

**Syllabus for Course of Instruction – Spring 2009**  
**Foundations for Social Work Practice - SW 315**

**I. Basic Course Information**

Course: Foundations for Social Work Practice -3 credit hours

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**II. Scope of the Course**

This course is designed to equip students for competent social work practice through the integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills. With a view toward generalist social work practice with diverse populations of individuals, families, groups, and communities, students will explore social work processes including the professional use of self in engagement, assessment, and problem solving, evaluation.

**III. Course Objectives**

**--Knowledge--**

1. Students will increase their understanding of the generalist approach to social work practice with systems of all sizes (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities). *(Program Objective 6)*
2. Students will gain an understanding of social work as a profession with a distinctive knowledge base, values and skills. *(Program Objective 1, 2)*
3. Students will be given opportunity to discuss and explore social work as a multi-faceted profession. *(Program Objective 5, 6)*
4. Students will gain knowledge of the problem-solving process (assessment, planning, interventions, evaluations and termination). *(Program Objective 1, 6)*
5. Students will understand the person-in-environment and strengths perspectives of social work. *(Program Objective 1, 7)*
6. Students will gain knowledge about the Social Work Profession (history and organization). *(Program Objective 5, 8)*
7. Students will gain knowledge about documentation, progress notes, protecting files and confidentiality. *(Program Objective 10)*

**-Values--**

8. Students will be challenged to examine self, their own experiences and values, and to begin to develop their professional identity as a social worker. *(Program Objective 3, 14)*
9. Students will increase awareness of their personal values and the basic values and goals of generalist social work practice. *(Program Objective 2, 13)*

10. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the Christian worldview and lifestyle that values human life, its diversity and promotes social and economic justice. *(Program Objective 4, 13 14)*
11. Students will be able to critically analyze conflicting ethics and values which influence social and economic policies. *(Program Objective 2, 8)*

**--Skills--**

12. Students will learn basic interviewing skills. *(Program Objective 3, 6, 10, 13)*
13. Students will learn beginning skills and theory of group work and group facilitation. *(Program Objective 6, 10)*
14. Students will learn basic skills in organization, community assessment, and problem-solving in communities. *(Program Objective 4, 6, 10)*
15. Students will learn the social work process for problem-solving, including interviewing, assessment, planning, intervention and referral, and follow-up and evaluation. *(Program Objectives 1, 6, 7, 10)*
16. Students will be challenged to examine how different intervention strategies work with areas of diversity and at-risk populations. *(Program Objective 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 10)*
17. Students will learn how to construct social histories and genograms, develop treatment and care plans, prepare documentation such as case notes, conduct home visits, and protect client confidentiality. *(Program Objectives 2, 6, 7, 10, 11)*
18. Students will learn how to observe and to evaluate social agencies at work. *(Program Objectives 1, 3, 7, 9, 11, 14)*
19. Within the context of real-world practice with a vulnerable population, students will demonstrate an understanding of a Christian worldview and lifestyle that values human life, appreciates and respects diversity, and promotes social and economic justice. *(Program Objectives 2, 3, 13, 14)*

**IV. Required Text**

Kirst-Ashman, K. K. & Hull, G. H. (2006). *Understanding Generalist Practice* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition). Brooks/Cole.

Keith-Lucas, A. (1994). *Giving and taking help*. North American Association of Christians in Social Work.

**V. Method of Instruction**

Lectures, case studies, class discussion and exercises, reading assignments, examinations, special social work practice projects, guest speakers, role plays, and videos may be used in the teaching of this course.

## VI. Tentative Course Calendar

- Readings should be completed by the date in the row where they are listed.
- Additional readings will be assigned throughout the course.

| # | Date   | Activities                  | Kirst-Ashman & Hull Readings | Keith-Lucas Readings |
|---|--------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Jan 8  | Course Introduction         | none                         | none                 |
| 2 | Jan 15 | LinkedIn Assignment Due     | 1, 2, 3, 4                   | 1, 2, 3              |
| 3 | Jan 22 | Genogram Due                | 5, 6                         | 4, 5                 |
| 4 | Jan 29 | Film Choice Email Due       | 7, 8                         | 6, 7                 |
| 5 | Feb 5  | Midterm Exam                | 9, 10                        | none                 |
| 6 | Feb 12 |                             | 11, 12, 13                   | 8, 9, 10             |
| 7 | Feb 19 | Psychosocial Due            | 14, 15, 16                   | none                 |
| 8 | Feb 26 | Final Exam & Portfolios Due | none                         | none                 |

## VII. Method of Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on exams, written assignments, special projects, on-time class attendance, and participation. See the *Course Addendum* for assignments, projects, and exam details. The following is the grade scale:

- 95-100 points A
- 85-94 points B
- 75-84 points C
- 65-74 point D
- Below 65 F

**Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism (15%)** - All students are expected to attend class. Students are also expected to come to class prepared to interact in discussion and activities in the classroom. Professional social workers must be able to critically analyze the world in which they live, and be alert to the ever-changing and sometimes unpredictable nature of their environment. Students must also become adept at appreciating and respecting the variety of perspectives that different people and groups can bring to an issue. Class participation is preparation for professional work, and the student will be assessed by the level of their responsible engagement in the learning processes offered in the course. LinkedIn assignment is due on **January 15<sup>th</sup>**. See assessment rubric for more details of how student will be evaluated.

**Helping Skills Role-Play Activities (15%)** – Role-play activities designed for students to develop beginning foundational social work skills such as the ethical treatment of persons; enactment of dignity and respect of persons who may be cross-culturally, racially, or developmentally different from the student; engagement in the conscious use of self; active listening; assessment; intervention; empathy; problem solving. Students will have opportunities in class to discuss their experiences, perceptions, feelings, and questions regarding their work with their virtual client. A rubric for the assessment of this activities will be provide by the instructor as an addendum to the syllabus before January 15th.

**Genogram (10%) – January 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Students will construct a genogram up to at least 4-levels based on their own family system. *A rubric for the assessment of this assignment will be provide by the instructor as an addendum to the syllabus before January 15th.*

**Psychosocial (10%) – February 19<sup>th</sup>** – Students will be select a film from a list provided to students during the second class session. Students will email the instructor by **January 29<sup>th</sup>** via their uu.edu email address with details of which film they have selected and how they plan to view it. Students will choose one character in a film to write a virtual psychosocial assessment utilizing a prescribed format. *A rubric for the assessment of this assignment will be provide by the instructor as an addendum to the syllabus before January 22nd.*

**Portfolio (10%) – February 26<sup>th</sup>** – Students will compile a three-ring binder complete with handouts and documents as detailed by the instructor. The instructor will indicate which items should go into *A rubric for the assessment of this assignment will be provide by the instructor as an addendum to the syllabus before February 12th.*

**Midterm Exam (20%) – February 5th**

**Final Exam (20%) – February 26th**

## **VIII. Behavioral Expectations of Students**

***Shared Client and Agency Information:*** In the classroom, students and professors will occasionally discuss clients and agencies. In these discussions it is expected that information about clients and agencies should be disguised or eliminated, if clients could be identified, and that this information is to be held in confidence, within the bounds of the Code of Ethics. You must disguise the identity of clients in written assignments including changing the name of the client.

***Social and Economic Justice:*** The faculty of the Department of Social Work believes we all share a responsibility for championing social and economic justice for all members of society. Guided by the Code of Ethics and the Social Work Department's Core Performance Standards, social workers should strive to:

- Eliminate personal and institutional discrimination;
- Ensure access to needed resources and opportunities for all persons;
- Expand options and opportunities for everyone, but especially for persons who are disadvantaged or disenfranchised;
- Respect cultural diversity in society;
- Advocate changes that improve social conditions and promote social justice;
- Encourage participation in the democratic process; and
- Encourage people to develop their own voice.

There will be times during this course when societal “isms” or prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practices are examined. Because of our commitment to social and economic justice, we are open to hearing all views and all perspectives will be carefully examined. Students are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others while at the same time striving to attain the ideals of social justice.

## **IX. Policies:**

***Disabilities:*** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires that the University make reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities as defined in the act. Students who wish to seek accommodations under the ADA guidelines must contact the Office of Counseling Services at 731-661-5322, who will inform faculty of specific classroom and course accommodations consistent with ADA guidelines.

***Changes to Course Syllabus/Outline:*** The professor reserves the right to change the course syllabus or course outline if necessary. Students will be informed of any changes in a timely manner.

***Academic Integrity:*** Academic dishonesty is a violation of the social work program’s values and ethics and may result in:

- A grade of zero for the work
- A grade of “F” in the course
- And/or dismissal from the social work program

The policy as explained in the student handbook will be enforced.

***Cheating/Plagiarism:*** Students who cheat/plagiarize on a paper, test, etc., shall be given an “F” grade for the particular incident and/or course.” Cheating is defined as the attempt, successful or not, to give or obtain aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any class requirement. Cheating includes plagiarism or use of other’s ideas, etc. without proper acknowledgments.

## X. Optional Bibliography for Foundations in Social Work Practice

1. Asher, M. B. (2003). *Micro and macro tensions in generalist practice*. *The New Social Worker*, 10(4), 11-13.
2. Atkinson, R. (1998). *The life story interview*. Sage: Thousand Oaks.
3. Barry, J. (2003). *Autobiographical writing: An effective tool for personal and psychological development*. *The New Social Worker*, 10(4).
4. Bock, D. (1995). *A case manager's practical tips for family caregivers*. *Journal of Case Management*, 4(4), 128-131.
5. Bremner, J. D. (1999). *Acute and chronic responses to psychological trauma: Where do we go from here?* *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 156(3), 349-351.
6. Chau, K.L. (Ed.). (1991). *Ethnicity and Biculturalism: Emerging Perspectives of Social Group Work*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
7. Cunningham, M. (2003). *Impact of trauma work on social work clinicians: Empirical findings*. *Social Work*, 48(4), 451-459.
8. Congress, E., (1999). *Social Work Values and Ethics*. Chicago, IL: Nelson Hall.
9. Brown, C. D. (2002). *Through the looking glass: The world of disability and disease*. *Social Work Today*, 2(26).
10. Carlton-LaNey, I. (1999). *African American social work pioneers: Response to Need*. *Social Work*, 44(9).
11. Castellanos, D. (1997). *Teenage suicide*. *Miami Health Letter*, 2(1), 1-4.
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13. Cohen, M. (2002). *Pushing the boundaries in empowerment-oriented social work practice*. In M. O'Melia and K. K. Miley (Eds.) *Pathways to power: Readings in contextual social work practice*, pp. 143-155, Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
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16. Cowger, C. D. (1994). *Assessing client strengths: Clinical assessment for client empowerment*. *Social Work*, 39(3).
17. Dattilio, F. (2003). *Case studies: Learning to love the problem - The art of helping the impossible family*. *Psychotherapy Networker*, 27(5), 71-77.
18. DeJong, P. & Berg, I. K. (2001). *Co-constructing cooperation with mandated clients*. *Social Work*, 46(4), 361-374. DeJong, P., and Miller, S., (1995). *How to Interview for Client Strength*. *Social Work*, 40(6), 729-736.
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20. Desselle, D. D. & Proctor, T. K. (2000). *Advocating for the elderly hard-of-hearing population: The deaf people we ignore*. *Social Work*, 45(3), 277-281.
21. DuBois, B., and Miley, K.K., (1999). *Social Work an Empowering Profession*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
22. Edwards, A., (1996). *Practitioner and Client Value Conflict: Suggested Guidelines for Social Work Practice*. *Social Work and Christianity*, 23(1), 28-38.
23. Fast, J. D. (2003). *After Columbine: How people mourn sudden death*. *Social Work*, 48(4), 484-491.
24. Fiske, H. (2002). *Nursing home social work*. *Social Work Today*, 2(19), 11-12.
25. Fiske, H. (2002). *Adolescent group therapy: Not just hearing, listening too*. *Social Work Today*, 2(23), 16-18.
26. Fiske, H. (2002). *When a client commits suicide: How do you cope?* *Social Work Today*, 2(10), 9-11.
27. Fiske, H. (2003). *Sexual abuse survivors: Caring for aging abusers*. *Social Work Today*, 3(7), 6-9.
28. Fiske, H. (2003). *Voice of the spirit: Creativity at the end of life*. *Social Work Today*, 9-11.

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34. Hugen, B. & Scales, L. T. (Ed.). (2003). *Christianity and social work: Readings on the integration of Christian faith and social work practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). NACSW: Botsford, CT.
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## **SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM UNION UNIVERSITY**

### **Program Mission**

The Social Work Program

at Union University seeks to prepare students for entry level generalist social work practice. The program emphasizes the importance of a solid liberal arts foundation and of Christian and social work values that promote social and economic justice and an understanding and appreciation for human life and its diversity.

### **Program Goals**

1. To prepare competent and effective professionals for entry-level social work practice with diverse client systems and population groups within an ever-changing global context.
2. To ground students in the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy.
3. To equip students for competent social work practice through the integration of social work knowledge, values, and skills.
4. To prepare students for a career in the social work profession and for success in a graduate social work program.
5. To participate in the development of social work knowledge and provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems.
6. To promote students' understanding of the Christian worldview, with Jesus as the model, which values human life, appreciates and respects diversity, and promotes social and economic justice.

### **Program Objectives**

1. The graduate will be able to apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. The graduate will be able to practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity.
3. The graduate will demonstrate the professional use of self and practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skill related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. The graduate will understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. The graduate will understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
6. The graduate will apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.
7. The graduate will be able to use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. The graduate will be able to analyze, formulate, and influence social policies and the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies.
9. The graduate will be able to evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
10. The graduate will be able to use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
11. The graduate will use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
12. The graduate will be able to function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.
13. The graduate will demonstrate an understanding of a Christian worldview and life style that values human life, appreciates and respects diversity, and promotes social and economic justice.
14. Faculty and students will be involved with community service opportunities that promote human well-being.