

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

**Syllabus: SW530 – Seminar in Clinical Social Work: Forensic Social  
Work – An Introduction  
Spring 2006**

**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 Hokins Library at (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will provide an introduction to and overview of the field of forensic social work. Course content focuses on forensic social work including ethics, roles, functions, skills; utilization of community assets; the criminal justice system; and trans-systemic interactions.

**COURSE RATIONALE:**

Social workers have increasing opportunities to practice in forensic settings. Recognizing the growing trend toward "community justice" which includes policing, prosecution, defense, courts, and sentencing; this course seeks to assist students to develop knowledge and skills for practice in these arenas. Forensic social work practice requires the ethical, knowledge, and skill capacity to balance the mutual and conflicting interests of client and community.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Introduce forensic social work including purposes, functions, practice roles, and practice settings.
2. Students will know the domains of the criminal justice system and steps in the criminal prosecution.

3. Students will be able to identify social work values and ethics and apply these values and ethics toward resolution ethical dilemmas faced in forensic social work practice.
4. Students will comprehend and be able to articulate relevant theories and models of offender causation including the influence of oppression and socio-economic injustice.
5. Students will know the biopsychosocial assessment process including evaluation of (a) degree of criminal responsibility, (b) relevant mental and/or substance disorders, (c) collateral information including records, testing, and medical reports.
6. Students will understand the concept of mitigation in criminal cases and the range of roles of forensic social workers in the development mitigation related theories and materials.
7. Students will understand and appreciate the knowledge and skills required to present court testimony.
8. Students will know the functions of forensic social workers in clinical and judicial settings offering sentencing and program alternatives.