SOCW 5302 Human Behavior and Social Environment I
Fall 2021

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Office Hours: Tuesday in office from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM; Thursday by phone from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM; daily by email, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM; or by appointment.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing
Co-requisite: None

www.How to Protect Yourself & Others | CDC

www.Symptoms of Coronavirus | CDC

www.COVID-19: Considerations for Wearing Masks | CDC

SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is the first of two (2) courses in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment (HBSE) sequence which focuses on individuals, families, and groups – and their related behaviors, in various, diverse, social environments. It is also part of the generalist practice, which builds on the program's liberal arts perspective. The teaching-learning approach focuses equitably on behaviors and environments. The primary objective for this course is to prepare students for subsequent use of HBSE knowledge and theories in practice settings. Next semester, HBSE II extends the
knowledge base for human behavior and the social environment to communities, organizations, and task groups within rural contexts and rural lifestyles.

Students will develop a holistic view and will be able to demonstrate competence of knowledge, values, skills and cognitive and affective processes. It will enable them to understand human behavior and the social environment as it relates to individuals, families and groups. This includes the application of critical thinking, identification of affective reactions and ability to exercise judgement.
REQUIRED TEXTS:

II. 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 context & Kirst-Ashman's. 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 & Kirst-Ashman 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 context & Kirst-Ashman 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 (PLO’s) CORE COMPETENCIES

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)

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: SLO’s)

Upon completion of this course, students 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 multiple 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 (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 clients and constituencies. (Competency 7)

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

9. Understand the use multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in developing intervention strategies for individuals, families and groups. (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

The course will be taught as a face to face or a hybrid course. It will incorporate the following instructional strategies: lecture, extensive class discussion, group exercises, online activities, assigned readings, and individual projects. You are encouraged to actively participate in activities, ask questions, and contribute comments for discussion. You are also encouraged to offer input regarding instructional strategies and assignments. Most importantly, you are expected to be an active learner and to ask for clarification when you have questions. To be successful in the class, it is important that you attend regularly, sign in to D2L, read the assigned material, and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. You will be expected to not only know the material presented, but to be able to apply it in experiential activities. Lectures will not duplicate the reading material except to clarify or to expand upon it and to review material covered in prerequisite courses. The goal of this approach is to develop a safe learning environment that addresses a variety of learning styles, promotes critical thinking, and fosters creativity.
VI. COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

This course will utilize D2L/Brightspace to support the delivery of course content - go to Client Portal Home (sfasu.edu)

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1  Introductions and overview of course
        What is human behavior?
        Why do social workers study human behavior?
        Life-span model
        Diversity and difference in practice
        Diversity, oppression, and populations at risk
        Human behavior in global and rural contexts
        Ethical considerations
        Ecological and strengths perspectives
        Grand challenges of social work
        Knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes

        Required Readings:
        Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chap.1
        Adams (2009)
        NASW Code of Ethics (2021)
        Reamer (2013)

Week 2  Infancy and Childhood
        Biological development
        Psychological development
        Social development
        Developmental milestones

        Required Readings:
        Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chaps. 2-4
        Cowan & Cowan (2007)
        Page & Cain (2009)

Week 3  Infancy and Childhood
        Theories of development
        Self- concept and self esteem
        The family environment and application of systems theory to families
        Children with special needs

        Required Readings:
        Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chaps. 2-4
        Cowan & Cowan (2007)
Page & Cain (2009)

Week 4  Oral Presentations (Assignment I)

Week 5  Ethnocentrism and Racism
         Human rights
         Race and racism
         Ethnocentrism
         Social, economic and environmental justice: Prejudice, discrimination & oppression
         The costs of oppression
         The effects of discrimination on human growth and development
         **Required Readings:**
         Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chap 5
         Smokowski, Martica, & Bacallao (2008)
         Spencer (2008)

Week 6  Adolescence
         Biological development
         Psychological development
         Social development
         Aging out of foster care
         **Required Readings:**
         Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chaps 6–8
         McCoy & Roth (2010)
         Sharaf, Thompson, & Walsh (2009)

Week 7  Adolescence
         Theories of development
         Significant issues and life events
         Identify development
         Moral judgment
         Aging out of foster care
         **Required Readings:**
         Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chaps 6–8
         McCoy & Roth (2010)
         Sharaf, Thompson, & Walsh (2009)

Week 8  Mid-Term Exam

Week 9  Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression
         The complexity of gender
         Gender identity and expression
Cross-cultural perspectives on gender
Special needs and issues of women
Gender, diversity, and difference
Gender: Social and economic justice

**Required Readings:**
Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chap 9
Conyers (2007)
Edmonds-Cady (2009).
Shultz (2008)

**Week 10 Young and Middle Age Adults**
Biological, psychological, and sociological aspects
The double standard of aging
Young adulthood

**Required Readings:**
Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chaps 10 – 12
D’Amico, Barnes, Gilbert, Ryan, & Wenzel (2009)
Freund & Ritter (2009)
Skowron, Stanley, & Shapiro (2009)
Weinberger, Hofstein, & Whitbourne (2008)

**Week 11 Young and Middle Age Adults**
Middle adulthood
Family Systems
Special considerations: HIV/AIDS, substance use and abuse

**Required Readings:**
Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chaps 10 – 12
D’Amico, Barnes, Gilbert, Ryan, & Wenzel (2009)
Freund & Ritter (2009)
Skowron, Stanley, & Shapiro (2009)
Weinberger, Hofstein, & Whitbourne (2008)

**Week 12 Sexual Orientation**
Homosexuality and bisexuality
Theoretical perspectives
Ethical Issues
Impacts of social and economic forces
Empowerment
Sexual orientation and rural context

**Required Readings:**
Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chapter 13
Kosciw, Greytak, & Diaz (2009)
Ohnstad, (2009)
Perrson (2009)

Week 13  Later Adulthood
Biological, psychological, and social aspects
Theoretical perspectives
Wellness and the strength perspective
**Required Readings:**
Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chapter 14 - 16
Cox (2007)
Drywater-Whitekiller (2006)
Schroepfer, Kavanaugh (2009)
Silverstone (2005)

Week 14  Later Adulthood
Risk factors in later adulthood: ageism, elder abuse, health
Support systems
Grief management and death
**Required Readings:**
Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman Chapter 14 - 16
Cox (2007)
Drywater-Whitekiller (2006)
Schroepfer, Kavanaugh (2009)
Silverstone (2005)

Week 15  Assignment III Group Presentations

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.

B. **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.

C. **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.

D. **Exams:** 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.

E. **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.

F. **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.

G. **Social Media Policy:** Student will follow policy related to social media as outlined in the Student Handbook.

**GRADING:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercises/Quizzes/Class Participation</th>
<th>100 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment I Diversity Interview</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign II Theory of Human Behavior &amp; Oral Presentation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign III Group Presentation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Term Exam</td>
<td>75 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>75 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400 points</strong></td>
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**Grading Scale:**
The earned points will be averaged and a letter grade assigned as follows:

- **A = 400 - 360**
- **B = 359 - 320**
- **C = 319 - 280**
- **D = 279 - 240***
- **F = 239 – or less** *

*Not applicable as credit toward graduate degree.

**IX. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

biding 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.
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 Final Course Grade Appeals by Students (6.3). [student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf (sfasu.edu)]

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (SFA Policy 5.5)

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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 by the deadline set by the instructor of record, not to exceed one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade 5.5 Course Grades Page 2 of 3 automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Military Service Activation (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. [course-grades-5.5.pdf (sfasu.edu)]

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: [student-code-of-conduct-10.4.pdf (sfasu.edu)]

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 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: [academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities-6.1.pdf (sfasu.edu)]

ASSIGNMENT I: Diversity Interview Paper

[Assessment for Competency 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7]
The objective of this assignment is to understand what it means to “live with” a diverse issue within society. Typically social scientists rely on two perspectives to study the experience of others. One is the perspective of an outsider (etic) and the other is the insider’s (emic) perspective. Most of the information that we cover in this class is from an outside perspective (i.e. looking at biological, psychological, or sociological theories and how they explain human behavior). In this assignment, you will gain an insider’s emic perspective by conducting a personal interview. Using the guidelines below, conduct an interview with an informant who is not related to you, but someone you know very well and who lives with a diverse issue (ethnicity different from your own, gay/lesbian/bisexual, physical challenge). Present your findings in a paper that adheres to the following guidelines.

- The major objective of the interview is to gain an insider’s view of the informant’s experience. Since informants live daily with their circumstances, they are the experts. You should approach the informant in the role of student learner and ask him/her to teach you about his/her experience and to identify what he/she thinks is important for you to know.
- Confidentiality must be upheld and discussed with the informant before the interview occurs.
- Interviews should be approximately one hour long and should be fairly open, yet focused enough so that you can develop an understanding of the person you are interviewing. Developing an interview guide in advance to help maintain focus may be helpful, but allow yourself to be flexible as the interview evolves.
- Summarize your interview in a 5-6 page paper. Include at least 3 direct quotes from the informant. Also include a section including a self-assessment regarding how well you did in eliciting the information, what part of the interview was most difficult for you, what you learned from the interview, and how this assignment relates to social worker.

The following are examples of questions to consider:

- How do you identify yourself (ethnically, racially, sexual orientation, ability)?
- Do you recall when you first realized that you are a member of this group?
- What was your reaction?
- What have been the positives and negatives of membership?
- How would you characterize society’s response to your membership?
- What impact has this had on you and on your family, career plans, and social relationships?
- How have your culture and philosophical or religious beliefs affected your experience?
ASSIGNMENT II: In-Depth Analysis of a Theory of Human Behavior

Including Class Presentation

[Assessment for Competency 2,3,4,7 and 9]

For this assignment each student is to choose a theory of human behavior to examine and research in depth. The chosen theory must be approved by the instructor. The student will research the theory, including determining the following:

- Overview of the theory
- Originator and brief history of the theory; historical context
- Underlying assumptions
- Key concepts and themes, including:
  1. Types of problems it addresses
  2. How the problem is defined
  3. How solutions are envisioned
  4. How the helping process is defined
- Focus for solutions
- Variants of the theory
- Contemporary issues related to the theory
- The relevance of this theory to generalist social work practice and/or other social work practice
- Critical analysis of the theory, including:
  1. Placement of theory on macro-micro continuum
  2. Philosophical underpinnings
  3. Settings and possible applications for the theory today
  4. Methodological issues and empirical support for the theory
  5. Potential efficacy with rural populations

To explore the theory in this level of depth, the student will need to find at least 5 peer reviewed (or approved government documents) journal articles or dissertations in which the theory has been used, and report its use, relevance and findings. Students will present their theory and a summary of their analysis of the theory in a 10-15 minute PowerPoint presentation for critique by the class. The essential components of the paper should be included, along with a brief presentation of the peer-reviewed articles that will be used.

Points will be award based on the following:

- Adequate overview of the theory including history: 10 pts.
- Current applications 10 pts.
- Selection of at least 5 peer reviewed articles related to the theory 10 pts.
- Oral Presentation 10 pts.
- Quality of substantive PowerPoint 5 pts.
- Bibliography in APA format 5 pts.

Total: 50 pts.
ASSIGNMENT III: Group Presentation

[Assessment for Competency 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9]

The final assignment for this class is a group presentation. In groups of 3 or 4, students will select one stage of human development and present a thorough overview from an ecological perspective. Issues for inclusion are biological, psychological, and social factors including rural context ethics, controversial or important issues related to the individual at this stage of development; at least three theories that explain the developmental processes at this stage, and the impact of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, poverty and other oppression on this stage of development. Presentations should be approximately 30 minutes and should be supported by a bibliography of at least 10 professional references including journal articles.

In addition to content and delivery, the group will be graded on the originality, creativity, and ability to stimulate questions and discussion following the presentation. Include an exercise to enrich or illustrate some aspect of the presentation and/or use audio-visual media. Peer and instructor grading will be used to evaluate this assignment.


