



**COURSE TITLE/SECTION:** SOCW 7325/18784 Assessment in Social Work

**TIME:** Tuesday 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

**FACULTY:** Aabha Brown, LMSW

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday 1:30-3:00 p.m. or by appointment, requested via email Room 413

**E-mail:** [abrown28@uh.edu](mailto:abrown28@uh.edu)

**Phone:** 713-743-6255

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**\*\*THIS COURSE SYLLABUS MAY BE AMENDED BY THE INSTRUCTOR DURING THE SEMESTER\*\***

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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 course will be conducted as a highly interactive seminar. **Active participation in class is a significant component of the course and is essential to learning.** The content will be delivered utilizing a variety of teaching and learning techniques which may include: lectures, in-class group discussions, group activities and online activities via Blackboard. Instructor and students will create an open, collaborative and respectful atmosphere which allows for sharing of different perspectives to assure maximum rigor, learning and growth.

### V. Texts

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 Text:

Jordan, C. & Franklin, C. (Eds.) (2011). Clinical assessment for social workers: Quantitative and qualitative methods (3rd ed). Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc. [ISBN: 978-1-933478-80-7]

#### Other Required Readings on Blackboard:

Green, W. & Simon, L. (2012). The Columbia Guide to Social Work Writing. Chichester, NY: Columbia University Press.

Pipher, M. (2006). Writing to change the world. New York, NY: PenguinGroup.

Ragg, D. M. (2011). Developing practice competencies. A foundation for generalist practice. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

\*\*\*Other writings to be added by the Instructor\*\*\*

### 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. Self-Assessment and Genogram (20%).**

Self-awareness and use of self are critical components when conducting assessments. This first homework assignment allows students to reflect on their own experiences, values and beliefs. Students will receive a handout with specific questions to be answered for a self-assessment. In addition to completing a cultural chart and writing a brief self-assessment, students will turn in a genogram of their family with 3 generations, including self.

### **2. Family Assessment (15%)**

Students will develop a family assessment based on characters presented to them.

### **3. Community Assessment (30%)**

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.

### **4. Bio-psychosocial Assessment (15%)**

Because of the busy settings in which social workers assess, this assignment offers a chance to conduct a rapid and brief but multi-dimensional assessment on an individual. Students will take notes of their observations while viewing a therapy session. The focal person in the video is the focus on this individual assessment. The assessment will focus on biological, social and psychological dimensions of the case.

### **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.

A critical measure, if not the most significant, of a student's learning is dependent upon the level of participation in the course. Consistent and ongoing class preparation, full class attendance, thoughtful completion of assignments and contribution to discussions will be an expectation of every student. Students will receive points for class attendance and participation as well as

participation in class exercises. **Any necessary absences must be discussed with the Professor in advance. Students are allowed one absence without explanation. Three or more unexcused absences will result in a 10 point reduction of final grade.**

## **VII. Evaluation and Grading**

### **A. Grading Distribution:**

1.	Self-Assessment	20%
2.	Family Assessment	15%
3.	Community Assessment	30%
4.	Biopsychosocial Assessment	15%
5.	Attendance / Participation	20%

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

A =	96-100% of the points	C+ =	76-79.9%
A- =	92-95.9%	C =	72-75.9%
B+ =	88-91.9%	C- =	68-71.9%
B =	84-87.9%	D =	64-67.9%
B- =	80-83.9%	F =	Below 64%

### **C. Incomplete Grades**

The grade of I (incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are passing a course but, for 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 requesting an incomplete grade.

### **D. Late Assignments**

Late assignments will result in the lowering of the otherwise earned grade. Late assignments will be accepted **ONLY** if prior arrangements have been made with the Instructor and will include a reduction of 2 points per day (each day late) of the earned grade.

## **VIII. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism**

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.

#### **IX. Consultation**

Students are encouraged to consult with the Instructor pertaining to the course. The Instructor can be reached by phone or email listed above. **If student needs to set an appointment with the Instructor, those requests should be emailed with three 30 minute options listed in the text of the request.**

#### **X. Americans with Disabilities Statement**

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. Instructors may not provide accommodations without supporting documentation from the UH Center for Students with Disabilities.

#### **XI. Exceptions for maintaining a safe, respectful learning environment and classroom behavior**

##### **A. 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 be used to take notes only.

##### **B. 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.

**ASSESSMENT IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE  
FALL 2014 COURSE OUTLINE**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>READING</b>	<b>DATE DUE</b>	<b>LECTURE CONTENT</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
1		August 26th	Welcome Introduction to Assessment	
2	Ragg Ch 2 G & S Ch 6	September 2nd	Review of student assessments Ethics of Assessment Phases of Assessment	
3	J & F, Ch 1, 2 & 4 Ragg, Ch 1	September 9th	Quantitative & Qualitative Assessment Awareness of Self	
4	J & F, Ch 3 & 5 Ragg Ch 4	September 16th	Data Collection Sources & Methods Assessment Tools	<b>Self-Assessment Report</b>
5	J & F Ch 9 Ragg Ch 6	September 23rd	Family Assessment Assessing Trauma Assessing Crisis	
6	J & F C 10 Ragg Ch3 Hepworth Ch 8	September 30th	Culturally Competent Assessment Strengths Based Assessment	<b>Family Assessment Paper</b>
7	Hepworth Ch 9	October 7th	Biopsychosocial Assessment	
8	G & S CH 11, 13, 14 OR 15 (based on area of work/interest)	October 14th	Biopsychosocial Assessment	<b>Biopsychosocial Assessment</b>
9	Pipher, Ch 5 G & S Ch 9	October 21st	Macro Assessment	
10	Sheafor	October 28th	Community Assessment: Gathering Information	
11	TBD	November 4th	Community Assessment: Practitioner Perspective	
12	Hardina Ch 1 & 2	November 11th	Community Assessment: Assets & Needs (Agency/Resident Perspective)	
13		November 18th	In-Class Group Work Day	
14	NO CLASS	November 25th	Group Work Day	
15		December 2nd	Reflections on Assessment	<b>Community Assessment Due</b>

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\*\*\*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.\*\*\*  
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## XII. Bibliography

Collins, D., Jordan, C., & Coleman, H. (2007). *An introduction to family social work*. (2nd Ed.). Itasca, IL: Peacock Publishers.

Corey, M. and Corey, G. (2006). *Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Dillon, C. (2003). *Learning from mistakes in clinical practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Helton, L., & Jackson, M. (1997). *Social work practice with families: A diversity model*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., Strom-Gottfried, K., & Larsen, J. (2006). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills* (7th ed). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Jordan, C. & Franklin, C. (2003). *Clinical assessment for social workers: Qualitative and qualitative methods* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Lyceum.

Mattaini, M. A. (1997). *Clinical practice with individuals*. Washington, DC: NASW Press. McGoldrick, M. , Gerson, R., & Shellenberger, S. (1999). *Genograms: Assessment and Intervention* (2nd Ed.). New York: W. W. Norton.

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Pearce, J. (Eds.). (1996). *Ethnicity and family therapy* (2nd ed.). New York:

Guilford Press.

Murphy, B. C. & Dillon, C. (2003). *Interviewing in action: Relationship, process, and change*. Pacific Grove, CA:

Brooks/Cole.

Netting, E., Kettner, P., & McMurtry, S. (2007). *Social work macro practice* (4th Ed.).

Boston: Pearson

Education.

Saleebey, D. (2006). *The strengths perspective in social work practice* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

Toseland, R. W., & Rivas, R. F. (2001). *An introduction to group work practice* (4th ed.).

Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.