

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

**Syllabus: SW-552 - Community Organization  
Summer 2004**

**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. (*Hill topics, 2003*).

**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:**

This course is designed to give you the essential knowledge base and skills to practice community organization. As a method of social work, community organization is defined as a mode of social work practice including models of locality development, social planning, and social action through which the community is "mobilized" and empowered to deal with its issues and problems, and to resolve them to its satisfaction.

**Course Rationale:**

More than ever, the communities are faced with significant problems hampering their quality of life with adequate social and economic power and resources in their diverse and vulnerable contexts. Historically, community based work has been the medium through which the collective problems of community members have been explored and resolved within the practice frameworks of cultural and ethnic sensitivity and competence. The serious and urgent nature of current problems besetting the communities of diverse ethnicity and culture necessitates the profession of social work to approach these problems with knowledge- and expertise-based planned change. Furthermore, the expediency with which these communities and their problems need to be given attention compels the social work profession to teach how to practice community organization within the framework of professional ethics and standards for community practice and, strengths and empowerment perspective lodged in the social and economic justice principles. The need to practice community organization today is no less than it has ever been in the history of this country.

**Course Objectives:**

This course is offered to give the students the basic knowledge and skills necessary to practice community organization.

At the completion of this course, students are expected to demonstrate:

- 1) The knowledge of community as a socio-political entity with its own characteristics and resources for problem solving
- 2) The knowledge of the community change strategies and tactics of mobilization and models of practice
- 3) The knowledge of the roles social workers plays as community organizers and practitioners and of the ethical foundations of community practice
- 4) The skills to analyze community problems, design strategies and implement programs to resolve these problems to the satisfaction of the community
- 5) The skills in recognizing vulnerable and at-risk communities of color, minority and diversity with respect to fair and equitable distribution of society's resources
- 5) The skills to practice as empowerment and change agents for action resulting in positive outcomes within the context of social, and economic justice for the community