

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK  
BSSW PROGRAM  
Fall 2009**

**SW 200: Introduction to Social Work**

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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, 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. discuss the unique aspects of the profession of social work and its similarities compared to other helping professions;
5. describe the competencies which are expected of the entry-level professional social worker;
6. identify and demonstrate basic practice skills of problem-solving and interpersonal communication;
7. identify some of the major problems addressed in rural and urban areas and the special populations assisted by baccalaureate social workers;
8. discuss social work practice within a problem-solving perspective that incorporates a variety of helping roles, and is rooted in systems theory;
9. discuss the meaning of human diversity, blaming the victim, creaming the poor, and dual perspective and how these concepts influence practice;
10. discuss the rewards and challenges of the social work profession;
11. articulate your reasons for further pursuance of a B.S.S.W. or for switching into another area of interest.
12. 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. (2009). *Social Work: A Profession of Many Faces*, 12th Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Grobman, L. (2005). *Days in the lives of social workers*, 3rd Edition. Harrisburg, PA: White Hat Communications.

**Recommended text:**

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

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Washington, DC: Author.

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

**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](mailto:helpdesk@utk.edu)

**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 quizzes, a group project, an agency visit and discussion, an interview/paper, online assignments (essays), class participation, and attendance.

Here is a breakdown of each course requirement and the assigned points:

ATTENDANCE: 20 points  
 PARTICIPATION: 10 points  
 QUIZZES AND EASSAYS: 100 points total (10 points each)  
 SOCIAL WORKER INTERVIEW/PAPER: 30 points  
 GROUP PRESENTATION: 20 points  
 VISION PAPER: 20 points  
 EXTRA CREDIT: 5 points

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Total: 200 points + 5 extra credit points

### 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+
172-179.1	B+	126-131	D
166-171.1	B	120-125	D-
160-165	B-	119-below	F
152-159.1	C+		
146-151	C		

### Attendance Policy (20 points):

**Attendance counts toward 20 points of your grade.** 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. Attendance sign-in sheets will be passed around at the beginning of each class. It is the student's responsibility to sign in as the attendance sheets are the final say for attendance. **EACH** unexcused absence or tardiness will result in 5 points being deducted from your final grade.

### Participation (10 points):

In addition to attending class, there will be many opportunities to engage in class discussion. Full participation is expected. Participation is worth 10 points of your grade.

### Weekly Quizzes and Essays ( 100 points total= 10 points each):

To demonstrate understanding of the course content and readings, there will be regular quizzes and essays. These will be completed on University's Blackboard online services. Depending on the course content for that week it may be decided that a quiz or an essay are best used to determine level of understanding. **The Essays:** These are intended to be short in nature (no more than three pages double spaced or approximately 800 words.) While they are intended to be short in nature they should be sufficient to indicate you have prepared for the essay by reading the required literature for the week and taken the time to think about the content. The essays should be completed no later than 12 p.m. on the day they are due.

Essay topics or quizzes will be placed on the announcements page board which must be completed by the date and time noted in the assignment. **Late entries will not be graded.** Each assignment is worth 10 points unless otherwise specified.

The listed topics will be analyzed via blackboard online assignments. The competencies to be reviewed for the essays are included here but the actual question asked for the essay may be worded differently. Upon completion the student should be able to discuss the following:

1. Online essay assignment 1: Identify your reasons for attending this class and your goals of what you would like to learn and/or accomplish from taking this class.
2. Online essay assignment 2: Discuss the rewards and challenges of the social work profession. This assignment evaluates course competency #10.
3. Online essay assignment 3: Articulate your reasons for further pursuance of a BSSW or for switching into another area of interest. This assignment evaluates course competency #11.

**The Quizzes:** These too will be administered online. The content for these quizzes are based on the following competencies:

- #1- identify various fields of practice within the social work profession.
- # 2- the basic knowledge, skills, and values for entry-level social work practice
- #3- the emergence and relationship of the profession of social work within the context of the social welfare institution
- #4- discuss the unique aspects of the profession of social work and its similarities compared to other helping professions.
- #5- the competencies which are expected of the entry-level professional social worker
- # 6- basic practice skills of problem-solving and interpersonal communication
- #7- identify some of the major problems addressed in rural and urban areas and the special populations assisted by baccalaureate social workers.

### **Group Presentation (20 points)**

**DUE SEPTEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> & 17<sup>TH</sup>**

Each group will be given a social work topic to present to the class. These topics may include: systems theory, person in environment, blaming the victim, creaming the poor, and dual perspective. The presentations are intended to be fun and creative. The presentation should be informative as well as capable of keeping the class attention. Powerpoint, video clips, pictures, etc are welcome and encouraged.

### **Vision Paper (20 points)**

**DUE OCTOBER 8TH**

Students will review competency #8- discuss social work practice within a problem solving perspective that incorporates a variety of helping roles and is rooted in systems theory. Students will define: problem solving perspective, helping roles, and systems theory. Students will consider a problem in the community and apply those concepts to addressing that problem. This is an opportunity for students to imagine how they can change the world in which they live. The paper must be 4-5 page paper which summarizes the above topics as well as your vision on how to address a problem in your community with the social work perspective. 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 8<sup>th</sup>. Late papers will be penalized 10 points.

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

**DUE NOVEMBER 17TH**

Each student will be responsible for making an appointment with a B.S.S.W. or M.S.S.W. practitioner in **agency practice** and conducting a 30-45 minute face to face interview. 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 17th**. Late papers will be penalized 10-points.

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, and 7) how the social worker and/or agency is committed to social and economic justice. This assignment evaluates course competencies #2, #4, #10, and #11.

### **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), SW 207, 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. To be an active member and be eligible for extra credit, students are required to attend at least 7 meetings per semester (officers are required to attend 75% of the meetings each semester) and earn between 3 and 5 participation points. Participation points are earned using the following scale:

- 1 point for attending minimum number of meetings required for membership (see above);
- 1 point for participating in one or more drives;
- 2 points for fundraising participation;
- 2 points for community service or other participation

Criteria for participation in all activities is determined by BSSW-SWO faculty advisor and committee chairs. Students may earn 3 to 5 extra credit points in designated BSSW courses. Points awarded for extra credit equal BSSWO-SWO participation points for a minimum of 3 and not to exceed 5 points. No points will be awarded for students earning less than 3 participation points. **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.

### **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.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: Additional reading from the Grobman text will be added to the course syllabus as needed. \*\*\*\*

## TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

**August 20**

### **Course Introduction**

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

**August 25**

### **UT Undergraduate Social Work Program**

- a. Mission
- b. Objectives
- c. Curriculum areas
- d. Progression Policies
- e. Student Social Work Organization
- f. Senior Portfolio

\*\*\*Online Essay #1- Due August 25<sup>th</sup> by 12 p.m.

**August 27**

### **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 BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 1

**September 1**

### **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 BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapters 3,4

**September 3&8**

### **Class Service Hunt**

**The class will be divided into groups and given a client scenario. The job of the group is to find services for the clients in the scenarios within the hour and present the findings in class on September 8th.**

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 9

**September 10**

### **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 BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 2, 8

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 1: Must be completed by September 10<sup>th</sup> - before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency #3.)**

**September 15& 17 Group Presentations**

**September 22 Social Work Values and Ethics**

- a. Competencies
- b. Value conflicts

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 7 & NASW code of ethics

**Video:** Professional Choices: Ethics at Work

**September 24 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 BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 11

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 2: Must be completed by September 24<sup>th</sup> - before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency #2.)**

**September 29 Panel Discussion- Social Workers in the Field**

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 5

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 3: Must be completed by September 29<sup>th</sup> - before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency #4.)**

**October 1 Fields of Practice**

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

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 6, 19

**\*\*\*Online Essay #2- Due October 1<sup>st</sup> by 12 p.m.**

**October 6 Practice Settings and Client Groups**

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

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 4: Must be completed by October 6<sup>th</sup> - before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency #5.)**

**October 8 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

**\*\*\*\*\*Vision Papers DUE!!!**

**October 13 Rural Social Work Practice**

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

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 10

**NO CLASSES OCTOBER 15&16- FALL BREAK!!! YAY!!! ENJOY THE LONG WEEKEND!**

**October 20 Introduction to Special Populations**

- a. Ecosystems model
- b. Societal induced stressors affecting special populations
- c. Individuals and families living in poverty
- d. Rural populations

**Video:** Welfare Reform: Social Responsibility

**October 22 Practice with Special Populations**

- a. Children at risk

**Video:** John Sterling Gardner, Jr., A Case Study of Child Abuse

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor - chapter 18

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 5: Must be completed by November 3<sup>rd</sup>- before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency # 7.)**

**October 27 Practice with Special Populations, cont.**

- a. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people

**Video:** Gay Youth

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapter 17

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 6: Must be completed by October 27th- before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency #6.)**

**October 29 Practice with Special Populations, cont.**

- a. Women
- b. Elderly
- c. Persons with mental illness
- d. Persons with disabilities

**READ BEFORE CLASS:**Morales & Sheafor, chapter 16, 20

**November 3 GUEST SPEAKER- CAREER SERVICES**

**\*\*\*\*Online Quiz # 7: Must be completed by November 3<sup>rd</sup>- before 12 p.m. (Addressing competency #1)**

**November 5 Race, Ethnicity, and Cultural Diversity**

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

**Video:** Divided City: The Route to Racism

**READ BEFORE CLASS:**Morales & Sheafor, chapters 24,25

**November 10 Inequality and Oppression**

- a. Racism

**READ BEFORE CLASS:** Morales & Sheafor, chapters 23, 26

**November 12 The Role of Prevention**

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

**November 17 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

**\*\*\*\*\*SOCIAL WORKER INTERVIEW PAPER DUE**

**November 19 Strategies for Advancing Social and Economic Justice**

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

**READ:**Morales & Sheafor, chapter 15

**November 24 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

**\*\*\*Online Essay #3- Due November 24<sup>th</sup> by 12 p.m.**

**NOVEMBER 26&27- NO CLASSES-THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY!  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND BE SAFE!**

**December 1- Last Day of Class**    Wrap up

**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.