SSS 454
Generalist Social Work Practice with Groups, Organizations, and Communities
(3 credits)

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I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is the second part of the two-semester course continuum in which foundation knowledge, skills, and values for professional social work practice are taught. It prepares students to apply the generalist perspective to social work practice with groups, organizations, and communities. Lectures, group exercises, seminar discussion, agency-based case examples, and class assignments are designed to provide the student with opportunities to increase understanding and develop proficiency in the generalist intervention model.

Generalist practice is characterized by its multi-theoretical approach to assessment and multi-method approach to planned changes. Generalist practice is applicable to diverse fields of human services, agency settings, program services, populations, and human needs. It is the foundation level of professional social work practice and stems from the primary mission of the social work profession, “To enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people, who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (NASW, 1999, p. 1).

This course is intended to assist the student in understanding theories and methods to assess and facilitate change in organizations and communities in an effort to improve human well-being, particularly the well-being of people living in poverty. This course will offer students the opportunity to reflect on, critique, and demonstrate a beginning competence in small group, organization, and community practice.
II. COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

Practice behaviors that are covered this class are indicated by **bold**. Practice behaviors that are not covered in this class are indicated by **grey**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Competency</th>
<th>CSWE Suggested Practice Behaviors</th>
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| Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. | 1.1 advocate for client access to the services of social work  
1.2 practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development  
1.3 attend to professional roles and boundaries  
1.4 demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication  
1.5 engage in career-long learning  
1.6 use supervision and consultation |
| Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. | 2.1 recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice  
2.2 make ethical decisions by applying standards of the NASW Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles  
2.3 tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts  
2.4 apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions |
| Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. | 3.1 distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom  
3.2 analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation  
3.3 demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues |
| Engage diversity and difference in practice. | 4.1 recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power  
4.2 gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups |
| Advance human rights and social and economic justice. | 4.3 recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences  
4.4 view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. | 5.1 understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination  
5.2 advocate for human rights and social and economic justice  
5.3 engage in practices that advance social and economic justice |
| Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. | 6.1 use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry  
6.2 use research evidence to inform practice |
| Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services | 7.1 utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation  
7.2 critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment |
| Respond to contexts that shape practice. | 8.1 analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being  
8.2 collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action |
| | 9.1 continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services  
9.2 provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.1.1 substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;</td>
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<td>10.1.2 use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and</td>
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<td>10.1.3 develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.</td>
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<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
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<td>10.2.1 collect, organize, and interpret client data;</td>
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<td>10.2.2 assess client strengths and limitations;</td>
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<td>10.2.3 develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and</td>
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<td>10.2.4 select appropriate intervention strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention</strong></td>
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<td>10.3.1 initiate actions to achieve organizational goals;</td>
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<td>10.3.2 implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities;</td>
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<td>10.3.3 help clients resolve problems;</td>
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<td>10.3.4 negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients; and</td>
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<td>10.3.5 facilitate transitions and endings.</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
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<td>10.4.1 social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.</td>
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III. FURTHER EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. To understand the use of task groups as an intervention tool in organizations and communities.

2. To understand the role and importance of drawing on group, organization, and community strengths and assets in assessing and intervening systems for macro social work practice.

3. To learn a framework for analyzing or assessing power and to understand the role of power in task groups, organizations, and communities with particular attention to promoting justice for vulnerable and marginalized populations.

4. To learn and demonstrate competency in drawing on assets and strengths to analyze organizations and communities.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts and Readings:


B. Recommended Readings


C. Other Recommended Resources and Media:


D. **Course Assignments:**

1. **Quiz on Concepts of Power (15%)**. Students will take an online quiz through blackboard on concepts of power. Quiz will be open from Wednesday, January 20th through Monday, January 25th.

2. **Coverdale Assignment (15% of grade)**. Students will write an analysis and critique of the group process of her/his Coverdale experience. Students should integrate concepts introduced in the Coverdale exercise, and give special attention to the role of power in the task group process (6-8 pages). (See assignment guidelines.) The paper will be **due Class 6**.

3. **Agency Program Analysis (20%)**: Create a conceptual model of one of your agency programs using both Leavitt’s Diamond and Logic Model formats. (Use the templates provided in class.) Gather information about the program from written materials, websites, and discussions with your field instructor. Prepare a 3-4 page analysis with conceptual models attached based on the assignment description provided in class. Be sure to reference class readings and agency documents used. **Due Class 10**.

4. **Community Analysis (20% of grade)**: Student groups of 3 will conduct a community analysis using skills imparted and practiced in class. The community
analyses will involve having conversations with community residents; creating a community asset map; and analyzing census data to develop a general profile of their community. Using the asset-based community development model, students groups will make recommendations on how the assets found within the community can be brought to bear on community change. Students will need to write up their community analysis (see assignment handout). 5% of the grade on the community paper will be based on the peer assessment. **Due Class 14.**

6. **Community Profile Presentation (10% of grade):** Based on their community analysis, students will need to visually represent their assigned community in preparation for a 10-minute presentation. **Due Class 14.**

**Weight of Assignments**

- Quiz on Power: 15%
- Coverdale Assignment: 15%
- Program Logic Model: 25%
- Community Assignment Paper: 25%
- Community Presentation: 10%
- Attendance and Participation: 10%

**E. Grading Policy:** The university grading system will be utilized (see policy in bulletin). The grade will be based upon the extent to which the student meets the course objectives as demonstrated by class participation and the two NCSSS required papers.

**F. Attendance and Participation**

1. Students are expected to attend all class sessions, to arrive at classes on time, and to conduct themselves in an ethical and scholarly fashion. In the event that it is necessary for a participant to miss a class session or come late, s/he is expected to notify the instructor in advance. Students are responsible for obtaining any class notes or other materials distributed when they are absent. Unexcused or multiple absences may result in a reduction of the final grade.

2. The use of laptops or other devices should be used in such a manner that they do not disturb or distract other students. Recording devices should only be used with the permission of the instructor and should be turned off at the request of the instructor or class participants when requested in the event that personal or confidential information is being discussed.

3. Students are expected to read all required readings for each class session and be prepared to participate in classroom discussions and exercises.

4. The course combines the formats of didactic lectures and participatory seminars. Students and the instructor will endeavor to draw on their own experience including professional practice experience, relevant literature and analytic thinking about the course
content. Each student is expected to participate actively in class discussions and to come prepared to share current knowledge, ideas, and relevant experiences as appropriate. Students and the instructor will view each other as resource persons.

G. Course and Instructor Evaluation:

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations using your CUA username and password. Additional informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to special requests. These evaluations will serve as a basis for ongoing course revisions.

V. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Scholastic Expectations:

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should demonstrate communication ability consistent with graduate level performance, reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

Academic Honesty:

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and Appropriate Program Handbooks.

Accommodations:

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other challenges wishing to request accommodations must identify themselves with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. Once you have documented a disability, DSS will establish whether any accommodations or academic adjustments are required. If so, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
CLASS SCHEDULE

UNIT ONE: THE USE OF SMALL GROUPS AS VEHICLES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL, COMMUNITY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Class 1
1/13/16

Introduction to Macro Social Work Practice: Students will understand key concepts, roles, and skills associated with macro practice in the context of generalist social work practice.

Required Readings


Class 2
1/20/16

Analyzing Power as a Component to Macro Practice: Students will develop an understanding of power, its dimensions, and its manifestations in social work practice. Students will be introduced to principles of anti-oppressive practice.

Required Reading


Recommended Reading


Power Quiz opens Tuesday, January 19th at 11:59PM and closes Monday, January 25th at 11:59 PM
Class 3  
1/27/16  
**Intervention Using Task Groups in Social Work Practice (Part I):**
Students will review the difference between treatment and task groups; understand the group as a social system; understand the operative dynamics within groups.

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


Class 4  
2/3/16  
**Intervention Using Task Groups in Social Work Practice (Part II):**
Students will understand the stages of group development and the role of the social worker in each stage, and addressing conflict in a group.

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


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**The Coverdale Exercise** (Experiential Group Exercise)

**Required Reading**

No required reading for the week! Review readings from previous two weeks.

**UNIT TWO: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK IN ORGANIZATIONS**

**Class 6**

**2/17/16**

**Social Work Practice in Organizations I:** Understanding Organizations – Theory and Structure in Organizations. Students will be introduced to theories of organizations and Leavitt’s Diamond as a conceptual framework for understanding the elements of an organization. Ethical issues will also be considered.

**Coverdale Assignment Due**

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


**Social Work Practice in Organizations II: Logic Models as a Tool for Organizational Program Planning and Evaluation**

Students will delve more deeply into the context of organizations and learn how to do a Logic Models for program planning.

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


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**No Class March 2nd – Spring Break**

**Class 8**

3/9/16  
**Social Work with Organizations III: Assessing Organizational Readiness for Change** Students will understand a model for assessing an organization’s readiness for change.

**Required Reading**


**Class 9**

3/16/16  
**Social Work with Organizations IV: Implementing Change within Organizations** Students will learn models for promoting change within an organization.

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Readings**


**UNIT THREE: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WORK IN COMMUNITIES AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MACRO PRACTICE**

**Theories of Community and Models of Community Practice.** Students will review theories of community practice and an overview of models of community practice.

Students view “Leap of Faith” Video: The story takes place in Fitchburg, MA based on a project done by the Twin Cities Community Development Corporation. Students are invited to review the website prior to viewing the video: [http://www.twincitiescdc.com/](http://www.twincitiescdc.com/)

**Required Reading**

Twin Cities Community Development Corporation of Fitchburg and Leominster, Massachusetts, [http://www.twincitiescdc.com/](http://www.twincitiescdc.com/). (Students will be watching a video based on community development work done in Fitchburg. They may want to visit the website before and/or after they view the video.

Hardcastle, D. A., Powers, P. R., & Wenocur, S. (2011). *Community*
Assessing Communities and Asset-Based Community Development as a Model of Community Practice: Part I. Students will be introduced to domains of community assessment and Asset-Based Community Development as a model for community practice.

Required Reading:


Census website: [http://www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/) (Students are asked to review the census webpage, and one of the data sources collected by the census.)

Recommended Reading:


Asset-based Community Development as Model of Community Practice: Part II After learning how to assess communities, students will learn how to develop an intervention plan.

Required Reading


Recommended Reading


Special Issues In Community Practice: Gentrification And Ethical Dilemmas. Students Will Be Exposed To A Variety Of Issues Associated Ethics When Engaged In Macro Practice.

Required Reading


Recommended Reading


Class 14
4/20/16

Community Presentations and Papers Due

Sections will present on their community analysis.