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

REQUIRED TEXTS:

II. CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The MSW program of SFASU features a generalist practice and a single specialization/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 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.

### III. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (CSWE 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

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 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 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 (per SFA Office of Instructional Technology)
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: (01/23) 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

Readings:
- Kirst-Ashman Chapter 1
- NASW Code of Ethics (2013)
- Reamer (2018)

Week 2: (01/30) 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,

Readings:
- Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 2

Week 3: (02/06) 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,

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 2

Week 4: (02/13) 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

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman Chapter 3

Week 5: (02/20) 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

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman Chapter 4

Week 6: (02/27) 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

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman Chapter 4
Week 7: (03/5) 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

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman Chapters 5 & 6

Week 8: (03/12) Spring Break

Week 9: (03/19) Exams

Week 10: (03/26) 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

Readings:
Kirst-Ashman Chapter 7
Rodriguez-Keyes & Schneider (2013).

Week 11: (04/02) 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: (04/09) 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

**Readings:**
Kirst-Ashman Chapters 9 & 10
Markey, Connelly & Roseland (2010)

**Week: 13 (04/16) 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

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

**Week 14: (04/23) 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

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

Week 15: (04/30) Summary/Final Paper due

Week 16: (05/7) 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:

Assignment I: Rural Community Paper and Presentation  50
Class Participation                                100
Midterm exam                                      100
Assignment II: Analysis of Group Behavior         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

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: 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


