Semester/Year: Spring 2015
Course Title: Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 3301: 006
Instructor Name: Dr. Diane Mitschke
Office Number: GACB 115
Email Address: DianeMitschke@uta.edu
Office Hours: To be determined based on student needs.
Day and Time (if applicable): This is an online course taught via Blackboard and accessible at https://elearn.uta.edu
Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.
Blackboard: https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/

A. Catalog Course Description/Special Requirements (Prerequisites/Out of Class Meetings):

The first of two required human behavior courses that explore, within the context of a strengths and empowerment perspective, knowledge of the bio-psycho-social development of persons from birth through young adulthood. Offered as AAST 3301 and SOCW 3301; credit will be granted in only one department.

B. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes - CORE/Advanced Practice Behaviors:

Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:
(a) Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.

Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
(a) Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom.

Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice. Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers:
(a) Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
(b) Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
(c) Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.

Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:
(b) Use research evidence to inform practice.

Educational Policy 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:
(a) Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
(b) Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

Educational Policy 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice. Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that
the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:]

(a) Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.

C. Required Text(s) and Other Course Materials:


D. Additional Recommended Text(s) and Other Course Materials:


E. Major Course Assignments & Examinations:

Note. Much of what students learn in the classroom is affected by two sources: the level of effort contributed by the individual, and the learning community that is created through the shared ownership and contributions of the collective whole. Everyone is asked to participate to her/his fullest extent in the virtual learning environment, and to facilitate others’ ability to participate at the same time. This means that we come prepared to join in the classroom learning experience by having our readings and other work completed, we respect ourselves and others who are posting on the discussion boards, and we take responsibility for completing assignments in a competent and timely manner. But much more than this, it also means that we each take a shared responsibility for the growth and professional development of each of the individuals in our learning community. The assignments for this course have been designed with these ideas in mind.

NOTE: Please refer to our Blackboard course for session readings, course material, discussion topics, and quiz and assignment dates.

Discussion Board. You must answer at least one of the discussion board questions posted for each session. In addition, you must post responses to at least two postings of your classmates. You may earn up to 10 points each session by participating in the discussion board. There will be 15 Discussion Boards, corresponding with the 15 Course Sessions of the semester.

In order to earn the full 10 points in any given session, you must meet the following criteria:

1. Respond to at least one new discussion board question and comment on two postings from your classmates.
2. Demonstrate thoughtfulness and effort in your response.

Note: **Discussions will end on Sundays at 10 pm, and new discussions will begin on Mondays at 6 am.** I encourage you to respond to other students’ postings and to participate in more than the minimum number of discussions required, as participation will generally enhance your understanding of the material as well as your overall experience in the course.

EPAS Note: Discussion Boards address Educational Policies 2.1.4 (a-c) and 2.1.9 (a)

**Quizzes.** There will be 10 short timed quizzes administered during the semester. The quizzes will be open-book, and you may access your notes as well as other resources to complete the quizzes. Each quiz will be worth a total of 10 points. **On the sessions that have quizzes, the quiz must be completed by 10 pm on Sunday evening.**

EPAS Note: Quizzes address Educational Policies 2.1.3 (a) and 2.1.4 (a-c)

**Ethics and Values Assessment.** You will choose three case studies from the list provided on Blackboard under the “Ethics and Values Assessment” Assignment. You **MUST** use the Hierarchy of Ethical Principals AND the NASW Code of Ethics to answer the following questions for each of your chosen case studies in complete sentences:

- What ethical principals apply to the case study you selected and why?
- Describe at least three courses of action and weigh the pros and cons of each.
- As a social worker, how would you handle this situation?

Note: Estimated length of at least 1-2 pages per case study.

**This assignment is due by the end of Session 12, on Sunday, April 19th, by 10 pm.**

EPAS Note: The Ethics and Values Assessment addresses Educational Policies 2.1.2(a), 2.1.3(a), and 2.1.9(a)

**Tests.** There will be 2 tests in this course. On each, you will have the option to complete 1) a quantitative exam, which will include various types of questions such as multiple choice, true/false, and short answer; or 2) a qualitative exam, which will include short essay questions. Both will be administered online and will be worth 100 points. Providing two different types of exams of equivalent value allows you as a student to make a choice about what type of assessment you prefer. You will be able to use your notes, books, and online materials during the test, but you must complete the test during the 2 hour time limit. Once you open the test online, you must complete it in one sitting. **Test 1 will be available during Session 8, March 16th-March 22nd, and must be**
completed by 10 pm on March 22**nd**. Test 2 will be available during Session 15, May 4**th**-May 10**th**, and must be completed by 10 pm on May 10**th**.

EPAS Note: Tests 1 and 2 address Educational Policies 2.1.6 (b) and 2.1.7(a-b)

F. Grading Policy:

Late assignments will not be accepted. You will not be permitted to “make-up” a test, quiz, or discussion board. It is your responsibility to ensure that your work is completed on time and submitted correctly. Please do not wait until Sunday evening to submit your assignments for the week, as I will not be able to assist you if there is a problem with Blackboard. Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

You can earn a total of 500 points in this course. The grading for this course is as follows:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 Discussion Boards</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics and Values Assignment</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
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450-500 A  
400-449 B  
350-399 C  
300-349 D  
Below 300 F

G. Make-Up Exam or Assignment Policy:

I do not accept late assignments or extend deadlines for missed exams or coursework.

H. Attendance Policy:

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. For this course, here is the attendance policy:

This online course requires weekly participation assessed through discussion boards and quizzes. The expectation is that you would spend at least 5-10 hours each week reading
the text, watching online videos and reading online posts, and participating in assessment activities.

I. Course Schedule:

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course. Should technical problems arise with course delivery, alternate but equivalent assignments may be given so long as the overall learning objectives, general time frame and grading structure for the course are sustained.

Course Outline/Topics and Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session #</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates Covered</th>
<th>Graded Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1/20-1/25</td>
<td>DB 1; Quiz 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>1/26-2/1</td>
<td>DB 2; Quiz 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theoretical Perspectives</td>
<td>2/2-2/8</td>
<td>DB 3; Quiz 3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Biology; Paradigms and Theories</td>
<td>2/9-2/15</td>
<td>DB 4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Psychosocial Theory</td>
<td>2/16-2/22</td>
<td>DB 5; Quiz 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social Conformity; Diversity</td>
<td>2/23-3/1</td>
<td>DB 6; Quiz 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>3/2-3/8</td>
<td>DB 7; Quiz 6</td>
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<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>3/9-3/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Families; Test 1</td>
<td>3/16-3/22</td>
<td>DB 8; Test 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cultural Competence</td>
<td>3/23-3/29</td>
<td>DB 9; Quiz 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td>3/30-4/5</td>
<td>DB 10; Quiz 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>4/6-4/12</td>
<td>DB 11; Quiz 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Social Work Ethics and Values</td>
<td>4/13-4/19</td>
<td>DB 12; Ethics and Values Paper Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>4/20-4/26</td>
<td>DB 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Social Work and the Environment</td>
<td>4/27-5/3</td>
<td>DB 14; Quiz 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>5/4-5/10</td>
<td>DB 15; Test 2</td>
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Note: Grades will be posted to the campus MyMav system at course completion and made available on the University Schedule for posting of grades. Grades cannot be given by email or individually by the instructor, per University Policy.

J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study:

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required
materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

K. Grade Grievance Policy:

See BSW/MSW Program Manual.

L. Student Support Services:

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit or contact Ms. Jennifer Malone, Coordinator of the Office of Student Success and Academic Advising located on the third floor of Building A of the School of Social Work Complex. Dr. Chris Kilgore serves as a writing coach and resource as well and has posted an online writing clinic. Also, the Maverick Resource Hotline may be contacted at 817-272-6107, or send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

M. Librarian to Contact:

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is in the campus Central Library. He may also be contacted via E-mail: dillard@uta.edu or by Cell phone: (817) 675-8962. Below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php

The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:

Library Home Page……………………http://www.uta.edu/library
Subject Guides ......................http://libguides.uta.edu
Subject Librarians .................http://www-test.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php
Database List .........................http://www-test.uta.edu/library/databases/index.php
Course Reserves .......................http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do
Library Catalog .......................http://discover.uta.edu/
E-Journals ............................http://utalink.uta.edu:9003/UTAlink/az
Connecting from Off-Campus ........http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus
Ask a Librarian ........................http://ask.uta.edu

N. Emergency Exit Procedures:

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exits, which are the stairwells
located at either end of the adjacent hallway. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

O. Drop Policy:

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (http://wweb.uta.edu/aoa/fao/).

P. Americans with Disabilities Act:

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Q. Title IX:

The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law “Title IX” such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.
R. Academic Integrity:

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents’ Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of University’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

S. Electronic Communication:

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

T. Student Feedback Survey:

At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

U. Final Review Week:
This ONLY applies to courses administering a major or final examination scheduled in the week and locations designated for final examinations following last classes. A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

V. School of Social Work - Definition of Evidence-Informed Practice:

Evidence-informed practice (EIP) is a guiding principal for the UTA-SSW. This approach is guided by the philosophy espoused by Gambrill (2006) and others who discuss evidence-based practice (EBP). Though many definitions of EIP/EBP saturate the literature, we offer two definitions that most closely define our understanding of the concept and serve to explicate our vision of EIP for the UTA-SSW:

The use of the best available scientific knowledge derived from randomized, controlled outcome studies, and meta-analyses of existing outcome studies, as one basis for guiding professional interventions and effective therapies, combined with professional ethical standards, clinical judgment, and practice wisdom (Barker, 2003, p. 149). ...the integration of the best research evidence with our clinical expertise and our patient’s unique values and circumstances (Strauss, et al., 2005).

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work vision statement states that the “School’s vision is to promote social and economic justice in a diverse Environment.” Empowerment connects with the vision statement because, as Rees (1991) has pointed out, the very objective of empowerment is social justice. Empowerment is a seminal vehicle by which social justice can be realized. It could well be argued that true social justice cannot be realized without empowerment. Empowerment, anchored with a generalist base, directs social workers to address root causes at all levels and in all contexts, not simply “symptoms”. This is not a static process but an ongoing, dynamic process, a process leading to a greater degree of social justice and equality.

University of Texas at Arlington-School of Social Work: Definition of Empowerment Empowerment is defined by Barker (2003:142) as follows: In social work practice, the process of helping individuals, families, groups, and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and political strength and develop influence toward improving their circumstances.
Note: Please also consider conserving paper by formatting and two-sided printing of syllabi with \( \frac{1}{2} \) inch margins. Please help our fragile environment by recycling all paper when finished, as well as plastic bottles, cans, etc., in the many recycling stations available in the Social Work Complex. Thank you.