

Social Work Practice I (Individuals) Course Syllabus

COURSE INFORMATION

Number SCWK 310
Credits: 3
Pre-requisite: SCWK 201, Intro to Social Work; Accepted into Social Work Program
Co-requisite: SCWK 300, HBSE I
Quarters offered: Fall

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Mary Big Bow, MSW
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Office hours: As posted

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social Work Practice I (Individuals) provides foundational knowledge and skills needed for effective generalist social work practice with individuals and introduces interviewing skills, assessment, case management, and crisis intervention strategies. [Writing Course]

This course is the first in a series of three social work practice courses. It is designed to prepare students for generalist social work practice grounded in the historical perspective of the profession and its contemporary structures and issues, directed by social work values and ethics and a person-in-environment perspective. Assessment and interventions are designed and implemented recognizing the eco-systems affecting the individual. The course also introduces the student to case management and crisis intervention strategies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course participants will be able to:

General Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate a range of communication skills and interventions to appropriately meet the needs of varying client systems according to their socio-cultural contexts.
Measured by: Client/social worker video recordings and process recordings.

2. Describe the various professional roles common to direct social work practice (e.g. broker, counselor, case manager, teacher advocate).

Measured by: Client/social worker video recordings and process recordings.

3. Describe case management skills which include the planned change process; engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, referral, termination,

Measured by, Social assessment report, Medicine Wheel.

Critical Thinking Objectives

4. Describe and compare several of the theories and treatment models used in work with individuals (especially crisis intervention, solution-based practice, and motivational interviewing)

Measured by: Role plays.

5. Assess individuals biological, psychological, ecological, social, and spiritual variables to assess social functioning and relate it to practice.

Measured by: Personal family of origin paper, eco mapping.

6. Identify and apply the guiding principles and ethical standards of the National Association of Social Workers and relate it to practice.

Measured by: Reflection essay on difference and diversity.

Cultural Objectives

7. Utilize knowledge of cultural differences to help maintain the cultural integrity of Native American communities and other diverse populations.

Measured by: Reflection essay on difference and diversity.

8. Identify and discuss issues related to client age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.

Measured by: Exploration and discussion of case examples.

9. Describe how student self-understanding can be enhanced and how self-awareness insights relate to practice decisions and activities.

Measured by: Personal family of origin paper, reflection essay on difference and diversity.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Sheafor, B., Horejsi, C., & Horejsi, G. (2000). *Techniques and guidelines for social work practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

NASW Code of Ethics: Distributed during class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Assignment #1: Personal family of origin paper. The purpose of this assignment is to help the student become familiar with concepts used to describe family behavior and functioning. 25 points. See the assignment attachment for details.
2. Assignment #2: Client/social worker video & process recordings. 50 points. See the assignment attachment for details.
3. Assignment #3: Reflection essay on difference & diversity. Identify a person or a group from a background different from your own with whom/which you might have difficulty working as a social worker. Why did you choose this person/group? What do you believe to be the important differences in your cultural experiences? Where might there be a common ground? What ethical dilemmas did you notice or foresee when working with this client group? 25 points.
4. Assignment #4: Service Contract Assignment. Following the final interview with the client, write a two- to three-page contract with the client using materials from *Techniques and Guidelines for Social Work Practice*. Include the following: headings and content, engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and termination. In addition, identify the specific theory(ies) and the professional roles used to formulate the intervention strategy. 50 points. See the assignment attachment for details.
5. Assignment #5: Social assessment report. Soon after the 2nd interview, the social worker is to prepare a typed, 3-5 page, highly factual and detailed social assessment report on the client. 25 points. See the assignment attachment for details.
6. Instructor's Judgment: Twenty five points of the final course grade (potentially one letter grade) is based on the instructor's judgment of the *student's commitment to and temperament for professional social work practice*.

Behaviors that *add* points to the instructor's judgment call include the following: initiative, dependability, honesty, punctuality, capacity to meet deadlines, perseverance, ability to handle conflict in interpersonal relations, sensitivity to others, ability to achieve goals and objectives, ability to plan and organize work, clear writing, motivation and willingness to work hard, openness to new learning, openness to examining own values and attitudes, self-awareness, capacity to work under pressure, personal maturity, emotional stability, respect for clients and other students, fairness in decision-making, and professionalism.

Behaviors that *decrease* points when a professor's judgment call is made include the following: the opposite of the above listed behaviors, especially dishonesty, missing deadlines, disrespect for others, manipulation and efforts to "bend" or avoid the class rules and requirements, attempts to secure special concessions or privileges, domination of class discussion or avoidance of class participation, and the inability to keep personal problems from interfering with professional tasks and activities. 25 points.

8. Optional Assignment for more than three missed classes. The use of this option is only available if the student misses three classes. See the assignment attachment for details.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are allowed to miss two classes. This is an experiential class and absences will reflect on your final grade.

GRADING

Assignment #1	25 points
Assignment #2	50 points
Assignment #3	25 points
Assignment #4	50 points
Assignment #5	25 points
Instructor's Judgment	25 points.

A total of 200 points is possible.

Grades are earned in the following way:

180-200 points = A
160-179 points = B
140-159 points = C
120-139 points = D
Under 119 points = F

An Incomplete grade ("I") for this course is NOT an option, except in cases of extreme emergency or the death of a family member. In either situation, instructor approval is required. The instructor must be notified within 48 hours.

Grading criteria for writing assignments

Written assignments will be worth various points. The distribution of the points will be determined on the following percentages.

Content (Clear, coherent, convincing)	10 %
Organization (Follow assignment directions, information in logical order)	10 %
Readability (punctuation, spelling, grammar, follow writing tips)	10 %
Accurate reflection of information	15 %
Reference; correct use of APA format	5 %

See the Guidelines for Papers attachment.

WEEKLY OUTLINE

- Week 1 & 2** Read chapter 1-3
- Week 2 & 3** Read chapter 7 & 9
Assignment #1: Personal family of origin paper
- Week 4 & 5** Read chapters 11 & 12
Assignment #2: Client/social worker video & process recordings
- Week 6 & 7** Read chapter 13
Assignment #3: Reflection Essay on Diversity
- Week 8** Assignment #4: Service Contract
- Week 9 & 10** Assignment #5: Social Assessment Report

REFERENCES

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SKC Syllabus Supplement

Academic Honor Code

All course work shall follow the guidelines of the Academic Honor Code as set forth by the SKC Student Handbook. Do your own work; allow other students to do their own work. **Plagiarism** involves the taking of someone else's words, ideas, or writings and presenting them as your own. Avoid plagiarism, and always acknowledge the ideas of others and cite your sources of information. Violation of the Academic Honor Code may result in failure of the assignment, the course, or possible expulsion from school.

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are provided to students with diagnosed or suspected disabilities through the ACCESS Office located in the Social Work Department in the Beaverhead Building. For additional information, contact John Domitrovich, the SKC ACCESS Officer, Beaverhead Building Room 131; 406-275-4889; john_domitrovich@skc.edu.

Appropriate Behavior

As an enrolled student of Salish Kootenai College, you are expected to display professionalism and responsibility in attitude and behavior. Treat yourself and others with courtesy and respect.

Course Transferability

Transferability of any SKC course to any other academic institution is entirely dependent upon the program requirements of that other institution.

Course Responsibilities

Knowledge of the course content, class lectures, assignments, and syllabus content are the responsibility of the student regardless of absenteeism. Syllabus content and calendars are tentative; instructors will notify you of any changes.

Study Time Expectation

Students are expected to spend one (1) hour in class and a minimum of two (2) hours outside the class per week per every credit hour. For example, if this is a 5-credit course, you are expected to spend 5 hours in class and a minimum of 10 hours outside of class, a total of at least 15 hours each week to earn a C.

Attendance

Good attendance and active participation will help you to achieve success in your academic career. Poor attendance will result in missed information, missed assignments and tests, and possible failure of the course.

Guidelines for Papers

A Paper: Generally has strong presentation, with a solid opening paragraph explaining what the paper is about. The argument is clear, logical and backed up by evidence, (assessment, intake, etc.) Examples support your paper. The paper demonstrates a sound command of all material from the course, reading, discussions, guest speakers, etc. “A” papers are well written with few, if any, errors of fact or grammar.

B Paper: Has a presentation, but is less developed. The body uses examples and demonstrates an understanding of the material, but lacks depth or sophistication. There may be errors of fact. Contains more errors of fact or grammar/spelling/punctuation than an “A” paper.

C Paper: Weak or only implied understanding of the topic. Paper demonstrates some evidence of familiarity with the course materials, but in a superficial way. Writing lacks structure often does not use paragraphs, and examples and details are few or missing. Several errors of fact and grammar/spelling/punctuation. Paper is too brief, is not supported by facts. Assignment directions may be only partially followed.

D Paper: Show little evidence of grasping the issue. May make some connections, but in a disjointed way. Rarely offers detailed information. Like C papers, these are usually too brief. Errors of fact are common and errors of grammar/spelling/punctuation. Directions are not followed accurately.

F Papers: Papers are poorly organized and poorly written, do not follow directions, and show very little or no grasp of the subject matter. These are often too brief and may be full of spelling and punctuation errors.

Some Writing Pointers:

1. Type using Times New Roman 12 point font.
2. Write assignments in Word format, so you can do a spell and grammar check.
3. Avoid use of ampersand most abbreviations.
4. When writing about a series of more than two items, put a comma before the word “and”:
e.g., “Sam, Joe, and Gina formed one of the groups.”
5. When writing quotations, place commas and periods inside the quotation marks (e.g., “After giving your presentation on ‘Group Theories,’ write a one-page paper about what that experience was like.” (Note: The British put the comma or period after the quotation marks, but the U.S. puts them inside.) Make sure all quotations have the appropriate reference to their author.
6. Always follow APA format.
7. Because this is a writing course you may submit your papers for review and if you want to improve your grade on a specific paper you may make corrections and resubmit it.
8. Other writing tips will be provided through handouts.

Assignment # 1: Personal family of Origin Paper

The purpose of this assignment is to help the student become familiar with concepts used to describe family behavior and functioning. In this assignment, the term “family of origin” refers to the family in which the student grew up or was raised. In six to ten pages the student will describe how he or she has been impacted by the following:

- 1) The roles he or she played in the family
- 2) The family’s rules, boundaries, norms, mood, and expectations
- 3) Communication patterns
- 4) The family’s socio-economic circumstances
- 5) The family’s ethnicity, religion, and moral beliefs
- 6) The make-up of family and sub-systems
- 7) Problems and dysfunctional behavior within the family
- 8) Family crises and trauma
- 9) Family life-cycle events and changes
- 10) Family strengths
- 11) Patterns of decision-making
- 12) How differences and conflicts were handled
- 13) Expression of emotions
- 14) Degree of closeness and connectedness among family members
- 15) The family’s place or status in the community
- 16) How issues of control and authority were handled

Of these sixteen aspects of family life, ten or more must be used as headings to organize and structure the content of the paper. This assignment is to assist the student in understanding what a client experiences when asked to address issues in his or her family. **The final paragraph** should be devoted to describing what it was like to think about and analyze one’s own family’s functioning.

Assignment # 2: Client/social worker video and process recordings

At the start of the quarter, each student will be assigned a partner. You will each assume the role of client and social worker. You are to develop two role-plays for each time you are the social worker (you may want to check with me on the appropriateness of your role play). Each role-play should be videotaped and last approximately ten minutes. The first role-play should be the first meeting with your client. The second role-play should have you asking your client a “difficult question” or confronting your client regarding a problem. In addition, for each role-play, you should include a process recording. Then, based on your process recording, you are to critique your role as the social worker. Your critique should be based on social work techniques learned in class. The critique should be two pages in length.

For assistance in process recording, the student should record the following information:

1. Strength based model: Identify client strengths in the following areas:
 - Spiritual
 - Emotional
 - Physical
 - Intellectual
 - Family
 - Community
 - Organizations individual has even the slightest degree of involvement
 - Personal cultural understanding of self
 - Maintain a chronological record of activities,
 - Type of contact
2. What other agencies has the client used?

Along with comments and suggestions regarding the video and process recordings, the instructor ratings for session reports will be given from the following scale:

- FM unacceptable because of improper format or organization
- FQ unacceptable quality of work with client
- FL unacceptable because of lateness
- FWS unacceptable because of poor writing, grammar, or spelling
- 1. barely acceptable
- 2. below expected level
- 3. at expected level
- 4. slightly expected level
- 5. above expected level (good)
- 6. considerably above expected level (very good)
- 7. excellent (unusually good in many ways)
- 8. truly superior and outstanding in all ways

After written reports are returned, students are to keep the reports and tape recordings in a protected place where confidentiality is protected.

Assignment # 4: Service Contract Assignment

Following the final interview with the client, write a two- to three-page contract with the client using materials from *Techniques and Guidelines for Social Work Practice*. The contract will include the following: headings and content, engagement, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and termination. In addition, identify the specific theory and the professional roles used to formulate the treatment model.

The format of the service contract should follow the following headings and content:

Engagement

1) background to contract (2-3 sentences)

Assessment

2) presenting concern or problem (2-3 sentences)

Planning

3) goals for intervention (at least one goal)

4) objectives for intervention (at least 2 objectives)

Implementation

5) client tasks (at least 3 tasks)

6) worker tasks (at least 2 tasks)

Evaluation

7) methods used to monitor progress (2-3 sentences)

8) procedure for renegotiation of contract (2-3 sentences)

9) other details and clarification of contract

10) signatures of both client and social worker

Termination

11) terms for termination

12) follow-up

Assignment #5: Social Assessment Report

Soon after the 2nd interview, the social worker is to prepare a typed, 3-5 page, *highly factual and detailed* social assessment report on the client. See item 12.1 in *Techniques and Guidelines* before preparing this report. The social assessment report must use the following headings:

1. **Identifying information:** client's name, date of birth, age, address, telephone number, marital status, occupation, etc.
2. **Purpose of report:** briefing for agency staff
3. **Client's presenting problem or concern** and the worker's reason for involvement with client
4. **Source of data:** how and when data were collected
5. **Current family and/or household membership:** with whom does the client live, social-legal relationship among these people, describe marriage and children, if applicable (see item 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, and 12.12 in *Techniques and Guidelines*)
6. **Family of origin:** description and/or listing of client's parents, siblings, and important members of extended family (see item 12.3 in *Techniques and Guidelines*)
7. **Interpersonal and role functioning:** describe client's relationships with friends, peers, people at work and school; describe client's primary social roles and relationship among these roles (see item 12.10 in *Techniques and Guidelines*)
8. **Education history and intellectual functioning:** describe client's education and training, capacity for abstract thinking, memory, and problem solving; oral and written communication; schools attended, G.P.A., school performance, etc. (see item 12.19 in *Techniques and Guidelines*)
9. **Physical functioning:** describe current health and medical problems; significant disabilities; use of medication or physical supports
10. **Strengths and usual ways of coping:** describe client's particular strengths and predominant and habitual ways of coping with life and its stressors; defense mechanisms commonly used to handle troublesome thoughts and emotions (see items 12.8, 12.9 and 12.11 in *Techniques and Guidelines*)
11. **Cultural background, religious beliefs, and spirituality:** describe identity with a particular cultural or ethnic group, and the values, beliefs, faith, etc. that provide a sense of meaning and purpose in life and put life experiences in perspective (see item 8.8 in *Techniques and Guidelines*)
12. **Employment:** describe types of jobs held, special work related skills and training, schools attended, military service, etc.
13. **Economic situation, housing, transportation:** include income from job and benefits, expenses, debts, financial stressors
14. **Use of community resources:** describe client's current or recent utilization of various social service, health care, financial assistance, legal, educational, and recreation programs
15. **Impressions and assessment:** in one paragraph, summarize the social workers conclusions and inferences from the above facts.

Optional Assignment

The use of this option is only available if the student misses three classes. If the paper is acceptable, the grade assigned will be the average of class participation (10 points) and instructors judgment (15 points). The totals add to 25 points, which could possibly make an increase or decrease in one letter grade. The paper must be from 6-8 pages in length (typed, double-spaced) and must make use of at least three relevant reference books or articles. Citations must follow APA style. The topic for this paper **must be** one of the following:

- 1) "Discuss worker self-awareness and self-understanding as factors in being effective with clients."
- 2) "Discuss the relationships among a social worker's personal values, religious beliefs and spirituality, and his or her effectiveness as a professional social worker."
- 3) "Compare and contrast the generalist perspective with the ecosystems perspective."
- 4) "Compare and contrast the behavioral and the psychodynamic practice frameworks."
- 5) "Describe the task-centered model and explain how it is used in social work practice."
- 6) "Describe the interactional approach and explain how it is used in social work practice."
- 7) "Describe the crisis intervention model and explain how it is used in social work practice."
- 8) "Describe one of the conceptual frameworks used in work with families (e.g., structural, communications, strategic, functional)"