

**UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SOWK 4001 - Social Work Skills Lab: Individuals and Small Groups
Fall Quarter, 2015: 3 credit hours**

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This foundation course focuses on beginning skills for micro social work practice with individuals and small groups. The framework of intentional interviewing teaches students to think critically about applying the skills for engagement, assessment and intervention. Attention focuses on use of these skills with clients from multiple social identities (e.g., ethnic, racial, sexual orientation, gender affiliation) and the pitfalls of practitioner micro-aggressions. An active learning approach requires students to participate in role-play exercises both in and

outside of class, digitally record some of those exercises and share them with the class and instructor.

COURSE RATIONALE

This is a required foundation curriculum course. The purpose of the course is to provide students with beginning social work interviewing skills for use with individuals and small groups from across a range of social and cultural identities. Within an experiential learning environment, students *learn* and *practice* a variety of social work skills using a framework of case discussion, demonstration, in-and out of class exercises, role-playing, and interviewing. Application of course readings, lectures, peer and instructor feedback, digitally recorded interviews, and written assignments on interviewing skills support student learning and practice.

Students in SOWK 4001 integrate the theoretical perspectives introduced in SOWK 4020 and SOWK 4132. Students also incorporate the pragmatic application of content on evidence-informed social work skills for interviewing, social work ethics and values, multiculturalism, and social justice.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through class attendance, readings and assignments students will be able to:

Knowledge:

1. Recognize the effects that unequal social and economic environments, oppressed and privileged social statuses and discrimination have on the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns between social workers and the people we serve.
2. Comprehend the foundational structure and components of social work interviewing for engagement, assessment and intervention with individuals and small groups.
3. Understand evidence supporting effective choice of interviewing skills to engage and guide the helping process with individuals and small groups.

Skills:

4. Apply generalist social work knowledge and practice skills, including the problem solving process, in conducting interviews with individuals and small groups.
5. Demonstrate critical thinking and choices to apply beginning interviewing and listening skills for oral communication with individuals and small groups (i.e., attending behavior; open and closed questions; client observation skills; paraphrasing, summarizing, reflections of feelings and meaning, and constructing a clinical interview).
6. Conduct a cross-cultural interview from a strengths-based perspective, successfully establishing a helping relationship and building rapport, with attention to the pitfalls of micro-aggressions on the part of the social worker.

7. Utilize peer and professor consultation in the classroom setting and through digital recordings to assess and improve interviewing skills.
8. Critically analyze one's own natural style of interviewing, including an assessment of one's own privileged and marginalized social identities and evaluate their impact on the student's interactions with individuals and small groups.

Values/ Ethics:

9. Apply relevant ethical responsibilities that impact social work interviewing, such as privileged communication, client confidentiality, and informed consent.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS (EPAS)

The following Social Work Core Competencies are addressed in this course:

EPAS #	Core Competency	Educational Objective #	Assignment # or Learning Activity
2.1.1	Professional Identity	7, 9	Assign 1, 2, 4
2.1.2	Ethical Practice	1, 7, 9	Assign 4
2.1.3	Critical Thinking	5, 6, 8	Assign 1, 2, 3, 4
2.1.4	Diversity in Practice	1, 6, 8	Assign 3, 4
2.1.5	Human Rights & Social Justice		
2.1.6	Research Based Practice		
2.1.7	Human Behavior		
2.1.8	Policy Practice		
2.1.9	Practice Contexts		
2.1.10a	Engagement	2, 3, 4, 5	Assign 1, 2, 4
2.1.10b	Assessment	2, 3, 4, 5	Assign 3, 4
2.1.10c	Intervention	2, 3, 4, 5	Assign 1, 4
2.1.10d	Evaluation		

ASSESSMENT

This course will facilitate the assessment of the following Practice Behavior(s):

EPAS #	Practice Behavior
F1.3	Attend to professional roles and boundaries
F1.4	Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
F10a.1	Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals and groups
F10a.2	Use empathy and other interpersonal skills
F10b.2	Assess client strengths and limitations
F10c.5	Facilitate transitions and endings

CONTENT ON DIVERSE POPULATIONS

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.

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

Social and economic justice is one of the key themes promoted throughout the curriculum at GSSW. As a community we encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. These issues; therefore, are integrated into each classroom experience at GSSW. As a result, there will be class discussions that may be difficult or challenging. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive space in which each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions and interactions. It is important that we *listen* to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another and the learning environment. We share the task of negotiating the dual priorities of authentic free speech and active regard for one another being open to diverse perspectives and ideas. We recognize that microaggressions happen; however, overt slurs in relation to race, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion/world view, immigration status, size, nationality, dis/ability, marital status, political affiliation, or any other identities, will be addressed directly. Throughout the course, we will negotiate other guidelines about class discussions.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Evan, D., Hearn, M., Uhlemann, M., & Ivey, A. (2011, 8th edition). *Essential interviewing: A programmed approach to effective communication*. Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

McKenzie, F. (2014). *Interviewing for the helping professions: A relational approach*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books Inc.

Required Additional Readings: Listed in the week-by-week topics below and provided in Canvas. The full reference is located in the Bibliography.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION LITERACY GUIDANCE

The following research guides and/or databases within the University of Denver Libraries <http://library.du.edu/site/> are most relevant to course assignments. The GSSW Academic Support Portfolio includes resources for APA stylistic expectations, information literacy and writing. Please visit <http://portfolio.du.edu/gsswacademicsupport>.

***Research oriented databases are not relevant for this course on clinical social work skills, but students are encouraged to examine the library's numerous DVD and other digital holdings on

clinical skills for social work and the other helping professions. These can be found by accessing the Classic Catalog and using the advanced search function to specifically search for DVDs and video recordings at <http://bianca.penlib.du.edu/search/X>

REQUIRED USE OF THE PUBLICATION MANUAL of the AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, 6TH EDITION

Adherence to in text citations and reference list guidelines of the 6th edition of the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association must be used when relevant for assignments.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Topics Covered	Learning Activities	Readings
One	Interviews VS Conversations The 3 stage interview Attending skills Client observation skills Ethics	Media clip to examine professional roles and boundaries	Evans text: CH 1 and 2 McKenzie text: CH 2 & 12 <u>On Canvas:</u> Youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6ahLQWj_iE (body language)
Two	Active listening Questioning skills Encouraging/paraphrasing/summarizing Micro-aggressions in clinical practice	Role plays to practice active listening; Media clip on pitfalls of micro-aggressions	Evans text: CH 3 and 4 McKenzie text: CH 4 <u>On Canvas:</u> Micro-aggressions, Sue Calling Out Culture Calling IN Coddling of the American Mind
Three	Feelings & Empathy Reflecting feelings Culture and expression of feelings	Role plays to practice reflecting feelings, Media clip to examine feeling expression Assignment #2 is due today by 5:00 pm	Evans text: CH 5 McKenzie text: CH 6 <u>On Canvas:</u> Kyoko's story Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwDDb_h2i0A (expression spectrum)
Four	Specific skills for small groups Linking, Cueing, Blocking, Supporting, Energizing	Group process experiential role plays	McKenzie text: CH 5 <u>On Canvas:</u> Group skills, Kottler pp. 123-127 Lessor & Pope Chapter 6 Youtubes on groups: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ez87S11QpWs & (part 2) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vuIB1--YbDU https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYc_APIH7VY

			https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cV3IzZDDuAQ
Five	Integrating skills for exploration Eco-maps The role of theory in interviewing	Duo interviews for eco-maps Assignment #3 is due today by 5:00 pm	Evans text: CH 6 McKenzie text: CH 1 <u>On Canvas:</u> Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMKfTcY9Eww (eco-maps) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Z6zxBZK3x8 (eco-maps) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7HJmVx3qN4 (cognitive behavioral) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wTVbzvBH0k (person centered) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBfaIN0rKWM (family systems)
Six	Interviewing skills for clarification Confrontation, Immediacy, Self-disclosure, Interpretation	Role plays to practice clarification skills	Evans text: CH 7, 8, 9 & 10 McKenzie text: CH 10
Seven	Interviewing skills for action Information giving, Empty chair technique, Miracle question	Role plays to try out skills for action/intervention	Evans text: CH 11 McKenzie text: CH 7 <u>On Canvas:</u> Miracle question Empty Chair Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecYzjaSyaA4 (miracle question) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXpBEE5PJ4U (miracle question) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJ4Uyf5X6Sw (empty chair)
Eight	The flow of the 3 stage interview Structuring	Media clips to assess structuring the session	Evans text: CH 12
Nine	Working with resistance Reasons for resistance	Media clip example of resistance	Evans text: CH 13 McKenzie text: CH 3

	Phases of change		
Ten	Putting it all together	Group exercise in endings and transitions and media clip of ending long term therapy relationship Assignment #4 is due today by 5:00 pm	Evans text: CH 14 McKenzie text: CH 11 <u>On Canvas:</u> Professionals Don't Cry

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Submission of Assignments

**** Submit written assignments electronically and label them with your last name and then the assignment number. Example: Smith_Assignment 1**

The assignments are due on the date specified in the course syllabus. Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances arise (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency) which may make it difficult for a student to complete the assignment by its designated due date time. Should this happen, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor. At the instructor's discretion, a student's request for an extension of an assignment past its due date may be granted, usually for no longer than one week past the due date. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points for late assignments.

Please note: Letter grades are **not** assigned to individual assignments as each assignment is worth a number of points toward a total of 100 points on which the final letter grade for the course is determined. The number of points that equate with final course grades can be found in the syllabus under: GRADING FRAMEWORK FOR FINAL GRADES

PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT 1:

Participation in classroom role play: (10 pts.) During the quarter each student is expected to participate in 1 role-play during class-time as the social worker. Students should be prepared to be called on for this activity at any point during the quarter. The instructor will keep a checklist of students to account for these participation points.

ASSIGNMENT 2 Demonstration of preliminary interviewing skills via mini-recordings and feedback (20 points toward final grade) **Due date: Week 3** by 5:00 pm on the day your class meets.

Due date specifics for assignment two:

Recording and feedback to peer: **Recording** must be posted to your VM group by 10:00 p.m. on Monday of Week 3 so that each person has time to watch another student's recording and use the VM to provide feedback before the entire assignment is due at 5:00 p.m. on the day your class meets during week 3.

Feedback from peers on one’s skills is integral to encourage students to build a community of learners with their peers. Learning communities such as this are imperative for the life-long learning required for social work practice. This assignment serves as the basis for an initial self-assessment on your interviewing skills and consultation with your peers and professor about areas of strength and improvement. Honest and professional feedback to peers is an expectation of this assignment.

***Students may use their own digital recording device as long as they can access the recording for upload to VM. You may also check out one of the GSSW Flip cameras for this purpose.

Specific guidelines

Step 1: You will be assigned to small groups for this assignment. However each student is graded individually.

Step 2: Each of you will pick several skills from the list of interviewing skills (e.g., open questions, closed questions, encouragers, paraphrasing, summarizing, reflections of feelings) and use them in a brief interview (not more than 5 minutes) with one of the peers in your small group. Individuals in each group may choose any of the skills, regardless of overlap with peers’ choices. Digitally record your interview. Have the interview be about something real, but not intimately personal or traumatic. You **do not** need to create an entire social work interview that covers the 3 stage process, just 5 minutes of you interviewing your classmate about the topic they choose in which you use the skills you chose.

Step 3: Upload your interview to your small group’s VM site.

Step 4: Use the VM site to review your own work as an interviewer. Use the tools in video manager to mark out bookmark comments to label the 2 skills you used in the interview, each time you used them. For example, if you chose open questions and reflection of feelings you will mark out every single time you used those skills during the 5 minute interview.

Step 5: Use the VM site to analyze your own recording as an interviewer. In your analysis note: 1) how well you begin and end the interview and 2) describe the purpose of the skill you used and comment on whether the skill worked as planned.

Step 6: Use VM site to view the recording of 1 other student in your small group and provide constructive feedback by marking out at least 5 points in the interview and writing a comment at each one to help your peer gain some insight into their strengths and challenges, including: 1) how that peer appeared professionally and 2) how they began and ended the interview. Each small group should work it out so that each person’s interview is commented by 1 other student in the group. Your professor will view your comments to peers on VM and grade them according to rubric #2.

Instructors will also be viewing each student’s mini-recording and giving feedback on your use of the skills. However, at this early stage of the quarter we will not be grading your use of the skills, but we will be grading the work you do in step 5 and step 6 (see rubrics below).

Example of VM bookmark comments for assignment 2

Interviewer dialogue as heard in the recording Skill Used Purpose of skill, did skill work, beginning/ending skills

I.1 (Interviewer): Can you tell me what brought you here today?	Open question Attending behavior (eye contact)	Open question to allow the client to control where he wants to go with the session, to give the power to the client to direct the session. Eye contact to indicate interest in whatever the client would say. I am
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	Client Observation skills (body language)	aware some people find eye contact rude, so I am cautious about making sustained eye contact and paying attention to how the interviewee responds (body language) to my eye contact. In this case the open question didn't work at all because he only gave me a one-word answer. I began the interview well by using professional behavior and posture.
P.1 (Peer interviewee): Struggles.		
I.2: What are your struggles about?	Open question	To see if he would provide more about the struggles and give me more than a one word answer. It did work as planned because I learned that he recently moved and started graduate school.
P.2: I moved to Denver two weeks ago and started graduate school.		
I.3: So, you moved and started graduate school at the same time. Is that what your struggles are about?	Paraphrase Closed question	Paraphrase to let the interviewee know I heard what he was saying and this is followed by a closed question to get specific information on if this is what the struggle is related to. Finally, I have some information on the struggles, so my closed question worked better than the open one I asked before. He actually responded with more information as if I had asked an open question.
P.3: Well, not really because I am excited to live in Denver and be in grad school, but my partner was supposed to move here with me and also go to grad school, but he decided to stay in Alaska where we both grew up.		
I.4: So it is a struggle to have your partner stay in Alaska, I noticed a tear in your eye when you said that (with a question implied by the tone of my voice).	Client Observation skills (eyes tear up and his voice gets quieter) Paraphrase	I used client observation skills to note tears in his eyes so he wouldn't think I was ignoring his feelings. I used the paraphrase which I ended it with a question in the tone of my voice because I wanted to use it to clarify if indeed his partner staying behind was the "struggles" he meant earlier in the session. I paused and when he nodded yes and saw a few more tears in his eyes, I could see that this skill worked as planned.
P.4: He nodded his head to indicate yes.		
I.5: What is the biggest part of that struggle right now for you?	Open question	I followed up with an open question that focused on the here and now to see what was most concerning to him at the present moment. I hoped the open question would get me more information on how I could help today.

Grading rubric for skill identification and analysis in assignment 2 (15 points)

0 points	Skill identification and analysis is not completed and turned by due date
Up to 5 points	Accurately labeled the skills used in the interview.
Up to 5 points	Correctly pointing out the intended purpose of the skill used by the interviewer. E.g., paraphrase to let the interviewee know I heard what he said. Assessing how you began or

	ended the interview.
Up to 5 points	Analysis that reports your personal reasoning for the intended use of the skills. E.g., paraphrase to let the interviewee know I heard what he said about how recent the move was and that he was struggling because his partner did not move as intended. I used client observation skills to note tears in his eyes and that his voice got quieter and note this out loud to him so he doesn't think I am ignoring his emotions.

Grading rubric #2 for providing feedback to peers in assignment 2 (5 points)

0 points	comments such as	“This was great!” “Not a very good job.” “I give you 10 points for trying.”
1 point for each of 5 comments for a total of 5 points for this section.	comments such as	“I know you said you were using reflection of feelings as a skill, but didn't hear you reflecting any feelings” “Your voice was too quiet because the interviewee had to keep asking you to repeat what you were saying each time you asked an open question.” “You professional appearance was diminished because you were slouching.” “You used an open ended question, but the interviewee didn't respond as predicted because he only gave you a one word answer.” “I noticed you were wringing your hands during the interview. It made me wonder if you were nervous? In spite of it your open ended question worked because the interviewee told you more about how hard it was to leave his partner behind.”

ASSIGNMENT 3, TAKE HOME MID-TERM EXAM (30 points toward final grade) **Due date:** week 5 of the quarter by 5:00 pm on the day your class meets.

Watch DVD clip #1 posted on Canvas under course assignments of Dr. Kevin Nadal interviewing Juan

Use the table provided in the assignment template to complete the following items:

1. Use the textbook language to label the skills you see the helping professional use. (5 points)
2. Listen carefully to what Juan is saying in order to find the feelings, affective, or emotion content of his story. In the line next to each time Juan's expresses feelings (either with words or tone of voice or facial expression) type out what you would say or ask to respond to Juan in way that would acknowledge you are aware of this feeling content. (10 points)

Use the space below the table provided in the template to type out your responses below each of the following questions.

3. Dr. K does not reflect or seek out more details about the feelings Juan expresses in this first session. Why do think he didn't? How much would you attend to the feelings Juan expresses? What would be your rationale for this choice? Describe how it might impact Juan if you pay too much attention to his feelings. Describe how it might impact Juan if you ignore his feelings? (10 points)

4. If you were the clinician interviewing Juan, with your own social identities, describe the role could micro-aggressions play in the session and give examples of these? (5 points)

ASSIGNMENT 4: FORMAL INTERVIEW (40 points toward final grade) Due by 5 pm on the last day of class.

The final assignment is a demonstration, analysis and application of your clinical interviewing skills.

Step 1: Digitally record an interview session with a client or another student or other non-relative that lasts for no more than 30 minutes. Recordings that are more than 30 minutes are too large to upload in the VM. The interview should be unrehearsed during which your interviewee is to be themselves and present real life circumstances. If you are working with another student or non-client please focus the clinical interview on developing an eco-map that represents their current life.

If you interview a client from your practicum agency or other work setting be certain that ***you have all the proper permissions and consents to visually record, upload it to the VM and obtain written permission from the client*** as well as permission from your field supervisor (please check first with your field supervisor, as to the agency's policy about this).

Whether you work with another student or a client in your field placement: **OBTAIN INFORMED CONSENT UTILIZE THE SAMPLE PRACTICE CONTRACT**

Step 2: (15 points) In a word document write a 2 - 3 page, double spaced description of the following:

- Describe the person's age, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender affiliation, spirituality or other relevant social identities (3 points).
- Describe how societal oppression related to the interviewee's marginalized social identities may influence the experiences they talked about during the interview (3 points).
- Describe two strengths and identify how the interviewee's cultural and social identities serve as strength in their life. (3 points).
- Describe how power differences due to your social identities and interviewee's social identities may have influenced your behavior during the interview. (3 points).
- Provide a self-assessment of your current skill competence (areas of strength and for growth) and describe your experience as the interviewer, including your internal-cognitive, emotional, physical responses to the interviewee (e.g., My stomach started to ache when he told me about his mother dying; I was thinking I am glad this not my life; I wanted to cry along with him). (3 points).

Step 3: (25 points) Skill identification and analysis. Upload your recording to the VM and watch the entire interview. Choose a 10 minute excerpt and use the VM comment tool to analyze your work on the following points:

- Identify and label the interview skills you used (e.g., attending skills, open question, reflection of feeling, confrontation). After each skill that did not work as intended or when you notice that you could have used a different skills (e.g., reflecting feelings instead of posing a closed question), write an alternative statement or question that would have made the interview better.
- Describe the emotions or affect of the interviewee by pointing out facial expression, tone of voice, body language, and the use of feeling words (e.g., I saw tears in his eyes and his

voice sounded sad; she pounded her fist on the table and said she was frustrated; her smile got big when she talked about going to the beach).

- Assess your professional appearance (e.g., posture, body language, dress) and
- Assess how you handled beginning and ending the interview or anything you did to facilitate transitions between topics during the interview.

Components to be assessed

- **Cognitive skills**: correctly identify the interview skills you used.
- **Behavioral skills**: selecting and demonstrating an appropriate interview skill to help facilitate the client telling her or his story. (This would include trying something different when an earlier interviewing skill appears not to be working or pointing out retrospectively the skill that you would have used and why, if you had been able to think of it during the actual interview).
- **Affective skills**: demonstrate the ability to: 1) reflect feelings; 2) explore meaning; 3) demonstrate empathy; 4) confront (directly or indirectly) incongruities or manipulation; 5) recognize your own feelings (positive or negative) about the client and the content of the interview.
- **Multicultural skills**: address any interview content that raises power differences between you and the interviewee that are based on cultural or social identity differences as well as ethical concerns and/or values conflicts as defined in social work ethics and values.

Grading sheet for VM responses to final assignment

0 points		Video manager comments are not completed and turned in by due date
1 to 5 points	Behavioral and cognitive interviewing skills	Your VM comments accurately identify the skills you used in the interview. For example, if you use an open question you label it correctly.
6 to 10 points	Combining accurate listening skills, attending skills, cognitive and behavioral use of skills and client observation skills.	All of what is listed under 1- 5 points plus correctly pointing out <u>the evidence from how the interviewee reacted</u> to support your analysis of the interviewee’s experience during the interview. Analysis of how you began, ended, or made transitions from 1 topic to another during the interview.
11 to 15 points	Demonstration of intentionally using the skills either during the interview or in hind sight	All of what is listed under 1-10 points plus accurate analysis and critique of your skills to hear the client’s story and what other skill you tried if it did not work, or would have tried based on what you see yourself doing in the interview.
16 to 20 points	Demonstrate the skill of awareness and use of one’s own affective or emotional experience and use of affective skills	All of what is listed under 1-15 points plus accurate analysis of your affective, emotional experiences and intervention skills during the interview, such as your use of reflection of feelings, empathy, confrontation, and directives Or, if you did not use these affective skills and intervention during the interview, accurate assessment of where you could have used them during the interview.
21 to 25 points	Demonstration of multicultural skills and application of social work values and ethics	All of what is listed under 1-20 points plus assessment of 1) The multicultural differences and/or similarities between you and the interviewee and how this influenced you as well as assessment of how these differences and/or similarities may have influenced how the interviewee experienced you as an interviewer. 2) Any micro-

		aggressions that occurred or could have occurred during the interview and how you think this influenced or could have the interviewee. 3) Social work ethic and/or values concerns that arise during the interview.
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EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Participation:

Note that this class has 1 participation assignment for which students earn 10 points by playing the role of the social worker in a role-play during class.

Students are expected to refrain from using email, texting and use of other social media while in the classroom.

However, general participation is also expected. At a minimum, it means that assigned readings and written assignments are completed on their assigned due date. Participation also includes asking questions, applying course concepts to class discussion, contributing to the learning of others, participating in role playing, providing accurate and respectful feedback to others, identifying any unique learning needs or problems to the instructor, and utilizing office hours when necessary to ask for clarification or assistance in fulfilling course expectations and assignments. Classroom contributions should focus on relevant course concepts and professional practice experiences.

Submission of Assignments

The assignments are due on the date specified in the course syllabus. Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances arise (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency) which may make it difficult for a student to complete the assignment by its designated due date time. Should this happen, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor. At the instructor’s discretion, a student’s request for an extension of an assignment past its due date may be granted, usually for no longer than one week past the due date. The instructor reserves the right to deduct points for late assignments.

Attendance

GSSW Attendance Policy:

Attendance is a matter of professional behavior. Students are expected to attend *all meetings of a class*, including the scheduled hours for field instruction, for which they are registered. Instructors are expected to establish attendance requirements for their classes and may, at their discretion, use class attendance as one factor in assigning a grade for a class. Participation in official University activities, personal emergencies, and major religious observances are all considered valid reasons for absence. Students who miss more than two class sessions may not be allowed to pass that course. *It is the responsibility of the student to check with the instructor regarding any absence from class and to make arrangements regarding the work missed.* The responsibility for completing all work in the course rests with the student.

Attendance Policy for this Course

In this class, attendance requires not only being physically present in class, but also demonstrating the readiness to learn and be accountable for the outcomes of one’s own learning. Apply the same standards of professionalism and courtesy that you would use when keeping appointments with clients or supervisors or attending agency meetings. In keeping with GSSW policy, students are expected to attend and be punctual for all class sessions. You must notify the instructor (in advance, if possible) if you will be absent from or late to class. It is the responsibility of students to check with the instructor regarding any absence from class and to make arrangements regarding work missed.

A single missed session or lateness due to illness or personal/family emergency, inclement weather, or severe traffic jams generally does not affect a student’s grade. However, multiple absences and/or repeated lateness are detrimental to the continuity of the learning process and the learning community. Given the DU quarter system, as a general rule in this class, **a second absence will result in the reduction of points from the final grade. Multiple tardies also will result in a loss of points from the final course grade. More than two absences (whatever the reason) may result in no credit, or a failing grade, for this class.**

Grading

Assessment Classification	Range	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent Work (above course expectations)	94-100	A	4.0
	91-93	A -	3.7
Good Work (meets course expectations)	88-90	B+	3.3
	84-87	B	3.0
	81-83	B-	2.7
Poor Work (meets minimal course expectations)	78-80	C +	2.3
	74-77	C	2.0
	71-73	C -	1.7
Failing Work	70-0	F	0.0
Incomplete (I) – Issued as per policy in student manual.			

This next section is optional

91-100 = A/A- **Excellent Work**

Students display excellent work (***beyond course expectations***) in several ways: evidence that additional readings, beyond what is assigned, have been completed and integrated into written or in class presentations/participation; superior written work; evidence of critical thinking; demonstration of advanced practice skills applied to practice; and creativity and innovation in conceptual as well as practice-related thinking are frequently seen in the student’s work.

81-90 = B+/B/B- **Good Work: Meets Course Expectations**

Students display good work in several ways: basic mastery of course material is evident in written or in class presentations/participation; solid development of practice skills fitting with concentration-year expertise is evident; and creativity and innovation are noted but to a lesser degree and less frequently than that in the “excellent” category.

71-80 = C+/C/C- **Work Minimally Meets Course Expectations**

Students display marginal work in several ways: through evidence that course readings have not been covered, as observed in written or in class presentations/participation; conceptual confusion and difficulty with critical thinking are evident in written and verbal work; and through work that lacks an integration of theory and practice.

70 and below = F **Failure to Meet Course Expectations**

Student demonstrates poor or unacceptable work during the course in several ways: inadequate understanding of course content, poor quality written work, plagiarism, and poor or unethical demonstration of practice skills.

In general, grades of A and A- reflect outstanding work, significantly above the basic expectations of the course. B+ denotes very good work that, in part, exceeds adequate performance. A mark of B represents solidly adequate work, whereas a B- represents a level of performance that is, in part, uneven or unsteady in its level of meeting the basic expectations of the course. It is important to keep in mind that **you are not your grade!** Students come to graduate school with a wide range of academic experiences and preparedness. Thinking and writing about complex issues and abstract concepts can be very challenging for many students. If you are satisfied with the level of effort you have invested in the course, and you earn a grade of B or better, I hope you will feel very good about your performance.

GENERAL GSSW AND DU POLICIES

Policy Concerning Students with Disabilities

Students who have disabilities or medical conditions and who want to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Program (DSP); 303.871.2372/ 2278; 1999 E. Evans Ave.; 4th floor of Ruffatto Hall. Information is also available online at www.du.edu/disability/dsp; see Handbook for Students with Disabilities. Please note that academic accommodations cannot be applied retroactively, so it is important for you to register with DSP as soon as possible if you think you may need accommodations at some point while at GSSW. You are also encouraged to contact the Director of Student and Career Development for GSSW students.

Please review MSW Student Handbook materials for the following policies:

Policy Concerning Religious Accommodations

Policies Concerning Academic Integrity and Ethical Conduct

Name and Pronoun Use in the Classroom

Use of Technology

The Student Handbook can be found at:

http://www.du.edu/socialwork/media/documents/handbook_msw.pdf

It is located on the GSSW website, within the “current students” tab, on the “Quick Links” box on the right hand side.

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