I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to prepare students for transition to practice. The focus is on adequate preparation for social work licensure, job search, and career planning. Strategies for approaching the exam will be provided. Students will develop appropriate test taking skills. The course will also prepare students to develop a career plan and to learn effective strategies to implement the plan.

The course will enable students to analyze their own knowledge and competencies and make appropriate career decisions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:


SUGGESTED TEXTS:


REQUIRED READINGS & WEBSITES

Association of Social Work Boards, aswb.org
- Exam Candidates: Candidate Handbook; About the Exams; Exam Materials; Free Materials
- Rules and Regulations: Title 22, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 781
  - Subchapter A: General Provisions
  - Subchapter B: Code of Conduct and Professional Standards of Practice

National Association of Social Workers, socialworkers.org
- Student Membership Required
- Code of Ethics (most recent version)
- Career Center (Resources for Students Tab)
- Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice

**** Other websites as assigned

II. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The MSW program of SFASU features a generalist foundation and a single Specialized practice: 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 a practice perspective that serves diverse client systems utilizing an ecological systems approach focusing on persons, families, groups, organizations and communities within the context of the rural social environment. It is not confined by a narrow cadre of theories; rather, it is versatile enough to allow problems and situations as well as strengths, capacities and resources to determine the practice approach. Generalist practice employs a problem solving framework and a broad knowledge, value and skill base which demands ethical practice and on-going self-assessment. 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 foundation, 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.

### III. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (CORE COMPETENCIES)

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

5. Engage in Policy Practice

6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES)

This elective is designed to enhance student knowledge and skills as it relates to the concentration practice behaviors.

Upon completion of this course:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development in advanced rural social work; (PB: EP2.1.1)
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to attend to professional roles and boundaries while working rural communities; (PB: EP2.1.1)
3. Students will demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication appropriate for working with rural people and communities; (PB: EP2.1.1)
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in career-long learning in advanced rural social work; (PB: EP2.1.1)
5. Students will use supervision and consultation appropriate for rural advanced social work. (PB: EP2.1.1)
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize and manage personal and professional values to engage in effective advanced rural practice with multiple systems. (PB: EP2.1.2)
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and apply factors competently within and across diverse groups (e.g. gender, ethnicity/race, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation) and across multiple system levels. (PB: EP2.1.4)
8. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze and compare different social constructions of rurality and consider their implications. (PB: EP2.1.4)
9. Students will relate advanced theories, models, and research to appropriate multi-level systems with rural people and rural communities. (PB: EP2.1.6)
10. Students will demonstrate the ability to utilize theoretical frameworks to guide differential assessments, specialized interventions, and evaluation for effective advanced rural social work practice; (PB: EP2.1.7)
11. Students will apply theories, models, and research appropriately to systems of all sizes to solve problems and alleviate oppression in rural environments locally and globally. (PB: EP2.1.7)
12. Students will use advocacy skills to effectively deliver services to rural populations. (PB: EP2.1.8)
13. Students will demonstrate the ability to relate appropriate theories, models, and research to client systems and circumstances. (PB: EP2.1.10(b)
V. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The class will involve lecture by the instructor, student discussion and participation in class and online exercises.

To be successful in the class, it is important that students attend regularly, read the assigned material and complete assignments according to due dates and times, and come to class prepared to discuss what they have read. Lectures will not duplicate the reading material except to clarify or to expand upon it. Students are expected to be active learners and to ask for clarification when they have questions.

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

This course will utilize Desire2Learn or D2L to support the delivery of course content (for help with Desire2Learn go to http://www.sfasu.edu/sfaonline/). Students can also get help by phone by calling 468-1919 or by emailing d2l@sfasu.edu. 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).

*** NASW Student Membership
VII.  COURSE SCHEDULE (Due dates and times may change per scheduling needs)

Weeks 1&2  Introduction to Course & Career Planning

Required Readings & Websites:

Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners.  http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/default.shtm


NASW (Career Center), https://www.socialworkers.org/Careers/Career-Center

Suggested Readings:


Weeks 3&4  Unit I Human Development, Diversity, and Behavior in the Environment (27%)

A. Theories and models
B. Application of theories and models (in the environment)
C. Abuse and neglect

Required Readings & Websites:


NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice, https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=7dVckZAYUmk%3D&portal_id=0
Weeks 5 & 6  Unit II Assessment and Intervention Planning (24%)  **** Assignment #1
Due (Week 5)
A. Biopsychosocial history and collateral data; Pharmacology
B. Use of Assessment Methods and Techniques

Required Readings & Websites:


Weeks 7 & 8  Unit III Intervention with Clients/Client Systems (24%)  ***** Assignment #2 Due (Week 7)
A. Intervention processes and techniques for use across systems

Required Readings & Websites:


Week 9  Unit III Intervention with Clients/Client Systems (24%)
A. Intervention processes and techniques for use with larger systems

Required Readings & Websites:


Weeks 10-12  Unit IV Professional Values and Ethics (25%)
A. Professional values and ethical issues
B. Confidentiality
C. Professional development and use of self
D. Diversity, social/economic justice, and oppression
E. Influences of culture, race, and/or ethnicity on behaviors

Required Readings & Websites:


Review Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Website, Recognize the Signs of Child Abuse:

Review of Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Website, It’s Everyone’s Business: Adult Abuse and Exploitation,
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Everyones_Business/Overview.asp

**Suggested Reading:**
Elder Abuse Prevention Kit, Download,
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Everyones_Business/Kit.asp

**Weeks**
13 & 14   Managing Anxiety and Self-Care
**** Assignment # 3 (Professional Development Oral Presentation Due Week 13)

**Week 15**   Final Exam (Comprehensive)

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

D. **Quizzes/Exercises:** There will be unannounced class exercises. Students are required to participate in the exercises at the scheduled time. Makeup exercises will be
scheduled according to university policy with a university-approved excuse.

E. Assignments/Presentations: 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.

GRADING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Career Plan Written Assignment</td>
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<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Test Preparation Plan</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Self Care Professional Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Final Exam (Comprehensive)</td>
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GRADING SCALE:

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<td>D</td>
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<td>90-104 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>89 &amp; below F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic Integrity (SFASU Policy A-9.1)**

Honesty and representing one’s knowledge and abilities appropriately are important ethical principles of the social work profession. All violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be addressed in accordance with SFASU Policy A-9.1 (SFASU Policy A-9.1 can be found at the web address below). **All incidents will result in a grade of “0”**. **Given the limited number of graded assignments in this course, a “0” could have serious consequences for the student’s academic standing.**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including
citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
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.

IX. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS AND 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, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

X. 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 Code, policy D-34.1). 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, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/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.
STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
MSW PROGRAM

Assignment #1

The purpose of this paper is to enable you to prepare for your career and to make important decisions. You need to apply analytical thinking as well as structured and scientific writing.

Write a 5-page paper addressing all the following:

1. My career plans (These include your current plans and where you hope to be in 5 & 10 years)
2. My competencies (Use the information provided to you in class – for example Bolles (2017, What Color Is Your Parachute: a practical manual for job-hunters and career changes) to analyze your competencies
3. Enhancing my competencies and knowledge (Identify and describe different ways how you will improve your competencies)
4. Resume (You must attach a newly created resume to your paper). The resume must be complete and up-to-date and prepared according to current resume criteria.

Requirements for the paper:
***APA style citations and formatting are required
Assignment #2

(2-3 pages): The purpose of this assignment is to develop an individualized study plan based on the data you collected during this course. Your plan must have (3-5) specific goals based on feedback you have received in class and insights that you have gained. It must contain specific target dates, days and times for study. You must identify at least 3 specific tasks/action steps needed to accomplish each of the goals. Finally, your plan must identify and describe a reward/incentive that motivates you to be consistent on your study plan.

Assignment #3 (online presentation to class via ZOOM)

(Professional Development Presentation): Read (at least) 2 scholarly articles on the ethics of self-care for helping professionals/social workers. Based on the research and class discussions, develop a self-care professional development that addresses each of the domains of wellness as well as self-care as an ethical standard. Finally, reflect on how this self-care plan will help you accomplish your study plan and career goals. *** APA citations are required.

You must include ALL the following in your presentation:
   a. Target audience
   b. Objectives
   c. 7-10 slides (or other creative means) of presenting information to audience
   d. Audience Activity
   e. Participant Evaluation
BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://www.aatbs.com

Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners
http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/default.shtm

http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/socialwork/swlaw.doc


Social Service
http://www.socialservice.com/?gclid=CKWwsbigg5MCFQ-WGgodriWUGQ

Social Work Job Bank
http://www.socialworkjobbank.com/

Social Work Jobs
http://www.socialworkjobs.com/

Social Service Network
http://socialservicenetwork.com/

The New Social Worker Online
http://www.socialworker.com/home/index.php

ihire Social Service
http://ihiresocialservices.com/

Social Work Search
http://www.socialworksearch.com/cgi/socialwork.cgi?search=CAT&Category=Websites:Employment+Opportunities
Go Jobs: Social Work Jobs

VA Social Work
http://www.socialwork.va.gov/jobs.asp

U.K. Pro
http://www.uk-pro.net/

Social Work Jobs in Federal Government
http://www.uk-pro.net/

Case Management Jobs
http://www.casemanagementjobs.com/

Council on Social Work Education Jobs
http://careers.cswe.org/home/index.cfm?site_id=392

NASW Job Link
http://www.naswdc.org/joblinks/default.asp

Job Search NASW Link
http://joblink.socialworkers.org/search/