I. COURSE PURPOSE
This course builds on the foundation courses to focus on clinical social work practice with older adults and their families. The emphasis is on holistic, bio-psycho-socio-spiritual, evidence-based approaches to assessment and intervention in a variety of practice settings in the community and within institutions. Effective Gerontological clinical social work requires a solid understanding of the aging process from multidisciplinary perspectives, which focus on physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being. This course explores these domains both in terms of deficits as well as competencies, strengths and resiliencies. The course examines aging as a dynamic developmental stage of life that occurs within a socio-historical, cultural context. Throughout the course, the impact that ageism, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual-orientation, and aging policies have on older adults is explored. Unique ethical dilemmas that arise out of working with older adults and their families are also considered throughout the course.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course (as demonstrated via class discussions and presentations, role-plays, audiovisuals, interviews, and written assignments) students should possess the following:

1. Increased knowledge and understanding of the normative bio-psycho-socio-spiritual changes associated with aging (including end-of-life issues) and the importance of the interplay amongst these domains;
2. Heightened awareness of personal and societal attitudes, feelings, and values towards older adults and their families vis-à-vis the aging process and social work practice;
3. A keener appreciation of the unique issues confronting older adults from outside the dominant culture;
4. Appreciation for and understanding of ethical issues (including self-determination) and considerations that arise in gerontological social practice with diverse, often oppressed, populations.

5. Ability to identify, critique, and apply major theoretical models that inform clinical social work assessment of older adults;
6. Ability to identify, critique, and apply major theoretical models that inform clinical social work interventions with older adults;
7. Ability to interview and counsel older adults and their families using appropriate gerointerviewing skills;
8. Ability to employ key assessment methods effectively with older adults and their family and caregivers: differentiating adaptive and maladaptive psycho-socio-spiritual reactions to the aging process from the perspectives of strengths, resiliency, and person-in-environment;
9. Knowledge of evidenced-based and creative contemporary gerontological intervention strategies and treatment techniques, including group work;
10. Ability to create effective care plans, with an understanding of supportive community and housing services;
11. Ability to evaluate the effectiveness of assessment and intervention.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Texts


C. Required website:

http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/toc.html#chapter5


Foreword, Preface and Executive Summary
Chapter 1: Background
Chapter 6: Challenges in Mental Health & Aging

D. Recommended Websites

AARP: http://www.aarp.org
Administration on Aging: http://www.aoa.gov
Ageline: http://www.aarp.org/research/ageline
American Society on Aging: http://www.asaging.org
Gerontological Society of America: http://www.geron.org
National Family Caregivers Assoc.: http://www.geron.org/online.html
Online Resources for Aging: http://www.geron.org/online.html
U.S. Census Bureau: http://census.gov

E. Course Assignments

Assignment 1: Aging Awareness Project. Due: Class 2
Instructions will be provided during first class. This assignment is designed to increase awareness and sensitivity to the changes that occur as individuals age; how aging affects roles and engagement in social relationships; and how values, attitudes and biases impact individuals as they age.

Assignment 2: Agency context for social work practice with the elderly. Due: Class 5
This assignment requires that each student arrange a visit to an aging program and interview a service provider (preferably a geriatric social worker) and observe the community/situational context in which services are delivered. Students are to submit a two page report on the agency, its staffing pattern and its clientele.

Assignment 3: Interview or Reminiscence Group. Due: Class 8
This assignment is designed to allow you the opportunity to experience interviewing older adults, and is not to be considered a formal assessment. Rather it affords you a chance to practice gero-interviewing techniques, focus on competencies, strengths and resiliencies, and gain a greater comfort level in working with older adults. The interview should last no more than 30-60 minutes. Guidelines for interviewing and writing a summary of your experience will be handed out in class. All interviewees will have given their consent prior to being interviewed. You have the option of selecting one of two choices for this assignment:

A. Conducting a structured interview with an older adult who lives in some type of supportive housing; or
B. Participation in a structured reminiscence group held at a local senior service agency.
   Group members are highly-functional older adults who by and large live in the community (non-institutionalized).

Assignment 4: Scholarly paper. Due: Class 13
This assignment is a scholarly paper which focuses on a specific gerontological practice issues, theories, therapeutic intervention, or problem of particular interest you. Guidelines will be handed out, and an outline is due by Class 7. Appropriately referenced literature review from professional journals and texts is required. Your will also make a brief presentation during Class 12, 13 or 14.
Grading Policy

Assignment 1     5%
Assignment 2    15%
Assignment 3    35%
Assignment 4    35% (5% = class presentation)
Attendance and Participation  10%

F. Course and Instructor Evaluation
NCSSS requires written evaluation of this course and the instructor. Forms for this purpose will be
distributed at the last meeting of the class. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the
instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

G. Preparation, Attendance & Participation: Students are expected to read and understand
required texts and supplemental readings in their entirety prior to each class for which
they are assigned. Since active class participation is essential to this course, students are
expected to attend all classes. The instructor adheres to an adult learning philosophy that
recognizes students as adults who bring their unique experiences to the process and take
responsibility for their own learning. Collaborative learning in a safe environment
requires students to participate actively in class, respect the diversity of opinions, and
allow all to participate equally. The instructor may give as a final grade, a lower grade
than that achieved on examinations if the student has had excessive class absences.

H. Due Dates: Assignments are expected to be submitted to instructor on the due date. For
each day the assignment is submitted late, 5 points will be deducted.

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. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course Overview/Knowledge of Aging quiz/Aging awareness exercise/competence pre-test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Gerontological social work</strong> /The Biopsychosocial-spiritual perspective/ Developmental theories of aging/ Demographics of aging</td>
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</tbody>
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Required Readings –


Recommended Readings –
Butler, *et al.*: Chapter 3, Healthy successful aging (54-70).
Hooyman & Kiyac: Introduction & Part 1: The Field of Social Gerontology, Chapters 1 & 2 (1-64.)

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<tr>
<th>Class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Understanding Physiological and Medical Aspects of Aging, including chronic illness</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required Readings –
McInnis-Dittrich, K. Chapter 2: Biological Changes and Physical Well-Being of Elders.

Recommended Readings –
4 & 5  Psychosocial Theories of Aging: Understanding Psychological and Social Aspects of Aging

Required Readings –
Handouts: Psychosocial theories of aging
   Families, informal social supports, formal supports and caregiving issues.
McInnis-Dittrich, K. Chapter 3: Psychosocial Adjustment to Aging.

http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/toc.html#chapter5

http://www.aoa.gov/mentalhealth/aging
   The Administration on Aging Report on Mental Health and Aging (2001)

Recommended Readings –
   Butler, et al.: Chapters 4-6 (71-156).
   Greene: Chapter 4, Psychological Aspects of Functional Age, (67-80).
   Greene: Chapter 5, Sociocultural Aspects of Functional Age, (81-89),
   Chapter 6, The Family as a social system, (91-110),
   Chapter 7, The Family as a set of reciprocal roles and as a developmental unit, (111-126).
   Hooyman & Kiyak: Part 3: The psychological context of social aging, Chapters 5-7 (161-278).
   Emlet, et al.: Chapter 8, Assessing social function, support, and socioeconomic status, (154-179),


6 Understanding Cultural and Spiritual Aspects of Aging

Required Readings-
   McInnis-Dittrich, K. Chapter 10
   Gallo, et al.: Chapter 64, Spiritual aspects of aging (781-785)

7 Geriatric Assessment: Biopsychosocial-Spiritual Approaches

Required Readings:
   McInnis-Dittrich, K. Chapter 4: Conducting a Biopsychosocial Assessment.

8 & 9  Social Work Interventions with the Elderly: Practice Models for working with Individuals, Couples and Families

Required Readings:
McInnis-Dittrich, K. Chapter 8: Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention in Elders.


Required Readings-
McInnis-Dittrich, K. Chapter 9: Group Work with Elders
Handout on Grief and Loss

11  Social Work Practice with Vulnerable Older Adults: A Capacity-Risk Model for Assessment and Interventions.

Required Readings –

12  Helping Elders Plan for Long Term Living, Long Term Care and End of Life Issues

Required Readings-

Recommended Readings –
  Hooyman & Kiyac: The Social Context of Aging, Chapter 13, Death, dying, bereavement, and widowhood (480-524).

(Begin presentations of scholarly papers)

13  Working effectively with Special Populations
   Evaluating Practice and the Effects of Interventions
   Required Readings –
      Greene: Chapter 10, Social work: Intervention with special populations (148-175).

   Recommended Readings -

(Continue Presentations of Scholarly Papers)

14  Continue Presentations of scholarly papers.
   Summary and wrap up.