

SOWK 7750, 7800, or 7830

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SPECIAL SETTINGS

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Classroom: Pine Hall 114 (Valdosta)
Time: Thursdays 5:00 - 8:00 PM
Semester: Fall 2005
Credits: 2

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: Concentration Status or Permission of Director. The description for the various topics to this course may be found in the Graduate Catalog under SOWK 7750, SOWK 7800, SOWK and 7830. Course content will be taken from these listings.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of this course is to acquaint students with the special environments in which they may work after graduation. These environments include (1) Child & Family Settings, (2) Health Settings, and (3) Mental Health.

RELATION TO OTHER COURSES

This course is linked vertically to the content in the Foundation courses SOWK 6001 & 6002 Orientation to Social Work I & II, SOWK 6202 Human Behavior in the Social Environment II, SOWK 6310 & 6302 Generalist Practice I & II, SOWK 6400 Social Welfare Policy, Problems, and Services, and SOWK 6500 Research and Evaluation Methods in Social Work. It is linked horizontally to the Concentration Courses SOWK 7300 Advanced Practice in Rural Areas – Individuals, SOWK 7310 Advanced Practice in Rural Areas – Families, SOWK 7400 Policy in Rural Areas, and SOWK 7612 – Advanced Social Work Practicum II.

RELATION TO THE ADVANCED GENERALIST CONTINUUM

This course focuses on Direct Practice in these settings, particularly in a rural context. relates to the practice roles ranging from 1 to 5 on the right side of the advanced generalist continuum.

SETTING-SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Develop an understanding of these settings from a bio-psycho-social perspective.

2. Develop understanding of the historical development of social work in these settings, current issues, roles and setting and future challenges.
3. Develop understanding of an ecological macro context for social work practice in these settings, particularly in rural areas.
4. Develop understanding of social work roles within the context of multidisciplinary practice in host organizations, the parameters of practice and partnerships with other community agencies
5. Develop understanding of the impact of these settings on the individual, family, significant others and the community
6. Develop understanding of the impact and importance of gender, ethnicity, age, gender orientation, cultural and socioeconomic issues in determining meaning and in accessing and interacting with these settings.
7. Develop sensitivity to and understanding of the ethical and social justice issues and the application of social work values to practice in relation to these settings.
8. Develop knowledge about expectations for practice accountability and evaluation in these settings.
9. Enhance knowledge and skill in utilizing professional resources for ongoing professional growth.
10. Provide the opportunity to explore in-depth one diagnostic group of special interest and to apply social work practice knowledge and skills to the special needs of the selected group.
11. Provide the opportunity to develop an in-depth body of knowledge about an aspect of social work practice in these settings.

CONCENTRATION AREA OBJECTIVES

HBSE: Students are expected to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of theories of human behavior and social systems as they relate to the changing social contexts particular to rural areas.
2. demonstrate an understanding of those theories and models that assist in viewing aspects of a client and/or client system along a continuum ranging from pathology to health, focusing on both primary and secondary prevention and intervention as well as how this view relates to social policy and advocacy.
3. demonstrate an ability to analyze and select from an array of theories those most useful in understanding and intervening as they relate to rural life-styles and rural social work practice at all levels.

4. demonstrate increasing independence and depth of analysis as applied to more complex situations as well as cultural analysis.

POLICY: Students are expected to:

1. demonstrate an ability to analyze complex social, political, and economic issues and their impact in rural areas, and propose local, state, national, and international policies that address their consequences.

PRACTICE: Students are expected to:

1. build on the professional foundation content, and demonstrate an ability to independently and systematically select from and apply a wider range of theories, practice models and skills, those that best fit specific problems and situations in work with individuals, families, groups, minorities unique to the area, oppressed populations, organizations and/or communities in rural areas.
2. demonstrate the ability to apply the values and ethics of the social work profession to more complex situations and problems at all levels of practice in rural settings.

RESEARCH: Students are expected to:

1. demonstrate ability to effectively communicate in written, verbal and multi-media formats basic information related to research design and outcomes.

SUGGESTED COURSE TEXTS (Do not purchase until after first class session)

Child & Family Settings

Pecora, P.J., Whittaker, J.K., Maluccio, A.N., Barth, R.P. & Plotnick, R.D. (1991). *The Child Welfare Challenge: Policy & Research*. New York: Aldine DeGruyter.

Health

Kerson, T.S. & Associates. (1997). *Social Work in Health Settings: Practice in Context* (2nd ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Mental Health

Horwitz, Alan B. and Scheid, Teresa L. (1999). *A handbook for the study of mental health in social context: Theories and systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN – 0521567637

I strongly suggest students purchase the newest edition of the book below:

Remark, Robert B. and Hubert, Richard N. (1996). *Law and Mental Health Professionals: Georgia*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

COURSE OUTLINE

We will meet on Thursday, August 19 at 5:00 PM in Room 114 Pine Hall. There we will introduce the course, determine how often we should meet, and anything else relevant to making the course useful to students. Attendance to the first class session is mandatory. We may meet later anytime and will determine that at this session.

ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATIONS, GRADES

Because the course is meant to give students the greatest opportunity to promote their careers, students may choose from one of the following:

1. Complete a thorough organizational analysis of a social services organization. This should include a literature review about organizations and organizational analysis and the selection of an organizational analysis paradigm. The work will include interviews, formal flow charts, informal organization, other pertinent material to help readers understand the organization, and a critical analysis of the organization. Please remember that “critical analysis” is not synonymous with personal attitudes and feelings about the organization. This paper will be 10-15 pages in length. This assignment is for students who wish to take a close look at an agency of which (s)he is considering becoming an employee.
2. Complete a paper (15-25 pages) on a topic of interest within the setting area the student has selected. This paper will be graded on whether it is publishable. Therefore, theory, literature review, research design, critical analysis, and conclusions must be done on a highly professional level. If the paper is publishable I will assist students in finding a journal for submission and in learning how to submit it. This assignment is for students who are considering obtaining their license and eventually returning to graduate school. An independently published paper is helpful in such cases.
3. Develop a presentation that will be given at a professional conference. The topic will be selected from a sector of interest within the settings the student is taking. Professional presentations must be well-organized, conclusions well supported, and suitable for an audience. Audiences tend to prefer some type of handout and some visual aids, often in the form of power points or overhead transparencies. The presenters must know the topic well enough to answer (sometimes difficult) questions from the audience. If the presentation appears good enough to submit to a conference, I will assist the student in finding one and making the submission. This assignment is for students who are considering obtaining their license and becoming active in the social work community. Presentations help with networking and gaining professional prestige. A presentation also is helpful for applying for further graduate school, but not so helpful as a published paper.
4. Create an independent project: For many reasons, students may believe that they would be able to promote their careers with a specialized project. These must obtain my permission and we must remain in close contact throughout. We will establish grading standards IN WRITING as soon as such a project is approved.

This project is meant for students whose career goals are not well supported by the projects above.

Projects will be evaluated on how well they meet professional standards (e.g. whether they would be publishable or presentable at a conference) or would be helpful to advancing the student's career and insight into it (e.g agency analysis' or special project's clarity and insight).

Grading:

(NOTE): Grading will be individualized for special projects. These standards will be in writing and signed by both the instructor and the student.

"A" papers will be publishable independent and meet all APA standards, while presentations are those that are independently presentable at professional conferences. If a paper or presentation is considered an A, the student is encouraged to see me about getting it published or presentation.

"A" organizational analyses will be those that demonstrate a high level of understanding of the prospects of the agency, an employee entering it, its population, and strengths/weaknesses. The instructor should be able to make a decision about these aspects from reading the paper. It should be very thorough.

"B" papers will be publishable/presentable with suggestions and direction from me. If students with B papers/presentations wish to pursue publication/presentations, we should work together toward that goal.

"B" organizational analyses will be those in which the instructor and student are able to make the decisions above after correction by the instructor.

"C" papers are those that are not likely to be publishable. Generally, C papers actually are term papers and C presentations are those one prepares for a classroom presentation. Likewise, C presentations will not likely be accepted for presentation at a large professional conference.

"C" organizational analyses are those that leave the decision above in limbo. These generally are the level of basic organizational analyses in lower level classes.

D/F papers/presentation or organizational analyses do not meet professional standards, APA guidelines, or are deficient in other areas.

This class is held under NASW Ethical Guidelines. Also, please see The division of social work student handbook. Students may receive special assistance for disability, writing, physical and emotional health, substance abuse and other issues.

PLEASE ALWAYS BE PROFESSIONAL. STUDENTS MUST MEET ETHICAL STANDARDS. LET'S ENJOY THE CLASS BY WORKING WITH EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT AND COURTESY. **GOOD LUCK!**