

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT I (SWK 320)

Fall, 2009

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Course Description:

This course is the first of a two- semester sequence designed to acquaint the student with human development and behavior as it occurs across the lifespan. By exploring a variety of developmental theories which address the maturational process, the student will examine the **bio-psycho-social-spiritual** development of the individual. In addition, the student will examine a variety of social systems in which individuals live and with which they interact (**families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities**). The student will gain an understanding of interactions which occur between and among individuals and explore social, cultural, and economic systems in which people reside. The course will also explore ways in which social systems promote or deter individual achievement and maintenance of optimal health and well-being, emphasizing the interrelationship between individuals and community and their mutual responsibility to each other.

The focus of this first semester includes the introduction to developmental theories, including the critical analysis of these alternative perspectives, especially those relevant to the ecological model of social work practice. In exploring these theories, attention will be given to the development of the individual, from conception through adolescence, and the social systems relevant to these stages of development.

Objectives

1. Understand the function and purpose of theoretical constructs applied to the study of human development and behavior, in the context of the lifecycle from prenatal development to adolescence, and to examine these constructs in the framework of critical thinking, as exhibited by written and oral skills (evidenced by exam and autobiography)
2. Describe the interaction of biological, sociological, psychological, spiritual and cultural factors in human development and functioning (evidenced by exam, autobiography, book report).
3. Explain the interactions among **various sized systems**, particularly as theoretical constructs relate to families (evidenced by autobiography and book report).
4. Examine and utilize the values and ethics of the social work profession, and to create an awareness of one's own values, prejudices, assumptions, and discriminatory practices (evidenced by autobiography, book report, service learning project, homelessness/hunger project).
5. Affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every individual, and to recognize influences of diverse cultures and environmental factors on human development and social functioning (evidenced by service learning and hunger/homelessness projects).
6. Carry theoretical knowledge gained from this course into practice courses, with a focus on strengths-based practice theory (exam, service learning project).

Required Text:

Schriver, J. M. (2005) *Human behavior and the social environment: Shifting paradigms in essential knowledge for social work practice*. (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Required Readings:

Required Book Report: Each student is required to read ONE of the titles on the book list. Because personal stories are articulated, you will probably find all of them interesting and worth reading. You are encouraged to read them all, but only ONE is required, so pick the one most likely to hold your interest: Native American, African American, Latin American, Asian American or white urban poverty.

Required articles are available in the library or through on-line resources. NOTE: Additional readings will be assigned during the semester as determined by the instructor.

METHODS TO ATTAIN OBJECTIVES

The primary learning format will be lectures and classroom activities, which involve all students as active learners. Class lectures and exercises are based on the understanding that all readings assigned for that topic have been **completed prior to class**. It also is anticipated that each student has experiences and points of view that will enrich class discussions. The instructor will be responsible for organizing and presenting primary course material, assisting any student with course-related material and assignments, and for assessing student progress. The student will be responsible for **attending all classes**, facilitating his/her own learning and that of others in class, sharing ideas, making observations, and asking questions. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DATE SPECIFIED**, and must be presented in a professional fashion (typed, double-spaced, grammar-and-spell-checked, properly formatted, and written in the accepted American Psychological Association style. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. ALL EXAMS MUST BE TAKEN ON THE DATE SPECIFIED BY THE INSTRUCTOR.**

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

Conformity to the University Academic Honor Code is basic to academic integrity. All tests and assignments turned in must acknowledge your familiarity to the AHC by handwriting the letters "AHC" followed by your initials.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I am more than happy to make appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Students who have a disability and need accommodation should follow this procedure. First, contact and register with the **Office of Disabilities Services** in Westside Hall (ext. 23746). Second, bring a copy of your **Accommodations Letter** to me so that we may discuss the accommodation(s) suggested in the letter. Assistance will be gladly provided based on the recommendations of Disabilities Services and our mutual agreement.

ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is required, and full participation is expected.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

1. A comprehensive take-home capstone assignment will measure your comprehension of course material over the semester. Exam materials will be taken from text materials, library reading assignments, and ancillary materials presented by the instructor in lecture.
2. An extensive autobiographical paper will reflect your ability to synthesis course material as it applies to you and your own family, within the context of the larger society. It is expected that you will interview family member(s), and utilize academic journals, and the other ancillary

materials for this paper. A genogram also is required. (Details are provided on a separate sheet in this syllabus).

3. Service Learning experience of 25 hours, to be cleared with instructor prior to beginning. This experience will include a brief written summary of your experience, with an emphasis on human behavior in the social environment and course content, and a reflection journal regarding your thoughts and feelings about the experience (details are provided on a separate sheet in this syllabus).
4. A book report is required on one of the books listed on the reading list, or from a handout of selected titles given in class (details are provided on a separate sheet in this syllabus).
5. You are expected to participate in the University Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Project, and to write a brief paper regarding your experience (details are provided on a separate sheet in this syllabus).

Examination		20% of final grade
Autobiography Paper:		25% of final grade
Service Learning Experience		25% of final grade
Experience	33.3%	
Paper	33.3%	
Journal	33.3%	
Book Report		20% of final grade
Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Paper		<u>10%</u> of final grade
		100%

A final letter grade based on 100% of completed course assignments and exams will be given at the completion of the course. No +/- grades are given in the course. Grades are based on a 10-point scale, **with no exceptions:**

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
59 and below	F

SERVICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND PAPER

Exercise Objectives:

The primary purpose of this exercise is to familiarize students with social service organizations, their purpose(s), structure, client populations served, and methods of operation. The secondary purpose of the exercise is to encourage excellent writing skills in describing the volunteer experience. The third purpose of the exercise is to urge students to reflect on the learning experience in terms of its connection to their own lives. Finally, the fourth purpose of the exercise is to integrate course material with the service experience.

Methods:

You may choose from the many and varied social service agencies in the area. A listing of potential service sites is available on the Social Work Department Homepage. **YOU MUST WORK WITH CLIENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18.** Note that many agencies require background checks, criminal record checks, fingerprints, letters of reference, and a driver's license. You are expected to meet these requirements at your own expense, if there is an expense. Also note that many agencies require extensive volunteer training before a volunteer is actually allowed to work. If you wish to undertake training in a particular agency, that certainly is encouraged, but you should check on training schedules before you plan to volunteer at a given agency. You may count **NO MORE THAN 5** training hours toward the 25 required volunteer hours.

Procedures/Requirements

1. **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL 25 HOURS IN ORDER TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT.** Working less than 25 hours will result in a grade of F.
2. Get my approval **BEFORE** you volunteer your services.
3. Your hours of service, and over what period of time, are to be agreed upon by you and your supervisor.
4. Make three copies of your time sheet(s) when you are finished. Give the original to me. Give one copy to your supervisor. Keep a copy for yourself in case there are any questions regarding your volunteer work.
6. You may choose to work in more than one setting. You must get approval from me **BEFORE** you undertake a new location, and **a paper is required for each place in which you worked.**
7. Write a paper about your experience. It may include any information you wish, but it **MUST** include the following:
 - a. name of agency, location, telephone number, name of person who supervised you, and the dates you volunteered.
 - b. What you did during your time at the agency.
 - c. Information concerning agency structure: is it a profit or non-profit organization? How are decisions about the structure and function of the agency made? Are social workers employed there? If so, what is the education level of the social worker(s), what does s/he do? If none are employed, why not? Does the agency conduct research? If so, what, and how is it used? What kinds of clients are served by the agency: age range, gender, ethnic background, needs of the clients? What additional services might the agency provide? What are the governmental policies that influence the agency operation?

- d. Document a section of your paper regarding an area of human behavior theory that impacts the agency and/or its clients. You must reference at least TWO theories of human behavior in DETAIL in this paper!
 - e. What did you feel about this experience? the agency?
 - f. Would you be willing to continue to provide services to the agency? Why or why not? Would you be willing to provide services to a different agency?
8. Reflection Journal: Write at least one journal entry in a notebook for each work period. Your journal entries should include a synopsis of what you did that day, what your feelings and thoughts are about your work, the agency, the clients served, and how what you are learning in your agency relates to course material, particularly developmental theories and social justice issues. Most important, what are you learning about yourself? Use the reflection handout given in class for this portion of the exercise. **See the Course schedule for due dates for reflection journal.**
9. GRADING: This assignment constitutes twenty percent (25%) of your final grade in this class. One third (33.3%) of the grade on this assignment is based on your performing no less than 25 hours of volunteer service. One third (33.3%) percent of the grade is based on the quality of the written paper, and one third (33.3%) is based on turning your reflection journals in when assigned, and the quality of your reflection journal.

PAPER, TIMESHEET AND COMPLETE JOURNALS ARE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DATE IN NOTED IN THE COURSE SCHEDULE. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PAPERS MUST BE WRITTEN IN THIRD PERSON AND IN APA STYLE. A PAPER WRITTEN IN FIRST PERSON, SINGULAR OR PLURAL, WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A GRADE OF 59.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PAPER

Exercise Objectives:

One of the goals of this course is for students to critically think about their own lives, their own development, and their own family dynamics. Students will also analyze their own development from four perspectives: biology, psychology, social environment, and culture. This paper asks you to complete these objectives. This paper also will assist you in developing strong research and writing skills.

Methods:

This paper should include an interview with an adult family member, as well as a review of the relevant scholarly literature. It is expected that you will synthesize materials from the literature and information gleaned from your family member into a working knowledge of how human behavior theories have impacted your life. A genogram of three generations of your family also must be included, with a written explanation of the chart included in your paper.

Procedures/Requirements:

1. Interview an adult family member. You should have questions prepared ahead, but leave room in your interview for spontaneity. You may tape the interview, or take notes.
However, your paper must include a written form stating that the interviewee grants you permission to use the information in a class assignment.
2. Conduct a review of the appropriate social work scholarly literature. This review should include human behavior theories regarding developmental stages, lifespan issues, and any other relevant materials. Be sure to annotate significant influences in each of the following human development areas: biology, psychology, social environment, spirituality and culture. Also include a discussion which encapsulates the following.
 - a. Ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and region of country of origin
 - b. The influence of culture on gender roles
 - c. Cultural pride and shame issues
 - d. Beliefs and messages passed down in family
 - e. The way that “difference” is dealt with within family
 - f. Experience with oppression/discrimination
 - g. Aspects the student ascribes to or rejects.
 - h. Discuss how resiliency and vulnerability have factored into your life
 - i. MOST important: what are the strengths that you and/or your family developed in your growth process?
3. Develop a genogram of at least three generations of your family. Refer to your textbook and lecture material for genogram methodology. A written description of your genogram must be included in your paper. You also may include an eco-map.
4. Discuss how the information in the genogram impacts your current development.
5. Explain how your development has impacted your decision to major in social work.
6. Your paper must be written in proper formal paper style, using APA style and referencing.

PAPER IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON DATE NOTED IN COURSE SCHEDULE. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PAPERS MUST BE WRITTEN IN THIRD PERSON AND IN APA STYLE. A PAPER WRITTEN IN FIRST PERSON, SINGULAR OR PLURAL, WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A GRADE OF 59.

BOOK REPORT

Note: If you choose from any of the books listed on the reading list provided on the Social Work Department Web page, you do not have to have my approval before reading. However, if you choose a book that is not on the approved list, you must have my approval.

Exercise Objective:

The intent of this exercise is to have students view the world from a cultural perspective that is different from their own. Just as the autobiography exercise asks students to examine what has shaped their lives, the book report exercise asks students to examine what shaped someone else's life. How does human behavior theory relate to the characters, environments and events in the book?

Method:

Read the book. Write a paper about the events and characters in the book, focusing on how human behavior theory and the character's environment shaped their lives. **You should include at least two additional references other than the book read. A comprehensive discussion of theories as they relate to the book should be included. Remember, this assignment is 20% of your final grade!**

PAPER IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON DATE NOTED IN COURSE SCHEDULE. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PAPERS MUST BE WRITTEN IN THIRD PERSON AND IN APA STYLE. A PAPER WRITTEN IN FIRST PERSON, SINGULAR OR PLURAL, WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A GRADE OF 59.

HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS PROJECT

Each year, the University's Center for Leadership Education and Service, the Department of Social Work's Social Work with Groups courses, and various other campus organizations, along with community agencies, sponsor the Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Project. Usually, this is a week-long project featuring lectures, food drives, and a "hunger banquet". The intent of the project is to bring awareness about hunger and homelessness issues to students and the larger community. The project not only focuses on local needs, but also examines hunger as a worldwide issue.

Exercise Objectives:

Students will gain a better understanding regarding the complex global and local issues of hunger and homelessness, and should be able to focus on those issues as they relate to human behavior theory and the concept of person-in-environment. Additionally, participating in this project will aid students' knowledge base as they prepare for the Social Work with Groups course in their senior year.

Methods:

It is the instructor's preference that students attend the Hunger Banquet, presented by students in Dr. Blundo's Social Work with Groups course. However, it is understood that some students may not be able to do so. Therefore, you must attend at least one of the events of the week (although two or more are preferable). Then, write a paper on your experience.

Procedures/Requirements:

Attend an event, and fully participate, during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. Have your attendance sheet signed by an official. (You may count the hours in attendance toward your service learning hours required.) Write a paper regarding the experience. What did you observe? What did you do? How do you feel about the experience? What might you continue to do about this issue? How does this experience relate to human behavior in the social environment theory? Your paper must include references from the scholarly literature, and should include information from several international websites.

PAPER IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FIRST CLASS AFTER THE AWARENESS WEEK. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PAPERS MUST BE WRITTEN IN THIRD PERSON AND IN APA STYLE. A PAPER WRITTEN IN FIRST PERSON, SINGULAR OR PLURAL, WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A GRADE OF 59.

Course Outline

<i>Week of</i>	<i>Course Content</i>
8/19	Course introduction and assignments
8/24	Critical evaluation of theoretical constructs scientific method critical thinking traditional and alternative paradigms Readings: Chapters 1 and 2 <i>NOTE: Additional readings will be assigned on separate handout for the course.</i>
8/31	Theories of dynamic interaction and interrelationship: systems theory and ecological model; relationships among micro, mezzo, macro systems person-in environment systems/ecological perspective strengths perspective appreciating ambiguity Readings: Chapter 3
9/7	No Class – Labor Day
9/7, 14	Theories of lifespan development Psychosocial theory Psychosexual theory Cognitive development theory Cultural determinism Theories of social learning Social role theory Relationships among bio-psycho-social-spiritual aspects of development Readings: Chapter 4
9/14	REFLECTION JOURNAL NO. 1 DUE
9/21, 28	Ethnocentrism and racism: impact at micro, mezzo, macro systems pluralism/diversity cultural competence institutional racism blaming the victim Readings: Chapter 5
10/5	No Class – Fall Break
10/7	Pregnancy/prenatal development genetics fetal development emotional bonding issues: fetal alcohol syndrome, abortion, adoption, miscarriage/stillborn, infertility Readings: Chapter 4

10/12, 19	<p>Infancy and Early Childhood object relations/attachment theory emotional development autonomy issues: child abuse, toilet training, child care,</p> <p>Readings: Chapter 6</p>
10/14	BOOK REPORT DUE
10/19	REFLECTION JOURNAL NO. 2 DUE
10/26	<p>School age sex role identification early moral development intelligence testing self-esteem group play issues: school readiness, attention deficit disorder, divorce, latch-key, homeless</p> <p>Readings: Chapters 4 and 5</p>
11/2 end of semester	<p>Adolescence through puberty: in the context of various size systems gay and lesbian developmental issues suicide moral development autonomy, intimacy, isolation eating disorders substance abuse teen pregnancy</p> <p>Readings: Chapters 4, 5</p>
11/4	AUTOBIOGRAPHY DUE
11/?	HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WEEK
11/?	HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS PAPER DUE
11/16	SERVICE LEARNING PAPER, REFLECTION JOURNAL AND TIME SHEETS DUE
11/18	CAPSTONE ASSIGNMENT DUE
11/25	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
11/30	Class discussion about service learning project
12/2	LAST CLASS, WRAP UP

References

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