SSS 680

Essential Foundations for Advanced Graduate-Level Social Work Education

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Summer 2015
(1 credit)

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I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is presented to help Advanced Standing students’ transition from undergraduate to graduate social work education. It is designed to strengthen the student’s generalist social work practice competency to enhance their advanced year concentration. In addition, it will help students solidify their understanding of essential concepts from Foundation year courses on Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Human Development and Psychopathology, Diversity in a Multicultural Society, and Research. The course places an emphasis on human behavior theory, human development, psychopathology, cultural competence and being an informed consumer of social work research. Strength and resilience, all forms of diversity and oppression, and the impact of social and economic forces are emphasized as salient influences on social functioning.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the differences between a “perspective” and a “theory” and understanding of the connection between theory, research, and social work practice.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of micro, mezzo, and macro theories used to explain, assess, and intervene at multiple levels of interaction and within a multicultural
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the values underlying human behavior theories, their consistency with social work values and principles, and their biases, omissions, and cultural limitations.

4. Recognize the role of risk and resilience in human development and understand how different people react to different life events based on diversity and oppression within their life journeys.

5. Demonstrate knowledge of stratification, oppression, and inequality as they relate to sociopolitical contexts, theoretical perspectives and the categorization of pathology.

6. Be familiar with several mental health disorders and distinguish between “normal” development and psychopathology.

7. Demonstrate understanding of the theoretical perspectives that inform prejudice, discrimination, oppression, privilege, and power.

8. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the experience of oppression in the lives of individuals in American society as defined by race, ethnicity, and immigrant status; religion and spirituality; sex and gender; sexual orientation; disability; age; and socio-economic status.

9. Demonstrate knowledge and skills required for culturally-sensitive social work practice, including a working knowledge of the NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice.

10. Link power, anti-oppressive practice and public policy concepts to social work practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### A. Required Texts


Revised 5/5/2015

B. **Recommended Texts**


C. **Course Assignments**

1. Blackboard postings: Students are expected to post responses to the readings for each unit. For units in Area I, students are to post responses particularly to readings from Adams (2000).

   **BLACKBOARD POSTINGS ARE DUE BY 11:00am THE MONDAY MORNING OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK. (EX: AREA I, UNIT 1 STARTS MAY 26th; THE BLACKBOARD POSTING FOR THAT MATERIAL IS DUE NO LATER THAN MONDAY, JUNE 1st AT 11:00 am).**


Revised 5/5/2015
D. Grading Policy

Class Participation via Blackboard postings  25%
Papers (Areas I, II & III)  75%

The Class participation grade is determined by the instructor’s perception of the student’s activity in Blackboard discussions. Students are expected to engage in lively discussion on Blackboard as it contributes to the learning process and is designed to create a virtual community of your peers. Once a student posts to Blackboard, he or she is expected to check back for responses to their posting and respond to others’ comments on their postings. Assignments are to be submitted to instructor on the date due. For each day the assignment is submitted late, 5 points will be deducted. The instructor will not grant an extension on the date the assignment is due. Please refer to the CUA Announcements or MSW Program Handbook for Academic Requirements.

E. Course and Instructor Evaluation

NCSSS requires written evaluation of this course and the instructor. This will be addressed at the end of the course. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged, and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations

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

B. Technology Requirements and Expectations

Students enrolled in this course must utilize computer hardware and software that supports Blackboard technology. Internet connectivity must be arranged so that the student can download the PowerPoint and PDF files, as well as videos and media. The student is expected to have working knowledge of Blackboard and must notify the instructor IMMEDIATELY if training or support is needed. Finally, the student is expected to utilize appropriate “netiquette” in all communications via Discussion Board and email.
C. 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.

C. Accommodations

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
CLASS SCHEDULE
Topics and Readings

Area I: Essentials of Cultural Competence, Oppression and Difference

Unit 1: Defining and Experiencing Difference

Required Readings
Adams – choose two readings each from Sections 2 & 3

Unit 2: The Meaning of Difference

Required Readings
Adams – choose two readings each from Sections 4, 5 & 6

Unit 3: Cultural Competence, Social Justice and Strategies for Change

Required Readings
Adams – choose two readings each from Sections 7 & 8

Revised 5/5/2015


*NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice* on NASW’s website: [www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org)

**Unit 4:** Anti-Oppressive Practices in Agenda Setting and Policy

**Required Readings**


**Area I Paper Due Wednesday, June 24th by 5:00 pm**

**Area II:** Essential Human Behavior Theory Competencies

**Unit 1:** Looking at a Complex World: Human Behavior Perspectives & Theories

**Research Review**

**Required Readings**

- Fadiman (all)
- Walsh Chapters 1&2

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Unit 2: Micro Theories

Required Readings

Focus on three micro theories:

1 & 2. Behaviorism and Cognitive Theory:
Walsh Chapters 7 & 8

3. Psychodynamic Theory:
Walsh Chapters 4 & 5

Unit 3: Mezzo and Macro Theories

Required Readings

Focus on three mezzo/macro theories:

1. Systems Theory:

Walsh Chapters 6 & 9

2. Conflict Theory:


3. Organizational Theory:


Area II Paper Due Wednesday, July 15th by 5:00 pm

Revised 5/5/2015
Area III: Essentials of Human Development and Psychopathology

Unit 1: Normal Development and Abnormal Behavior

Required Readings
Allison - All
Corcoran & Walsh, Chapters 1 & 2

Recommended Readings
Allen, Chapter 1, A developmental approach to trauma
DSM 5, Introduction

Unit 2: Mental Health Disorders

Required Readings
Cognitive Disorders, Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 12
Eating Disorders – Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 9
Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Corcoran & Walsh Chapters 3&4
Oppositional Defiant and Conduct Disorders - Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 10
Substance – Related and Addictive Disorders - Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 11

Recommended Readings
DSM 5 – related sections

Unit 3: Mental Health Disorders

Required Readings
Anxiety Disorders - Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 8
Bipolar and Related Disorders - Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 6
Depressive Disorders – Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 7
Personality Disorders – Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 13
Schizophrenia - Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 5

Recommended Readings
DSM 5 – related sections

Area III Paper Due Wednesday, August 5th by 5:00 pm

Revised 5/5/2015