Valdosta State University, Division of Social Work
SOWK 6100 B Fall 2013 (1 Credit Hour)
Introduction to Professional Graduate Education

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Class:	Friday, Aug. 26,	2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
	Friday, Sept. 6,	2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
	Friday, Sept. 27,	2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
	Friday, Oct. 18,	2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
	Friday, Nov. 15,	2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

CATALOG DESCRIPTION
Orientation to graduate education in the Masters of Social Work (MSW) Program.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is an overview of and preparation for the rest of the graduate program. Topics addressed include the technology needed for success in the program, the expectations and requirements of graduate study, and what it means to be in a professional program.

PREREQUISITE
Admission to the program.

RELATION TO OTHER COURSES
This course introduces you to the technology, modes of thought, and writing and research skills you will be using throughout the entire MSW program.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY
BlazeVIEW will be used as a tool for course enhancement. Your documents will reside in the BlazeVIEW course site, where you will find all handouts and links to Internet sites. I want to encourage you to access the online course materials in BlazeVIEW as soon as possible.

VSU Support

Valdosta State provides free technical support for students. If you need technical assistance with BlazeVIEW, call the Help Desk at 229-245-4357 or visit the [Valdosta D2L web page](#) for Frequently Asked Questions and Self Help.

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course is organized by outcomes that will provide focus, consistency, and clear evaluation criteria. Skills and knowledge that support achievement of the course outcomes will receive the majority of class time. These course outcomes are derived from the MSW program objectives, and will help you build toward achievement of those objectives. Lessons, materials, methods and assignments are organized toward your achievement of the objectives and toward what you as a student will be able to do differently, as a direct result of participating in the course:

To pass this course, students must:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the program objectives and their relation to the MSW curriculum.
    a. The POCO Paper
2. Demonstrate the ability to utilize the electronic databases in University library resources performing a complex search of these resources.
    a. The Research Paper
3. Demonstrate the use of the required course management platform and associated University and PC-related technology.
    a. The BlazeView Tasks
4. Demonstrate the ability to create, organize, and edit graduate level writing, including profeciency in grammar and spelling, organizing a complex paper, revising a paper, and copy-editing said paper.
    a. The Graduate Writing Assignments
5. Distinguish between personal and professional values and ethics.
    a. Junk thinking quiz
    b. Junk thinking discussion
6. Differentiate between opinion and truth; facts and values; perceptions and reality; values and evidence.
    a. Junk thinking quiz
    b. Junk thinking discussion
7. Illustrate the difference between Understanding/applying (from Bloom) and dualist/contextual relativist (from Perry) approaches to learning.
    a. Bloom/Perry discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will demonstrate your achievement of course objectives through the following graded assignments:

1. **"**BlazeView **Task."**
   - o Use BlazeView and complete the following basic tasks;
     - ▪ Participate in one online discussion on including an original posting with an attachment (text document or graphic) and reply to at least one posting,
     - ▪ Test the plagiarism checker,
     - ▪ Send the professor an e-mail with an attachment,
     - ▪ Take an on-line quiz, and
     - ▪ Submit an assignment through the dropbox.
   - o These **must** all be completed by August 26th (25 total points)

2. **"Junk Thinking Quiz."**
   - o Take the on-line quiz on graduate level thinking.
   - o Due September 25th (15 points).

3. **"Junk Thinking** Discussion**."**
   - o On-line discussion of junk and critical thinking.
   - o Due September 25th (25 points).

4. **"Bloom/Perry Discussion."**
   - o On-line discussion of Bloom and Perry frameworks and their applicability to graduate social work education.
   - o Due September 25th (15   points).

5. **"P**lagiarism**."**
   - o Write a **short paper on "keys to success in on-line learning"** which includes 3 examples of plagiarism. It should also include three examples of good citations. One of the examples should be easy to spot, one a little bit more difficult to spot, and the third very hard to find.
   - o *In class*, you will give copies of your paper to *three* other students, who will have to find the examples of the plagiarism.
     - o The students who stump the most students (without being **ridiculously difficult) will receive a "prize."**
   - o On-line you will submit a second paper indicating where you found the examples of plagiarism in the papers you were give..
   - o First part due in class October 18th, second part on-line submission November 13th (25 points).

6. **"Graduate Level Writing Assignments"**
    o This is designed to clarify the level of writing/thinking we are looking for.
    o **You might be able to use this as "prep" for assignments in other** classes this semester.
    o <u>Due October 16th</u> (20 points)

7. Research project
    o Define a topic to research
    o Find good and bad sources related to the topic
    o Explain which are good and which are bad, and why
    o Summarize what you found
    o You might be able to use this as a **"prep" for assignments in other** classes this semester.
    o <u>Due date to be determined</u> (20 points)

8. **"POCO discussion."**
    o Write a one page double spaced paper that illustrates the connection between a course assignment, course outcomes, program objectives, and program goals. This paper should include 1) the connection, 2) an explanation of these connections, and the benefits to the student of recognizing those connections.
    o <u>Due in BlazeView Dropbox November 22nd</u> (15 points).

9. Online or face-to-face discussions.
    o There will be at most five short, graded discussions.
    o For example, summarizing what you learned from the second part **of the "Plagiarism" assignment.** (5 points each- total of 25 points.)

ASSESSMENT and ASSESSMENT ISSUES

GRADING SCALE

A   91-100%
B   81-90%
C   71-**80% ("C" involves** 1 deficiency point: Student Handbook, p. 21)
D   61-70% (**"D"** means 2 deficiency points: Student Handbook, p. 21)
F   0-60% (**"F"** means 3 deficiency points and you must retake the course—See Student Handbook, p. 21)

I will need to inform your Advisor if your final grade falls below a "B."

Please Note: Students should be aware of various issues that may adversely affect their grades and even their participation in the program. These regulations arise from

legal codes, The Georgia Board of Regents, Valdosta State University, or the Valdosta State University Division of Social Work. All of them are listed in the Student Handbook at http://www.valdosta.edu/sowk/documents/StudentHandbook2010-2011.pdf IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK. *Remember the "STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING" signed by all students (*see pages 20-24).

Please contact me with any special needs or developing problems. I will help you all I can.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: In this course, the majority of your learning will take place outside the classroom, through your own study and participation in on-line discussions.

The following are the times we will meet face-to-face. There **will** be work to do between those meetings.

Class #1: August 16th
- Introduction and overview of the course
- **Module One**: Using BlazeVIEW and other relevant information processing technology

Class #2: September 6th
- **Module Two:** Graduate & Professional Education
    - Graduate education – How it differs from undergraduate education
    - Professional education – Requirements and implications
    - Graduate level thinking

Class #3: September 27th
- **Module Three**: Graduate level writing
    - APA style
    - Graduate level writing and critical thinking
    - Plagiarism

Class #4: October 18th
- **Module Four**: Social Work Research
    - Locating information relevant to social work practice
    - Evaluating/vetting information

Class #5: November 15th
- **Module Five**: Introduction to
    - Advanced Generalist practice,
    - MSW Program Objectives & Course Outcomes
    - The curriculum and POCO

COURSE POLICIES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO THIS COURSE (*Other, general policies are listed at the end of the syllabus in Grading Issues*)

Written Work & Submission of Assignments
- Your written work should show thoroughness, accuracy and professionalism. All work <u>must</u> be carefully proofread and corrected. Papers should be free of errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. If you do not proofread carefully, you run the risk of having your paper rejected for re-write, with penalty for lateness.
- **All written work, unless otherwise specified, should be double spaced with 1"** margins on all sides and with a 12-point font size.
- Late papers and assignments will lose one full letter grade (10%) for every 24-hour period they are late (including weekends).
- No revisions of assignments will be allowed without explicit permission— However, please feel free to meet with me (face-to-face, online, or by phone) to discuss your paper <u>before</u> the final due dates.

By taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to [TurnItin](), a tool within BlazeView.
DIVISION OF SOCIAL WORK and UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The goal of the Division of Social Work is to prepare students for the professional practice of social work. The Division requires students to adhere to professional practices and standards in all classes and practicum. These practices and standards are outlined in the MSW Student Code of Conduct which can be found on pages 23-27 of the current *MSW Student Handbook.* The Code of Conduct must be signed by all students beginning MSW students.

The following standards are not negotiable: Students may depend on well-planned classes and knowledgeable instructors. Professors are committed to the facilitation of student success. Learning is a complex phenomenon for which BOTH instructors and students are responsible. Evaluation criteria are stated clearly in the syllabus. However, **if students have questions about grading, it is the students' responsibility to discuss** these matters with their instructors. The course syllabus represents a contract between students and the instructor. Professors reserve the right to modify syllabi, and students will be notified in writing when such changes are made. Likewise, students are responsible for reading and following instructions on the syllabi.

Class Attendance. Because the MSW Program is a professional program, class attendance is **MANDATORY**. The Attendance Policy is extremely important and can be

found in the current *MSW Student Handbook* on page 19. Students are expected to be on time for class and to return from breaks in a timely manner. Likewise, students are expected to participate in class discussions and activities.

Submission of Assignments. All assignments must be submitted ON TIME and IN THE MANNER directed by the faculty (e.g., brought to class, sent to an assignment drop box, etc). Deadlines are extremely important for professional social workers. Additional information about assignment submission is found in the Attendance Policy.

Academic Honesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are not acceptable in a professional social work program. Students who engage in this type behavior risk failure on specific assignments, in the course, and possible dismissal from the MSW Program. Academic dishonesty is prohibited by the university as well as the Division of Social Work. The following link outlines **VSU's Academic Honesty Policies**. The Academic Dishonesty Policy for the Division of Social Work is found in the *MSW Student Handbook* found as a link off the Division web site.

Incompletes: Incomplete grades are given only in cases of extreme emergency with proper documentation, and are granted only with the prior approval of the instructor. Policies governing Incompletes are found in the *MSW Student Handbook.* You are required to formally request an Incomplete using this form: *http://www.valdosta.edu/registrar/documents/RequestForAGradeofIncomplete.pdf*

Academic Performance: Students are expected to maintain a 3.00 grade point average in the MSW Program. A discussion of all academic expectations and grading can be found in the *MSW Student Handbook,* **including the Division's policy of Academic** Deficiency Points given for grades lower than C.

Cancellation of Classes: The University President may cancel classes under specific emergency conditions. The most frequent cause of cancellation is inclement weather. Please check the main page of the VSU web site if you have concerns about inclement weather or an emergency situation: http://www.valdosta.edu

ADDITIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION

Technology Assistance: Students having technology problems may contact the Help Desk (phone 229-245-4357) or e-mail a question at helpdesk@valdosta.edu. The Help Desk is located on the 2nd floor of the Odum Library. Their hours are 8:00 AM – 9:00 PM, Mondays – Thursdays; 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Fridays; 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Saturdays; and 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Sundays. If students are having problems with BlazeVIEW, they may seek link to Common Questions & Solutions or use the BlazeVIEW Contact Form.

Specific Learning Needs: Students requiring classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability should discuss their needs with the professor at the beginning of the semester. Students who are not registered with the Access Office for Students with Disabilities should contact <u>**VSU's Access Office**</u> or call 229-245-2498 (229-219-1348 for TTY). The office is located in Room 1115 Nevins Hall.

Students Experiencing Academic Difficulties. Students with academic concerns are strongly encouraged to contact the staff of the <u>Student Success Center</u> or call them at 229-333-7570. The Student Success Center is located on first floor of Langdale Hall on the main VSU campus. Services provided by the Success Center include tutoring, writing assistance, and help with time management. Students are encouraged to make appointments with Center Staff through the web link or by telephone. The Center is available to all VSU students, and evening appointments are available.

Additional services include the <u>Counseling Center</u> (phone 229-333-5940; e-mail <u>pjraynor@valdosta.edu</u>). Services are free of charge to students with emotional/mental, social, substance abuse and other problems. The <u>Farber Health Services</u> provides physical health services (phone 229-333-5886).

Emergency Campus Policy: The Police Contact Number is **229-259-5555**. The Campus Police Division is located in Pine Hall. Officers will escort students on campus, and emergency phones are placed across campus. Students are **strongly encouraged to program the campus emergency number, 911** (for local police) **and *447** (GA State Highway Patrol) **into their cell phone.**

EXPLANATION OF THE POCO MAP

As a part of our 2007-2008 MSW Curriculum Revision, you will begin to see the Program Objective Course Outcome Map or "PoCo Map" in each class syllabus. Your instructors will assist you in using the map while you are in the MSW Program. The "map" is simply a graphic representation of the MSW Curriculum which shows how all parts of the curriculum are interrelated.

The program objectives are derived from the goals of the MSW program. As we define it, program objectives are more specific than goals, and specify what we **intend or expect** students to accomplish by the end of the MSW Program. Think of them as targets to achieve. On the other hand, course outcomes **are much more specific,** course-related components of each program objective. The specific Course Outcomes are what each of you should have achieved by the end of each course. They are measured directly through tests, assignments, discussions, and activities.

Perhaps the analogy of a community may be helpful. The advanced generalist social work community at VSU is made up of program objectives which can be thought of as individual businesses, institutions, and houses in our community. Like any community, each program objective (e.g., house, business) can stand alone, but they need each other to thrive and become a functional community. Course outcomes then can be seen as the walls, floors, windows and doors that are combined to comprise each objective and, ultimately the Advanced Generalist community.

The faculty has selected 19 Program Objectives to form the basic structure of the MSW Curriculum: 14 are foundation objectives and five are concentration objectives. The PoCo Map shows that these 19 Program Objectives are met in different courses across the two-year curriculum. For example, most of the objectives that are related to Social Policy will be met in the two required Policy Courses. Further, each of the 19 Program Objectives is linked with specific Course Outcomes.

In examining the range of courses that comprise the overall curriculum, we can begin to identify specific elements of knowledge, values, and skills that we expect students to achieve during the MSW Program. We have called these elements *Course Outcomes.* Outcomes combine specific chunks of knowledge and skills with a demonstration of their achievement, through application!

Think of a window, which might be a combination of a specific size of glass, with a type of wood and metal. The achievement is the building of a window; the window is an achieved product although its ultimate application is its 'fit' with the specific house. By examining the outcomes that students are expected to master per course, students can determine the actual content that will be learned. Further, we will identify specific assignments, exercises, and quizzes that relate to course outcomes.

The POCO Map ensures that all courses and the overall curriculum meet our own curriculum standards as well as national standards of social work education as set forth by the Council on Social Work Education (*July 24, 2008*).

COURSE POCO MAP

FPO 1. Conduct multi-level generalist practice based on the planned intervention process.

6100-CO1. Demonstrate an understanding of the program objectives and their relation to the advanced generalist curriculum (**PoCo Discussion**).
6100-CO6. Differentiate between opinion and truth, facts and values, perception and reality, values and evidence (**Quiz questions 1-9; Section 3 & 4 Writing and Research Assignment; Junk thinking discussion**).

FPO 2. Demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking within the context of professional social work practice.

6100-CO 2 Demonstrate the ability to utilize the electronic databases in University library resources performing a complex search of these resources (**Research and Writing assignment, literature review section**)
6100-CO4. Demonstrate the ability to create organize and edit graduate level writing, including proficiency in grammar and spelling, organizing a complex paper, revising a paper, and copy-editing said paper. (**Plagiarism assignment, Research and writing assignment, all sections**).

FPO 3. Analyze and apply the values and ethics of the social work profession.

6100-CO6. Differentiate between opinion and truth, facts and values, perception and reality, values and evidence (**Quiz questions 1-9; Section 3 & 4 Writing and Research Assignment; Junk thinking discussion**).

FPO 11. Demonstrate the ability to communicate across client populations, colleagues and communities, in both written and verbal form.

6100-CO4. Demonstrate the ability to create organize and edit graduate level writing, including proficiency in grammar and spelling, organizing a complex paper, revising a paper, and copy-editing said paper Demonstrate the ability to create, organize and edit graduate level writing (**Plagiarism assignment, Research and Writing assignment**).
6100-CO3 Demonstrate the use of the required course management platform and associated University and PC-related technology (**BlazeView task**).

FPO 14. Identify with the social work profession and behave professionally.

6100-CO5. Distinguish between personal values and ethics (**Bloom/Perry discussion**).
6100-CO2. Demonstrate an understanding of the MSW program objectives and their relation to the advance generalist curriculum (**POCO discussion**).