FOUNDATIONS OF GENERALIST PRACTICE I
Social Work 601
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Department of Social Work

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This course provides foundation knowledge, values and skills for generalist social work practice at the micro level with individuals and families and at the mezzo level with treatment groups. This course provides a basic understanding of the history, purpose, values, scope and focus of the social work profession, emphasizing principles that promote social and economic justice and human well-being. This course introduces students to Strengths, Empowerment, Task-Centered, Problem-Solving, and Family-Centered approaches for evidence-based direct social work practice. Students develop knowledge of and skills to establish and maintain effective helping relationships, emphasizing strategies to promote client empowerment and strengths, effective practice with diverse populations, and to engage in all phases of the helping process, including engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and termination. This course also provides students with knowledge of and skills for effective communication and interviewing, with emphasis on application to effective communication with diverse populations. Students will also develop professional writing skills for micro and mezzo level practice.

PLACE IN THE MSW CURRICULUM

SOWK 601 Foundations of Social Work Practice I is the first course in the practice sequence and is taken in the first semester of the foundation year in conjunction with SOWK 603 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I, SOWK 605 Social Welfare Policy and Practice and SOWK 607 Professional Competence Seminar I. Students apply the theoretical content concurrently taught in SOWK 603 HBSE to their examination of practice with individuals, families, and groups. Students also apply the values, ethics and diversity content concurrently taught in SOWK 607 Professional Competence Seminar I to the direct practice course content taught in SOWK 601. This course prepares students for generalist direct practice at their foundation field education agency beginning in the spring semester of the foundation year. In addition, this course lays the foundation for SOWK 651 Advanced Social Work Practice with Individuals and SOWK 660 Advanced Social Work Practice with Couples, Families & Groups.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

Foundations of Generalist Practice I contributes to the University mission related to promoting learning through effective teaching and scholarship. The course is also supportive of the College mission to promote exploration, understanding, explanation and transformation of the social world through graduate teaching and learning.

MSW PROGRAM GOALS

SOWK 601 Foundations of Generalist Practice I contributes to the Department of Social Work graduate program goals. Content of this course will prepare graduates to become competent and
effective advanced generalist social work practitioners with individuals and families. The content of this course will be used to prepare graduates to apply and promote, at an advanced level, theory, and perspectives of the social work profession with an emphasis on treatment in rural and small communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1) Understand the history, purpose, values, scope and focus of the social work profession (MSW 2.1, 2.3).

2) Understand and apply the multiple roles of the generalist social worker in practice at multiple system levels (MSW 1.2).

3) Understand and apply the Strengths Perspective, Empowerment, Task-Centered, Problem-Solving, and Family-Centered approaches for evidence-based direct social work practice (MSW 1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

4) Apply knowledge and skills to establish and maintain effective helping relationships with diverse populations that promote client empowerment and strengths (MSW 1.2, 1.4, 1.5).

5) Apply knowledge, values and skills to engage in all phases of the helping process with individual and families, including engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and termination (MSW 1.1, 1.2, 2.3).

6) Apply knowledge of and skills for effective communication and interviewing with micro level systems from diverse backgrounds (MSW 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5).

7) Understand the types and purposes of documentation required for direct social work practice (MSW 1.2, 1.3).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Client System Assessment and Intervention (Designated Assessment Assignment L. O. 1.2)

Students will be assigned a client system with a specific presenting problem. Students will complete a series of assignments designed to demonstrate an understanding of all phases of the helping process.

Part A: Multidimensional Assessment - Students will complete a multidimensional assessment of the assigned client system incorporating a genogram, a social network/ecomap, and one additional assessment tool.

Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 601, 2009-2010
**Part B: Annotated Bibliography** – Students will review and summarize ten articles that will lead to the development of an evidence-based service plan (Part C) for the client system. The complete Annotated Bibliography will contain 10 article annotations with a 3–part format:

1. Complete, accurate APA citation of the article.
2. A summary of the article in the student’s own words.
3. A thoughtful and critical critique of the article in the student’s own words, focusing on evidence presented and its application to practice with the assigned client system.

**Part C: Service Plan** - Students will develop a service plan, including goals, objectives and methods for evaluating outcomes, and apply one or more of the practice approaches presented in this course with particular emphasis on cultural competence.

2) **Assessment of Interviewing Skills**

Using the client system assigned in the Client System Assessment and Intervention assignment, students will conduct interviews with the client system. Other students in the class will be assigned to act as the clients. The first taped interview will be the initial meeting with the client system. The second taped interview will be during the middle phase of treatment. Students will self-assess their interviews and the tapes will be reviewed and critiqued by the class and instructor using an evaluation instrument.

**TEACHING METHODS**

A wide variety of teaching methods are used in this class including the use of lecture, discussion, guest presentations, videotapes, role-plays and other experiential learning activities, computer based technologies, case presentations, individual and group assignments as well as written and verbal journal/logs. This class uses large group, treatment group and individual activities for in class and out of class learning activities to facilitate learning. Students will also be expected to role-play, engage in audio and video taping exercises, and present materials in class.

**EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING**

A total of 200 points can be earned in this course. Points will be accumulated through the: 1) Client Assessment and Intervention (120 points), 2) Assessment of Interviewing Skills (60 points), and 3) Class Attendance/Participation/D2L Postings (20 points).

Students will be evaluated in accordance with the following system of letter grades used at Minnesota State Mankato for graduate-level courses:

A, B, C, D, and F.

- A – 90% to 100% of possible points represents work of definitely superior quality
- B – 80% to 89% of possible points represents a level of performance that is above average
- C – 70% to 79% of possible points represents a below-average performance
- D – 60% to 69% of possible points represents unacceptable performance
- F – 59% or below represents unacceptable performance
COURSE, DEPARTMENT, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

NOTE: For complete policies please refer to the MSW Student Handbook as well as the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, College of Graduate Studies and Research, and Minnesota State University, Mankato Policy documents for Graduate Students.

Statement of Non-Discrimination Policy

The University and Department of Social Work is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, veteran’s status. National origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical and mental disabilities, creed, status due to receipt of public assistance, or any other groups against which discrimination is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Minnesota Statute Chapter 363, and other applicable state or federal laws or State University System policy. Complaints of discrimination are filed with the Office of Affirmative Action located at 112 Armstrong Hall.

Access for Students with Disabilities Policy

In accordance with University Policy, the Department of Social Work is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunity and full participation for qualified persons with disabilities as is legally required under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 including section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All students with a disability may request accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. Visit the Office of Disabilities Services at 132 Memorial Library or call 507-389-2825 (V/TTY). Student disability accommodations will be made by faculty based upon the advisement of the Office of Disability Services. To read the entire University Access for Students with Disabilities Policy go to http://www.mnsu.edu/acadaf/policies/AccessforStudentswithDisabilities.pdf.

Student Responsibilities Policy and Academic Honesty Policy

Students are expected to comply with the Student Responsibility Policy and Academic Honesty Policy stipulated in the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook.

APA Style Writing Policy

Students are expected to comply with the stylistic guidelines of the American Psychological Association, sixth edition. The APA manual is available at the MSU Memorial Library (reference section, ready reference section, reserve collection, general collection and reference desk): call number BF76.7 .P83 2010. The reference for the APA manual is:

An on-line overview of the editorial style is at: http://www.apastyle.org/

**Distraction and Technology Use Policy**

Students are expected to comply with the Department’s Distraction and Technology Use Policy stipulated in the MSW Program Graduate Student Handbook. Violations of this policy will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Students who are late for class or leave class early may have a reduction of participation points and/or may be recorded as absent (or partially absent). Students using electronic devices for non-educational purposes will be asked to turn off the equipment. In the case of repeated offences, students will be asked to leave the classroom and will be recorded as absent.

**SOWK 601 COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**  
Topic: Course Overview and Introductions  
- Overview of the Generalist Practice Perspective  
- Purpose, values, scope and focus of the social work profession  
- Roles of the generalist social worker  
- Develop Case Clients System  
Delivery Method: In-class

**Week 2**  
Topic: Overview of the Helping Process  
- Phases-Specific Skills in the Helping Process (inside cover of text)  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings  
Chapter 1: Introduction  
Chapter 2: Professionalism  
Chapter 3: Ethical Decision Making Cournoyer, Chapter 4: Talking and Listening: The Basic Interpersonal Skills  
Chapter 5: Preparing

Assignment due: Case description

**Week 3**  
Topic: Phase I of the Helping Process: Communication Skills  
Delivery Method: In-class  
Required Readings  
Chapter 4: Talking and Listening: The Basic Interpersonal Skills  
Chapter 5: Preparing  
Chapters 6: Beginning  
Chapter 7: Exploring
Week 4
Topic: Phase I of the Helping Process: Assessment
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Assessment Instruments (e.g., http://www.genopro.com/)
Handout: Multidimensional Assessment (review assignment)

Group 1 Taping AH105

Week 5
Topic: Phase I of the Helping Process: Assessment
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Chapter 8: Assessing

Week 6
Topic: Assessment of Interviewing Skills (initial meeting) Viewing and Feedback
Delivery Method: In-class

Assignment due: Multidimensional Assessment, Interview Self-Assessment and DVD or VCR

Week 7
Topic: Phase I of the Helping Process: Contracting
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Chapter 9: Contracting

Week 8
Topic: Phase II of the Helping Process: Empowering Change
  - Phase II of the Helping Process: Advocacy
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Chapter 10: Working and Evaluation

Week 9 Mid Semester Break

Week 10
Topic: Phase II of the Helping Process: Groups and Families
Delivery Method: In-class

Assignment due: Annotated Bibliography
Week 11
Topic: Phase II of the Helping Process: Barriers to Change and Phase III of the Helping Process-Termination
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Chapter 11: Ending

Group I Taping (middle phase) AH105

Week 12
Topic: Phase II of the Helping Process: Barriers to Change and Phase III of the Helping Process-Termination
Delivery Method: In-class
Required Readings
Chapter 11: Ending

Assignment due: Service Plan

Week 13
Topic: Assessment of Interviewing Skills Viewing and Feedback
Delivery Method: In-class

Assignment due: Interview Self-Assessment and DVD or VCR tape

Week 14 Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class

Week 15
Topic: Assessment of Interviewing Skills (middle phase) Viewing and Feedback
Delivery Method: In-class

Assignment due: Client System Assessment and Intervention (2 copies one electronically without student name on it)

Week 16 - Finals
SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY


Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 601, 2009-2010


