PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

Professional Competence Seminar I prepares social work graduate students to meet the challenges of generalist social work practice at the micro, mezzo and macro systems levels in an increasingly ethically complicated and diverse world. This course focuses on two broad content areas: 1) social work values and ethics and 2) aspects of diversity, including age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Students learn about the social work values and ethics that guide advanced generalist social work practice, including examining the NASW Code of Ethics. Students will also learn about other international ethical codes. Students learn how to utilize an ethical-decision making framework for resolving ethical dilemmas encountered in social work practice. Aspects of diversity are examined, including an exploration of the historical and current economic, social, cultural and political forces that affect various groups, including recent immigrants and refugees, and impact the utilization of social service delivery systems and social work services. Students examine models for culturally competent generalist social work practice and begin to review the literature pertaining to aspects of diversity in order to enhance their knowledge of and skills in culturally competent evidence-based practice.

PLACE IN THE MSW CURRICULUM

SOWK 607 Professional Competence Seminar I is a required course taken during the first semester of the foundation year in the MSW program in conjunction with SOWK 601 Foundations of Generalist Practice I, SOWK 603 HBSE I, and SOWK 605 Social Welfare Policy and Services. This course provides the foundation content in values, ethics and diversity drawn upon in the other foundation level courses. This course provides students with an academic foundation to begin developing professional competency as advanced generalist social work practitioners at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

Professional Competence Seminar 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

This course supports the achievement of the MSW Program goals, specifically: 1) to prepare competent and effective graduates to be advanced generalist social work practitioners with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, emphasizing rural and small communities, 2) to prepare graduates who apply and promote at an advanced level the values,
ethics, theory, and perspectives of the social work profession, and 3) to prepare graduates who promote at an advanced level social and economic justice in a diverse society within a global context.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1) Understand and apply the social work values and ethics that guide advanced generalist social work practice at the micro, mezzo and macro levels (MSW 1.2, 2.3).

2) Understand an ethical-decision making framework for addressing value differences and ethical dilemmas in advanced generalist social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and apply at the micro level with individuals and families (MSW 1.2, 2.2, 2.3).

3) Critically examine ethical behavior and its impact on social service delivery to diverse populations served in social service agencies (MSW 1.1, 1.4, 2.3).

4) Critically analyze the historical and current economic, social, cultural and political forces that affect diverse groups and impact the utilization of social service delivery systems and social work services in the United States (MSW 1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 3.1).

5) Understand the root causes of bias, prejudice, discrimination and oppression through understanding the role of power and the impact of these issues on diverse populations (MSW 1.4, 3.1).

6) Examine and understand the importance of self-assessment of one’s own and clients’ cultural heritage, beliefs, attitudes, values, identities, and responses to diversity and the application to advanced generalist social work practice at all level, with an emphasis on micro level practice with individuals and families and mezzo level practice with treatment groups (MSW 1.4, 2.3).

7) Understand models for “culturally competent” advanced generalist social work practice at the micro level with individuals and families and at the mezzo level with treatment groups (MSW 1.4).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS


RELATED WEBSITES


Minnesota State University, Mankato, SOWK 607, 2009-2010
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Ethics Assignment
Students will choose two cases dealing with complex social work ethical issues from Appendix A in Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington (2009). Utilizing course readings, class discussions, and personal reflections, students will write two 750-word postings on D2L applying an ethical decision making model to each case. Students will also respond to two other students’ postings.

Cultural Competence Portfolio. (Designated Assignment for L.O. 1.4).
The portfolio is a compilation of the student’s reflection logs that encapsulate the personal and interpersonal journey of becoming a culturally responsive social worker. The personal work captures the introspection, self-exploration, critical appraisal, and understanding of the influence of the student’s culture on his/her own belief system, values, and worldviews. The interpersonal work focuses on the student’s learning about other cultures through interpersonal experiences (immersion activities). The student must document the potential rubs and gaps between his/her values, beliefs, and worldviews that may potentially challenge the student to practice without discrimination, with respect, and with knowledge and skills related to client’s age, socioeconomic status, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

Class Participation - Class participation will consist of participating in D2L discussions outside of class, various out of class immersion activities, and in-class discussions, including discussions of required readings, as well as attendance.

TEACHING METHODS
A wide variety of teaching methods are used in this class including the use of lecture, discussion, guest presentations, videotapes, experiential learning activities, out-of-class immersion service activities, computer based technologies, case presentations, individual and group assignments, written journal/logs. Students will be expected to role play, engage in audio and video taping exercises, present materials in class, and attend scheduled out-of-class immersion service activities.

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Additional assigned readings, as well as course requirement guidelines, supplemental resources, exercises, and research articles will be available via Desire2Learn (D2L).

EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING

A total of 440 points can be earned in this course. Points will be accumulated through the: 1) Ethics Assignments (50 pts. each, 100 pts. total), 2) Cultural Competence Portfolio (300 pts.), and 3) Participation (40 pts.).

Students will be evaluated in accordance with the following system of letter grades: 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

A grade of “incomplete” will only be awarded under rare circumstances. Students must meet with the instructor to request an “incomplete” by the 14th week of the semester. The request must include a plan with a timeline for completing and having evaluated all coursework prior to the first day of the subsequent semester.

COURSE, DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

NOTE: For complete policies please refer to the MSW Program Graduate 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.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

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

Students are expected to comply with the stylistic guidelines of the American Psychological Association, fifth edition. The APA manual is available at the MSU Memorial Library reference desk, call number BF 76.7.P83 2001). The reference for the APA manual is:


SOWK 607 COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1
Topic: Course Overview
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Course Syllabus

Week 2
Topic: Social Work Values and Ethics
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Dolgoff, Loewenberg, Harrington, Chapter 1 - Ethical Choices in the Helping Professions
Chapter 2 - Values and Professional Ethics
Related websites:
International Federation of Social Workers
Professional Codes of Ethics
Minnesota Board of Social Work, Minnesota Statute 148D 2006

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Week 3
Topic: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Heterosexuality
Delivery: Out of class immersion activity/Sibley Park
http://www.scmnpride.com/
Required Readings: Anderson & Middleton, Part I – Stories of Heterosexual Privilege

Week 4
Topic: American Indian/Indigenous Heritage/Culture
Delivery: Out of class immersion activity/Land of Memories/Mahkato 37th Annual Traditional Wacipi PowWow
Required Readings: Anderson & Middleton, Part I - Stories of White Privilege

Week 5
Topic: Ethical Decision Making (macro, mezzo, micro), Ethical Behavior and its Impact on Social Service Delivery (discuss Ethics Case Assignment)
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, Chapter 3 - Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making: Concepts, Approaches and Values
Chapter 4 - Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making: The Decision-Making Process and Tool

Week 6
Topic: Ethical Decision Making (macro, mezzo, micro), Ethical Behavior and its Impact on Social Service Delivery
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, Chapter 5 - Confidentiality and Informed Consent
Chapter 6 - Client Rights and Professional Expertise
Chapter 7 - Value Neutrality and Imposing Values

Week 7
Topic: Ethical Dilemmas
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings
Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, Chapter 9 - The Professional Relationship: Limits, Dilemmas, and Problems
Chapter 10 Bureaucratic and Work Relationships
Chapter 13 – Whose Responsibility are Professional Ethics?

Week 8
Topic: Cultural Competence; Root Causes of Bias, Prejudice, Discrimination and Oppression
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Anderson & Middleton, Part II – Stories of Assumed Privilege
Part II – Stories of Internalized Oppression, Acculturation, and Assimilation


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**Week 9**
NO CLASS: Fall break

**Week 10**
Topic: Age, Socioeconomic Status, Disability, Chronic Health Conditions
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, Chapter 11 - Social Work with Selected Client Groups

Anderson & Middleton, Part I - Stories of Socioeconomic Privilege
Part I - Stories of Able-Bodied Privilege

**Week 11**
Topic: Family Structure, Marital Status, Religion Culture, Ethnicity
Required Readings: Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, Chapter 11 - Social Work with Selected Client Groups

**Week 12**
Topic: Hmong Culture Day Immersion Activity
Required Readings: None
Delivery: In-class partially and out-of-class partially

**Week 13**
Topic: Gender, Rural Setting
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Anderson & Middleton, Part I – Stories of Sexism

**Week 14**
NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Holiday

**Week 15**
Topic: Cultural Responsiveness
Delivery: In-class
Required Readings: Anderson & Middleton, Part II – Stories of Personal Compassion and Being Allies
Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, Chapter 12 – Changing World, Changing Dilemmas
Chapter 8 – Equality, Inequality, Limited Resources and Advocacy
SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY


