I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is the first of two Foundation year courses on Human Behavior and the Social Environment. Providing a multidimensional approach, the course examines theory, research, and contemporary challenges that relate to the biopsychosocial-spiritual dimensions of human behavior. Focus is given to particular theories that are used by the social work profession to explain and assess functioning at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of interaction, with the recognition that theory evolves out of a historical and cultural context. Strength and resilience, all forms of diversity and oppression, and the impact of social and economic forces are emphasized as salient influences on human behavior. Required readings, class assignments, and group activities will be used as educational methods to achieve the course purpose.

II. COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires that students meet 10 core competencies, which are operationalized as practice behaviors. Each course is designed to cover one or more of the ten core competencies and each course is also designed to cover some, but not all of the practice behaviors within a competency. Upon completion of this course, students will able to demonstrate the following practice behaviors within the noted competencies:

Revised: June 2016
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
<th>Course Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Professional Identity:** | 1. Social workers practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.  
2. Social workers engage in career-long learning. | Application of theory to practice papers;  
PowerPoint slides;  
Readings |
| Identify as a professional social worker & conduct self accordingly |                                                                                       |                                         |
| **Ethical Practice:**      | 1. Social workers recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice. | Application of theory to practice papers;  
PowerPoint slides;  
Readings |
| **Critical Thinking:**     | 1. Social workers distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.  
2. Social workers analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation.  
3. Social workers demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues. | Application of theory to practice papers;  
Tests demonstrating knowledge;  
PowerPoint slides;  
Readings |
| Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments |                                                                                       |                                         |
| **Diversity in Practice:** | 1. Social workers recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.  
2. Social workers recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences. | Application of theory to practice papers;  
PowerPoint slides;  
Readings |
| Engage diversity and difference in practice. |                                                                                       |                                         |
### Research Based Practice:
Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Social workers use research evidence to inform practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application of theory to practice papers</td>
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</table>

### Human Behavior: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Social workers utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Social workers critique and apply theory to understand person and environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application of theory to practice papers; Tests demonstrating knowledge; PowerPoint slides; Readings</td>
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### Practice Contexts: Respond to contexts that shape practice

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Social workers continuously deliver, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services and develop needed policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application of theory to practice papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate: Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Social workers collect, organize, and interpret client data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application of theory to practice papers; Tests demonstrating knowledge; PowerPoint slides; Readings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### III. ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Understand the differences between a “perspective” and a “theory” and the connection between theory, research, and social work practice.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of micro, mezzo, and macro theories used to explain, assess, and intervene with individuals, dyads, families, small groups, organizations, and communities within a multicultural society.

3. Recognize that human behavior theory is a product of its seminal authors and their historical context, reflecting different viewpoints about gender, race, power, and oppression.
IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Text


C. Additional Required Readings

All readings not in the required text are posted on Blackboard. In addition, case studies will be posted on Blackboard for students to read each week for class discussion.

D. Course Assignments

Concept Tests

Following selected classes, students will take a short, objective test on Blackboard that will evaluate the student’s knowledge of the theories and concepts covered in each unit of the course. The BB test must be taken within four days following the class discussion, such as four days after classes #4, 8, 10, and 13):

1. Concept Test 1 – After Class #4 (on Class Session #1, #2, #3, & #4)
2. Concept Test 2 – After Class #7 (on Class Sessions #5, #6, #7, & #8)
3. Concept Test 3 – Class #9 (on Class Sessions #9 & #10)
4. Concept Test 4 – Class #11 (on Class Sessions #11, #12, & #13)

Analysis Papers

Revised: June 2016
These assignments are designed to demonstrate students’ ability to integrate theory with knowledge about human behavior and the social environment on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Details about the assignments will be distributed at the beginning of the semester, and the instructor will discuss the assignment further in class.

E. Grading Policy and Weights of Assignments

Grades will be based on the CUA Grading Policy as described in the Graduate Announcements. Assignments are to be submitted to the instructor on the date due. Unless you have prior permission from the instructor, five points will be deducted for each day the assignment is submitted late. Extensions will not be granted the day an assignment is due. The paper is due at the beginning of class and will be considered late if it is turned in later. If you should need an extension, the student must discuss this with the instructor at least 48 hours ahead of the due date (excluding weekends and/or holidays). No credit will be given for assignments submitted after they have been reviewed in class. The following provides weights for the various course assignments:

Assignment 1—Four concept tests 10% per test = 40%
Assignment 2—Analytic papers 15% per micro/mezzo/macro = 45%
Preparation, Attendance, and Participation 15%

(Refer to Professional Conduct Grid at end of syllabus)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading System</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 69</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Preparation, Attendance & Participation

Students are required to attend classes and are expected to participate meaningfully in class discussion/exercises and online forums as required. The class participation grade will be determined by the instructor’s evaluation of the student’s preparation for and contributions to class discussion/activities. Different students will make different types of contributions. Some will have an easy time with spontaneous interactions while others will be more comfortable making planned statements about key ideas from the readings or other sources. Both types of contributions are valued. See p. 11 at the end of the syllabus for detailed information regarding the grade for professional conduct related to preparation, attendance, and class participation.

G. Course and Instructor Evaluation

Revised: June 2016
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 requests.

V. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements (http://ncsss.cua.edu/courses/index.cfm), including scholastic and behavioral requirements. NCSSS is committed to creating an open and inclusive learning environment where all members - including students, faculty, administrators, and staff – strive to listen to and learn from one another. We recognize that in a multicultural society, it is inevitable that issues or tensions relative to diversity and different life experiences will arise. It is how we handle these events that matters. Therefore, when such issues occur – inside or outside of the classroom - we agree to engage in respectful and productive discussion with one another until learning is enhanced and understanding is deepened by all involved.

A. Scholastic Expectations

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 carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. 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.

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 (http://graduatestudies.cua.edu/currentstudents/academintgrt.cfm) and appropriate Program Handbooks.

D. Confidentiality

Each student is expected to adhere to the Confidentiality Agreement that is signed at the beginning of every semester. This agreement covers “practice materials” in classes,
supervisory sessions, case conferences, seminars, and other educational settings within the NCSSS BSW or MSW programs that are for professional learning purposes only and are subject to strict professional standards of confidentiality. These same standards of confidentiality also extend to various forms of written communication and peer consultation.

Adherence to these standards means all students refrain from communicating beyond the classroom setting about practice material that is presented in class. Students will also refrain from using social media outlets (blogs, twitter, Facebook, etc.) or email to discuss practice settings, program responsibilities, and projects with individuals who are not in teaching or supervision roles directly related to the situation.

E. 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, you must present that documentation to your instructors at the start of the course and arrange a meeting to discuss these accommodations.

F. Use of Electronic Devices
Laptops and other electronic devices are permitted in the classroom only for course purposes, e.g., note taking (no internet usage). Please turn off all cell phones or other devices that would disrupt the learning environment of the classroom and put them away and removed from the classroom environment.

CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course Overview and Critical Thinking about Human Behavior Theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required Readings


Exercise: Discuss why a person would seek problem-solving assistance from a social worker rather than other helping professionals such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric nurse, counselor, life coach, or religious cleric?

Recommended Reading

Revised: June 2016

Unit One: Micro Theories

2 Classical and Contemporary Psychodynamic Theories
(S. Freud, H. Hartmann, A. Freud)

Required Readings


Case Study #1

Recommended Readings


3 Psychosocial Theory (Erik Erikson)

Required Readings:

Case Study #2

Revised: June 2016
Recommended Readings:


4

Relational Psychodynamic Theories: Object Relations, Person-Centered and Attachment Theory (Mahler, Rogers, Bowlby)

Required Readings:


Case Study #3

Recommended Readings:


The Learning Theories

Revised: June 2016
5  **Behavior Theory (Pavlov, Watson, Skinner)**

**Required Readings**


**Case Study #4**

**Recommended Reading**


6  **Cognitive Theory (Ellis, Beck)**

**Required Reading**


**Case Study #5**

**Recommended Reading**


7  **Social Cognitive Learning Theory (Bandura)**

**Required Readings:**


Revised: June 2016
SSS 571: Fall 2016 & Spring 2017


Case Study # 6

Recommended Reading


Role Theory

Required Reading


Case Study #7

Recommended Reading


MEZZO THEORIES

9

General Systems Theory (Roots across disciplines, Bertalanffy)

Required Readings

Revised: June 2016

Case Study #8

Recommended Readings


MICRO ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

Family Emotional Systems and Structural Family Systems Theories
(Bowen, Minuhin)

Required Readings:


Case Study #9

Recommended Reading

MACRO THEORIES

Organizational Theory (Weber)

Required Readings:
behavior and the social environment (3rd ed.) (pp. 330-366). Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc. (On Blackboard)


Case Study #10

Recommended Reading

MEZZO ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

12 Conflict Theory (Marx)

Required Readings:


Recommended Reading

Case Study #11

13 Empowerment and Diversity (Solomon, Sue)

Required Readings


Case Study #12

Revised: June 2016
Recommended Readings


### 14

**Bringing it All Together: Use of Theory for Generalist Social Work Practice**

**Required Readings:**
- Rodriguez Case Study

**MACRO ANALYSIS PAPER DUE**
# Analytic Paper Instructions and Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT (80%)</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction:</strong> Write a brief opening paragraph that gives the reader a clear idea of what you are going to address in the paper. Include the following in your Introduction: 1) a brief description of the primary problems in psychosocial functioning in the case from the (micro, mezzo, or macro) perspective you are using for this paper; and 2) introduce and briefly discuss the theory to be applied to the case. (1/2 page)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory:</strong> Provide a robust discussion of your chosen theory. Include the following information in this section of the paper: 1) a brief statement about the basic premise/assumption of the theory; 2) the definitions and a discussion of three concepts from the theory; 3) a minimum of six scholarly references that expand your discussion of the theory. Your references should be independently located apart for your required readings. Acceptable literature consists of peer-reviewed journal articles, chapters from scholarly books, professional literature, and government publications. (2 pages)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application:</strong> Discuss how your concepts explain the psychosocial issue identified in your Introduction. In other words, apply your three key concepts (described above) to the case study. Do not restate the definitions of the concepts; instead, use the case information to demonstrate the meaning of the concepts. Omit any discussion of practice interventions based on the concepts. (1.5 pages).</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary:</strong> Write a one paragraph summary that discusses how your three concepts explain the problem in psychosocial functioning.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion:</strong> Discuss how the concepts you have selected do or do not address the strengths-based, person-in-environment perspective that characterizes professional social work. (1/2 page)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## GRADUATE-LEVEL WRITING (20%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADUATE-LEVEL WRITING (20%)</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization, clarity, and demonstration of well-development sentences and paragraphs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of at least six references <em>beyond required readings from this or other courses</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of correct grammar and spelling; no writing errors</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of correct APA formatting following the APA Manual, 6th edition</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**                                                                                     | 100    |

Revised: June 2016