



COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 7347/17869 Social Work Practice & Interventions in Schools

TIME: Tuesdays, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. Room 231

FACULTY: Roberta M. Leal, MSW

OFFICE HOURS: Mon 8:00 - 8:45 a.m.,
Tues 11:30-12:15 p.m.
By Appointment

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I. Course

A. Catalog Description

[Credit 3 (3-0)]. Prerequisite: Completion of foundation. Focuses on three areas of social work practice and interventions in schools: student behavior issues, special education, and the coordination of services between schools and communities.

B. Purpose

This elective course is designed to develop knowledge and competence for the interdisciplinary roles that social workers perform in relation to public educational systems, including an understanding of the causes of violence, oppression and discrimination in schools and respective preventive interventions strategies for such issues.

II. Course Objectives

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

1. Differentiate various models of school social work practice and interventions for appropriate application, adaptation, and utilization with students, parents/families, school personnel and the community to address specific issues and problems rooted in school settings.
2. Utilize appropriate advocacy processes to uphold the legal rights of students and parents/families in obtaining a safe and appropriate education for students.
3. Develop, increase and/or enhance pertinent resources for social work services and interventions that include multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to help address student and school-based problems.

4. Apply and/or adapt appropriate interventions when working with students for whom school social work services are indicated, especially students who are from diverse cultural backgrounds, minorities, GLBT, economically disadvantaged, victims and perpetrators of violence; and students affected by issues pertaining to social class; students who have physical and/or learning disabilities; and special needs students.
5. Apply social organization, ecological perspectives, crisis intervention and systems theory to social work practice and interventions in school settings.
6. Facilitate diversity group exercises with students to address prejudice, discrimination and violence in schools and their communities.

III. Course Content

This course includes content in the following areas: the history of school social work and its value base; the context of U.S. public education and contemporary issues; the school setting as a social organization and the job of the social workers in schools, including professional standards; legal rights of students and mandated responsibilities of schools for special populations; emerging evidence-based models of school social work practice, programs and interventions; collaboration between social work and education professionals; parental involvement and empowerment; group, community and advocacy-based methods in the delivery of social work services in schools.

IV. Course Structure

This Fall 2014 semester course will consist of 15 class periods including participation in the Anti-Defamation League's Youth Summit. The content will be delivered in seminar format, utilizing a variety of teaching and learning techniques including: lectures, in-class group discussions, individual participation and presentations, case studies, videos, handouts, guest speakers and trainers, and peer presentations.

V. Textbooks

Massat, C. R., Constable, R., McDonald, S., & Flynn, J. P. (2009). *School social work: Practice, policy, and research* (7th ed.). Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc. [ISBN 978-1-933478-02-9].

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:** Two written assignments are required for this course: (1) a research paper about a contemporary issue impacting the U.S. public education system and its students from a social work perspective and (2) a reflective paper related to the facilitation experience at the Anti-Defamation League Youth Summit. Specific guidelines for these assignments will be presented by the professor, posted to the class Blackboard site, and available during class. The due dates are listed in the Course Outline section of this syllabus. Additionally, two non-graded topic paragraph statements will be turned in according to their due dates.
- C. Oral Presentation of Special Topic Specific to Social Work Intervention in Schools:** Students must prepare a Power Point presentation about a topic specific to social work services in schools. A one-page resource page will be created by the student and presented to the class as a handout. Specific guidelines for this assignment will be provided by the professor and distributed during class. The topic for this assignment MUST be different from the contemporary issues paper. The due date is listed in the course outline.
- D. Facilitation at Anti-Defamation League's Youth Summit** Friday October 24th, 2014 @ South Texas College of Law from 7:30 AM – 2:30 PM. Mandatory Attendance.
- E. In-Class Participation:** Attendance and class participation are critical to successful learning in this course and to your development of essential social work practice skills. Students can receive full class participation points for class attendance, attending the entire class session (do not be late or leave early), active participation in class and group activities, current events discussions, and informed participation in class activities. Each absence will result in points loss for attendance, as does arriving more than 15 minutes late or sleeping in class. (Exceptions: death in the family, illness with physicians note, or agreement reached in advance that an absence is excusable.) More than 2 absences will automatically result in a lower letter grade. If you know in advance that you need to be absent from class, please notify the instructor in writing via e-mail. The University of Houston "respects the religious observance of students (e.g. Religious Holy Days) even though they may conflict with university class meetings, assignments, or examinations" (UH Undergraduate Studies Handbook, p. 63). In such situations, students may request an excused absence. I will honor such requests, but do ask that you please notify me in advance, in writing via e-mail.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

Several methods will be used to assess and evaluate your progress in this course and achievement of the course objectives.

A. Grading Distribution:

1. Contemporary Issue Paper --20%
2. Reflective Paper (Anti-Defamation League Youth Summit) – 10%
3. Oral Presentation (School Social Work Services) -- 20%
4. Facilitation of Anti-Defamation League's Youth Summit -- 35%
5. Class Attendance and Participation -- 15%

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:

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% (no credit)
B- = 80-83.9%	F = Below 64% (no credit)

VIII. 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 10 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.

IX. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism: Although we do not expect to encounter academic dishonesty or plagiarism in this class, we want to be very clear about our 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.

X. 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.

XI. Expectations for Maintaining a Safe, Respectful Learning Environment and Classroom Behavior.

A. Cellular Phones and Pagers:

Students are asked to turn off (or activate the silent mode) 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.

B. 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.

XII. Consultation

Professor Leal's office is located in the GCSW building room #414. Consultation hours are Monday 8:00-8:45 am, Tuesday 11:30-12:15 pm, and by appointment. Please email leal3@central.uh.edu to schedule a meeting time in advance.

XIII. Course Outline

INTRODUCTION

WEEK 1 August 26th

- Course introduction, syllabus review, logistics & expectations
- Introduction to social work practice in schools, history of school social work & Ethics
- READINGS
 - Course syllabus
 - In Class Handout: Ethics in Schools
 - In Class Videos
 - Textbook chapters 1, 2, 4

SELECT ISSUES FACED BY STUDENTS PREVENTIVE STRATEGIES / PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS

WEEK 2 September 2nd

- Contemporary issues in U.S. Public Schools
- Micro and Macro assessments in a school setting
- Response to Intervention
- READINGS:
 - Textbook chapters: 11, 17, 39

WEEK 3 September 9th **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES TOPIC PARAGRAPH DUE TODAY**

- Program Design, model of school social work & strategic interventions
- Research-based practice & use of curriculum
- Academic performance, behavioral issues, & social service needs
- READINGS:
 - Textbook chapters 7, 22, 37
 - Various Curriculum provided in class

WEEK 4 September 16th

- Individual Interventions
- Working with Special Populations
- Mental Health Factors in school social work
- READINGS:
 - Textbook Chapters: 13, 19, 25, 26
 - Case Studies provided in class

WEEK 5 **DUE** September 23rd **SOCIAL WORK INT. PRESENTATION TOPIC PARAGRAPH**

- Progress, re-assessments, & documentation

- Group Interventions
- Relational Aggression
- Crisis Interventions in Schools
- READINGS:
 - Textbook Chapter: 31, 33, 34, 38
 - Article selection for next week

WEEK 6 September 30th

Cultural competence, cross-cultural practice and cultural sensitivity in school settings

- Termination & Referrals
- Outcome measures & Evaluation
- Cultural Competency & Poverty Knowledge
- READINGS:
 - Textbook Chapter: 18
 - Articles posted in blackboard

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION

WEEK 7 October 7th **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES PAPER DUE TODAY**

- ADL Training, Mandatory Attendance (Ms. Susan Shaw)

WEEK 8 October 14th

- ADL Training, Mandatory Attendance (Ms. Susan Shaw)

October 21st No Class today in Lieu of the Youth Summit 3 of the 6 hours.

WEEK 9 & 10 **Friday October 24th** (takes the place of classes on Oct. 21st & Nov. 25th)

- Anti-Defamation League Youth Summit (**mandatory attendance**)
- 7:30am – 1:30pm, South Texas College of Law, Houston, TX
- Reflection Papers are due by the end of the semester and may be submitted electronically via blackboard.

October 28th No Class today in Lieu of the Youth Summit 3 of the 6 hours.

WEEK 11 Youth Violence, Bully Prevention Programs in Schools

WEEK 12 November 4th Marginalized Populations: Youth who are or are involved in: immigration System, Suicide/Homicide, or GLBTQI.

WEEK 13 November 11th Marginalized Populations: Youth who are or are involved in: Excessive Truancy, Homeless or Unaccompanied Minors, or Gang Members.

WEEK 14 November 18th

- **Student oral presentations** on a special topic, relevance to intervention/social work interventions in schools, and resource identification. Mandatory Attn.

WEEK 15 November 25th

- **Student oral presentations** on a special topic, relevance to intervention/social work interventions in schools, and resource identification. Mandatory Attn.

WEEK 16 December 2nd Last Day of Class!!

- **Student oral presentations** on a special topic, relevance to intervention/social work interventions in schools, and resource identification. Mandatory Attn.

*****The instructor reserves the right (and flexibility) to alter the Course Outline or schedule in order to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints.*****
