

FALL 2007-2008 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SW 401 Social Policy and Services

The second semester of this course builds on learning from the first, using analytic tools developed in the previous semester to focus on social welfare policies as they affect current social work practice and society. Student task forces are organized to analyze social issues and society's response to them. In both semesters special emphasis is placed on understanding issues of poverty, racism, and other forms of oppression, and on understanding their relationship to social welfare policy.

SW 409 Realities of Racism and Oppression in Today's World

As an introduction to this intensive examination of the dynamic of various forms of oppression, an "Oppression Matrix" is used to analyze racism from individual, institutional, and cultural perspectives. The words racism and oppression in the course title are deliberate, used to focus on a continual visual stigma, that of color, and the ongoing complex dialogue about race in current society. The course, in exploring whether the cost/impact of white racism to all individuals, whether white or persons of color, will examine various forms of racism/oppression to stimulate critical thinking and provide a framework for confronting racism and oppression more resourcefully on personal and professional levels. Practice issues are examined in relation to multi-level interventions.

SW 411 Human Behavior in the Social Environment

Theoretical perspectives inevitably inform social work practice. This two-semester course helps the students learn and critically engage with formal theoretical approaches to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Students learn the language and logic of selected developmental, systemic-ecological, and political approaches to human behavior. HBSE I focuses on ecological and environmental shaping of behavior, HBSE II on development through the life cycle. Personal strengths, societal inequities, and the rich diversity of human experience are emphasized.

SW 414 Assessment and Diagnosis

Prerequisites: HBSE (411), Year 1 Field (446), Social Work Practice (421 -semesters 1 & 2)

Experienced clinicians teach this course on current systems for diagnosis and assessment in mental health. The course addresses the interrelations among biological, psychological, and socio-cultural systems. Students are challenged to learn diagnostic assessment in a way consistent with a multicultural and strengths perspective.

SW 421 Social Work Practice

Prerequisite: concurrent Field (446) or (447)

This two-semester course exposes students to selected practice theories for social workers. Students are introduced to the general processes that are common to every client system level: preparation and engagement, differential use of self, assessment, contracting, intervention planning, intervention evaluation, and termination of services. Considered over two semesters is work with individuals, families, groups and, more briefly, organizations and communities. The broad range of settings, problems, and roles of the practitioner are addressed. A special concern is the impact of diversity and oppression for client and worker. Actual practice dilemmas are examined through case discussions, videotapes, role play, and other exercises.

SW 424 Advanced Clinical Practice

Prerequisite: Human Behavior (411), Social Work Practice (421 -semesters 1 & 2), Field Education1 (446), concurrent Field (447)

Advanced Clinical Practice with Children

Section -09 only:

This child-focused section combines most of the material taught in the single semester course during the fall semester. Additional emphasis is placed on child and family work. Students learn techniques of play therapy from psychodynamic, cognitive behavioral, and narrative approaches. The second semester builds on the theory and techniques of the first, and focuses on specific social and behavioral problems (trauma, abuse, anxiety, depression, borderline conditions, etc.) commonly seen in social work practice. Student input is considered for areas of further discussion. Case materials, discussions, and readings form the basis for enhancing practice skills.

Advanced Clinical Practice

Sections -01 through -08, and section -10

The intent of these one-semester sections is to deepen and broaden the students' understanding of the clinical process. Assessment and intervention planning are emphasized. Multiple theoretical perspectives are incorporated with particular attention to ecological, psychodynamic, systemic, and constructivist perspectives.

SW 441 Social Work Research

In this introductory course, students examine the research process as it applies to the specialized interests and needs of social work. Illustrations are chosen from the studies of social work practice. The course is designed to enable students to be critical consumers of research, to understand the principles and process of research and the evaluation of practice, to become familiar with ethical considerations when designing and implementing a project, and to be capable of participating in practice related research.

SW 446 Field Education Year 1: Foundation

Prerequisite: concurrent Social Work Practice (421)

Students in the field must always be concurrently in a class which addresses practice issues and is taught by a social work professor.

SW 447 Field Education Year 2: Concentration

Prerequisites: Social Work Practice (421 -semesters 1 & 2), Human Behavior (411), Field Education(446), concurrent Advanced Clinical Practice (424)

Students in the field must always be concurrently in a class which addresses practice issues and is taught by a social work professor.

SW 458 Advocacy & Social Action in Child & Family Welfare

Prerequisites: Social Policy and Services (401)

The focus of this course is on the interaction of child and family policies, practices and services that affect children, youth, and families. This course is designed to provide an in-depth analysis of the needs of children and their families, child and family policy and practices, and an examination of historical and contemporary child and family policy and services in the United States. This course examines definitions of the family and how such definitions influence the

development of policy and services; the history and changing roles, functions, and responsibilities of the family; and, the challenges faced by children, youth and families today. Societal responses to address the needs of children and families will be explored, with a focus on the broad range of child and family policies, services, and practices that either support family, supplement the roles of family, or substitute for family when parents are unable to care for their children. Students are required to identify gaps in services, issues of social injustice or oppression, and develop a social action or advocacy agenda to effect improvement in the availability or delivery of services for clients.

SW 462 Clinical Social Work with Groups

Prerequisite: Human Behavior in the Social Environment (411)

concurrent with Field (447), or Field (446) with permission

A variety of group approaches and their applications in relation to client purposes and contexts are discussed, including therapeutic, mutual aid, psycho-educational, and task oriented groups. Differential use of self in various stages of group development is considered as are brief and open-ended groups. Case material is used, including students' own material whenever possible.

SW 463 Advocacy and Social Action with Disability and Chronic Illness

Prerequisite: Social Policy (401)

The course focuses on issues and interventions regarding disability and chronic illness that affect adults and children physically, cognitively, and/or emotionally. Students gain understanding of historical and current day experiences of that population from the perspectives of their oppression and their response to oppression through rights and self-advocacy movements. Philosophical and practical frameworks studied include civil rights, inclusion, interdependence, and universal design in the built and social environments. Techniques are discussed for actions as advocates and allies with individuals, as social activists in coalitions, and as policy change agents.

SW 474 Conversational Spanish for Social Workers

Taught by language instructors from the Berlitz Language Center, these courses give students the opportunity to develop conversational Spanish skills. There are twelve levels of proficiency in the Berlitz system ranging from beginning Spanish to fluent. Social work-specific vocabulary is introduced at Levels 3 and 4, enabling students to learn useful vocabulary and phrases for their work.

SW 475 Narrative Approaches

Prerequisite: Field (446) and Social Work Practice (421)

This course explores newer systematic approaches to work with groups, families, and individuals. Narrative/constructivist approaches that are often applicable to short-term work are examined. Students will also consider what it means to think of treatment as involving the co-construction of new narratives. The course incorporates experiential learning and makes use of student case material.

SW 480 Couples Therapy

Prerequisite: Field (446) and Social Work Practice (421)

The focus of this advanced level course will be on an in-depth examination and analysis of theories, research, and intervention strategies with couples. It builds on the knowledge and skills concerning assessment and intervention acquired in the first year clinical practice courses and field work. The course is designed to study and critically evaluate the use of cognitive, behavioral, insight-oriented, brief treatment, and skills-training approaches with couples. There

will be an emphasis on the adaptation of couples therapy to the needs of minority couples, intercultural couples, and same-sex couples. Also, interventions with couples around special issues, such as living with chronic illness, facing divorce, and sexual dysfunction will be explored. In-class lecture and discussion of required readings, in-class video-taped role plays, and written assignments will be used to advance students' knowledge and skills in practice with couples.

SW 482 Domestic Violence and Family Welfare

Prerequisite: HBSE (411)

This course is concerned with intimate partner violence with particular attention to the meaning of such violence in and for families. We will look at this subject both as social work practitioners and as people with an academic or research interest. Students will learn about current criminal justice, child protective, and health system responses to domestic violence, and will practice interviewing skills. We will also consider some of the important controversies in the field. Each student will select, study, and write about a particular topic or area.

SW 483 Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches and Treatment

Prerequisite: Field (446) and Social Work Practice (421)

The object of this course is to provide a working knowledge of the basic principles and specific techniques of a contemporary multi-modal approach to cognitive-behavioral therapy with consideration of its integration with other therapeutic approaches. Treatment models are presented issues including: substance abuse, anger, interpersonal relationships, stress, anxiety disorders, depression, personality disorders with an emphasis on borderline personality disorder and issues of affect regulation.

SW 494 Multiple Faces of Trauma

Prerequisite: Field (446) and Social Work Practice (421)

The focus of this elective is understanding trauma: theoretically and clinically. It considers trauma in various contexts and in relation to various vulnerable populations: people at war, women, residents of violence-torn communities. Recently traumatized individuals are considered as well as those affected by earlier trauma. Students explore some of the theoretical and clinical controversies in the field and are asked to apply their learning to case situations.

SW 501 Themes in Gerontological Social Work Practice

This course focuses on common themes in gerontological social work practice and helps students achieve in-depth understanding to select issues specific to this life stage. A major focus is on the role of the social worker in supporting successful aging, and in promoting the older person's empowerment. Attention also goes to the effect of aging on the family. Discussed from both a micro and macro perspective are topics including long-term care, grandparenting, retirement, Alzheimer's, depression, alcoholism, end of life decisions, sexuality, and spirituality. Programs and policies coping with life-cycle issues are reviewed and critiqued.

SW 509 Evaluation in Social Work Practice

Prerequisite: Research (441), concurrent Field (447)

This course prepares students in basic principles of practice and program evaluation and their application to social work practice in agency settings. Using their agency settings as laboratories,

students learn the major approaches to evaluation (needs assessment, process, and outcome) with attention to the struggles, tensions, and ambiguities related to current evaluation models and agency demands for evaluation.

SW 523 Advocacy and Social Action for Professional Social Workers

Prerequisite: Social Policy (401)

Sections One, Three, and Four

The focus of this course is to discuss relevant theories and strategies of social and political action that promote social justice within organizations and the larger community. In this course students will gain understanding of policy practice theory and skills in regard to social, economic, political, and organizational systems, and will use this knowledge to then influence, formulate, and advocate for policy changes to meet the needs of clients. They will develop the skills to create change at the client, agency, community, and/or societal level that is founded on the principles and ideals of social, distributive, political, and economic justice.

Where advocacy assumes that people have rights, and those rights are enforceable, social action involves a coordinated and sustained effort to achieve institutional change to meet a need, solve a social problem, or correct an injustice to improve and/or enhance the quality of human life and individual well-being (Baker, et al.). This effort may occur at the initiative and direction of professional social workers, or it may occur through the efforts of individuals directly affected by the problem or policy change. Professional social workers must utilize their clinical skills, knowledge, and differential use of self to critically assess values and to evaluate needs and gaps in services for our constituents.

Section Two:

The focus of this course is to discuss relevant theories and strategies of social and political action that promote social justice within organizations and the larger community. In this course students will gain understanding of policy practice theory and skills in regard to social, economic, political, and organizational systems, and will use this knowledge to then influence, formulate, and advocate for policy changes to meet the needs of clients. They will develop the skills to create change at the client, agency, community, and/or societal level that is founded on the principles and ideals of social, distributive, political, and economic justice. The course will focus on mental health and substance abuse policy, and policies related to LGBTIQ populations.

Where advocacy assumes that people have rights, and those rights are enforceable, social action involves a coordinated and sustained effort to achieve institutional change to meet a need, solve a social problem, or correct an injustice to improve and/or enhance the quality of human life and individual well-being (Baker, et al.). This effort may occur at the initiative and direction of professional social workers, or it may occur through the efforts of individuals directly affected by the problem or policy change. Professional social workers must utilize their clinical skills, knowledge, and differential use of self to critically assess values and to evaluate needs and gaps in services for our constituents.

SW 528 Child and Adolescent Trauma

Prerequisite: HBSE (411), Field (446) and Social Work Practice (421 -semesters 1 & 2)

An advanced seminar addressing psychological, sociological, legal, and ecological aspects of family violence in its varied forms, especially in the sexual, physical, and psychological abuse of

children and adolescents, as well as wife battering. Theories of and research on intrafamilial and extrafamilial abuse are discussed. Counter-transference phenomena are identified and alternate forms of treatment are explored.

SW 547 Field Education- One Year Placement Option

Students in the field must always be concurrently in a class which addresses practice issues and is taught by a social work professor.

SW 554 Advocacy in Social Action & Health Care

Prerequisite: Social Policy (401)

In this course students will gain understanding of health care policy and health care services in the U. S. The culture of illness and society's response to health care needs of individuals will be examined. We will also examine historical and contemporary health policy, as well as social, economic, political, and cultural theories of health and illness, poverty and social justice related to affordability, availability and accessibility of health care services. Managed care models, health maintenance organizations, community health centers, and private practice in health care, financing health care through private and public funding streams (e.g., Medicaid, Medicare, SCHIP, Employer provided, etc) will also be analyzed for their utility. This course will focus on theories and practice of advocacy and, social and political action that promote social justice within organizations, the larger community, and society. Students will apply the knowledge gained to formulate, influence, and advocate for policy changes in health care delivery at the organizational and/or state and federal level.

SW 557 Clinical Practice with Immigrants and Refugees

Prerequisite: Social Work Practice (421 -semesters 1 & 2)

The global and political debate about immigrants, immigration policy and the environmental context of some of the countries where Massachusetts's new arrivals come will provide a setting for this course. The population of immigrants and refugees in the United States is growing rapidly. Many social workers practice in settings that serve immigrant and refugee clients. Practice with refugees and immigrants require specialized knowledge about the unique issues of these populations. It also requires specialized adaptations and applications of services and interventions that are grounded in multiculturally sensitive, flexible and when appropriate, community-based methods. This course will provide a comprehensive perspective of social work practice—a perspective that entails examination of the multiple factors that effect immigrants and refugees and relevant practice approaches. Students are expected to continue using a model of problem analysis developed by Freire that encompasses both personal and political aspects of change as an overarching framework for the course. In addition students will learn a conceptual framework of the stages of migration. The framework enables students to examine the interrelationship between the sending and receiving countries and to examine the experiences of individuals in their home countries with their experiences in the new country.

The course draws on multiple theoretical perspectives including empowerment, ecological, psychodynamic and systemic approaches to practice. Knowledge from political science and history, for example, facilitates an understanding of the influence of immigration policy on the lives of immigrants. Concepts drawn from psychology, sociology, and psychiatry, such as stress, life transitions, social networks, trans-nationalism, resilience, post-traumatic stress disorder, explain (in part) aspects of the migration experience. We will also consider concepts from anthropology, different cultural views of health, mental health, help-seeking behavior, family, and child-rearing practice, and gender role behavior. ***This course meets the requirement for a clinical practice elective.***

SW 565 Applied Theatre for Deep Listening and Team-building

This interactive course will strengthen your creativity and help you call forth the creativity of the clients and staff you work with. You will learn full-body and expressive listening techniques, drawn primarily from Playback Theatre (an improvisational theater form derived from Drama Therapy) and also from Theatre of the Oppressed, Interplay, and Nonviolent Communication. Each student will have personal coaching and supervision in how to apply the skills in the field.

Applied theatre techniques can enhance your team-building skills, provide unique tools for addressing diversity and social justice issues, increase your capacity to observe and respond, and teach you to trust yourself further and take greater risks.

The course will run for 10 Saturdays, with most sessions running 2.5 hours except for the first and last sessions running 4 hours.

SW 581 Feminist Theories and Social Work Practice

Students in this course will examine several branches of feminist theory, learn how each branch defines social problems, and determine how the theories can guide social work practice at multiple intervention levels. Students will analyze the benefits and constraints of applying each of the theories to common social work problems including violence against women, alcohol problems, and other social work practice issues of interest to students.

SW 569 Advanced Standing Seminar

SW 570 Social Work Practice with Alcohol & Drug Problems

Prerequisite: Assessment and Diagnosis (414)

Students are introduced to theory and practice with people who experience problems with alcohol and drugs. Drug and alcohol problems are considered independent of, and in combination with other social problems. A range of self-help programs and professional services are considered, as well as prevention, education, service organization, and policy issues.

SW 596 Field Education- Advanced Standing Students only- 5 credits

Students in the field must always be concurrently in a class which addresses practice issues and is taught by a social work professor.