

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

**SW 200 Introduction to Social Work
Fall 2008**

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BSSW Program Mission:

The BSSW Program at the University of Tennessee exists to fulfill a need for disciplined, highly educated and trained generalist social workers to help people improve their social functioning in a technologically complex, culturally diverse, and rapidly changing world without borders. There is a focus on the reciprocal relationships between persons and their environments. Social workers are doers; they are problem-solvers who are able to intervene in multiple-level systems and perform various professional roles. Their actions are guided and informed by a broad knowledge-base, code of ethics, and professional values. Social workers are educated and trained to do things right as well as to do the right thing.

The mission of the BSSW Program is to develop generalist social workers who are strategic thinkers, life-long learners, and opinion shapers. The knowledge-base, skills, and values necessary for generalist practice are taught in an environment that fosters professional development and prepares students for critical thinking throughout their careers. We are dedicated to preparing practitioners for the challenges of today's complex pluralistic world. Since the amount of knowledge doubles approximately every five years, what is taught today may soon be obsolete. Our challenge, therefore, lies in the on-going development and implementation of a curriculum that prepares and energizes students for generalist practice today and in the future.

BSSW Program Goals:

Provision of education and training that enable students to become generalist social work practitioners who:

- are committed to advancing social and economic justice and the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession
- are committed to evidence-based practice
- are grounded in systems theory and operate within a person-in-the-environment framework
- use the problem-solving process to intervene in multiple-level client systems
- have an understanding of human diversity, special populations, and domestic and international challenges, that informs practice interventions
- use critical thinking, evaluative, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing global world
- are committed to continuous development of professional self

Rationale:

The introduction course in the BSSW program focuses on the profession of social work. This course is intended to assist the prospective social worker in gaining awareness and

understanding of the breadth and depth of the profession by providing opportunities to study its historical evolution, fields of practice, consumers of service, delivery of service, rewards and challenges and relationship with social welfare.

Course Description:

Topics covered include the emergence of the social work profession; professional mission; knowledge, skills, values; practice settings; client groups; helping services; career patterns; practice methods. This course is designed to assist students to consider their ability for a career in social work.

Course Competencies

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

1. identify various fields of practice within the social work profession;
2. discuss basic knowledge, skills, and values for entry-level social work practice;
3. discuss the emergence and relationship of the profession of social work within the context of the social welfare institution;
4. describe the competencies which are expected of the entry-level professional social worker;
5. identify and demonstrate basic practice skills of problem-solving and interpersonal communication;
6. identify some of the major problems addressed in rural and urban areas and the special populations assisted by baccalaureate social workers;
7. discuss social work practice within a problem-solving perspective that incorporates a variety of helping roles, and is rooted in systems theory;
8. discuss the meaning of human diversity, blaming the victim, creaming the poor, and dual perspective and how these concepts influence practice;
9. discuss the rewards and challenges of the social work profession;
10. articulate your reasons for further pursuance of a B.S.S.W. or for switching into another area of interest.
11. describe from first-hand experience social work practice and the role of social workers at a social service agency

Required texts:

Morales, A. T., & Sheafor, B. W. (2006). *Social Work: A Profession of Many Faces*, 11th Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Grobman, L. (2005). *Days in the lives of social workers*, 4th Edition. Harrisburg, PA: White Hat Communications.

Recommended text:

National Association of Social Workers. (2006). *Social work speaks: NASW policy statements*, 7th ed. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th Edition. Washington, DC: Author.

Szuchman, L., & Thomlison, B. (2008). *Writing with Style: APA Style for Social Work*, 3rd Edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

Other required reading:

In addition to assigned readings from our texts, there are multiple NASW Policy Statements designated in our syllabus (**) which are required readings. If you choose not to buy that text, they can be accessed through Online@UT under Course Materials.

Blackboard:

This course utilizes many Blackboard features through *Online@UT*. Please make sure you check the email address listed in the course is your current one. If additional help is needed accessing Blackboard contact helpdesk@utk.edu

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive punctually. If you will be missing a class or will be late the instructor must be notified **PRIOR** to the **BEGINNING** of the class you will be missing or late for in order to be excused. **EACH** unexcused absence or tardiness will result in 5 points being deducted from your final grade.

Course Requirements:

The course format will be a combination of lecture, PowerPoint, video, online assignments, speakers, class discussion and activities. Each class, the instructor will highlight main points and important issues. Students are expected to read, critically analyze, and discuss assigned readings. Grades will be based on 2 exams, an interview/paper, a NASW reaction paper, a library assignment, online assignments, class participation, and attendance.

Library Search Assignment (20 points):

Each student is required to conduct a thorough library search, consisting of a **minimum of 4** databases (Social Work Abstracts, PsychInfo, Medline, and one additional of your choice), that begins the **search with POVERTY and narrows it down to a specific topic related to poverty**, whereby you have exhausted the databases in search of abstracts. Each student must have 10 or fewer final results with a minimum of 3-4 "hits" per database search. Your library search history pages will be turned in as proof of databases and terms used in the search process, accompanied by a 1-page overview of your search process and your reaction to the searches. This paper is due on **September 16th** at the beginning of class. Late papers will be penalized 3-points. No papers will be accepted after 2:00 PM on November 25, 2008.

Through participation and attendance on the designated library days the Library Search Assignment will: 1) clarify the importance of evidence based practice, 2) clarify the importance of scholarly, peer-reviewed articles, and 3) this assignment will assist students as they prepare for future research projects.

Grading criteria as follows: 20 possible points

- One page reaction paper to the database searching process. This personal reaction should be one page and points will be deducted for anything over or under the specified page limit. It should be well written, thorough and concise with no spelling or major grammatical errors: 4 pts
- Each of the four specified database searches beginning with Poverty: 4 pts
- Providing search history pages for each specified database listed: 4 pts
- Showing no fewer than 3-4 searches for each specified database: 4 pts
- Showing 10 or fewer final results per each listed database: 4 pts

NASW News Review and Reaction Paper (30 points):

The *NASW News* is a publication of the National Association of Social Workers which is distributed to its membership monthly. Hodges Library houses current editions of the newspaper in the current periodical section of the library but if by chance you can't find one there please go to the help desk for assistance. Each student will read and review one recent issue of *NASW News* and write a 4-5 page paper which summarizes **the overall content of the newspaper and your reaction to *NASW News***. The paper must follow APA format (page one is the title page and the last page is the reference page. Do not include an abstract) and be well organized and well written (this includes proper grammar, sentence construction, paragraph development, and spelling). The paper is due by the beginning of class on **October 14th**. Late papers will be penalized 5 points. No papers will be accepted after 2:00 PM on November 25, 2008.

After reading *NASW News* students will have insight into the following: 1) The profession of SW as it pertains to micro and macro practice, 2) Continuing education opportunities, 3) Political issues as they relate to the profession and our Code of Ethics, 4) International and global issues as they pertain to the SW profession, 5) Current issues that are directly related to the profession and the clients that we serve, and 6) The profession's strong commitment to social and economic justice.

Grading criteria as follows: 30 possible points

- APA Format (including reference page): 3 pts
- Adhering to the specified page limit: 2 pts
- Overall content of *NASW News* (what's in the paper?): 15 pts
- Student's personal reaction: 5 pts
- Writing ability (Spelling and grammatical errors; is your text thorough, clear and concise?): 5pts

Social Work Practitioner Interview and Reaction Paper (30 points):

Each student will be responsible for making an appointment with a B.S.S.W. or M.S.S.W. practitioner in **agency practice to visit the agency and spend time observing/learning about agency activities** and conducting a 30-45 minute face to face interview with the social worker. Appropriate topics and questions for this activity will be discussed in class. The data collected in this interview will be utilized to construct a 6 page reaction paper (page one is title page and page six is the personal communications reference page) focusing on the perceptions of this social worker regarding the profession and his/her practice. Relate how this person's perceptions differ or reinforce what has been discussed and read to date for this class. Also, indicate what new issues were introduced that enhanced your understanding of the profession. This paper must be in APA format (Do not include an abstract) and is due at the beginning of class on **November 18th**. Late papers will be penalized 5-points. No papers will be accepted after 2:00 PM on November 25, 2008

This assignment should provide the student with the following: 1) insight into the work day of a social worker, 2) the pros and cons of working in an agency setting, 3) how often our Code of Ethics is utilized on a daily basis, 4) the importance of continuing education and how this can be achieved, 5) how the social worker deals with various clients in their respective environments, 6) barriers that vulnerable and special populations face 7) how the social worker and/or agency is committed to social and economic justice, and 8) describe from first-hand experience social work practice and the role of social workers at a social service agency

Grading criteria as follows: 30 possible points.

- APA Format which **must** include personal communications sheet (found online@UT under Assignments) for full credit: 3 pts
- Adhering to the specified page limit: 2 pts
- Overall content of the interview. How did the interview differ/coincide with what you've already learned about social work and what role does the social worker in the agency perform: 15 pts
- Student's personal reaction. What new issues were introduced to you during this interview?: 5 pts
- Writing ability (Spelling and grammatical errors; is your text thorough, clear and concise?): 5pts

Blackboard Online Assignments (20 points):

Students are required to participate in all online discussions and/or assignments on Blackboard. New discussion/assignments will be placed on the main discussion board which must be completed by the date and time noted in the assignment. It will be announced in class once the blackboard question or assignment has been posted. Late entries will not be graded. Each assignment is worth 2 points unless otherwise specified.

The listed topics will be analyzed via blackboard discussion board questions and online assignments. Upon completion the student should be able to discuss the following:

1. Discussion Board assignment 1: Understand the profession of social work and its commitment to social and economic justice (2 pts)
2. Discussion Board assignment 2: Discuss the importance of the profession's Code of Ethics and how it pertains to vulnerable populations (2 pts)
3. Discussion Board assignment 3: Critically analyze NASW's policy statement on the death penalty (2 pts)
4. Discussion Board assignment 4: Compare and contrast various agency settings from the Grobman text and explain how the social worker utilizes the person in environment approach and assists the clients in both micro and macro situations (2 pts)
5. Discussion Board assignment 5: Critically analyze and discuss special populations as they relate to our profession's Code of Ethics and the difference between our professional vs. personal values (2 pts)
6. Discussion Board assignment 6: Critically analyze NASW's policy statement on Affirmative Action (4 pts)
7. Discussion Board assignment 7: Critically analyze NASW's policy statement on International Policy on Human Rights (2 pts)
8. Discussion Board assignment 8: Critically analyze NASW's policy statement on immigrants and refugees and the importance of evidence based practice as it relates to this topic (4pts)

Exams (100 points):

Two exams will be given during this semester based on all required readings, videos, class lectures, assignments, class discussions, and speakers. Each exam will be worth 50 points. The exams are scheduled for **October 7th** (midterm exam) and **November 25th** (final exam). Both exams will be administered in the classroom. **No make-up exams will be allowed unless**

you obtain permission from the instructor to be absent from the exam prior to the start of class the day the exam is given.

October 7 (Midterm exam) This exam will cover material beginning August 21st- October 2nd and include required readings (including SW Speaks), lecture and PowerPoint, class discussions, and assignments related to: 1) Organization of the SW profession, 2) Professional values and ethics as it pertains to generalist SW practice, 3) The profession's commitment to social and economic justice, 4) The nature and history of our SW profession, and 5) Knowledge base for generalist practice including: fields of practice, various practice settings and client groups.

November 25 (Final exam) This exam will cover material beginning October 14th- November 20th and include required readings (including SW Speaks), lecture and PowerPoint, class discussions, assignments, videos, and guest speakers related to: 1) Special Populations and their relation to the Ecosystems Model, 2) Cultural diversity among special populations, 3) Professional and personal values as it pertains to generalist practice and special populations, 4) Agency based practice as it relates to generalist practice including: public vs. private organizations, record keeping, continuing education, evidence based practices, and case management skills, and 5) The future of SW including: global approach, employment opportunities, issues within the profession, and more evidence based practices.

Extra Credit:

It is the BSSW program's expectation that all social work majors participate in the BSSW Student Social Work Organization (BSSW-SWO) or the National Association of Black Social Workers Organization (NABSW). All students, regardless of major who are enrolled in SW 200 (Introduction to Social Work) and/or in SW 250 (Social Welfare) are welcome. This organization meets every Tuesday from 11:10 -12:25 in room 209, Henson Hall. This time slot is built into the class schedule as a lab. Given the time of the meetings, students are encouraged to bring their lunch.

The BSSW-SWO and NABSW are student organizations that provide an excellent opportunity for leadership development, community and university service, the enhancement of group skills, research opportunities, and socialization. The organization and its activities are viewed as an extension of the BSSW curriculum.

Students in this class will have the opportunity to earn five (5) final grade points for extra credit by attending and participating in the BSSW-SWO or NABSW this semester. Your attendance and participation must be documented. Attendance will be taken at each meeting. You must attend seven (7) or more meetings during the term. Also, you must participate on one of the organizations standing committees and this does not include donating anything (cans, yogurt tops, bottle caps, etc). For extra credit you must **ACTIVELY** participate in a BSWO sponsored activity at least two times during the semester. Both attendance and participation are required for extra credit. You will need to complete a form listing your activities in the organization throughout the term. The form will be signed by a committee chairperson and the faculty liaison to the BSSW-SWO or NABSW. The completed, signed form must be handed into me one week prior to the end of class. Without the signed form verifying your attendance and participation, the extra credit will not be provided. **No other extra credit is available in this class.**

Disability Services:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall or 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Grading:

Students will be evaluated by total points earned in this course as outlined above. **No extra credit (except for BSSW-SWO or NABSW participation) or REWRITES are permitted in this course.** The grading scale by total points is as follows:

188-200	A	140-145	C-
180-187	A-	132-139	D+
172-179	B+	126-131	D
166-171	B	120-125	D-
160-165	B-	119-below	F
152-159	C+		
146-151	C		

Honor Statement:

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. By enrollment in this class, you pledge that you will neither knowingly give, nor receive, any inappropriate assistance in academic work in SW 200, thus affirming your own personal commitment to honor and integrity (*Hilltopics*).

Inclement Weather Policy:

Class will be cancelled only if the University is closed due to inclement weather. Campus and local radio and TV stations will be notified so that appropriate announcements may be made. If class is cancelled, any assignments due that day will be due the next time class meets.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE**August 21****Course Introduction**

- a. Review syllabus
- b. Course requirements
- c. University Honor Statement
- d. Online@UT/Blackboard

UT Undergraduate Social Work Program

- a. Mission
- b. Objectives
- c. Curriculum areas
- d. Progression Policies

- e. Student Social Work Organization
- f. Senior Portfolio

August 26

Organization of the Social Work Profession

- a. BSSW/MSSW/Ph.D.
- b. CSWE
- c. NASW/NABSW
- d. Other professional social work organizations

Video: What do Social Workers Do?

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 4
* *SW Speaks*, Confidentiality, and Peace and Social Justice

The Nature of Social Work

- a. Definition
- b. Emergence of the Profession
- c. Historical review
- d. Relationship with social welfare
- e. Liberalism vs. Conservatism

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapters 1, 3

* *SW Speaks*, Capital Punishment and Death Penalty, and Civil Liberties and Justice

August 28

Profession of Social Work

- a. Mission
- b. Knowledge, skills and values
- c. Use of self
- d. Code of Ethics

Video: Faces of Change: Social Work in the New Millenium

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 2

* *SW Speaks*, Client Self Determination, Social Services, and Volunteers and Social Services

September 2 **Library Database research**

September 4 **Library Database research**

September 9 **online assignment**

September 11 **Social Work Values and Ethics**

- a. Competencies
- b. Value conflicts

Class Exercise: Value conflicts

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 7

**SW Speaks*, Correctional SW, Foster Care and Adoption, Senior Health, Safety, and Vitality, & Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

*Strom-Gottfried, K. (2000). Ensuring ethical practice: An examination of NASW Code Violations, 1986-97. *Social Work*, 45(3), 251-261.

September 16 Social Work Values and Ethics, cont

Video: [Professional Choices: Ethics at Work](#)

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 8

**SW Speaks*, Cultural Competence, Drug Testing in Workplace, & Linguistic/Cultural Diversity in the US

LIBRARY DATABASE SEARCH ASSIGNMENT DUE

September 18 Baccalaureate Generalist Practice

- a. Foundation for social work practice
- b. Person-in-environment approach
- c. Generalist as compared to a specialist
- d. Problem-solving approach
- e. Strengths based practice
- f. Career options

READ: *Early & GelnMaye. (2000). Valuing families: Social work practice with families from a strengths perspective. *Social Work*, 45 (2), 118-130.

**September 23 Online assignment
Fields of Practice**

- a. Child Welfare
- b. Mental Health
- c. Public Welfare
- d. Medical
- e. Schools
- f. Aging

- g. Others

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 5

**SW Speaks*, Early Childhood Care, Hospice Care, Mental Health, Public Child Welfare, & Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Substance Abuse

September 25 Practice Settings and Client Groups

- a. Non-profit
- b. For-profit
- c. Public
- d. Voluntary
- e. Involuntary

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 6

**SW Speaks*, Employee Assistance, & Professional Impairment

September 30 Urban Social Work Practice

- a. Client groups
- b. Major characteristics that influence practice
- c. Case studies

Video: What can we do about violence? Crisis in our inner cities

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapters 17, 24

**SW Speaks*, School Violence, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, School Dropout Prevention, & Family Violence

October 2 Rural Social Work Practice

- a. Client groups
- b. Major characteristics that influence practice
- c. Case studies

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 16

**SW Speaks*, Rural SW, Education of Children and Youths, & Community Development

**Evans, et al. (1999). Are rural gang members similar to their urban peers? Implications for rural communities. Youth and Society, 30(3), 267-282*

October 7 Exam 1

October 30

Practice with Special Populations, cont.

- a. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people

Video: Gay Youth

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 12

*SW Speaks, Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues & Transgender and Gender Identity Issues

November 4

Practice with Special Populations, cont.

- a. Women
- b. Elderly
- c. Persons with mental illness
- d. Persons with disabilities
- e. ADA
- f. Racial and ethnic minorities within special populations

Video: The Right Future

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 11, 14, & 15

*SW Speaks, People with Disabilities, HIV and AIDS

November 6

Race, Ethnicity, and Cultural Diversity

- a. Demographics
- b. Trends
- c. Prejudice and discrimination

Video: Divided City: The Route to Racism

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapters 18, 19, 20

*SW Speaks, Gender, Ethnicity, and Race-Based Workplace Discrimination, Racism, & Affirmative Action

*Kitano & Nakaoka. (2001). Asian Americans in the Twentieth Century. *Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 3 (3/4), 7-17.

November 11

Inequality and Oppression

- a. Racism

Class exercise: "Identifying "isms"

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapters 21, 22, 23

SW Speaks, Women's Issues, & Women in the SW Profession

*Carter, C. (1999). Church burning in African American communities: Implications for empowerment practice. *Social Work, 44* (1), 62-68.

November 13

The Role of Prevention

- a. Cost effectiveness
- b. Gordon's model vs. Public Health Model

Class exercise: Application of prevention models to practice

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 9

**SW Speaks*, TANF: Welfare Reform (341)

November 18

Working in Organizations

- a. Agency-based practice
- b. Public and private agencies
- c. Host organizations
- d. Professionals within a bureaucracy
- e. Record keeping
- f. Working with other professionals
- g. Continuing education

Class exercise: Comparing and contrasting agency settings and client populations in Grobman text.

READ: *Dane & Simon. (1991). Resident guests: Social workers in host settings. *Social Work, 36*(3), 208-213.

SOCIAL WORKER INTERVIEW PAPER DUE

November 20

Strategies for Advancing Social and Economic Justice

- a. Macro strategies
- b. Micro strategies
- c. International social work

Class Exercise: Application of strategies to case studies

READ: Morales & Sheafor, chapter 10

**SW Speaks*, Immigrants and Refugees, International Policy on Human Rights

*Padilla. (1997). Immigration policy: Issues for social work practice. *Social Work, 42* (6), 595-606.

Realities of Practice and the Future of Social Work

- a. Changing needs
- b. Scarce resources
- c. New roles
- d. Case management
- e. Organizational dilemmas
- f. Resistance
- g. Prejudice and discrimination
- h. Challenges to the profession
- i. Evidence-based practice
- j. Continuing education

Class exercise: Identifying the profession's issues

November 25 Exam II

November 27 & 28 Thanksgiving- No Class

**December 2 Last day of class
Panel of Guest Speakers**

Recommended readings and resources:

Brieland, D. (1990). The Hull-House tradition and the contemporary social worker: Was Jane Addams really a social worker? *Social Work*, 35(2), 134-138.

Ehrenreich, J. H. (1985). *The Altruistic Imagination: A history of social work and social policy in the United States*. New York: Cornell Publishing.

Ginsberg, L. (1998). *Social Work in Rural Communities, a Book of Readings, 3rd. edition*. New York: CSWE.

Lundblad, K. S. (1995). Jane Addams and social reform: A role model for the 1990's. *Social Work*, 40(5), 661-669.

McNeece, C.A., & Thyer, B. (2004). Evidence-based practice and social work. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work: Advances in Practice, Programming, Research, and Policy*, 1(1), 7-25.

Orlin, M. (1995). The Americans with Disabilities Act: Implications for social services. *Social Work*, 40 (2), 233-239.

Roberts, A., & Greene, G. (Eds.). (2002). *Social work desk reference*. New York: Oxford.

Specht, H., & Courtney, M. (1994). *Unfaithful Angels*. New York: The Free Press.

Yaffe, J., & Gotthoffer, D. (2000). *Quick Guide to the Internet for Social Work*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.