

SIMMONS COLLEGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
FALL 2008

421-1: Social Work Practice I

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Materials for the Course

Course syllabus and materials are available on the course website on WebCTVista. Go to <http://learning.simmons.edu>. Click Simmons College, then click the appropriate course number and section. Your user name is your Simmons Username and your password is your Simmons ID number. All journal articles and some book chapters can be accessed electronically through the library reserve link on WebCT Vista. Books are on reserve in the library and can only be accessed by going there.

Course Description

This year-long course will focus on the action and **skills** of social work practice, and on various ways of reflecting on that action. We will consider the basic processes of social work practice: engagement, assessment, contracting, intervention, evaluation and termination and their application to a wide range of issues and problems. We will look at various levels of intervention (intra-psychically, interpersonally and inter-systemically), practice settings, and theoretical perspectives. In the first semester, particular attention will be given to a multilevel approach to assessment and intervention, and developing the skills that facilitate the social worker - client relationship. There is a focus on theories of empowerment, ecological and strengths perspectives. The contexts of practice including professional codes of ethics, organizations, and neighborhoods and communities will be studied and analyzed.

In the second semester, we will continue to deepen our knowledge and skills in assessment and intervention, explore the differential use of self, and introduce specific approaches to practice with particular populations. Additional theoretical frameworks and practice approaches will be introduced – psychodynamic theory, cognitive-behavioral and a collaborative therapy approach with multi-stressed families which incorporates a solution focused modality and narrative perspective. Ways of evaluating practice and using the professional literature as an aid to practice choices will also be discussed.

Throughout both semesters, it is expected that students will be expected to master the content of the readings and then apply this to practice. Assessment of

mastery of the readings will occur through class discussions and in written assignments. We will use case discussions, videotapes, role-plays, and experiential exercises to enhance our understanding of practice.

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes

At the completion of this course students will, at a foundation level:

1. Develop and improve awareness of their ideas, assumptions, and biases regarding the ways people change and an understanding of how these ideas may affect their work.
Competence areas: Critical thinking, ethics and values, professional identity 7 differential use of self.
Measurement: Paper 1 Class participation
2. Understand the structural and political aspects of various service delivery systems and the effects of organizational arrangements on clients and social workers.
Competence areas: Organizational dynamics, oppression and social justice
Measurement: Paper #2
3. Understand the components of and acquire skill in developing effective professional relationships with individuals and families, and with community and organizational institutions and networks they interface with.
Competence areas: Intervention methods, professional identity, collaboration
Measurement: Classroom work including reports from field
4. Demonstrate basic listening and interviewing skills.
Competence area: Assessment, Intervention and evidenced based evaluation of methods
Measurement: Classroom demonstrations, role plays
5. Have the ability to assess client needs, challenges, strengths, and resources and consider these in formulations and intervention plans within an ecological framework.
Competence area: Formulation
Measurement: Paper # 3
6. Have the ability to assess clients in crisis situations (suicide, homicidal ideation and psychiatric decompensation) and develop appropriate crisis interventions.
Competence area: Crisis Intervention
Measurement: Class Exercises, Class Discussion
6. Understand the complexities of working in multicultural contexts with clients who represent many differences. Understand the differences that the social worker brings to the professional encounter and how that impacts the professional relationship
Competence area: Diversity, Intervention methods.
Measurement: Papers #2 & 3, class participation

7. Have the ability to conceptualize and describe possible interventions with various sized systems: individuals, families, and social systems clients interface with, based on biological, psychological, psychodynamic, family systems, socio-cultural, and organizational factors.
Competence area: Theoretical frameworks, formulation, intervention
Measurement: Paper #3, class participation
8. Understand the rationale for, and acquire the basic tools necessary for making practice choices and evaluating practice efforts.
Competence area: Evidenced-based (informed) practice: use of research and evaluation skills.
Measurement: Papers # 3
9. Demonstrate ethical sensitivity and self-awareness in a professional helping role
Competence area: Ethics and Values
Measurement: Paper # 3, class participation
10. Have the ability to translate knowledge and values affirming cultural diversity, inclusion and social justice into direct practice and social action.
Competence area: Diversity, oppression and social justice
Measurement: Papers #2 & 3, class participation
11. The ability to construct a coherent bio-psycho-social assessment with a sound formulation is an expected outcome of the fall semester.
Competence area: Integration of theoretical and practice skills of the semester
Measure: Final Paper

Evaluation of Student Performance

Students are responsible for class preparation (readings) and participation (discussion and exercises). **Students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of the readings through participation in class discussions. Students should write a paragraph each week about points of interest in two of the readings as preparation for class discussions. These papers can be collected intermittently according to professors' preferences.** There are three graded papers. Instructions and due dates for each paper can be found at the end of this syllabus.

Grading of students' performance will be based on:

- Class participation 35% (Includes demonstrating an understanding of reading assignments.)
- Three Papers: first two papers 20% each, final paper 25%

More than one absence will influence the evaluation of a student's performance.

Students are expected to let faculty know when they are unable to be in class or if there is a problem being on time.

Statement on Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability

and anticipate that you will need a reasonable accommodation in this class, it is important that you contact Josephine Shaddock in the Academic Support Center at 617-521-2472 or josephine.shaddock@simmons.edu early in the semester. Students with disabilities receiving accommodations are also encouraged to contact their instructors within the first 2 weeks of the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations.

Citations for References Used in Written Work

All citations for references used in written work and all reference lists must follow the American Psychological Association Manual, Fifth Edition. Failure to cite a reference or follow the APA guidelines will affect your grade. We recommend that students purchase the APA Manual which is also on reserve in the Beatley Library. If you have any questions about what should be cited or how to format the citation, please contact your faculty. There is also a course handout, References to Literature Cited in text that is included in the course materials on the WEB. For electronic citations you can also refer to the Website-- <http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html>.

Plagiarism is using someone else's words, works, thoughts, or ideas without giving proper credit. When a source is not cited, it is assumed that the words, works, thoughts, or ideas are the sole product of the student. Plagiarism includes handing in as one's own work a paper on which a student has received extensive aid without acknowledging that help. When a paper borrows from any source, including websites, the extent and nature of the borrowing must, to avoid the charge of dishonesty, be fully and explicitly noted in the text or in footnotes. Direct quotations must be differentiated from text by using quotation marks or by indenting or single spacing and accompanied by appropriate APA citation. Plagiarism can result in dismissal from the program.

HIPAA Guidelines/Client Confidentiality

All social workers are required to adhere to HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Public Law 104-191) regulations regarding the privacy of client information outside of the agency setting. Confidentiality must be strictly maintained when discussing clients in the classroom and writing about clients in course assignments. This includes stating the name of the agency, actual initials of clients and actual dates.

Required Texts

Hooks, bell (2000). *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. New York: Routledge. (This book will be summer reading for students taking Social Work Practice in the fall.)

Madsen, W. C. (2007). *Collaborative Therapy with Multi-stressed Families*. Second Edition. New York: Guilford Press. (This book offers an approach that focuses on practice with families. We will use it in the first and second semesters.)

There is a set of texts that include:

a) Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B. (2007) *Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach* (Fifth edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon. (This book emphasizes a

generalist empowerment-oriented approach to social work practice, with practice strategies and techniques for working with all levels of human systems.)

b) Cournoyer, B. R. (2004). *The Evidenced-based Social Work Practice Skills Book*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

c) *Myhelpinglab* access

Aldarondo, E. (Ed.) (2007). *Advancing Social Justice in Clinical Practice*. Mathwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Please note that we will use all of these texts for both semesters. In addition the ASJCP will be used in the second year Advanced Clinical Practice

Some general tips

- **Because students in this course are placed in a diverse range of practice settings and work with a variety of client populations and needs, we encourage you to explore resources relevant to your placement experience that lie beyond the scope of this syllabus. Many resources are available on-line through the Simmons College Library. The fall workshops on use of library resources will help you search these out, and your instructor may also be able to offer specific suggestions for supplementary readings.**
- **A note on class participation: Students should come prepared to discuss assigned readings. Your instructor may ask you to think about specific questions in preparation for each week's readings. You may find it helpful to give some thought to the following questions each week, "How does what I am reading fit (or not fit) with how I think and what I am doing? What do I identify as the important "take-away" ideas from this reading? What new thoughts or questions does this reading raise for me?" It may be helpful to write a brief paragraph on several of the readings, responding the these questions, so as to be better prepared to discuss your ideas.**

This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor reserves the right to alter the course requirements and/or assignments based on new materials, class discussions, or other legitimate pedagogical objectives.

COURSE OUTLINE

Key: (e) = electronic reserve (available on-line)
(l) = library reserve (not available on-line)

1. Introduction to Social Work Practice I (9/3; 9/5)

In this first class we will introduce ourselves to each other and preview the syllabus and the ways the class will operate. We begin with an orientation to the meaning of class (bell hooks), the importance of standpoint (Freire) and the workings of power in this country. We introduce a Freirian framework which underlies our view of what it means to become a “clinician activist.” We define and discuss the meaning of generalist practice, multiculturalism and social work values – themes to be developed in greater detail in subsequent sessions.

Required Readings:

(l) hooks, bell (2000) *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. New York: Routledge.
(This book will be summer reading for students taking Social Work Practice in the fall and is available in the bookstore.)

(l) Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B. (2007). *Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach*. Chapter 1: Generalist social work practice (pp. 3-23). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

(e) Martinez, D. B (2004). *Therapy for liberation: The Paulo Freire methodology*. (unpublished)

(e) Cournoyer, B. R. (2004). Chapter One In *The Evidenced-based Social Work Practice Skills Book*. (p.p. 1-21), Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

2. Frameworks for Social Work Practice (09/10; 09/12)

We consider the knowledge base for social work beginning with the ecosystems perspective and its applications. We will note what is shared by the Freire and ecosystems approach to gathering and assessing information. We will also consider ways of analyzing and critiquing the perspectives we use.

Readings:

(e) Germain, C, B. & Gitterman, A. (1996). *The Life Model of Social Work Practice*. Chapter 1: The ecological perspective (pp.5-24). New York: Columbia University Press.

(l) Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B. (2004). *Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach*. Chapter 2, The ecosystems perspective. (pp.24-52). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

3. Social Work as an Ethical Practice (09/17; 09/19)

A characteristic of a profession is having a code of ethics that is recognized by the public and sets the standard of professional practice. In this session we present ethical frameworks for our work including two contrasting Codes of Ethics. We will examine the distinction between legal, ethical and personal moral beliefs. While they often overlap they are distinct frameworks often with clashing expectations of behavior. Please note that all state licensing laws require adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics.

(e) Freud, S. & Krug, S. (2002). Beyond the Code of Ethics, Part 1: Complexities of ethical decision making in MSW practice. *Families in Society*, 83:5/6, 474-482.

(l). Prillelensky, I., Dorkecki, P. Friedan, G. & Wang, V. O. (2007) Counseling for wellness and Justice: Foundations and Ethical Dilemmas. In Aldarondo, E. (Ed.) *Advancing Social Justice in Clinical Practice*. (p.p. 19-42).Mathwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Please read the NASW Code of Ethics accessed at the following Internet address:
www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp

Please read the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Black Social Workers accessed at the following internet address
<http://www.nabsw.org/mserver/CodeofEthics.aspx>

(e) New Zealand Association of Social Workers Incorporated (1993). Code of Ethics. Dunhedin, Anteroa New Zealand.

Note how the New Zealand code is responsive to the Maori and Pacific Islander people in New Zealand whereas our code has one set of standards for all. Compare and consider the priorities of these different codes.

For your own interest, available on your instructor's web page are two additional codes of ethics: The Radical Social Workers Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines for Feminist Therapists.

Paper One Due

4. Organizational, and Legal, Contexts of Social Work Practice (09/24; 09/26)

Social work practice occurs within a legal framework, and organizational context. In this session we will look at these contexts and consider ways of influencing and changing organizations in which we and our clients function.

Readings:

(e) Fleck-Henderson, A. (2001). *A Typology of Value Orientations in Human Service Agencies*. Unpublished manuscript, Simmons School of Social Work, Boston.

(e) Germain, C, B. & Gitterman, A. (1996) *The Life Model of Social Work Practice*. Chapter 11: Influencing the practitioner's organization. (pp.366-395). New York: Columbia University Press.

(l) McDaniel, M. (2006). In the eye of the beholder: The role of reporters in bringing families to the attention of child protective services. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 28, 306-324.

(e) Ungar, M., Manuel, S., Mealey, S. Thomas, G. and Campbell, C. (2004). A study of community guides: Lessons for professionals practicing with and in communities. *Social Work*, 49:4, 550-561.

Here is the website for Massachusetts General Law Protecting Children, Chapter 119 - which pertains to all issues related to child and protection matters in the commonwealth. <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/gl-119-toc.htm> the following is specific to chapter 119, section 51A: <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/119-51a.htm> section 51B:<http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/119-51b.htm>

Students can scroll down from this homepage to sections 51A-F which governs mandated reporting, child abuse investigations, placement and custody hearings, and the central registry of offenders

5. Values and Multicultural sensitivity - getting started with individuals and families (10/01 10/03)

Social work values, personal values and cultural sensitivity intersect as we meet classmates, colleagues and clients from many backgrounds and diverse situations. In this class we discuss ways of developing self-awareness and openness to the ways of people from whom we are different. We also look at ways of getting started with groups and individuals that include being sensitive to differences.

Readings:

(e) Boyd-Franklin, N. (2003). *Black Families in Therapy*. Second Edition. Chapter 9, Therapist's use of self and value conflicts. (pp. 177-203). New York: Guilford Press.

(e) Dean, R.G. (2001). The myth of cross-cultural competence. *Families in Society*, 82(6), 623-630.

(l) Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B. (2004). Chapter 3: Values and multicultural Competence (pp. 53-78) and Chapter 6: Forming partnerships, (pp.129-157). *Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon .

(e) Shonfeld-Ringel, S. (2001). A re-conceptualization of the working alliance in cross cultural practice with non-western clients: Integrating relational perspectives and multicultural theories. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 29 (1), 53-63.

6. Strengths and Empowerment (10/08; 10/10)

Please note that there will be no evening classes this day in honor of Kol Nidre- and Thursday Yom Kippur. Please note that this means that Wednesday/Thursday evening classes will be one week behind [e.g. class 6 will be 10/15 and so forth until the end of the semester] with the last class for Wednesday evenings being 12/17

As we learn empowerment practices we will study the work of Freire. All students will be expected to attend a lecture on Freire .Time and place to be announced.

Readings:

(e) Chazin, R., Kaplan, S. and Terio, S. (2000). The strengths perspective in brief treatment with culturally diverse clients. *Crisis intervention*. 6:1, 41-50.

(e) Lee, J. A. B. (2001). *The Empowerment Approach to Social Work Practice: Building the Beloved Community*. Chapter 3: Empowerment method: the how to (pp. 56-93). New York: Columbia University Press.

(e) Martinez, D. B (2004). Therapy for Liberation: The Paulo Freire Methodology. (unpublished) **Review from week one.**

(e) Williams, A. B. et al. (2005). Kitchen table wisdom: A Freirian approach to medication adherence. *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*, 16:1, 3-12. (This article show in detail a way of using a Freirian approach in a health context.)

Suggested class exercise: Using the Williams paper, divide the class into groups to discuss themes, issues and problems encountered in their first weeks of social work school. Then have each group develop materials to show the problem (“codifications”) – (have drawing paper and crayons available). Finally, each group presents their themes to the entire class using the codifications. There may be overlap in themes among groups in which case the discussion can be joined. Use the discussion to develop action plans and establish ways to reflect on effectiveness at a future class time.

7. Building Professional and Therapeutic Relationships (10/15; 10/22)

Before beginning the discussion of building relationships with clients, take some time in class to discuss the paper that is due this week and how it has changed and set the context for clinical work. Relationship is central to the social work process. Current practice promotes empowering and collaborative relationships. In this and the next session we will discuss various aspects of building relationships with diverse clients.

This class and the next will fall during Sexual Diversity Week at SSW, a time when all classes direct attention to issues relevant to sexual diversity. In practice classes we begin to consider issues related to practice with members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual communities or practice issues for social workers who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual.

Readings

Sexual diversity:

(e) Ciro, D. et al. (2005). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, sexual-orientation questioning adolescents seeking mental health services: Risk factors, worries and desire to talk about them. *Social Work in Mental Health*. 3(3), 213-234.

(e) Crisp, C. (2006). The gay affirmative practice scale (GAP): A new measure for assessing cultural competence with gay and lesbian clients. *Social Work*, 51 (2), 115-126.

(l) Green, R. (2007). Gay and Lesbian Couples in therapy. In Aldarondo, E. (Ed.) (2007). *Advancing Social Justice in Clinical Practice*. (p.p. 119-150), Mathwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

(e) Morrow, D. F. (2004) *Social Work Practice with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Adolescents*. *Families in Society*, 85(1).

Recommended/ Optional

(e) O'Dell, S. (2000). Psychotherapy with gay and lesbian families: Opportunities for cultural inclusion and clinical challenge. *Clinical Social Work Journal* 28(2), 171-182.

(e) Johnson, T. W. and Keren, M. S. (1998). The families of lesbian women and gay men. In McGoldrick, M. (Ed.) *Revisioning Family Therapy*. (pp. 320-329). New York: Guilford Press.

For your own interest please see your instructors web page for an updated bibliography that covers a wide range of social identity groups.

Second Paper Due

7. Engaging with Involuntary Clients: The role of Motivational Interviewing (10/22; 10/24)

At the beginning of this class, you may want some time to discuss the paper students have just turned in before moving on to today's topic of "engagement." When clients have not sought services on their own but are referred or mandated for service, the process of relationship building can present different challenges.

Readings:

(l) Madsen, W. C. (1999). *Collaborative Therapy with Multi-stressed Families*. Chapter 1: Working with multi-stressed families, from technique to attitude, (pp. 9-44) and Chapter 3 Engaging reluctant families (pp. 85-125). New York: Guilford Press

(e) De Jong, P. & Berg, I.K., (2001). Co-constructing cooperation with mandated clients. *Social Work*, 46(4), 361-381. **A video of the interview discussed in this reading, available through the library demonstrates this process very well.**

(l) Miller, W. R. and Rollnick, S. (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing people for change*. Chapter 6, Building motivation for change (pp. 52-84) and Chapter 15, Motivational interviewing and the stages of change (pp. 201-216). New York: Guilford Press.

9. Exploration, Assessment, (10/29; 10/31)

There are many ways of proceeding to explore a situation and develop ideas about it. There are also various ways of presenting material that help illuminate patterns – e.g. geno-grams and eco-maps. These are important parts of the study process. Your HBSE course will also be exposing you to these assessment tools.

Readings:

(l) Cournoyer, B. R. (2004). Chapter 2: Questioning. In *The Evidenced-based Social Work Practice Skills Book*. (p.p. 21-48) Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

(l) Madsen, W. C. (1999). *Collaborative Therapy with Multi-stressed Families*. Chapter 2: What we see is what we get: Re-examining our assessment process. (pp. 45-84). New York: Guilford Press

(l) Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B. (2004). *Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach*. Chapter 10, Assessing Resource Capabilities. For now, just read section on genogram and ecomap, pp. 248-287. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

(e) Walton, E. & Smith, C. (1999). The genogram: A tool for assessment and Intervention in child welfare. Journal of Family Social Work, 3 (3), 3-20.

Suggested exercise: students could divide up in small groups and role play an interview in which a geno-gram and an eco-gram are used as part of evaluation and as interventions

10. Assessment of Crisis Situation-Acute Psychiatric Situations: Using mental status examinations (11/05; 11/07)

In crisis situations, the interview process changes. Some situations require action prior to developing a mutual purpose. Acute psychiatric episodes, inter-personal violence and addiction interfere with the ability to establish a working relationship. Safety and stabilization become primary concerns. A primary assessment tool the MSE is based on a traditional medical model of assessment.

Gil, D. (1996). Preventing violence in a structurally violent society” Mission impossible. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 66:1, 77-84.

(l) Lukas, S. (1993) Chapter 2: Looking, Listening and Feeling: the Mental Status Examination. In *Where to Start and What to Ask*. (pp.13-31). New York: W. W. Norton

(e) Ouvrier, R., Hendy, J. Bornholt, L. & Black, F. H. (1999). SYSTEMS: School-years screening test for the evaluation of mental status. *Journal of Child Neurology*, 14 (12), 772-780.

(E) Raymount, V., Bingley, W., Buchman, A., David, A. S. et al (2004). Prevalence of mental incapacity in medical inpatients and associated risk factors: cross-sectional study, *The Lancet*, 364, 1421-1427.

11. Assessment and Interviewing in Crisis Situations: Suicidal and Homicidal Ideation (11/12 11/14)

Suicidal and homicidal ideation is anxiety provoking for social work practitioners. The assessment process becomes more specific and focused and has a sense of urgency attached to it. Guidelines on suicide assessment are offered; it is expected that these will provide a model for considering ways of assessing other crisis situations.

Readings

(e) Bryan, C. J. & Rudd, M. D. (2006). Advances in the assessment of suicide risk. *Journal of clinical psychology: In session*, 62:2, 185-200.

(e) D'Augelli, et al (2005) Predicting the suicide attempts of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 35(6).

(e) Jacobs, D. G. & Brewer, M. L. (2006). Application of the APA Practice Guidelines on Suicide to clinical Practice, *CNS spectator*, 11:6, 447-454.

Recommended/Optional :

(e) Ciffone, J. (2007). Suicide prevention: An analysis and replication of a curriculum-based high school program. *Social Work*, 52:1, 41-59.

(e) Joe, S. & Niedermeier, D. (2006). Preventing suicide: A neglected social work research agenda. *British Journal of Social Work*. Advanced Access, 11/81/06. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bc1353, pp. 1-24.

12. Intervention; Further thoughts about facilitating and evaluating change – evidence based practice (11/19; 11/21) To Be Determined

The next two classes continue the introduction of some ways of thinking about facilitating change and evaluating progress. These approaches will be elaborated on in the second semester and other ways of approaching change will be introduced. How do we work collaboratively with clients to transform assessment information into strategies for change, prioritize goals, translate goals into objectives, construct action plans, and recognize situations demanding immediate action? How do we make decisions about modalities – working with individuals, families or groups? How do we think about community building and interventions on a community level? How do we use professional literature to find evidence based interventions and fit these to practice situations.

(e) Kluger, M.P., Rivera, N., & Mormile-Mehler, M. (2001). Defining and measuring program effectiveness at a mental health/social services agency. *Families in Society*, 82(6), p. 549-553.

(e) Introduction to evidence-based practices. Chapter 1 in *Turning knowledge into practice: A manual for behavioral health administrators and practitioners about understanding and implementing evidence-based practices*. This material can be accessed at the following website: www.tacing.org or www.acmha.org

(e) McNeil, T. (2006). Evidence –based practice in an age of relativism: Toward a model for practice. *Social Work*, 51 (2), 147-156.

13. Intervention; Further thoughts about facilitating and evaluating change – evidence based practice Part 2. (12/03 12/05)

Setting mutually agreed upon goals and plans for evaluating progress are important aspects of the clinical process. How do we balance an understanding of strengths and challenges, and identify strengths and resources at multiple system levels, prioritize goals and translate goals into objects?

Readings:

(l) Cournoyer, B. R. (2004). Chapter 3: Analyzing. In *The Evidenced-based Social Work Practice Skills Book*. (p.p. 118-178) Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

(l) Madsen, W. C. (1999). *Collaborative Therapy with Multi-stressed Families*. Chapter 5: Invitational interaction: An anthropological approach to 'Intervening' with Families. New York: Guilford Press.

(l) Miley, K., O'Melia, M. & DuBois, B. (2004). *Generalist Social Work Practice: An Empowering Approach*.

Boston: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 15: Recognizing success (pp. 409-435).

14. Goal setting and evaluation (12/10; 12/12). For Wednesday evening classes the last class (14) will be 12/17)

In this session we evaluate our work so far and learn to apply this process to clinical situations. What were our goals for the semester (individual and collective)? Did we achieve them? How do we know? What evidence might we consider to determine this? How might we approach the next semester in ways that would make the evaluation process easier? How does this process apply to your clinical work? How does one make use of professional literature in thinking about approaches to clients?

Readings:

(e) Drisko, J. (2001). How clinical social workers evaluate practice. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 71(3), 419-439.

(l) Madsen, W. C. (1999). *Collaborative Therapy with Multi-stressed Families*. Chapter 4, Envisioning New Futures, 126-154. New York: Guilford Press.

Homework Exercise: The Friere model and a generalist approach means considering practice approaches at different system levels –the individual, the family/ cultural, and the systems/political. Considering each level, describe how you would approach a case – either drawn from the students' initial experiences in their agency or drawn from a case study provided by the teacher.

Course evaluations will also be filled out and plans made for next semester.

Written Assignments for Social Work Practice (421-1)

Paper #1 Due week 3 3-4 pages “How People Change”

As part of your professional identity you will become aware of something called a “*clinician gestalt*”. This refers to the many aspects of self and environment (our ethnic/racial, cultural heritage, gender, class, sexual orientation, family and life experiences) that coalesce into a professional self . This sum total of social identities mediate our assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and behaviors about professional helping

We all come to professional training with implicit theories and ideas about helping, problems and change. In this paper, you are to reflect on the ways your own “clinician gestalt” has shaped the way you think about how people change. The purpose of the paper is to make explicit your beliefs and assumptions about change and professional helping. The paper has two parts:

A. What do you view as necessary or helpful ingredients in the process of change? How have your own ideas (your theories) about what facilitates (or blocks) change developed? Can you connect the development of these ideas to aspects of your own “clinician gestalt” (e.g. your ethnic, cultural heritage, gender, class, sexual orientation, family and life experience)? Be specific, illustrating your thinking with at least two examples of change drawn from your own life or the life of someone you know. Should you use terms such as “resistance” “motivation” please defined them as you understand them at this point in time.

B. How do you think these ideas about how people change may come up in your work? Reflect on situations where your ideas about change might serve you well and situations where they might be problematic. In other words, for whom are your current ideas about how people change likely to be a “good fit,” and for whom might they be a “poor fit?”

This paper will be graded **Pass/Fail**. What determines a passing paper is the depth of your self reflection and coherent articulation and organization of your thoughts in this essay. This will serve as a baseline for assessing your own professional growth over time.

Paper # 2 - Due week 6 4-6 pages “Ecoscan”

To assist you in developing skills and methods to internalize a systems approach to assessment and practice, please complete an eco-scan of your practice setting. The purpose of this assignment is to orient and accustom you to thinking about individuals

and systems as interdependent and to provide you with a three dimensional lens for viewing clients in their environments. Please complete all sections outlined below.

I. Using one of your clients gather data about the environment in which the client, and systems relevant to your client, exist. This section should be 1-2 pages, please include summaries of data, not raw data.

(If you have not yet been assigned a client you might ask your supervisor to share a client with you who is typical of the agency's clientele or you might just approach the community directly and evaluate it.)

- a. Begin by walking around the neighborhood/community where your client lives and where your agency is located to gather direct observations. (If your client does not live in the agency community you may choose either community to study)**

Content Guidelines:

- What do you observe?
- What is the physical appearance, the noise level, density, appearance of the neighborhood?
- Can you tell anything about the people who live in this neighborhood in terms of race, ethnicity, class, etc. from observing the neighborhood?
- Is your client like the other people in the neighborhood in terms of these identifying characteristics or different?
- What is the experience like for you to walk around this neighborhood?
- Is this neighborhood different or similar to your own? In what ways?

- b. Gather structural data about the community using websites along with various informants in the agency or neighborhood. (Strive to adopt a systemic perspective in understanding this data. Take some time to reflect on the notion of micro or individual indicators of well-being, and then consider what meso and macro indicators of well-being would look like.)**

Website Guidelines:

Use these websites as tools to become familiar with census-like data such as population.

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/>

<http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/> - Childstats.gov America's children

<http://www.childstats.gov/ac2004/summlist.asp> - Summary list of child well-being indicators from childstats.gov

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/cb01ff03.html> - Census information comparing men and women on a variety of social and economic indicators

Then when you feel you have mastered the flavor of this data, seek out specific websites that are directly related to the community of interest to you (e.g., the communities in which your client lives and in which you practice).

Content Guidelines:

- What is the demographic make up of the community, and what are some community-based indicators of well-being?

- What is the ethnic, racial and cultural make up of the community and the agency in which you are placed? What is the marital demography?
- Are there immigrant subgroups, ethnic neighborhoods, or children bused in from other neighborhoods who represent different groups?
- How many people own their homes or rent in this community?
- How many public schools are there and what is the fiscal budget for public education in this area? How does it compare to budgets of other areas?
- How many private schools are there?
- How many medical centers are there and what percentage of services provided by these medical institutions is associated with free care?
- What groups in the community are being served by it's schools or medical establishments and your agency?
- What is public transportation like? Is it accessible, clean, affordable, timely, etc.?
- What are the attitudes in the community toward particular populations and individuals?

II. Write a brief overview of your general impressions and of the data you collected and how this exercise might impact your work. In addition, be prepared to share some of your findings in a class discussion. This section should be 2-4 pages.

Guidelines:

- Consider what it would be like to live in such a community. What would it mean, for example, to do well in such a community?
- Has your view of the client/community changed based on the data you have collected?
- If you are using the lens of a client, has your perception of the client's problem changed? If so, in what ways?
- Have your ideas about change and interventions for your client evolved, or are they different in any ways? Why or why not?
- Critique your agency and its relationship to the community, its ability to serve the community and its relationship to individual clients.
- If you are focusing on the community itself, have your ideas about community problems and the process of change evolved? If so, in what way?
- How has this exercise potentially impacted the way you will approach your work with clients/communities?

*This is a modified version of an assignment developed by Tien Ung with contributions from other faculty.

Paper #3 Due week 12 6-8 pages "Client Assessment"

Assessment is both an objective and an outcome of initial conversations, as well as an ongoing process. Assessment is a structured (organized and purposeful) approach to gathering and analyzing information about the client, the client's story, and contextual or larger system influences. (One can, of course, also assess families, groups, agencies and communities.) This assignment provides an opportunity for you to practice conceptualizing what you have learned (and are presumably still learning) in your work with a particular client. **Although the assignment uses the term "client" it is understood that some of you may be working with a family. In choosing what**

information to include – be guided by an idea of what is most relevant to the work you will be doing. (If you do not yet have clients, see your instructor for options.)

In 1-2 pages, capture the following psychosocial information

Identifying Information

Provide basic demographic information about your client (disguised to protect the person's identity), the agency context in which you are conducting the assessment, and your role in that setting. Also provide some basic demographic information about yourself to show what you bring to this encounter since you and your background are part of the interaction.

Referral Source and Presenting Problem or Issue

Why has this person presented or been referred for help at this time? Who is requesting help, and for what, specifically? Do people have differing views of the problem or issue?

Systems and Persons Relevant to the Problem or Situation

Who are the key participants involved and what are the important "larger systems" in this situation? (Think about the person-in-context, including family, school, community and other systems.) Who is or should be involved in the assessment process? What stressors, resources and/or barriers (actual or potential) do they represent?

Relevant History

Summarize what you know of early family or developmental events relevant to the current situation. What else do you need to know? How and from whom can this information be gathered?

Observational Data

Describe the person's initial appearance, affect, and behavior during the assessment period. Has this changed over time? What have you noticed in your interactions with this person, and their interactions with others?

Can you now "pull together" your own succinct understanding of this person and their situation? In other words, how do you attribute meaning to and interpret the information you have gathered above? Be sure to consider interpersonal and intrapersonal issues, as well as larger social forces. This last section of the paper should be organized in the following way:

Formulation

1. Present a brief summary of your client assessment.
2. What are the expressed goals for your work with this client? What is this person doing well and wanting to sustain or enhance? What issues or problems need to be addressed? Have you prioritized goals, based on urgency or importance? Can you identify short-term and longer-term goals? Do key players agree on goals? Do goals represent change at intrapersonal, interpersonal, or environmental levels? Describe goals as specifically and concretely as possible. **Consider goals that are feasible for the amount of time you have with the client(s).**

3. What will your role be in this situation? What are your responsibilities? To which people and systems are you accountable, and in what ways?
4. What intervention options might be useful, in light of identified goals? What theories inform and support your thinking about intervention options? Out of the intervention options you present, which intervention(s) have you chosen? Why? Where do you see “leverage” for change?
5. What do you identify as potential (or actual) barriers to, your intervention plan? How will you anticipate addressing these issues?
6. How would you describe your relationship with your client? How do you imagine the relationship will develop? Can you identify or anticipate any relational issues that may come up?
7. How will you evaluate progress toward goals?