COURSE TITLE: SOCW 7325, Assessment in Social Work Practice

TIME/ SECTION/ ROOM: Saturday, 9am – 12pm, SW 107A

FACULTY: Marissa Hansen, M.S.W., Ph.D.

OFFICE HOURS: GCSW, 414
  - Thursday 3pm – 5pm;
  - By appointment on other days. Please submit appointment requests via e-mail.

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I. Course
   A. Catalog Description
      Knowledge and skills for assessment of clients at the individual, group, family, organizational and community levels.

   B. Purpose
      This advanced practice course prepares students to conduct assessments of clients at the individual, group, family, organizational and community levels. Utilizing a strengths perspective, it focuses on the collaborative nature of assessment and the design and implementation of assessments that include evidence based strategies.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES
   Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

   1. Describe how assessment informs all levels of social work practice;
   2. Delineate the tasks involved in the process of assessment;
   3. Compare and contrast the differences and similarities between problem-based and strengths-based assessment;
   4. Discuss the collaborative nature of assessment and its relationship to social work values;
   5. Determine the validity and reliability of different assessment tools;
6. Choose appropriate assessment tools for use with clients at the individual, group, family, organizational and community levels;
7. Explain how assessment methods are used in the evaluation process;
8. Utilize culturally sensitive models for assessment of racial/ethnic minority clients, families and communities;
9. Demonstrate assessment skills that take into account special client considerations including, but not limited to, race/ethnicity/social class, gender and sexual orientation;
10. Conduct a strengths-based assessment with clients at the individual, group, family organizational and community levels.

III. COURSE CONTENT
This course will include the following topical (content) areas:
1. Evidenced based methods;
2. Individual, family, organization, community and self-assessment;
3. Assessment tools to address various issues and age levels, inclusive of multicultural content and special groups.

IV. COURSE STRUCTURE
This Spring 2013 semester course will consist of 14 class periods. The content will be delivered in seminar format, utilizing a variety of teaching and learning techniques including: lectures, in-class group discussions, group activities, case studies, handouts, and online activities via Blackboard.

V. TEXTBOOKS – The citation for the textbook is provided below. Additional readings are posted on the class Blackboard site and/or are indicated on the course syllabus in APA-formatted reference.

Required:

There will be required articles or handouts for reading that are posted on Blackboard. These will be listed under “required readings” by weekly basis.

Recommended:

VI  COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A.  Reading Assignments:  Readings are listed on the class outline and are to be completed prior to the scheduled class. Please note that the lectures are designed to clarify and supplement the assigned readings—they are not designed to review them in detail. It is critical that you remain current with the readings in order to participate fully in class discussions and activities. Some readings are assigned directly from the textbook, while other readings can be found via the UH Library, the internet, or posted on the class Blackboard site.

B.  Written Assignments

1.  Analysis of an Assessment Tool / Instrument (20%). Through research, students will locate and analyze an assessment tool/instrument that could be used in social work practice. A framework for the analysis will be provided by the professor and will include elements related to purpose, feasibility, evidence-base (reliability and/or validity), population, relevance to social work practice, etc.  Assignment due February 14, 2013.

2.  Family Assessment (20%): Students will be assigned to a group. They will view a film and develop a family assessment based on the characters in the film. Each group will submit a written summary of their assessment and present their work to the class in a 20-30 minute presentation. A framework for the assessment and presentation will be provided by the professor. Assignment due February 28, 2013.

3.  Rapid Bio-psychosocial Assessment (20%). Students will conduct a multidimensional assessment based on a clinical case study. The assessment will focus on biological, social and psychological dimensions of the case. Assignment due April 11, 2013.

4.  Community or Organizational Assessment Case Study (20%): Students will use a handout to guide them in an assessment of their field practicum agency. If students are not in field at the time, arrangements can be made to conduct assessment of workplace or another agency. Assignment due May 1, 2013.

5.  Class Attendance and Participation (20%): Attendance and participation are expected for the full length of each class session. Reading is very important for this class so a few quizzes will occur throughout the semester. Performance on quizzes is factored in
with the participation grade. Full participation includes preparation for class, contributing to class discussions (large and small group), and respectfully providing thoughtful feedback to classmates. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. If you are more than 20 minutes late to class this will be counted as an absence. You are allowed 2 absences without explanation. Three or more UNEXCUSED absences will result in a 1-letter grade reduction at the end of the semester (E.g., A to B, B to C, C to D, or D to F). Excused absences MUST be negotiated with the professor.

VII. EVALUATING AND GRADING

A. Grading Distribution:
1. Analysis of an Assessment Tool / Instrument 20%
2. Family Assessment 20%
3. Bio-psychosocial Assmt. 20%
4. Organization Assessment 20%
5. Attendance / Participation 20%

B. Grading Scale: Scores from each written assignment and the class participation grade will be converted according to the grading distribution indicated above. The scores will then be combined and final letter grades will be based on the following grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-96</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79.9-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>95.9-92</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>75.9-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>91.9-88</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71.9-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>87.9-84</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>67.9-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83.9-80</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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C. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete): Please refer to the UH Graduate and Professional Studies Bulletin for the university policy regarding a grade of Incomplete (I). Incompletes will be given only in accordance with this policy. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class session for which they are due, as indicated in the course outline below. Late assignments will be reduced by 5 points for each day they are late. Please plan accordingly so that you are able to complete and submit
your assignments on time, and inform me ASAP should any problems arise. If an emergency prevents you from attending class on the day an assignment is due, you must notify me prior to the class so that appropriate arrangements may be planned. An unexcused absence will also result in a grade of zero (0) on any in-class assignments administered on the day of the absence. All assignment descriptions will be posted on blackboard for your reference.

D. POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM: Although I do not expect to encounter academic dishonesty or plagiarism in this class, I want to be very clear about my standards. Students are expected to demonstrate and maintain a professional standard of writing in all courses, do one’s own work, give credit for the ideas of others, and provide proper citation of source materials. Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an “I” for the class with a recommendation that a grade of F be assigned, subsequent to a College hearing, in accordance with the University policy on academic dishonesty. Other actions may also be recommended and/or taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty. All papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced using APA style format (or as approved by the instructor), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you must set the quote in quotation marks or use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must clearly indicate that this is a direct quotation. Please consult the current APA manual for further information. Academic dishonesty includes using any other person’s work and representing it as your own. This includes (but is not limited to) using graded papers from students who have previously taken this course as the basis for your work. It also includes, but is not limited to submitting the same paper to more than one class. If you have any specific questions about plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please raise these questions in class or make an appointment to see instructor. This statement is consistent with the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty that can be found in your UH Student Handbook.

VIII. CONSULTATION
This course will be delivered by Dr. Hansen. My office is located on the fourth floor of the GCSW. Scheduled office hours are indicated on page 1. If you need to meet with me at a time other than the allotted office hours, please schedule an appointment. My email is mhansen5@UH.edu
IX. POLICY ON ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. For more information and/or assistance, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities at 713-743-5400.

X. EXPECTATIONS FOR MAINTAINING A SAFE, RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Cellular Phones and Pagers: Students are asked to turn off (or activate the vibrator mode on) cellular phones and pagers during class time. Disruptions of this nature compromise the academic process, and therefore will not be tolerated. If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from honoring this classroom rule, please schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible to advise me of your situation.

Classroom Behavior: The GOLDEN RULE for expected behavior in the classroom is to be respectful of yourself and your colleagues. By virtue of the nature of our profession, we will often engage in content and discussions in this course that elicit varied opinions, perspectives, and emotions. This will provide a well-rounded educational experience for all of us, if we practice and demonstrate the core values of social work. Social Work classes are a good training ground for professional conduct.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENTS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Week 1  Saturday, January 19, 2013: Course Introduction  
CLASS WILL NOT MEET – see blackboard for assignment  
- Course overview & logistics: Introductions, syllabus, assignments, Blackboard site  
Required Readings:  
Course Syllabus & Review Blackboard Site

Week 2  Saturday, January 26  
- Assessment in Social Work Practice  
- Assessment and the Problem-Solving Process  
Required Readings:  
Jordan & Franklin– Chapters 1, 2, and 4

Week 3  Saturday, February 2  
- Phases of the Assessment Process  
- Assessment: Problem-based and strengths-based perspective
• Library Session-10-12pm– class will meet with the Social Work librarian
  **Review of Analysis of an Assessment Tool / Instrument assignment**

  Required Readings:
  Ragg- Chapter 4
  Saleeby – Chapter 5 & 6

GATHERING DATA: IMPORTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW
Assessment Tools/Instruments

Week 4   Saturday, February 9
• Assessment and Evaluation
• Introduction to Assessment Tool / Instruments
• Analysis / Evaluation of Assessment Tools/ Instruments

  Required Readings:
  Jordan & Franklin – Chapters, 3.5. & 11

  Recommended Readings:
  Ragg: Chapter 4 “Assmt & Service Contracting”
  **Review of Family Assessment Assignment & Group Set-up assignment**

ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES COMMON TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE
Organizing and Interpreting the Meaning of Data

Week 5   Saturday, February 16:
• Assessment of Families
• Multi-dimensional assessment with families.

  Required reading:
  Jordan & Franklin-Chapter 8 & 9
  Hepworth – Chapter 10

  **Due - Analysis of an Assessment Tool / Instrument**

Week 6   Saturday, February 23:
• Assessment with Families cont’d
• Pre-Class Assignment – Watch assigned video prior to class
• In-Class Assignment – Groups will meet during class time to prepare family assessments and presentations

Week 7   Saturday, March 2:
• In class presentations

  **Due - Family Assessment In-Class Group Presentations**
Week 8 Saturday, March 9
- Mental Health Assessment: Children and Adults, CPS risk assessment for suicidality
- Guest Speaker (LCSW, adolescents and children)

**Required Readings:**
Jordan & Franklin- Chapters 6 & 7
Journal Article –Gillingham & Humphreys (2010)

_SPRING BREAK – no class week of March 11, 2013_

Week 9 Saturday, March 23
- Mental Health Assessment cont’d – Bio-psychosocial assessment case study
- Introduction - Substance Use / Abuse Assessment

**Required Readings:**
Journal Article- Schechter & Lineberry (2011); Gans et al. (2010)

**Review of Bio-Psychosocial Assessment Assignment**

Week 10 Saturday, March 30
- Substance Use / Abuse Assessment cont’d
- Guest Speaker – Center for Drug and Social Policy Research, UofH

**Required Readings:**
Berzoff (2011); Samford et al. (2000)

Week 11 Saturday, April 6
- Assessment of Communities & Organizations

**Required Readings:**
Netting et al. (2012) – Chapter 5

Week 12 Saturday, April 13
- Assessment of Communities & Organizations cont’d
- Methods of Assessment

**Required Readings:**
Netting et al. (2012) – Chapter 7

**Review of Organization Case Study Assignment**

**Due - Bio-psychosocial Assessment **
Week 13  
**Saturday, April 20**
- Assessment of Communities & Organizations cont’d
- Guest Speaker – TBA – Assessment in Macro Practice

**Required Readings:**
Netting et al. (2012) – Chapter 8 & 10

Week 14  
**Saturday, April 27**
- Course wrap-up and evaluation
- Consultation on final assignment as needed

**Organization Case Study- Submit via BB - due May 1st**

***The instructor reserves the right (and flexibility) to alter the Course Outline or schedule in order to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints. Student flexibility and tolerance for any necessary agenda shifts may be required.***
XI. Bibliography


