THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
BSSW PROGRAM
SW 200: Introduction to Social Work

Instructor: Sarah Curtis, LMSW
Section: 001
Class Times: TR 12:40 p.m. - 1:55 p.m.
Class Room: 322 Henson Hall

Office Hours: By appointment
Email: svcurtis@utk.edu
Phone: (865) 974-7063
Blackboard: http://online.utk.edu

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 (http://www.csw.utk.edu/docs/BSSWHandbook.pdf). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the Social Work Field Placement Code of Conduct.

CSW Standards of Professional Conduct

There are certain cognitive, emotional and character requirements that students must possess that provide the College of Social Work (CSW) with reasonable assurance that students can complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of social work education and the professional practice of social work. Students in the CSW are expected to possess the following abilities and attributes at a level appropriate to their year in the program. They are expected to meet these standards in the classroom as well as in their practicum.

- **Professional Behavior.** The social work student behaves professionally by knowing and practicing within the scope of social work, adhering to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Tennessee Board of Social Worker Standards of Conduct (1365-01-.10) as found in the Tennessee Board of Social Work Certification and Licensure General Rules and Regulations, http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/1365/1365-01_20100729.pdf

- **Interpersonal Skills.** The social work student communicates and interacts with other students, faculty, staff, clients and professionals in a professional manner, and demonstrates respect for and consideration of other students, faculty, staff, clients and professionals in spoken, written and electronic form. The social work student expresses her/his ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates a willingness and ability to listen to others.

- **Self-awareness.** The social work student is willing to examine and change his/her behavior when it interferes with her/his working with clients and other professionals, and is able to work effectively with others in subordinate positions as well as with those in authority.

- **Professional Commitment.** The social work student has a strong commitment to the essential values of social work (the dignity and worth of every individual and her/his right to a just share of the society’s resources). The social work student is knowledgeable about and adheres to the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and the Rules of the Tennessee Board of Social Worker Certification.
• **Self-care.** The social work student recognizes the signs of stress, develops appropriate means of self-care, and seeks supportive resources if necessary.

• **Valuing Diversity.** The social work student appreciates the value of human diversity. Social work students do not impose their own personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on other students, faculty, staff, clients or professionals. Social work students are willing to serve in an appropriate manner all persons in need of assistance, regardless of the person's age, class, race, religious affiliation (or lack of), gender, disability, sexual orientation and/or value system.

Except for alleged academic dishonesty, which shall be addressed through the procedures set forth in *Hilltopics*, code of conduct violations will be addressed through the CSW Professional Standards Committee.

**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*).

**University Civility Statement**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other’s well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: [http://civility.utk.edu/](http://civility.utk.edu/)

**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 University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 100 Dunford Hall (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Dimensions of Diversity**

The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. Council on Social Work Education and the U.S. National Association of Social Workers, the College of Social Work defines “the dimensions of diversity as the intersectionality of multiple factors, including” age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. The College
values intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, and academic freedom and integrity. A person’s diverse life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.

**Inclement Weather**

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 announcement may be made. If class is cancelled, any assignments due that day will be due the next time class meets.

**Course Description**

Emergence of the social work profession. Professional mission, knowledge, skills, and values. Practice settings, client groups, helping services, career patterns, and practice methods. Designed to assist students to consider their ability for careers in social work. 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.

**Course 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 Competencies**

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

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 BSSW or for switching into another area of interest;
12. Describe form first-hand experience social work practice and the role of social workers at a social service agency; and
13. Discuss in writing your experiences and the experiences of professional social workers in the field with a specific focus on the social service agency you visited.

Required Text


Optional Text


Additional Required Readings

Additional required readings other than the required textbook will be posted on the course Blackboard site. Some of the additional required readings are listed in the course outline below and more will be added throughout the semester.

Blackboard

This course uses many Blackboard features through Online@UT. Please be sure that the UTK email address listed for the course is your current one. If you would like additional help to access or use Blackboard contact helpdesk@utk.edu or 974-9900.

Course Requirements

The course format will be a combination of lectures and class discussion, PowerPoint, videos, guest speakers, and class 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 class participation, attendance, an interview with a social work professional and a paper based on the interview, a reflection paper, and an assignment correlating with a social issue novel.

Grade Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APA Tutorial</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Reflection Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Work Practitioner Interview Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Work and Presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Grading Scale
Students will be evaluated by the number of total points earned. No rewrites are permitted. Scores are not rounded up.

| 188-200 | A   | Superior     |
| 180-187 | A-  | Intermediate Grade |
| 172-179 | B+  | Very Good    |
| 166-171 | B   | Good         |
| 160-165 | B-  | Intermediate Grade |
| 152-159 | C+  | Fair         |
| 146-151 | C   | Satisfactory |
| 140-145 | C-  | Intermediate Grade |
| 132-139 | D+  | Unsatisfactory |
| 126-131 | D   | Unsatisfactory |
| 120-125 | D-  | Unsatisfactory |
| 0-119   | F   | Failure      |

Attendance and Participation (25 points)

Regular attendance is essential. Students are expected to be on time, attend all class sessions, and stay until the end of class sessions. In the case of a medical or personal emergency, students should make reasonable effort to contact the instructor in advance via e-mail or voice mail. Students will only be excused for documented emergencies. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Each student will have a name tent that they are responsible for picking up from the instructor as they enter the classroom.

Students are allowed to be absent from class two (2) times. Please note that students arriving late to class (after the class presentation and discussion has started) or leaving early will be counted as absent. For each additional absence, five (5) points will be deducted from the student's final course grade unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the course instructor.

You may bring your laptops to class to take notes and for other appropriate classroom work. It is not appropriate to surf the Internet, check your email, or use electronic devices for any non-class related activity while in class. The instructor reserves the right to disallow the use of laptops in class if students use them inappropriately. Participation points may be deducted or students asked to leave the classroom if laptops, phones, or other electronic devices are used inappropriately. All cell phones and smart phones must be silenced and put away during class. Text messaging is strictly prohibited. If you have a special circumstance, talk to the instructor in advance. All mp3 players (iPods, etc.) are to be off and stored during class. This includes removal of all headphones, ear buds, and other listening devices from ears, head, and neck during class time.
Assignments

APA Tutorial (5 points)
http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/tutorials/apatutorial/tutorialindex.html
Students must earn a 100% on the posttest and email the results to the instructor.

Personal Reflection Paper (20 points) (Meets course competencies 2, 4, & 6)
Students are to review NASW’s Code of Ethics and write a paper comparing and contrasting their personal values with the values contained in the Code. Students should critically evaluate their own values and thoughtfully give examples of areas of compatibility with their own values as well as areas on incompatibility. Students will also select another profession (nursing, law, etc.) and compare/contrast that profession’s Code of Ethics with the NASW Code of Ethics.

Questions to help guide the paper:
1. How did you develop your value system?
2. What are the three most important values in your life?
3. What was your family’s influence on your personal values?
4. Are there specific experiences or events in your life that helped shape your value system?
5. How do your personal values compare/contrast with the values in the NASW Code of Ethics (be specific and think critically!)?
6. Which additional code did you select for comparison to the NASW Code of Ethics?
7. How does this code compare/contrast to the NASW Code of Ethics?
8. Discuss any issues that may arise from a social worker working on an interdisciplinary team with an individual from the profession you chose to compare/contrast.

This paper should demonstrate that you have read required readings and taken the time to think critically about the content. The paper should be in APA format (does not need an abstract), double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, and 4-5 pages in length.

Social Work Practitioner Interview Paper (20 points) (Meets course competencies 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13)
Each student will be responsible for making an appointment with a B.S.S.W. or M.S.S.W. practitioner and conduct a 30-45 minute face to face interview. Each student must email their interviewee’s name, agency, and credentials to the instructor for approval prior to conducting the interview. The data collected in this interview will be used to write a six-page reaction paper focusing on the perceptions of this social worker regarding the profession and her/his practice. Relate how this person’s perceptions differ or reinforce what has been discussed and read for this class. Also, indicate what new issues were introduced that enhanced your understanding of the social work profession. The paper should be in APA format (does not need an abstract), double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, and 5-6 pages in length.

The following questions will help guide the interview:
• The social worker’s education (degrees they hold, college(s)/university they attended).
• Name of agency and job title.
• What does a typical “social work day” look like?
• What population does the social worker work with?
• Identify whether the social worker is engaged in prevention, service delivery (helping people cope with a problem that already exists), social change (examining the root of the problem and seeking to eliminate the problem altogether), or a combination.
• What skills are needed to do this job?
• How is the NASW Code of Ethics used on a daily basis?
• What are some of the continuing education opportunities?
• How the social worker deals with various clients in their respective environments?
• How the social worker and/or agency is committed to social and economic justice?
• What new perspectives have you gained?
• What are your thoughts about what you learned?
• How did this experience influence your decision for further pursuance of a B.S.S.W. degree?

Group Presentation (30 points) (Meets course competencies 1, 6, 7, 8, 9)
Groups will be randomly assigned at the beginning of the semester. Each group will select a social work topic to present to the class. These topics may include any issue relevant to social work and of interest to the group, subject to the instructor’s approval. Each group should include in their presentation how the concepts of systems theory and the person-in-environment perspective apply to the chosen topic. The presentation should be informative, keep other class members’ attention, and be fun and creative. The use of PowerPoint, video clips, music, pictures, or other audio-visual resources are welcomed and encouraged. The length of presentations should be approximately 25 minutes each, but may vary depending on the number of students in the course. A proposal for this presentation is due before class on October 1st submitted via email. Detailed instructions will be provided for this assignment.

A grading rubric will be used to assess student papers and assignments. The rubric is available under “Assignments” on Blackboard.

Midterm Exam (50 points) (Meets course competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 9)
The midterm exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions. The exam will cover all course material up until the exam day. Information for the exam will be garnered from lectures, textbook readings, additional readings, guest speakers, videos, PowerPoint slides, and class handouts.

Final Exam (50 points) (Meets course competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, & 11)
The final exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions. The exam is comprehensive and will cover all course materials including lectures, textbook readings, additional readings, guest speakers, videos, PowerPoint slides, and class handouts.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APA Tutorial</td>
<td>August 27th by 11:00pm EST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Reflection Paper</td>
<td>September 17th by 11:00pm EST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation Proposal</td>
<td>October 1st prior to class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>October 13th in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Practitioner Paper</td>
<td>October 29th by 11:00pm EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentations</td>
<td>November 12th, 17th, 19th, and 24th in class</td>
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</tbody>
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Extra Credit

Extra credit in this class is available ONLY for the BSWO activities as described below. A total of 5 extra credit points can be earned.

BSWO (3-5 participation points)

It is the BSSW program’s expectation that all social work majors participate in the Bachelor’s Social Work Organization (BSWO). All students, regardless of major, who are enrolled in a social work course or considering a major in social work, are welcome. BSWO meets every Tuesday from 11:10 -12:25 in 322 Henson Hall. This time slot is built into the class schedule as a lab for many social work courses. Given the time of the meetings, students are encouraged to bring their lunch.

BSWO is a student organization that provides 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 3-5 points added to their course grade by attending and participating in BSWO this semester. Your attendance and participation must be documented. Attendance will be taken at each meeting. To be an active member in BSWO 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 3 - 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 (one per event);
• 2 points for community service or other participation (one per event)

The BSWO advisor and committee chairs determine criteria for participation in all activities. Students may earn 3 to 5 extra credit points in designated BSSW courses. Points awarded for extra credit equal BSWO 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.

Students must also submit a one-page, double-spaced statement indicating how BSWO participation relates to one or more of the course competencies. The paper is due to the instructor via email one week prior to the end of class.

COURSE OUTLINE

We may have guest lecturers join us for several class sessions, and might include additional or alternative videos related to the week’s topics. Readings should be studied before coming to class each week to prepare for class discussion. There may be additional readings to the ones listed on this syllabus.

Thursday, August 20th

Course Introduction
Review syllabus, course requirements, University Honors Statement, Textbook information, Blackboard resources
In-class exercise

Part I: Understanding Social Work

Tuesday, August 25th  The Social Work Profession
Purpose
Goals
Core Competencies
Social Work Education

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 1

Thursday, August 27th  The Social Work Profession
The UT Undergraduate Social Work Program

Guest Speakers

Review the UTCSW website (http://www.csw.utk.edu/)

*APA Tutorial Due by 11:00pm EST*

Tuesday, September 1st  The History of Social Work
Pioneers of the profession
Social Welfare
Eras in social welfare

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 2

Thursday, September 3rd  Social Work Values and Ethics
Defining values
History of values and ethics in social work
NASW Code of Ethics


Review the NASW Code of Ethics (link on Bb)
Additional Readings on Bb

Tuesday, September 8th  Social Work Values and Ethics
Ethical decision making

In-class case study activities

Additional Readings and Handouts on Bb

Thursday, September 10th  Generalist Social Work Practice
Systems Theory
Ecological Perspective
Strengths Perspective
Empowerment Theory
The Change Process
Generalist Intervention Model

In-class activity

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 3
Additional Handouts on Bb

Tuesday, September 15th
Generalist Social Work Practice
Social work practice settings
Careers in social work
Advocacy

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 4
Additional Readings on Bb

Part II: Responding to Need

Thursday, September 17th
Poverty and Inequality
Poverty
Measures of poverty
The face of poverty
Social service programs

*Personal Reflection Paper Due by 11:00pm EST*

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 5
Additional Readings on Bb

Tuesday, September 22nd
Family and Child Welfare
Today’s families
Child welfare services
School social work

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 6

Thursday, September 24th
Health Care and Health Challenges
Health care system
Health disparities
Policy
Health care trends
Health care and social work

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 7

Tuesday, September 29th
Physical and Mental Challenges
Types of challenges
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 1st</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Read Cox, Tice, &amp; Long (2016) Chapter 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 2nd</td>
<td>Substance Use and Addiction</td>
<td>Read Cox, Tice, &amp; Long (2016) Chapter 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 8th</td>
<td>Aging/Gerontology</td>
<td>Read Cox, Tice, &amp; Long (2016) Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 13th</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
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<td>Thursday, October 15th</td>
<td>Fall Break—NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 20th</td>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Read Cox, Tice, &amp; Long (2016) Chapter 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 22nd</td>
<td>Community Practice</td>
<td>Read Cox, Tice, &amp; Long (2016) Chapter 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 27th</td>
<td>Planning your Group Presentations: In-Class Work Session</td>
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Thursday, October 29th
Practice with Vulnerable Populations
Women
Military/Veterans
Immigrants

*Social Work Practitioner Interview Paper Due by 11:00pm EST*

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapter 15


Tuesday, November 3rd
Practice with Vulnerable Populations
LGBTQ Community
Minority Groups

Readings on Bb

Thursday, November 5th
Current Topics in Social Work Practice
Spirituality in social work
Global/International social work practice
Environmentalism

Read Cox, Tice, & Long (2016) Chapters 16 & 17

Tuesday, November 10th
Honors Presentations

Thursday, November 12th
Honors Presentations
Student Group Presentations-Groups 1 & 2

Tuesday, November 17th
Student Group Presentations- Groups 3 & 4

Thursday, November 19th
Student Group Presentations- Groups 5 & 6

Tuesday, November 24th
Student Group Presentations- Groups 7 & 8

Thursday, November 26th
Thanksgiving Holiday—NO CLASS

Tuesday, December 1st
TBD

*This schedule is subject to revision.*