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 objectives:

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

IV. **Course Structure**
Assessment is an essential aspect of competent social work in any professional environment. This course is structured to further your understanding of how and what to assess in any setting and will utilize a variety of teaching and learning techniques including but not limited to: lectures, in-class group discussions, presentations, simulation, and group activities. It is essential that you actively participate in activities and discussion. Instructor and students will create an open, collaborative, confidential, and respectful atmosphere, which allows for sharing of different perspectives to assure maximum rigor, learning and growth.

V. **Textbooks**
Readings for this course include textbook chapters and journal articles that will be made available through Blackboard.

Recommended:


VI. **Course Requirements**
A. **Readings**
Readings are listed on the course schedule 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.**

B. **Attendance and participation.** Students are expected to attend all classes, to arrive to class on time and to fully engage in all in-class activities. Students will be asked to sign attendance sheets at the beginning of each class. In the case of unforeseen, documented emergencies, students are expected to email Dr. Boyd as soon as possible. Unexcused absences and late arrivals will result in a significant points reduction applied to the participation grade.

C. **Completion of all class assignments & graded material.** All assignments are due at the date and time specified on this syllabus.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>DUE</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I Am From” &amp; Self-Assessment I</td>
<td>Due in class January 19</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bio-psychosocial Assessment (Partner assignment)</td>
<td>February 27 @ 11:59PM</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Assessment</td>
<td>March 20 @ 11:59PM</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential Community Assessment (Group assignment)</td>
<td>April 10 @ 11:59PM</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Assessment</td>
<td>April 24 @ 11:59PM</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Assessment II</td>
<td>May 8 @ 11:59PM</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation (Includes in-class assignments)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Late assignments.** On-time submission of assignments is an expectation of graduate social work students. Any assignment submitted after the due dates and times specified above will be considered late. There must be a significant reason for a late assignment to be accepted, and the student must communicate with the instructor regarding the circumstance prior to the assignment due date. If an emergency prevents the student from turning in an assignment, the student must (1) notify the instructor as soon as possible; and (2) provide documentation of the emergency. In all cases, the instructor has the right to determine whether or not to accept the late assignment and what the grade reduction may be. Students who believe they may need extensions of assignment submission deadlines due to their temporary or permanent health impairments, physical limitations, or other related conditions should contact the Center for Students with disAbilities and provide the Instructor with an Accommodations Form.

If you need special accommodations in class, if you have emergency medical information you wish to share with the professors, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evaluated, please make arrangements to discuss these with the professors immediately.

**VII. Evaluation and Grading**

The following standard grading scale has been adopted for all courses taught in the college.

- A = 96-100% of the points
- A- = 92-95.9%
- B+ = 88-91.9%
- B = 82-87.9%
- B- = 80-81.9%
- C+ = 76-79.9%
- C = 72-75.9%
- C- = 68-71.9%
- F = 0-67.9%
VIII. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete):

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are either (a) passing a course or (b) still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor of the course in which they receive an “I” grade to make arrangements to complete the course requirements. Students should be instructed not to re-register for the same course in a following semester in order to complete the incomplete requirements.

The grade of "I" must be changed by fulfillment of course requirements within one year of the date awarded or it will be changed automatically to an "F" (or to a "U" [Unsatisfactory] in S/U graded courses). The instructor may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements, and the grade may be changed by the instructor at any time to reflect work completed in the course. The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of **W**.

IX. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Please click the link below for the full explanation of the Academic Honesty policy and procedure:


Definitions:

“Academic dishonesty” means employing a method or technique or engaging in conduct in an academic endeavor that contravenes the standards of ethical integrity expected at the University of Houston or by a course instructor to fulfill any and all academic requirements. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, the following:

**Plagiarism**
- Representing as one’s own work the work of another without acknowledging the source (plagiarism). Plagiarism includes copying verbatim text from the literature, whether printed or electronic, in all assignments including field.

**Cheating and Unauthorized Group Work**
- Openly cheating in an examination, as copying from another’s paper; c. Being able to view during an examination, quiz or any in-class assignment an electronic device that allows communication with another
person, access to unauthorized material, access to the internet, or the ability to capture an image, unless expressly permitted by the instructor;


d. Using and/or possessing “crib notes,” as unauthorized use of notes or the like to aid in answering questions during an examination;

e. Giving or receiving unauthorized aid during an examination, such as trading examinations, whispering answers, and passing notes, and using electronic devices to transmit or receive information;

f. Securing another to take a test in the student’s place. Both the student taking the test for another and the student registered in the course are at fault;

Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation


g. Changing answers or grades on a test that has been returned to a student in an attempt to claim instructor error;

h. Using another’s laboratory results as one’s own, whether with or without the permission of the owner;

i. Falsifying results in laboratory experiments;

j. Misrepresenting academic records or achievements as they pertain to course prerequisites or corequisites for the purpose of enrolling or remaining in a course for which one is not eligible;

k. Representing oneself as a person who has earned a degree without having earned that particular degree

Stealing and Abuse of Academic Materials


l. Stealing, as theft of tests or grade books, from faculty offices or elsewhere, or knowingly using stolen tests or materials in satisfaction of exams, papers, or other assignments; this includes the removal of items posted for use by the students;

m. Mutilating or stealing library materials; misshelving materials with the intent to reduce accessibility to other students;

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty


n. Failing to report to the instructor or departmental hearing officer an incident which the student believes to be a violation of the academic honesty policy;

Academic Misconduct


o. Any other conduct which a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest or improper in an academic setting.

Process:

Students shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty to the instructor of record involved or to the appropriate authority if the alleged act is not associated with a specific class within 5 class days of the incident. Faculty or instructor of record shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty through their college hearing officer within 5 class days of the incident. The faculty should include the recommended sanction in the report. The college hearing officer will notify the student of the report and recommended
sanction. The student can accept the sanction and waive a hearing or request a college hearing. A hearing shall be set within 10 days and would be consist of two faculty and three students chosen by the hearing officer.

X. Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>READINGS (On Blackboard)</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 19</td>
<td>• Mary Pipher Ch. 2</td>
<td>Introduction to Assessment/ I am from</td>
<td>“I Am From” &amp; Self-Assessment I Due in class January 19</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>• Ragg Ch. 1</td>
<td>Awareness of Self &amp; Self-Assessment</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>• J&amp;F Ch. 1</td>
<td>Assessment: Process and Models</td>
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<td>• Ragg Ch. 4</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>• Singer (2007). Bio-Psychosocial-Spiritual Assessment and MSE</td>
<td>Conducting a Biopsychosocial Assessment / Clinical Writing and Documentation</td>
<td>Biopsychosocial Assessment Due February 27 @11:59PM</td>
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<td>• Singer (2007) Developing treatment plans</td>
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<td>• Zuckerman (2000)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>• Graybeal (2001)</td>
<td>Strengths Based Assessment</td>
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<td>• Saleebey Ch. 2</td>
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<td>• Saleebey Ch. 5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>February 23</td>
<td>• J&amp;F Ch. 2</td>
<td>Data Collection Sources &amp; Methods/ Standardized Assessment Tools</td>
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<td>• J&amp;F Ch. 3</td>
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<td>• Ortega &amp; Coulborn (2011)</td>
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<td>• NASW Cultural Competence Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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</table>
| 8    | March 9 | • J &F Ch. 7  
       • Hepworth Ch. 10  

**Recommended:**  
• J&F Ch. 8  
• Gehart & Tuttle Ch. 8  
• Corcoran (2002) | Family Assessment |
|      |       | Family Assessment Due March 20 @11:59PM |

|MARCH 16 - SPRING BREAK!!!!!!!|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 9    | March 23 | • Netting Ch. 6  
       • Sheafor Ch. 10  
       • Community Tool Box: Section 2 & 21  

**Recommended:**  
Changemaker’s guide to storytelling | Community Assessment |
|      |       | Community Assessment Due April 10 @11:59PM |
| 10   | March 30 | • Netting Ch. 7  
       • Community Tool Box: Section 14 | Organizational Assessment |
|      |       | Organizational Assessment Due April 24 @11:59PM |
| 11   | April 6 | See Blackboard | Special Topic in Assessment |
| 12   | April 13 | See Blackboard for case studies | Case conference and Presentations |
| 13   | April 20 | See Blackboard for case studies | Case conference and Presentations |
| 14   | April 27 | Reflections on Assessment | Self-Assessment II Due May 8 @11:59PM |
XI. Bibliography


Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas.


XII. Americans with Disabilities Statement

The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the UH Center for Disabilities at 713-743-5400.

XIII. Diversity and Values

Diversity concerns in social work practice (including ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and disability) are discussed throughout the course. Students are invited to critically reflect on and discuss the particular
challenges faced by diverse populations and the appropriateness of social work theories and methods in serving them.

Exploring the issues related to social work practice includes discussion and thought concerning controversial and sensitive topics, such as discrimination, social justice, racism, and poverty. Social workers must consider the greater societal context that influences their clients’ behaviors and situations. There may be some material presented in class that you find objectionable. You are encouraged to explore your feelings surrounding these topics and to engage in an open dialogue in class. Self-reflection is an essential part of working in the helping professions, as is the exploration of how our personal thoughts and feelings might affect how we view clients and the profession of social work itself.

XIV. Addenda

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices: Students are asked to turn off/silence/place in vibrate mode all cell phones and electronic devices during class. Laptops and tablets may ONLY be used to take notes. The expectation is that students will monitor themselves on this point, but the instructor reserves the right to ask a student to put away or disengage from their technology.

Classroom Conduct: Respect and confidentiality are cornerstones of the social work profession. These values create a safe space for honest, critical and diverse dialogue. The classroom is a great opportunity to practice these skills to create a richer learning environment for the students and Instructor. Students are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times. Students are encouraged to be honest and courageous in class to garner the best learning from the instructor and one another.

Consultation: Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the instructor pertaining to the course. The instructor can be reached by email listed above.