

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
SW 538 Social Work Practice with At-Risk Populations (2 credits)
Tuesdays 5:30-7:30PM

Instructor: Cherry Whitehead-Thompson, M.S.S.W., M.B.A.
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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. (www.csw.utk.edu).

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*, 2008).

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 2227 Dunford Hall (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

This is a required foundation course. This course provides in-depth study of evidence-informed and evidenced-based practice models with at-risk populations. Assessment and interventions focus on individuals, groups, families, and communities

Course Rationale

This is a 2 credit course that builds on the foundation introductory practice course in applying generalist practice to complex social problems and issues. Knowledge, values, and skills in advocacy and evidence-based intervention methods for practice with individuals, small groups, and families, and communities are essential to influence social change and empowering clients/client systems and populations at-risk. The course emphasizes assessment and intervention with client systems inclusive of their risk, protective factors and strengths in the context of the supports and demands of their environment.

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. Assess complex client systems from an ecological perspective for practice with individuals, small groups, families, and communities with an emphasis on diverse strengths, resources, natural support systems and using culturally affirming communication and available evidenced-based, culturally affirming assessment tools. (Practice- F.2, F.3, F.4; CT/EBP- F.1, F.4; Diversity- F.1, F.3, F.4; Research-F.1. *(content: skills and strategies for assessing clients/ client systems, problems, issues, and organizations; culturally affirming communication and assessment; critical analysis of assessment tools for evidence-bases and culturally affirmative elements; assessing family dynamics, roles, and patterns; information technology to locate evidence-based assessment tools).*
2. Evaluate the limitations and strengths of practice models and interventions and identify best practices appropriately in work with diverse client systems, families and small groups (Practice-F.6; CT/EBP-F.1, F.3; Diversity-F.4, F.6; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.1; Research- F.1). *(content: generalist group work (i.e., group dynamics, processes, roles); intra-, inter- and inter-disciplinary teams; generalist family-centered, strengths-based, evidence supported interventions; using information technological resources to identify evidence-based interventions; family configurations (e.g., single parent, step-, aging, GLBTQ) and issues (e.g., child maltreatment and abuse, mental and physical health, immigration/ legal status, death and dying, disability(ies), poverty, violence); intra-, inter- and inter-disciplinary teams).*
3. Recognize, analyze, and tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical dilemmas that arise in practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities. (Values/ethics-F.1, F.2; CT/EBP-F.4; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.4). *(content: NASW Code of Ethics, International Code of Ethics; ethical principles; professional values; analysis of ethical dilemmas; designing resolution strategies; utilizing supervision appropriately for analysis and resolution of ethical dilemmas).*
4. Identify evidence-based prevention principles and approaches to well-being and social and economic justice across client systems. (Practice-F.9; CT/EBP-F.5; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.3). *(content: public health/ risk and resilience framework (Fraser); EBP prevention models of practice; precautionary Principle (Public Health) and traditional scientific risk assessment methodologies; at-risk populations (e.g., HIV, suicide, community, and domestic violence, and substance abuse; using information technology to identify evidence-based principles and approaches).*
5. Describe how advocacy and social change are applied to advance well-being, human rights, and social and economic justice in communities, and how and when to apply such generalist strategies across larger systems. (Practice-F.5, F.10; Pops at-risk & SJ- F.4., F.6; Values/ethics-F.1). *(content: models of community practice, planned social change, and empowerment (e.g., grassroots, neighborhood, and community organizing); generalist roles, strategies and tactics in organizing functional communities, community social and economic development, program development, community liaison, social planning, coalition building, political and social action; social movements and their core components for progressive change (i.e., social work roles, scope of concern, constituencies, target systems, desired outcomes).*

Required Text: The following book is required of this course and may be purchased from the usual book sellers:

Dworkin, J. (2005). *Advanced social work practice: An integrative, multilevel approach*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

There are also additional required readings that are listed in the syllabus and made available at the UTK on-line Library Course Reserves site.

Attendance and class participation: Students are expected to attend every class session. It is essential that students notify the instructor by e-mail (cwt1920@aol.com) in a timely manner if circumstances interfere with class attendance or the completion of course assignments. Also, students are expected to engage one another in the lecture through critical thinking exercises.

Course Requirements/Plan for Evaluation

Class Presentation of Case Studies.....	20% (80 pts.)
Case Study Activities Questions.....	10% (40 pts.)
Discussion Boards.....	20% (80 pts.)
Group Project	25% (100 pts.)
Final Exam	25% (100 pts.)

Class Presentation of Case Studies

Students will be assigned to small groups of five to six individuals. One group per week (instructor will inform class of the week in which groups will begin presentations) will be responsible for making an oral presentation (10-15 minutes) of the case studies that focus on social work practice with one or more of the following – individuals, small groups, families, organizations, and/or communities. Students must be able to assess complex client systems from an ecological perspective with an emphasis on diverse strengths, resources, and natural support systems. Additionally, students must discuss issues that should be addressed in developing appropriate intervention(s). The group will be expected to facilitate class discussion of the case and defend chosen intervention(s) for addressing the problem(s) in the case. A limited power point presentation may be used. Although students will work in groups to complete the case studies, students will be graded individually.

Case Study Activities Questions

Each week students will be responsible for completing the questions located under “Activities” at the end of each assigned case study. Students must type the questions and answers. The questions will assist students in better understanding the concepts and frameworks presented and foster critical thinking skills by requiring students to draw from personal experiences in order to determine a feasible course of action in addressing issues presented in the case.

Discussion Boards

Topics for discussion board assignments will include: recognition, analysis, and toleration of ambiguity in the resolution of ethical dilemmas that arise in practice with individuals, families, groups, and/or communities; identification of evidence-based prevention principles and approaches to well-being and social and economic justice across client systems.

Group Project

In this assignment, students, using an eco-map, will be asked to: assess complex client systems from an ecological perspective with an emphasis on diverse strengths, resources, natural support systems; conduct a comprehensive literature review/search to identify available evidenced-based, culturally affirming assessment tools and “best practices” (based on an evaluation of limitations and strengths of various interventions). Although students will work in groups to complete the project, students will be graded individually.

Final Exam

The final exam will include, but not be limited to, questions on the following topics: using culturally-affirming communication in social work practice; identifying evidence-based prevention principles and approaches to well-being and social and economic justice across client systems; describing how advocacy and social change are applied to advance well-being, human rights, and social and economic justice in communities, and how and when to apply such generalist strategies across larger systems.

The final course grade will be based on the following:

- A = 376-400 points (Superior performance, exceeds expectations)
- B+ = 348-375 points (Better than satisfactory performance)
- B = 328-347 points (Satisfactory performance, meets expectations)
- C+ = 308-327 points (Less than satisfactory performance)
- C = 280-307 points (Performance well below the standard expected of graduate students)

Email Inquires: Please allow 24 hours for a response to course related email questions before resubmitting your question.

Course Content Outline:

Session 1 (August 26, 2008)

Class will not meet. However, students are expected to complete the required readings for the week and questions 1-5 under the “Activities” portion on pages 15-16.

Required Readings for Session 1:

Chapter 1 of Dworkin textbook

Case study: 2-1: Strengths-based and Solution-focused Narrative Intervention (pp. 12-16).

Complete “Activities” questions 1-5.

Session 2 (September 2, 2008)

Overview of course and assignments; discussion of problem-based learning; small group discussion of cases.

Required Readings for Session 2:

Case study: 5-3 Interventions for Recent Hmong Immigrants (pp. 65-67). Complete “Activities” questions 1-4.

Session 3 (September 9, 2008)

Assessment and multi-level interventions with organizations & communities from an ecological perspective; identification and critique of best practices in assessing and intervening with organizations and communities; information technology to locate evidence-based assessment tools; generalist group work (i.e., group dynamics, processes, roles).

Required Readings for Session 3:

Case study: 2-3 Clinical Practice in a Rural Community with an Adult Survivor of Sexual Trauma (pp. 20-24). Complete “Activities” questions 1-6.

*Carlson, B.E. (2006). Best practices in the treatment of substance-abusing women in the child welfare system. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 6, 97-115.

*Littell, J.H. (2005). Lessons from a systematic review of effects of multisystemic therapy. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 27, 445-463.

*Littell, J.H. (2006). The case for Multisystemic Therapy: Evidence or orthodoxy? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 28, 458-472.

Session 4 (September 16, 2008)

Assessment of and multi-level interventions with complex problems facing individuals & families from an ecological perspective; family configurations (e.g., single parent, step-, aging, GLBTQ) and issues (e.g., child maltreatment and abuse, mental and physical health, immigration/legal status, death and dying, disability(ies), poverty, violence)

Required Readings for Session 4:

Case study: 4-2 A Cambodian Woman with Severe Psychological and Social Trauma (pp. 49-51). Complete “Activities” questions 1-6.

*Birman, D., Trickett, E. & Buchanan, R.M. (2005). A tale of two cities: Replication of a study on the acculturation and adaptation of immigrant adolescents from the former Soviet Union in a different community context. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 35, 83-101.

*Cox, K.F. (2005). Examining the role of social network intervention as an integral component of community-based, family-focused practice. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 14, 443-454.

Session 5 (September 23, 2008)

Assessment and multi-level interventions with organizations & communities from an ecological perspective; identification and critique of best practices in assessing and intervening with organizations and communities

Required Readings for Session 5:

Case study: 3-3 Response to School Violence: A community-based approach (pp. 40-41).

Complete “Activities” questions 1-5.

- *Boehm, A. & Itzhaky, H. (2004). The social marketing approach: A way to increase reporting and treatment of sexual assault. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 28, 253-265.
- *Checker, M. (2007). “But I know it’s true”: Environmental risk assessment, justice, and anthropology. *Human Organization*, 66, 112-124.
- *Finifter, D.H., Jensen, C.J., Wilson, C.E. & Koenig, B.L. (2005). A comprehensive, multitiered, targeted community needs assessment model. *Family and Community Health*, 28, 293-306.

Session 6 (September 30, 2008)

Assessment and multi-level interventions with organizations & communities from an ecological perspective; information technology to locate evidence-based assessment tools; generalist group work (i.e., group dynamics, processes, roles)

Required Readings for Session 6:

Case study: 3-4 Community-Based Services for Youth Released on Parole (pp. 42-44).

Complete “Activities” questions 1-3.

- *Botvin, G.J., Griffen, K.W. & Nichols, T.D. (2006). Preventing youth violence and delinquency through a universal school-based approach. *Prevention Science*, 7, 403-408.
- *Heflinger, C.A. & Christens, B. (2006). Rural behavioral health services for children and adolescents: An ecological and community psychology analysis. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 34, 379-400.
- *Mulroy, E.A. & Lauber, H. (2004). A user-friendly approach to program evaluation and effective community interventions for families at risk of homelessness. *Social Work*, 49, 573-586.

Session 7 (October 7, 2008)

Evidence-based prevention principles and approaches across client systems; intra-, inter- and trans-disciplinary teams; public health/risk and resilience framework; prevention approaches with at-risk populations (e.g., HIV, suicide, community, and domestic violence, and substance abuse)

Required Readings for Session 7:

Case study: 6-1 Dealing with End-stage Illness: Cultural issues and the interdisciplinary team (pp. 69-71). Complete “Activities” questions 1-5.

- *Bronstein, L.R. (2003). A model for interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work*, 48,

297-306.

- *Haber & Toro (2004). Homelessness among families, children, and adolescents: An ecological-developmental perspective. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 7, 123-163.
- *Okamoto, S.K., LeCroy, C.W., Tann, S.S., Rayle, A.D. Kulis, S., Dustman, P. & Berceci, D. (2006). The implications of ecologically based assessment for primary prevention with indigenous youth populations. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 27, 155-170.

Session 8 (October 14, 2008)

Evidence-based prevention principles and approaches across client systems; using information technology to identify evidence-based principles and approaches; precautionary principle (Public Health) and traditional scientific risk assessment methodologies

Required Readings for Session 8:

- Case study: 7-1 Primary Prevention to Promote Effective Parenting: The Parent University (pp. 80-84). Complete “Activities” questions 1-4.
- *Campbell, A.N., Fisher, D.S., Picciano, J.F., Orlando, M.J., Stephens, R.S. & Roffman, R.A. (2004). Marketing effectiveness in reaching the non-treatment seeking marijuana smoker. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 4, 39-59.
 - *Glisson, C. & Schoenwald, S.K. (2005). The ARC organizational and community intervention strategy for implementing evidenced-based children’s mental health treatments. *Mental Health Services Research*, 7, 243-259.
 - *Jenson, J.M. (2006). Advances and challenges in preventing childhood and adolescent problem behavior. *Social Work Research*, 30, 131-134.
 - *Mann, E.A. & Reynolds, A.J. (2006). Early intervention and juvenile delinquency prevention: Evidence from the Chicago Longitudinal Study. *Social Work Research*, 30, 153-167.

Session 9 (October 21, 2008)

Advocacy and social change strategies that advance well-being and social and economic justice with individuals and in organizations & communities

Required Readings for Session 9:

- Case study: 2-5 The Impact of Agency Policy on Intervention with a Family Affected by ADHD/ODD (pp. 29-32). Complete “Activities” questions 1-4.
- *Icard, L.D. Bourjolly, J.N. & Siddiqui, N. (2003). Designing social marketing strategies to increase African Americans’ access to health promotion programs. *Health and Social Work*, 28, 214- 223.
 - *Peterson, N.A. & Hughey, J. (2002). Tailoring organizational characteristics for empowerment: Accommodating individual economic resources. *Journal of Community Practice*, 10, 41-59.

Session 10 (October 28, 2008)

Models of community practice, grassroots, neighborhood, and community organizing; social movements and their core components for progressive change (i.e., social work roles, scope of concern, constituencies, target systems, desired outcomes)

Required Readings for Session 10:

Case study: 4-1 Multilevel Solutions to Violence with an African-American Family using Oppression and Feminist Theories (pp. 46-48). Complete “Activities” questions 1-5.

*Chino, M. & DeBruyn, L. (2006). Building true capacity: Indigenous models for indigenous communities. *American Journal of Public Health, 96*, 596-599.

*Hancock, T. U. (2005). Cultural competence in the assessment of poor Mexican families in the rural southeastern United States. *Child Welfare, 84*, 689-711.

Session 11 (November 4, 2008)

Community social and economic development, program development, community liaison, social planning, coalition building, political and social action

Required Readings for Session 11:

Case study: 7-4 Restoring Organizational Functioning: Challenge for a new executive director (pp. 93-95). Complete “Activities” questions 1-4.

*Goodkind, J.R. & Foster-Fishman, P.G. (2002). Integrating diversity and fostering interdependence: Ecological lessons learned about refugee participation in multiethnic communities. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30*, 389-409.

*Jacobson, M. & Rugeley, C. (2007). Community-based participatory research: Group work for social justice and community change. *Social Work with Groups, 30*, 21-39.

Session 12 (November 11, 2008)

Recognizing, analyzing, and resolving ethical dilemmas with individuals, families, groups, and communities; NASW Code of Ethics, International Code of Ethics; ethical principles; professional values

Required Readings for Session 12:

Case study: 2-4 Assessment challenges with an adult homeless male (pp. 25-28) using guidelines for class presentations. Complete “Activities” questions 1-4.

Session 13 (November 18, 2008)

Required Readings for Session 13:

Case study: 3-1 A School-based Program for Teen Parents (pp. 34-36). Complete “Activities” questions 1-4.

Case study: 3-2 Outreach to Homeless Youth At-risk (pp. 37-39). Complete “Activities” questions 1-7.

Session 14 (November 25, 2008)

Utilizing supervision appropriately for analysis and resolution of ethical dilemmas; class discussion of issues raised during the course

Required Readings for Session 14:

Carolyn Sniff Legal Brief (listed under “course documents”)

Session 15 (December 2, 2008)

****GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS****

Session 16 (December 9, 2008)

****FINAL EXAM****