other social workers about doing this work?

Class overall

- In what ways did the lab overall contribute to your development as a social worker this semester?
- Looking back on the entire semester, what are your stars and wishes for the 521/511 methods lab experience:
- Focus on what you did and what you could have done to make it a good learning experience for yourself
- Focus also on what your peers and your instructor did and could have done to make it a good learning experience for you.
- How did this class integrate with your other class work for the semester?
- Any other final reflections

d. Attendance and class participation

I place so much emphasis on course participation and engagement because development of interpersonal practice skills are dependent on your active engagement. I expect you to be engaged in all in-class activities, including comments and questions in class discussions and in response to lecture and activities. Class attendance in our synchronous sessions is imperative for both your own learning and the learning of your peers, and certainly for my learning. I expect students to attend class or make arrangements to engage in all the content from each session. If personal or professional circumstances require your absence from more than 2 classes, please contact me as soon as possible. Note that even if you are absent from a class, you are still responsible for submitting any assignments due that day.

Here is more information about Policy on Class Attendance found in the MSW Student Guide.
e. **Grading**

**Grading**

Final grades are based on 100 percentage points. Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>94-99</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>91-93</td>
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See assignment rubric above, under section C (Assignments) for a list of Assignments and their “weight” towards your final grade.

A brief note about grading: I do not think it serves anyone well for every student in a course to earn an “A” grade, though I am familiar with this practice. Your grade will be a reflection of both your effort and the quality of your engagement and assignments.

**Late Assignments**

*Assignments are due at or before the dates/times listed on the syllabus and on Canvas.*

Please submit all work on time. Except where indicated, late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for the first day past the due date and time, and a full letter grade for each additional day thereafter. I am not inclined to waive this policy, though I do understand there may be exceptional circumstances.

**Grade Dispute Process**

If you believe you have been graded unfairly on an assignment, I ask that you please wait 24 hours before contacting me. In general, I do accept challenges to grades. However, challenges must be in writing (not verbal); must be specific, and must be based on substantive arguments (or mathematical errors) as opposed to nebulous references to “fairness.” I reserve the right to re-read, and re-grade, the work in its entirety in the case of a challenge. The grade may be adjusted upwards or downwards.

You can find more information about SSW grading policy here:

MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances](#).
Expectations for Written Work

**Development of professional writing skills is an important part of delivering quality assessments**, and I will consider writing quality in grading. **Prooﬁread written work carefully;** I strongly recommend that you have a colleague read your documents for clarity, typos, omitted words, etc. Purdue University’s OWL website [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/) is a great resource for general writing and formatting advice.

The Sweetland Writing Center (SWC) is located at 1310 North Quad (corner of W. Washington and State St.). Graduate students are eligible for seven sessions per semester. For help with your paper, please free to consult them for writing support. They can help you develop your argument, improve your paper organization, correct grammar mistakes, and craft effective prose. You can register with them on line and schedule an appointment: Website: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/)

In addition, social work students can receive individual writing assistance from Betsy Williams, Writing Skills and Study Skills Coordinator, through the UM SSW Career Services office. Students may schedule an appointment and bring a draft of their paper (at any stage) along with the text of the assignment and any questions or concerns they may have. Email [ssw-cso@umich.edu](mailto:ssw-cso@umich.edu) or call 734-763-6259. Finally, another resource is the English Language Institute: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli)

**Class Recording and Course Materials**

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. 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.

Additional information on class recordings can be found at the [Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ](#).

f. **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. Your
participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including properly wearing a face covering in class and compliance with the University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the Campus Maize & Blueprint. Your ability to participate in this course 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 and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through WolverineAccess. 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.

g. 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.

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
Student Well-Being

Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact me so that we can find solutions together. For personal concerns, U-M offers the following resources:

- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** - confidential; 734-764-8312; for after-hours urgent support, call and press 0; counseling, workshops, groups and more, counselors are embedded in some schools [insert school-specific details if possible]
- **Dean of Students Office** - 734-764-7420; provides support services to students and manages critical incidents impacting students and the campus community
- **Ginsberg Center for Community Service Learning** - 734-763-3548; opportunities to engage as learners and leaders to create a better community and world
- **Multi-ethnic Student Affairs (MESA)** - 734-763-9044; diversity and social justice through the lens of race and ethnicity
- **Office of Student Conflict Resolution** - 734-936-6308; offers multiple pathways for resolving conflict
- **Office of the Ombuds** - 734-763-3545; students can raise questions and concerns about the functioning of the university.
- **Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)** - 734-763-3000; accommodations and access to students with disabilities
- **Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center (SAPAC)** - confidential; 734-764-7771 or 24-hour crisis line 734-936-3333; addresses sexual assault, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and stalking
- **Spectrum Center** - 734-763-4186; support services for LGBTQ+ students
- **Trotter Multicultural Center** - 734-763-3670; intercultural engagement and inclusive leadership education initiatives
- **University Health Service (UHS)** - 734-764-8320; clinical services include nurse advice by phone, day or night
- **Well-being for U-M Students website** - searchable list of many more campus resources
- **Wolverine Wellness** - confidential; 734-763-1320; provides Wellness Coaching and much more

Teaching philosophy

This course is designed for students to leave with the following:

- Confidence in their ability to apply course material and concepts in settings outside of the classroom;
• A commitment to and facility with operationalizing social work Core Values in the NASW Code of Ethics;  
• Enhanced capacity to confront and explore issues of social justice and how populations that traditionally have been marginalized are disproportionately negatively affected by policies, practices, and interpersonal interactions;  
• Build on positive sources of power to envision and work towards social justice; work to reduce disempowerment;  
• Build on indigenous knowledge/experiences of individuals, groups and communities in practice;  
• Demonstrable and recognizable skills and competencies;  
• New knowledge of the subject matter, and an understanding of how to access further knowledge and resources commensurate with their professional roles and interests;  
• Curiosity and a drive to continue to develop critical thinking, inquiry, and integrity.

Graduate students are adult learners, and as such I prioritize honoring your prior knowledge and experience; your contributions to the class are vital, and I make every effort to create an environment that encourages you to share your perspectives and ideas with each other, disagree with me, and shape the tenor of the course. Additionally, it is incumbent on me to understand the differential pressures and life circumstances that facilitate or constrain your learning and your engagement in the course.

Classroom Climate

True learning involves risk and, therefore, vulnerability. I hope that all students will work with me to create and foster a learning environment that promotes social justice, inclusion and equity. Further, this is an opportunity for all of us to engage in professional socialization, respectfulness, and broadening our mutual development of cultural humility.

Questioning and disagreeing are part of the learning process, and I encourage all of us to engage in these activities with thoughtfulness and respect. I expect the classroom to be safe, but also brave; learning and growth is often uncomfortable. There are a few times when I may engineer disagreements to foster learning, so please do not “freeze” your understanding of any of us after one or two interactions. Expect that we all have the capacity to grow and develop. Finally, if you are someone who likes to interact and engage verbally, consider “moving back” occasionally in order to open the airwaves for others to speak. Similarly, if you are someone who is reticent to speak up in class, consider “moving up” and taking a risk. Above all, this is a learning laboratory and we all will be testing out different ways of interacting and learning.

An emotionally brave class climate is important for everyone’s learning and growth. Below are a few expectations I have about our interactions in the course. This is not an exhaustive list, and I welcome suggestions for additional expectations:

• Practice “Both - And” thinking and solution seeking
• Be attuned to both Process and Content: “process” is how and when you express
yourself, and “content” is what you say.

- Remember that this is a vulnerable space for you, and for others.
- We all have an amazing capacity to screw up. Do not “freeze” anyone in this space.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Be responsible to yourself and to others about what is communicated without blame or shame.
- Limit disruptions and distractions by coming to class on time, avoiding unnecessary use of electronics, and avoiding talking when others are presenting/talking.
- Notice both the intent and the impact of what you do or say. Take responsibility when your intent does not match the impact on someone else. Take notice of peoples’ intent, not just the impact of others’ communication.
- Speak from your own experience, without generalizing.
- Critique ideas, not people.
- Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
- Step up if you usually don’t contribute, step back if you often contribute.
- Call each other in to conversations vs. calling someone out.

I am interested in any other expectations you may have, and we will discuss in one of our first classes.

Inclusive Language

The words we use can make the difference between forging positive connections or creating distance in our personal and professional lives. Particularly in writing, impact is more important than intent. This course provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive concepts that span a variety of disciplines, experiences, cultural communities, and learning styles in education. Increasing the inclusiveness of our language means striving to understand the ways that language often unconsciously makes assumptions about people and unintentionally reinforces dominant norms. I invite you to reflect on issues of privilege and injustice, and to acknowledge issues of ethical engagement when speaking on cultural communities that you do not identify with. As such, I ask that students consider:

- Recognizing individual gender pronoun use;
- Respecting and using contemporary and relevant language around social identities;
- Using language that recognizes varying abilities and is not ableist;
- Using language inclusive of diverse global contexts;
- Providing developmental and educational support of attendees who may be unfamiliar with inclusive language practices.