I. COURSE PURPOSE

This advanced integrative seminar is designed to encourage students to move beyond the theories they have studied and critiqued in their NCSSS doctoral work. The course purpose is two-fold: (1) to integrate previous doctoral course content and (2) to develop knowledge based on the student’s particular focus and area of study. Drawing on this integration, expanding upon professional experience, and building on social work and related literature, students will develop a unique, theoretically framed set of questions that can be empirically examined. All questions will be aimed at the examination, prevention, or remediation of an issue or problem appropriate for intervention by a social worker. This course will enable students to think deeply, critically, and creatively about the complexity of professional social work. Course format consists of lectures and seminar discussions.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. Deepen knowledge of the scope of an issue or problem that is appropriate for the practice of social work with a specific target of social work intervention (e.g., individual, couple, family, or small group client system; organizational system, community, national, or international arena).

2. Expand understanding of the existing theoretical literature explaining the issue or problem.

3. Increase knowledge of the theoretical and empirical literature on the state of intervention into or understanding of the issue or problem.
4. Develop an appreciation of the state of social work model development and conceptual approaches with the particular issue or problem.

5. Integrate knowledge of existing theoretical and empirical literature regarding the explanation or intervention and model development of a particular issue or problem.

6. Propose empirical research questions that examine theories and research pertinent to the particular issue or problem.

7. Examine and critique the philosophical perspectives and values underlying the proposed questions.

8. Incorporate a policy analysis model into the critique of the proposed questions.

9. Increase appreciation of the transactional nature of social work’s person-in-environment or organization-in-environment perspective as it pertains to the proposed questions.

10. Incorporate in the proposed questions an understanding of the differential needs of groups of varying cultures, ethnicities, races, ages, genders, and sexual orientations.

11. Develop, present, and defend the proposed questions in clear, concise, logical, scholarly fashion in writing and in formal presentation to peers.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts

All required readings are on the course blackboard or in the following text.


B. Course Assignments

The assignments for this course consist of active class participation, formal presentations to peers, and a scholarly paper. The paper will be written and submitted in 5 parts, as outlined below in Section C. Feedback will be given by the professor on each of the first 4 submitted parts of the paper, and this feedback should be incorporated into the final version of the paper. See attached outline for

Revised 12/4/09
details of the scholarly paper assignment.

C. Grading Policy

Grades for the course are based on the University grading system. The grade is based on content (substance, attention to assignment, attention to page limit), style (scholarly writing style, APA edition 6, format), and timely submission (assignments submitted later than the assigned or agreed upon date will be downgraded). See directions in course assignment above and in scholarly expectations below for further clarification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment #1</th>
<th>Section 1 of scholarly paper</th>
<th>Due Class #3</th>
<th>5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #2</td>
<td>Sections 2 &amp; 3 of paper</td>
<td>Due Class #5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #3</td>
<td>Sections 4, 5, &amp; 6 of paper</td>
<td>Due Class #9</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #4</td>
<td>Section 7 of paper</td>
<td>Due Class #12</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #5</td>
<td>Final version of scholarly paper, sections 1-7</td>
<td>Due Class #14</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #6</td>
<td>Class participation &amp; formal presentation</td>
<td>Presentations: Class #14</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Course and Instructor Evaluation

The NCSSS doctoral program requires evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, an evaluation form will be distributed in class. Results will not be given to the instructor until grades are submitted. 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 (available on the NCSSS web page) 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 (v. 5) format, and should be carefully proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading. It is expected that all assignments will be submitted on the due date. Failure to submit work on time will result in a lowered grade, unless there has been an alternative arrangement with the professor prior to the due date of the assignment.

Additional Behavioral Requirements:

• Students are expected to maintain accepted standards of professional conduct and personal integrity in the classroom. Students should:
  • Attend all classes and contribute constructively to the classroom culture
  • Recognize and avoid behavior that jeopardizes the learning/teaching environment of other students or the instructor
  • Demonstrate competence in planning academic activities and in following through on those plans
  • Reasonably respond to and respect others’ reactions to one’s comments or actions in the classroom
  • Use an appropriate level of class time and instructor’s time and attention in and out of class
  • Behave in a manner that is consistent with the ethical principles of the social work profession.

B. 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

PART I INTRODUCTION
Defining and distinguishing paradigms, theory, and theoretical or practice models from a social work perspective.

Class 1 Introduction and Overview of the Course

Revised 12/4/09


**PART II IDENTIFYING AN ISSUE OR PROBLEM WITHIN ITS ENVIRONMENT**

What is the problem or issue appropriate for social work intervention? Or, what is the physical, mental, or social condition whose challenge results in a problem? Or, what social problems or injustices or organizational themes challenge individuals and communities? What is the population challenged by this issue or problem? What is the scope of the problem within this population or condition? Why is this of interest to social work? Is this problem observable, definable, and feasible to evaluate?

**Class 2 Identifying an Issue or Problem within its Environment**


**PART III EVALUATING THE LITERATURE, RESEARCH, AND POLICY**

Revised 12/4/09
PERTAINING TO THIS PROBLEM OR ISSUE
Based on an examination of the existing literature, research, and policy regarding this issue or problem, how do you further justify your focus? That is: What does the current theoretical literature have to say about this issue or problem? What is the extent of the empirical research that addresses this issue or problem? What policies influence this issue or problem? How has the existing literature addressed ethical concerns and values central to social work, such as social justice and attention to marginalized and diverse groups?

Class 3  
Critiques of Existing Literature and Empirical Research


Assignment 1: Section 1 of paper due class 3

Class 4  
Policies Influencing Issue, Problem, or Population


Revised 12/4/09


**PART IV EXPLANATORY THEORIES**

How have socio-cultural, social justice, and psychological theories explained the problem or issue? How have biological or spiritual considerations informed these explanations? What is your preferred conceptual explanation (explanatory theory)? What epistemological and ontological view does this explanation represent? Does the theory explain human behavior in terms of development or of learning? How does the effect of environments help explain the issue or problem within this population?

**Class 5 Sociological and Social Justice Theories**


**Assignment 2: Sections 2-3 due class 5**

**Class 6 Organizational Theories**

Revised 12/4/09


Class 7  Psychological Theories


PART V  CHANGE OR EXPLANATORY MODELS

What is the difference between a change and explanatory model? What is the expected outcome of change efforts? What interventions have been demonstrated to be effective? What is your preferred explanation of change? What are the common and/or curative factors evident in this effort toward change? What is the role of the social worker in the process of change? In what actions or techniques does the client or social worker engage in micro/mezzo change models? How is time considered or used to understand change? How is space or environment used? Under what context is social work practiced?
Class 8  
**Change Models: Focus on Communities and Organizations**


Class 9  
**Change Models: Focus on the Individual and Relationships**


**Assignment 3: Sections 4-6 due class 9**

Class 10  
**Explanatory Theoretical Models**


PART VI  
**KNOWLEDGE BUILDING**

What questions need to be addressed to lead to a deeper theoretical understanding or explanation of this issue or problem? What existing models of micro, mezzo, macro intervention need to be examined? What intervention or explanatory models need to be created to build social work knowledge? What are the implications for practice, organizations, policy, and/or social work education, were this model to be implemented?
Class 11  Relevant Research Questions and Testable Models


Class 12  Appropriate Evaluation of Proposed Research Questions


Assignment 4: Section 7 due class 12

Class 13-14  Presentations of Research Questions

Assignment 5: Final revised paper, sections 1-7, due class 14