

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Syllabus: SW501 - Foundations of Social Work Practice I
Fall 2005**

Code of Conduct:

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook (<http://www.csw.utk.edu/mssw/>).

The Honor Statement:

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics*, 2005).

Disability:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

Foundations of Social Work Practice I is the first course in the Foundation sequence of three required practice courses. The course is designed to prepare students to apply a generalist perspective to social work practice with individuals. The course includes the history, mission and identity of the profession. The commitment of the profession of social work to practice with culturally diverse, vulnerable and high-risk populations and to promote economic and social justice is included. Social work values and ethics are emphasized and knowledge and skill in resolving value and ethical dilemmas are included. The course provides an introduction to direct social work practice with an emphasis on work with individual clients based on an ecological/systemic theoretical perspective. The problem solving process including problem definition, assessment, goal planning, intervention, termination and outcome evaluation is examined. The task centered approach and crisis interventions are included as examples of the problem solving process in direct social work practice. The strengths' perspective is emphasized in the content on assessment and problem solving processes. Mutuality in relationship building, communication skills, such as empathic and active listening, and the professional use of self are also included.

Course Rationale

The problem-solving process through planned change forms the knowledge and practice base for professional functioning. This course serves a socialization function by assisting students in their integration of social work practice knowledge, values, ethics and skills. This is one of three foundation courses that prepare students to apply a generalist perspective to social work practice and provide the basis for the advanced concentration courses.

Course Objectives

By the completion of this course the students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments and/or exams):

1. An ability to describe the essential characteristics of social work professional practice that reflects both knowledge and a personal perspective regarding the nature of the profession, e.g. its purpose, functions, roles and historical development;
2. An awareness of the relationship between one's own beliefs and social work values and ethics;
3. An understanding of the implications of social work values and ethics for social work practice;
4. Skill in defining social work roles of direct service provider, broker, care coordinator, mediator, and advocate;
5. Knowledge about building professional helping relationships based on mutuality and a strength perspective;
6. An understanding of the practitioner's conscious use of self in the process of developing relationships with clients including recognition of facilitating factors and potential areas of conflict;
7. Recognition of the impact of agency policy on social work practice with clients;
8. An ability to apply a generalist perspective to the problem solving process in direct practice, identifying various system levels significant to both assessment and intervention;
9. An ability to examine the effects that the variables of age, race, ethnicity, social and economic class, culture, religion and sexual orientation play in service delivery and formulate ethically sound interventive strategies accordingly;
10. An ability to formulate an intervention plan emphasizing the use of the task centered and crisis intervention approaches with individual clients;
11. Skill in formulating a plan for evaluation of their practice with individual clients.