COURSE SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION
Built on the ecological systems perspective presented in Human Behavior and the Social Environment I, HBSE II extends the knowledge base for human behavior and the social environment to communities, organizations, and task groups within rural contexts. The ecological systems framework emphasizes the interrelationship of groups, agency, and community. Appropriate theories are critically evaluated, based on their compatibility with social work values, ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, and populations at risk.

HBSE II also builds on basic concepts presented in Introduction to Rurality, HBSE I, and the undergraduate liberal arts base by integrating and expanding theories and concepts to community, organizational and group systems levels. This course supports the concurrent second practicum and practicum seminar through roles and functions in organizations and communities, and the provision of tools for organizational and community analysis. HBSE II continues the theoretical framework, and provides the HBSE generalist practice for communities, organizations and work/task groups.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

II. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLO’s)
Programmatic learning outcomes are linked to the nine Social Work Competencies listed in the CSWE EPAS 2015 as follows:
1. Demonstrate Ethical & Professional Behavior (*Competency 1*)
2. Engage Diversity & Difference in Practice (*Competency 2*)
3. Advance Human Rights & Social, Economic, & Environmental Justice (*Competency 3*)
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research & Research-informed Practice (*Competency 4*)
5. Engage in Policy Practice (*Competency 5*)
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities (*Competency 6*)
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities (*Competency 7*)
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities (*Competency 8*)
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, & Communities (*Competency 9*)

III. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The MSW program of SFASU features a generalist practice and a single specialization: Advanced Generalist Practice in a Rural Context. Both are defined below.

It is important to note here that the BSW program and the MSW program have developed a shared definition of generalist practice, given below.

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social and economic justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.

Briefly, generalist social work practice:
- Is multi-level to include individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
- Is multi-theory, allowing for the free selection of theories as appropriate.
- Utilizes problem identification and solving focus that follows a problem-solving framework.
- Addresses the complexity of individual, family, group, organizational and community system interactions.
- Requires and integration of awareness, competence, and professional response to issues of values, ethics, diversity, culture, social justice and populations-at-risk.

Advanced generalist practice builds on the generalist practice, incorporating the elements listed above, but characterized by a greater depth, breadth, and autonomy as demonstrated through
specialized knowledge across problem areas, populations-at-risk and practice settings, with a greater selection of diverse interactions across practice levels.

Briefly, advanced generalist practice requires:

- The ability to engage and differentially assess complex problems with systems of all sizes, with a variety of advanced assessment skills.
- Specialized evidence-based interventions with systems of all sizes.
- Differential evaluation techniques with systems of all sizes.
- Strategies to advocate for clients and constituencies influenced by rural lifestyles.
- Readiness for leadership in a variety of areas including: program development, coordination and administration; clinical and organizational supervision; policy creation, reform and implementation; leadership in research development and utilization, particularly in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary practice settings; professional development.

The specialized practice for the MSW program is advanced generalist practice for rural contexts. Theories that describe and predict rural ecological systems and rural strengths, including the incredibly rich interactions, simple and complex, formal and informal, wholesome and debilitating are emphasized. On this basis, the curriculum of the MSW Program emphasizes the ecological systems approach, the strengths perspective, and the social capital and social exchange theories.

Rural context refers to social work practice with people with rural lifestyles and systems of all sizes within and outside of rural communities. There is no single accepted definition of rural. In fact, just as generalist practice in social work draws on multiple theories, generalist practice in rural contexts recognizes the many definitions currently in use and their advantages and disadvantages for research, practice, and advocacy. The School of Social Work at SFA utilizes several of these definitions within the United States and globally including:

The United States Census Bureau (urbanized areas, urban clusters, and rural populations); Office of Management and Budget (metropolitan, micropolitan, and non-core), Economic Research Service (rural urban continuum codes); and the United Nations that defines urban and rural according to the census definition for each nation, but suggests a definition of rural areas as having a population of less than 2,000 for international comparisons.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to apply the value base of the profession and its ethical standards with individuals, families, and groups, organizations, and communities. (Competency 1)

2. Develop the skills to use various frameworks of ethical decision-making with mezzo and macro systems. (Competency 1)
3. Understand the dimensions of diversity as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability, and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spiritually, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. (Competency 2)

4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power in mezzo and macro systems. (Competency 2)

5. Apply knowledge related to theories of human need and social justice to promote social and economic justice and human rights. (Competency 3)

6. Demonstrate the use of theories of human behavior and the social environment to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies. (Competency 6)

7. Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse mezzo and macro systems. (Competency 7)

8. Understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision making with groups, organizations and communities. (Competency 7)

9. Understand the use multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in developing intervention strategies for organizations and communities. (Competency 8)

10. Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and apply the knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. (competency 8)

11. Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. (Competency 9)

12. Understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. (Competency 4)

13. Understand the processes for translating research findings into theoretical knowledge for effective practice. (Competency 4)

14. Understand the role of policy and theories of human behavior and the social environment in practice settings. (Competency 5)
V. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This class utilizes a seminar format that facilitates active participation and learning consistent with developing students as autonomous advanced generalist practitioners; considerable student participation is required. An integral part of the course will involve classroom dialogue and collaborative learning experiences, demanding the continued development of high standards and personal responsibility. The major assignment is a task group project providing a task group experience in addition to lectures, student presentations, group exercises, video presentations and readings in this area.

VI. COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS (per SFA Office of Instructional Technology)

This course will utilize Blackboard (myCourses) to support the delivery of course content (for help with Blackboard go to http://www.oit.sfasu.edu/webct/index.html). You will need basic skills regarding the use of a word processor and web browser. You must have access to a computer that meets the university’s minimum computer system requirements (for specific details go to http://sfaonline.sfasu.edu/gettingstarted.html). Computers are available to you through a number of labs across campus (see www.sfasu.edu or the instructor for details).

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1  Introduction and Overview of Course
   The macro environment and generalist practice in rural contexts
   The macro change process
   Person in environment
   Ethics in macro social work practice
   Human diversity and empowerment
   Culture and cultural competency
   Oppression and populations at risk
   Promoting social and economic justice
   Grand Challenges of Social Work
   Knowledge, values, skills, cognitive and affective processes
   Holistic view of competence
   Inter-professional education and collaboration
   Social, economic and environmental justice

Required Readings:
Kirst-Ashman Chapter 1
NASW Code of Ethics (2013)
Reamer (2013)
Weeks 2-3 Human Behavior in Groups: Theories and Dynamics
- Definition of communities
- Theoretical perspectives on groups:
  - Field, Social Exchange Theory
  - Learning Theory
  - Cognitive-Behavioral Theory
  - Psychoanalytical Theory
  - Systems Theory
  - Empowerment and Feminist Theories
- Group Dynamics
- Composition
- Communication: Verbal, nonverbal, cross-cultural, and barriers
- Self-disclosure and interpersonal interaction
- Group cohesiveness
- Leadership
- Task Group Development: composition, purpose,

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 2*

Week 4  Types of Groups
- Task groups: teams and treatment conferences
- Treatment Groups
- Administrative Groups
- Delegate Councils
- Committees
- Social Action Groups
- Empowerment through leadership
- Diversity and difference in groups

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman Chapter 3*

Weeks 5-6 Knowledge and Theories of Organizations
- Critical thinking; understanding of knowledge, ethics, values and skills of the profession and generalist practice with organizations.
- Defining organizations
- Organizations providing social services/social agencies
- Classical Organizational Theories
- Neoclassical Organizational Theories
- Cultural Perspectives and oppression

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman Chapter 4*

Week 7  The Internal and External Environments of Organizations
Agency settings
Organizational mission and goals, goal displacement
Agency policy
Agency resources
Legitimization
Client resources
Relationships with other organizations
Impact of social, political and economic forces on social service organizations
Impact of social policy and federal legislation on organizations
Managed care and advocacy in social work practice
Ethical issues in managed care
Organizational culture and structure
Interpersonal communication
Power and politics in social service organizations: Types of power
Politics in Social Service Organizations

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman Chapter 5 and 6*
*Acquavita, Pittman, Gibbons, & Castellanos-Brown (2009)*

**Week 8** MIDTERM

**Week 9** Spring Break

**Week 10** Human Behavior, Management, and Empowerment in Organizations
The Importance of Management
Value Orientation Conflicts Between Helping Professionals and Bureaucracies
Ethical implications
Behavior Patterns in bureaucracies
Problems encountered by social service organizations:
Vagueness of goals and process, lack of rewards and recognition
Newer approaches to Management and Worker Empowerment
Leadership Styles
Managing diversity
Rural communities

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman Chapter 7*
*Briggs, H. & McBeath, B. (2009).*
*Rodriguez-Keyes & Schneider (2013).*

**Week 11** Communities in the Macro Social Environment
Defining communities
Theoretical perspectives
Using Resiliency to Enhance Communities
Non-geographical Communities: Spiritual, ethnic, and sexual orientation
Rural Communities: dual relationships
Membership in multiple communities
Human rights and communities

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman* Chapter 8
*Finch, Emrich, & Cutter* (2010)

**Week 12** Assessment of Geographic Communities/Neighborhoods
People and power
Citizen participation
Gathering data
Mapping assets
Neighborhood empowerment
Defining neighborhood
Neighborhood structure
Ethnicity and social class
Processes of change

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman* Chapters 9 & 10

**Weeks 13-14** Diversity, populations-at-risk, empowerment in the macro social environment, and social justice and the global community
Discuss Video: “Radio”
Defining and identifying populations at-risk: race, ethnicity, ability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual preferences
At risk children and youth: The child welfare system
Empowerment through social and economic justice/social policy
Social work values and cross-cultural values in global perspective
International social work
Implications for ethical practice

**Required Readings:**
*Kirst-Ashman* Chapter 11-12
National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center. (2009)
Peters, Claussen-Bell, Zinn, Goerge & Courtney (2008)

**Week 15** Summary/Final Paper due

**Week 16** Final Exam

**VIII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**
A. **Class Attendance and Participation:** In order for the class to discuss the readings, it is essential for you to read assigned material before coming to class, to attend class regularly, and to participate in class discussion. You are responsible for all material covered in class and assigned in the syllabus, whether or not you have attended class.

**Cell Phones/Pagers/Electronic Devices:** Because such devices are disruptive to the classroom environment, I ask that you refrain from using them during class. I also ask that you either place such devices on silent mode or turn them off during class. Repeated interruptions may result in a deduction of points from the final average.

B. **Readings:** The course outline provides a list of required readings for each week (you will receive a detailed schedule the first full week of class that will outline the readings to be covered each class). Since lectures and class discussions are designed to answer questions about the material and expand upon the basic concepts, you are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class. Furthermore, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the information, as evidenced by active participation in class discussion. For example, you should present well formulated questions and comments that demonstrate prior preparation.

C. **Exams:** There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. Students are required to take the exams at the scheduled time. Makeup exams will be scheduled according to university policy with a university-approved excuse.

D. **Quizzes:** There will be one quiz worth 20 points. Students are required to take the quiz at the scheduled time. Makeup quiz will be scheduled according to university policy with a university-approved excuse.

E. **Assignments:** See Assignments for a listing of all assignments for this course. All assignments are due at the beginning of each class, unless the assignment is a class presentation which will be due in class. For all late assignments, one letter grade will be deducted after the beginning of class when the assignment is due, with an additional letter grade deduction for each day for which the assignment is late.

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**GRADING:**

| Assignment I: Community Study and Presentation | 50 |
| Class Participation                              | 100 |
| Midterm exam                                     | 100 |
| Assignment II: Analysis of Group Paper           | 50 |
| Final exam                                       | 100 |
| Total                                            | 400 pts |

**GRADING SCALE:**

A = 360 - 400
B = 320 - 359
C = 280 - 319
*D = 240 - 279
*F = Below 240

*Not applicable as credit toward graduate degree

IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism, as well as the appeal process. Definition of Academic Dishonesty Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment;
- helping or attempting to help other student(s) in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source;
- Incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, resubmission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university. Procedure for Addressing Student Academic Dishonesty a faculty member who has evidence and/or suspects that academic dishonesty has occurred will gather all pertinent information and initiate the following procedure:

1. The faculty member will discuss all evidence of cheating or plagiarism directly with the student(s) involved.
2. After consideration of the explanation provided by the student(s), the faculty member will determine whether academic dishonesty has occurred. The faculty member may consult with the academic unit head and/or dean in making a decision.
3. After a determination of academic dishonesty, the faculty member will inform the academic unit head and submit a Report of Academic Dishonesty with supporting documentation to the office of the dean of the student’s major. This report will become part of the student's record and will remain on file with the dean's office for at least four years even if the student withdraws prior to receiving a grade.

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4. For a serious first offense or subsequent offenses, the dean of the student’s major will determine a course of action, which may include dismissal from the university. The dean may refer the case to the college council for review and recommendations before making this determination.

A student's record of academic dishonesty will not be available to faculty members. The purpose of the record is for the dean to track a pattern of academic dishonesty during a student’s academic career at Stephen F. Austin State University. Student Appeals A student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students (6.3). [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf]

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (SFA Policy 5.5)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Please read the complete policy on grades: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/5.5_course-grades.pdf]

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
The MSW Student Handbook and Academic and MSW Professional Integrity Code outline acceptable student behavior. Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct of Conduct (SFA Policy 10.4). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, visits to agencies, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate or inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed. Please see the following link for the complete policy: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct_10.4.pdf]

**X. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify
Assignment I: Rural Community Paper and Presentation

Utilizing library journals (refereed), reliable internet and other sources, write a paper describing a rural community of interest to you.

A. Include the following information:
   - History of the community
   - Location/geography
   - Demographics (size, racial/ethnic/cultural composition, age, gender, socioeconomic, education, etc.)
   - Economic base
   - Social institutions
   - Social service organizations (i.e. formal organizations and informal organizations)
   - Strengths and weaknesses

B. Assess the community in terms of community theory, generalist social work practice, technology, issues of ethics/values, social and economic justice, diversity and populations at risk. Discuss how this community might oppress certain members.

C. Envision yourself as a social worker in this community. Add a reflection on your own strengths and weaknesses to work in this community.

D. What significant changes has this community undergone in the past decade? (e.g. population increase/decline, changes in ethnicity, opening/closure of industry, loss or addition of important services, etc.).

The paper should be 12-15 pages and professionally written using APA format. Student will make an oral presentation of your findings. Presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes. Students are encouraged to be creative in their presentation.
Assignment II: An Analysis of Group Behavior

Using a critical perspective, students will write a paper about human behavior in groups, using a video as a facilitative tool. This paper is to be your analysis of the theory and concepts presented in this class as applied to the video and should include: theories of human behavior, systems theory, group theory, group dynamics, stages of group development, problem-solving, diversity, oppression, and values and ethics, and links with other research as main components of your analysis.

Specifically, you should address the following:

• Analyze the group dynamics related to: group structure (group composition, group roles, group tasks, membership position and status), group goals and tasks, group norms, group cohesion, and group communication which promote social and economic justice.

• Discuss the stages of group development, and how these stages progressed over time (Pre-affiliation, Power and Control, Intimacy, Differentiation, and Separation, J. Anderson, 1997).

• Identify and discuss issues, which arose in your work group as related to: Gender, Age, Physical and Mental Ability, Class, Race or Multicultural Issues, including Rurality. How did these issues affect the group’s behavior and stages of development? Discuss if/how social and economic justice was achieved.

• Discuss ethical issues in the movie. How were they resolved?

• Discuss implications for generalist social work practice in the rural context.

Your instructor will discuss this paper further in class following the presentation of the video. Make sure your paper is thorough and professionally written, using APA style, to ensure the best possible grade. This paper is worth 100 points.
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES


