THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 570 – Evidence-based Practice with Families
CRN 25374
Section # 001
3 credit hours
Online, Spring, 2016

Instructor: Professor Katie Veit
Class Time: online
Office Hours: By appointment

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Prerequisite(s): 510, 512, 513, 519, 522, 537, 538, and 539

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). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the

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/

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.
**Dimensions of Diversity**

The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the U.S. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement), “the dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including” age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, regionality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. 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” (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement). The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.

**Course Description**

This course is one of three concentration selectives. This course covers evidence supported theories and practice techniques that promote family resiliency. Diverse and non-traditional families are considered including gay or lesbian families, foster families, and kinship care. Attention is given to differences in families across culture, race, and ethnicity. Special topics such as domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, divorce and separation, substance abuse, mental illness, chronic illness, disability, and loss are covered within a family contextual framework. In the course, students are encouraged to think critically about ethical practice with at-risk families.

**Course Rationale**

Regardless of practice setting, social workers commonly provide services to families. Social workers need skills to intervene with families at all levels including the individual family unit, the community, and in policy practice. It is imperative that social workers have knowledge of the best available evidence when working with families.

**Course Competencies**

By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe different family problems encountered by social workers and use evidence-based approaches to working with families around these issues. *EBIP/MLCP 3.8, 4.6 (Content: domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, divorce and separation, substance abuse, mental illness, chronic illness, disability, loss and use of electronic resources to find evidence-based approaches to working with families dealing with these issues or problems).*

2. Demonstrate the use of family assessment techniques and analyze the evidence base for these techniques. *EBIP 3.9, 4.6 (Content: family mapping*
techniques such as genograms and ecomaps; use of standardized tools for assessment; use of electronic databases to search for family assessment tools.)

3. Understand and critically analyze traditional and historical intervention techniques, the role of practice in policies affecting families, and the role of policy in service delivery, when working with families from an evidence-based practice perspective. EBIP 3.8, MLCP 3.7, 3.9 (Content: history of the child guidance movement; applications of systems theory to families.)

4. Analyze family problems, understand the development of family policy and how to advocate for families, in the context of culture, policy, and current demographic trends both within the United States and internationally. EBIP/MLCP 2.7 (Content: role of culture in expectations around major family life events: e.g. marriage, childbearing, death; US policies around financial support, adoption, family leave, parental rights, families with disabilities, etc.; comparison of U.S. policies to that of other countries; comparison of rates of cohabitation, divorce, fertility, single parenting, etc. regionally across the US and internationally.)

5. Articulate a plan for giving consideration to, and collaboration with, diverse families across culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and family structure to effectively advocate for families within the context of an evidence-based practice model. EBIP/MLCP 3.7, 3.9 (Content: most current evidence on interventions with diverse families; strategies for advocating for more evidence-based knowledge of family intervention across diverse family systems; advocating for the access to services, social and economic justice and resources, and human rights of client(s)/client systems)

6. Explain the family lifespan and analyze the role of developmental stages in the lives of families. EBIP 3.8 (Content: the traditional family life cycle model and limits of this model; developmental stages from birth to older adulthood and typical family roles across these stages; developmental issues associated with deviations from the typical lifespan model: e.g. teenage pregnancy, custodial grandparenting, death of a young spouse.)

7. Recognize, analyze, and plan for resolving ethical dilemmas in working with families in the context of evidence-based practice. EBIP/MLCP 1.6, 1.7 (content: values of the social work profession and application of these to work with families, rights of parents and children, cultural competence in ethical dilemmas, understand differences between personal values and professional ethics.)
Required Texts

There is no required text for this class other than the novel. All supplemental readings, powerpoints, podcasts and lectures can be found on blackboard under Course Materials. Professor Veit reserves the right to add/delete course material as the course progresses. Professor Veit will communicate the addition of these materials via email, and will give students advance notice.


Blackboard:
This course utilizes many Blackboard features available through Online@UT. Please make sure you are knowledgeable of utilizing this tool and the email address listed on the course roster is your current one. If additional help is needed accessing Blackboard contact helpdesk@utk.edu

Assignment Due Dates:
All assignments must be submitted via email to Professor Veit and are due at the designated dates on the Assignments’ instructions. Overdue work will be penalized (by 5 points) and will not be accepted after 12pm the following day the assignment is due, no exceptions. However, if you miss a quiz, YOU CANNOT MAKE IT UP. You will lose full credit for those points.

Evaluation of Written Materials:
Other than informal journal writing or similar assignments, all written work is to be typed and comply with the APA 6th edition writing and publication guidelines.

Assignments:
Family Assessment 15 points
Quizzes 45 points (3 quizzes at 15 points a piece)
Zoom Group Discussions 20 points (4 meetings at 5 points a piece)
Family Policy Assignment 20 points

Family Assessment

For the purpose of this assignment, you are required to read “The Glass Castle” by Jeanette Walls. This novel provides many examples of family life, family struggle and the need for intervention. You can pick any time period for the family from the book, as well as any presenting issue that you’d like to focus on. I suggest that you read the novel entirely, prior to picking a time period/issue to focus on. Please use one of the outlines that I will provide you. The outlines will be posted in the
Assignments section of blackboard. Further details and clarifications on this assignment will be discussed in a pre-recorded Zoom video. This assignment is due via email to the professor 4/24/16 by 11:59 p.m. Please note: 5 points will be deducted for every day the assignment is late. (Measures Course Competencies 1, 2 and 6)

**Quizzes**

There are 3 quizzes in this class. Each one is worth 15 points for a total of 45 points of your final grade. They are located in the Assignments section of blackboard. There are no make up quizzes.

You have one hour to take each quiz, and it is open book and open note. The quizzes need to be completed by the dates/times given in the syllabus/Course Materials.

Quiz #1 Measures Course Competencies 3, 6 and 7  
Quiz #2 Measures Course Competencies 3, 4 and 5  
Quiz #3 Measures Course Competencies 2 and 4

**Zoom Group Discussions**

Even though this is an online class, it will be interactive in nature. Professor Veit will divide you into groups of 4. You will meet as a group via ZOOM four times throughout the course of the semester. Please designate a leader for each Zoom meeting. The leader is responsible for setting up the Zoom session, and emailing the professor AFTER the meeting to state who was present. These meetings are on your time, and at your convenience during that course module. Professor Veit will designate the meeting timelines in the Course outline, as well as on blackboard. Discussion topics will be given to you for all four meetings.

**Family Policy Assignment/portfolio**

The policy portfolio will be completed in four parts. The policy portfolio is the primary way for you to demonstrate skills in policy practice. The purpose of this assignment is to explore a U.S. social welfare policy in depth and reveal the implications of the policy on/for families by attending a public forum, writing an advocacy letter, reporting a conversation with a social worker, and writing an elevator speech. A much more detailed description/rubric for this assignment will be available in the Assignments section on Blackboard. (Measures Course Competencies 4 and 7)
**Grading Scale**

The following grading scale will be used for final course grade.

B+ (90-94) Very Good – Student consistently meets and occasionally exceeds normal expectations for the course.
B (85-89) Good – Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.
C+ (80-84) Average – There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting the normal expectations for the course.
C (70-79) Poor - There is a lack of understanding of course content. Student does not meet course expectations.
F (69-Below) Very Poor – There is a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments. Course expectations are not met.
Course Outline

1/25-1/31 Course Orientation

Orientation
Please review the syllabus, Course Materials (in blackboard), Assignments (in blackboard), and the Zoom instructional video posted by Professor Veit. Please email Professor Veit by 1/31 with any questions or concerns that you have once you’ve thoroughly looked through all the information listed above. While Professor Veit will always be available for questions, this week is designed to be a time for Professor Veit to answer in depth questions over the information listed above.

2/1-2/14 Module #1

Theories and Issues in Family Centered Social Work Practice

To Do:

Please read Readings from Blackboard:
Scanned reading by Nichols: Chapter 1, “The Foundations of Family Therapy”
Scanned reading by Nichols: Chapter 2, “The Evolution of Family Therapy”
Scanned reading by Nichols: Chapter 4, “The Fundamental Concepts of Family Therapy”

Additional readings/podcasts/websites/videos/powerpoints that are part of this modules’ requirement are in this week’s Module under Course materials.

ZOOM MEETING #1 – Please meet as a group by 2/14 at 11:59 p.m. Please discuss the following questions/topics among your group:
-Introduce yourself – where are you from?
-If you are interning, where is this and what is your role? What do you enjoy about this internship?
-In regards to self-care (imperative to our profession!), how do you take care of yourself to prevent burnout as a graduate student?
-In what capacity do you see yourself working with families?
-In your opinion, what do you think would be the most challenging aspect when working with families?
**Policy Portfolio Assignment #1 due by 2/14 at 11:59 p.m.** See the assignment sections for clear instructions for this assignment. Please email your assignment to Professor Veit.

**2/15-2/28 Module #2**

**Part One: Introducing Family Assessment and Intervention**

**To Do:**

**Scanned Readings:**
Thomlison reading Chapter 1, “Family Contexts”
Thomlison reading Chapter 2, “A framework for Understanding Families”
Thomlison reading Chapter 3, “The Family System”
Thomlison reading Chapter 4, “Core Tasks of Family Assessment”

Additional readings/podcasts/websites/videos/powerpoints that are part of this modules’ requirement are in this week’s Module under Course materials.

**ZOOM MEETING #2** – Please meet as a group by 2/28 at 11:59 p.m. Please discuss the following questions/topics among your group:
Some family events are normative and experienced by all families, whereas others are unique historical events to a family. Normative transitions for families are starting in kindergarten, starting school, getting married and leaving home and other occasions. Other events are specific to a family and can dramatically change the life course for a family, such as a death of a child, developing a life-threatening illness, an accident, receiving a substantial inheritance, loss of the home, or a tragic situation such as a fire.
-Identify three normative events in your family. How did these events impact individuals in your family and the family as a system?
-Identify three unique non-normative family events. How did these events impact individuals in your family and the family as a system?
-Define family tradition and provide one or two examples in your family – a cultural tradition or a religious tradition.
-Define ritual. Design a new family ritual to break a pattern in your family you think requires change.

**Policy Portfolio Assignment #2 due by 2/28 at 11:59 p.m.** See the assignment sections for clear instructions for this assignment. Please email your assignment to Professor Veit.

**Please take Quiz #1 by 2/28 at 11:59 p.m. CST. It covers all information from Modules 1 and 2.**
2/29-3/13 Module #3

Part Two: Effective Family Strengthening Interventions: Families Coping with Difficult Life Stressors

To Do:

Scanned readings:
Thomlison reading Chapter 6, “Older Adults, Families, and Life Stressors”
Thomlison reading Chapter 7, “Family-Centered Interventions for Coping with Difficult Life Stressors”
Thomlison reading Chapter 9, “Selecting Family Assessment Instruments to Evaluate Change”

Part Three: The Role of Reflection and Disclosure Writing Skills for Engaging with Families.

To Do:

Scanned readings:
Thomlison reading Chapter 10, “Reflective Thinking and Reflective Writing”
Thomlison Reading Chapter 11: “Getting Connected With Your Own Family Systems”

Additional readings/podcasts/websites/videos/powerpoints that are due are in this week’s Module under Course materials.

ZOOM MEETING#3 by 3/13. Please discuss the following topics/questions among your group:
-What is your understanding of resilience?
-How do you promote family resilience?
-What ways are family struggles related to family members’ developmental ages/stages, roles, communication patterns or family processes, and decision-making?

Policy Portfolio Assignment #2 due by 2/28 at 11:59 p.m. See the assignment sections for clear instructions for this assignment. Please email your assignment to Professor Veit.

Please take Quiz #2 by 3/13 at 11:59 p.m. CST. It covers all readings and class discussions from Module #3.
3/14-3/20 SPRING BREAK – enjoy this week OFF! Take time for self-care, and if you’ve taken COMPS, please breathe a sigh of relief and let it be OVER!

3/21-4/17 Module #4

To Do:

Scanned Readings:

Chapter 6, “Strategic Family Therapy”
Chapter 7, “Structural Family Therapy”
Chapter 8, “Experiential Family Therapy”
Chapter 9, “Psychoanalytic Family Therapy”
Chapter 12, “Solution-Focused Therapy”
Chapter 10, “Cognitive-Behavior Family Therapy”
Chapter 13, “Narrative Therapy”
Chapter 14, “Integrative Models”

ZOOM MEETING#4 by 4/17. Please discuss the following topics/questions among your group:
- Which 2 interventions did you find to be the ones MOST likely to use in YOUR practice/agency setting and why?
- Which intervention did you find to be the LEAST likely to use in YOUR practice/agency setting and why?

Policy Portfolio Assignment #4 due by 4/17 at 11:59 p.m. See the assignment sections for clear instructions for this assignment. Please email your assignment to Professor Veit.

Please take Quiz #3 by 4/17 at 11:59 p.m. CST. It covers all readings and class discussions from Module #4.

4/18-4/24 – Work Week on Assessment paper

4/24 – Assessment paper due via email to Professor Veit at 11:59 p.m. CST