

**The University of Tennessee  
College of Social Work  
BSSW Program  
Spring 2009**

**SOCIAL WORK 315—Social Work with Groups, Organizations and Communities**

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appointment

**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

**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 BSSW Handbook ([www.csw.utk.edu](http://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*)

### **Disability Services**

If you need course adaptation 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 at 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

### **Course Description**

Social Work with Groups, Organizations and Communities (3) Generalist practice with emphasis on groups and communities, including treatment theories, techniques, and issues.

### **Rationale**

Social Work with Groups, Organizations and Communities is the third of three (3) required practice courses. This course is designed to help prepare students for entry-level social work practice. The focus on working with small groups and larger social systems will expand the foundation of students' knowledge and skills, enabling graduates to apply a broad range of practice interventions in social work settings.

### **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. Demonstrate the basic knowledge required for assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation of small group interventions;
2. Demonstrate the basic skills needed for leading small groups;
3. Demonstrate the basic knowledge required for assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation of community-level interventions;
4. Demonstrate knowledge of diversity found in communities and an awareness of the factors that limit or oppress groups of people in communities;
5. Communicate knowledge effectively in verbal and written form;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the influences of socio-economic characteristics – of clients and social workers—on social work service delivery;
7. Demonstrate understanding of the role that social and personal power plays—and the potential for its abuse—in social work service delivery;
8. Identify other potential ethical conflicts for social workers—such as client self-determination versus the “directiveness” of the social worker.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **I. Readings**

In addition to the required texts identified in this syllabus, students will also be expected to read professional journal articles and research literature. These readings will be available on Blackboard. Students should be prepared to discuss all readings before class begins on the day that they are listed.

## II. Assignments and Evaluation

- A. Group Organization Project: Each student will be assigned into a group by the instructor at the beginning of class. This group will be responsible for developing a new agency for East Tennessee and within the new agency a new program. The group will then provide a 30 minute presentation about their new agency and organization to the class. Guidelines are attached at the end of this syllabus. The purpose of this assignment is to address competencies #1, #3, #4, #5, and #6.
- B. Examinations: There will be a two exams. Missed examinations will be recorded as a "0". Only in the case of a verified absence with documentation will make-up examinations be permitted. The purpose of these two exams are to address competencies #1 through #9.
- Exam 1 will cover assigned and presented material through February 10<sup>th</sup>. This material covers information related to understanding and working with small groups.
  - Exam 2 will cover assigned and presented material from February 12th to March 26th. This material covers class information related to understanding and working in and with organizations and communities.
- C. Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to be in attendance at each class and to be prepared to discuss assigned topics and readings. Students are allowed to be absent or tardy three (3) times without penalty. Additionally, students are expected to be at the presentations and provide well-reasoned feedback to the groups as part of the attendance and participation grade. The purpose of attendance is to address competencies #1 through #9.
- D. Community Service Project: In small groups, students will work together to complete a project designed to improve the community. Examples of this project include advocacy, mentoring, or fund-raising activities. *The course instructor must approve all projects in order for students to receive full credit.* Specific guidelines for the project will be discussed in class. The purpose of this assignment is for students to demonstrate competencies #3, #4, and #6.

For all exams and assignments, alternative arrangements, make-up exams, and deadline extensions are made rarely, at the discretion of the instructor, and in only in extenuating circumstances. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each calendar day past the due date unless alternative arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the due date.

### **The course grade will be computed as follows:**

Organization Project...	25%
Community Service Project...	15%
Exam #1 (material through February 10th)...	25%

Exam #2 (material from February 12th to March 26th)...	25%
Class Attendance and Participation...	10%

**The grading scale for SW 315 is:**

A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D	60-69
B-	80-82	F	Under 60

**Required Texts:**

Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hull Jr., G. H. (2006). *Generalist practice with organizations and communities* (3rd Ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Toseland, R. W., & Rivas, R. F. (2005). *An introduction to group work practice* (5th Ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

**Class Schedule and Readings**

**January 8, 2009**

**Introduction to the class**

**January 13, 2009**

Topic: Introduction to Group Work

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 3-43

**January 15, 2009**

Topic: Understanding Group Dynamics

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 64-91

Ludwig, K. (2003). The impact of translation on the process of bilingual groups.  
*Social Work with Groups*, 26, 19-31.

**January 20, 2009**

Topic: Understanding Group Dynamics

Video in class: 18 with a Bullet

**January 22, 2009**

Topic: Group Leadership

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 92-152

Kivlighan, D.M., Marsh-Angelone, M. & Angelone, E.O. (1994). Projection in group counseling: the relationship between members' interpersonal

problems and their perception of the group leader, *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 43, 99-104.

**January 27, 2009**

Topic: Planning and Beginning a Group

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 153-218

Slusher, M. P., Mayer, C.J., & Dunkle, R. E. (1996). Gay and lesbians older and wiser (GLOW): A support group for older gay people. *Gerontologist*, 36, 118- 123.

Video in class: Lord's Children

**January 29, 2009**

Topic: Group Assessment

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 219-254

**February 3, 2009**

Topic: Methods for Running Treatment Groups

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 257-319

Hill, A. (2001) 'No one else could understand': Women's experiences of a support group run by and for mothers of sexually abused children. *British Journal of Social Work*, 31, 385-397.

**February 5, 2009**

Topic: Evaluating a Group

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 389-416

Video in class: Basic Counseling Responses in Groups

**February 10, 2009**

Topic: Ending a Group

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 417-438

Goelitz, A. (2004). Using the end of groups as an intervention at end-of-life. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 44, 211-221.

**February 12, 2009**

Topic: Introduction to Organizations and Communities

Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with...*, pp. 1-35

**February 17, 2009**

**Exam #1 (Covers material through February 10, 2009)**

**February 19, 2009**

Topic: Methods for Running Task Groups

Toseland & Rivas, ...*Group Work Practice*, pp. 320-386

In class video: More Bloody Meetings

- February 24, 2009** Topic: Understanding Organizations  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with...*, pp. 112-156  
Video in class: Hard Road Home
- February 26, 2009** Topic: Outcomes  
No assigned reading
- March 3, 2009** Topic: Organizational Change  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with ...*, pp. 157-212
- March 5, 2009** Topic: Understanding Communities  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with ...*, pp. 248-283  
Hillier, A. (2007). Why social work needs mapping. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43, 205-221.
- March 10, 2009** Topic: Evaluating Macro Work  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with...*, pp. 310-338
- March 12, 2009** Topic: Fundraising  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with ...*, pp. 456-467
- March 17 & 19, 2009** **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**
- March 24, 2009** Topic: Advocacy  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with...*, pp. 339--370
- March 26, 2009** Topic: Ethical Dilemmas in Macro Practice  
Kirst-Ashman & Hull, *Generalist Practice with...*, pp. 371--414
- March 31, 2009** Class Presentations of Community Service Projects
- April 2, 2009** **EXAM #2 (Covers material from February 12th to March 26th)**
- April 7, 2009** Group Project (2 groups)

<b>April 9, 2009</b>	Group Project (2 groups)
<b>April 14, 2009</b>	Group Project (2 groups)
<b>April 16, 2009</b>	Group Project (2 groups)
<b>April 21, 2009</b>	Group Project (2 groups)
<b>April 23, 2009</b>	Group Project (2 groups) - <b>Last day of class</b>

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### **Group Organization Project**

The goal of this project is for you to better understand social service organizations, and in order to accomplish that goal, your group is asked to develop a plan for a new social service organization in East Tennessee. As a team, you are asked to establish either a non-profit or for-profit agency. Within that agency your group will establish a program that is meant to serve some need in the community. For example, if you decide to develop an organization whose mission is to help homeless teenagers, you'll also need to present a program that your agency will provide to those homeless teenagers to help them. At the end of the semester, your group will have 30 minutes to present your newly developed organization and program to the class. The class will be asked to view your presentation as a group evaluating your presentation for a funder (think United Way). Your group needs to convince your classmates that your agency is needed within East Tennessee, and your agency and the presented program can positively influence the issue your agency is designed to address. Your classmates (aka funders) will individually fill out evaluation sheets about your group's presentation and ideas.

In your presentation, your group needs to:

- (1) Identify and provide information about the need in your community;
  - a. What social issue is your newly developed agency tackling?
  - b. Provide data (both local and national) on this social need.
  
- (2) Identify your agency:
  - a. Is it a non-profit or for-profit agency? Explain your choice.
  - b. What is the mission statement of your agency?
  - c. Where is it going to be located? Be fairly specific and provide reasoning for that location.
  
- (3) Identify the program that will be presented to funders (although agencies often have many programs, you only need to develop and present one)
  - a. Talk about the program design:
    1. Whom will it serve? How many people will it serve?
    2. What will it do? What are the program's objectives? Find one or two articles that demonstrate the effectiveness of a program that is similar to what you are proposing.
    3. How will your staff/volunteers get it done? List relevant staff/volunteer qualifications.
    4. How will requested funds be used? Will clients be charged to participate in your agency's program?
  - b. Describe how you will measure the effectiveness of your program:

- i. What are your outcome indicators?
  - ii. Describe indicators that will be measured to determine the success of the project and how data will be collected to report the project's results.
- (4) Identify other agencies in East Tennessee that will impact the services your agencies provide.
- a. Which agencies will you have a complementary relationship with? Will your agency be located within a host setting?
  - b. Will your agency have a competitive relationship with another East Tennessee agency?
  - c. Is your agency duplicating services provided by a more established agency? If so, provide your reasoning.
- (5) Sustainability and Funding: You are presenting for only 12 months worth of funds.
- a. Describe how the project will be phased out or sustained at the end of the 12 month funding cycle. If it will be sustained, where will you look for additional funds?
  - b. As this group represents only one funding source, provide other ways your agency will look at obtaining funds (for example: fundraising (be specific), grants, fee for service, etc.)

For your 30 minute presentation utilize technology and be creative in your presentation to the class, while still getting the needed information across. Dress as you would if you were really presenting this to a group of funders. You should provide some time to answer questions from the class/funders, but how you divide your 30 minutes is up to your group. Throughout the second half of the course, you will be provided time during class to meet with your group to work on your agency and presentation.

The scores from your classmates on the group evaluation will be tallied. Open-ended feedback from the class will be typed up without identifiers and provided to the group by the instructor. The group with the overall highest average score on the feedback sheets from the class will receive two bonus points that will be added on to everyone in the group's final grades.