

Seton Hall University  
Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work  
Social Work Program  
Course Syllabus  
SOWK 4912 Social Work Theory and Practice II  
Spring 2011  
Day/Time: Tuesday, 5:45 to 8:15PM

Instructor: Alonda Alloway-Higgins, MSW  
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Office hours: before and after class; also by appointment

**Congratulations. You are only several weeks away from the possibility of joining me, and so many others, as colleagues. Everything you do in this course should be an exemplar of your very best work.**

Please note that this instructor and course will be evaluated three times during the semester. The first evaluation is written and confidential comment to the instructor concerning the efficacy of the teaching and learning and progress in this course. This is for the instructor's use only but must be submitted by the entire group in one confidential package. The second evaluation is a specific evaluation of this course in terms of how the course and the instructor helped you to help yourself learn and become more competent. These are to hand written and submitted to the instructor in a sealed envelope to be delivered to the Program Director for faculty development purposes. The third mode of evaluation is the University electronic course/instructor evaluation which we strongly encourage you to use. Also, the University Faculty Guide requires the Program Director to sit in for all or part of a class for purposes of feedback to the instructor. This will be unobtrusive.

Course Description and Relationship to Program Required Competencies:

This learning experience focuses, primarily, on indirect social work practice, theories, methods, and principles with emphasis on mezzo and macro dimensions of practice; these terms having somewhat different conceptualizations in the literature. This course focuses on specific learning competency outcomes that are presented herein in each unit and these are derived from the Council on Social Work Education, Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS 2008). These are identified, with reference to this course in respective units.

While we understand that generalist practice as an undergraduate may inhibit full action on your part with regard to these competencies, we expect that you demonstrate knowledge of these; understanding of these; application of these to your internship; and where possible, your activities and critical thinking analyses.

The course uses an array of teaching and learning activities including, but not limited to lecture, group discussion, guest expert speakers, and readings to facilitate the student providing evidence of competency

**Required Reading** (please keep in mind that the textbooks, very often, provide valid and reliable definitions and also have extensive bibliographic reference material):

National Association of Social Workers (2009). *Encyclopedia of social work* (2009). Washington DC: NASW Press

Note: when using these volumes, cite the author and the title of the article as if this was a journal.

National Association of Social Workers (2009-2012). *Social work speaks*. Washington DC: NASW Press

Note: When citing a chapter in this publication, state the author as The National Association of Social Workers and give the title of the respective reading as if it were a journal article. Then continue to cite as a journal article.

These are available in the conference room for in room use for two hour periods per student. Please note that we don't permit photocopying at department expense. Two hours should be more than sufficient for note taking for applicable readings in the above.

**Please note that, as promised last semester, we will use the same textbooks (required), albeit with different chapters, obviously those related to the competency learning objectives presented herein. In addition, and as announced last semester, the community cultural competency article by Moo Lee that was distributed in hard copy will be needed. You will also need the Social Work Code of Ethics and Cultural Competency materials that were distributed last semester, also as announced last semester.**

All units in this course, because you will not find scholarly literature about your exact agency (although you may use brochures and anecdotal information to support your statements; albeit not as a scholarly source), require **Competency learning outcome 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments**. Thus, you should be signaling in each assignment how you have used critical thinking in applying theoretical material from the course to your actual agency and community.

Each unit in this course has specific learning objectives, outcomes, and evidence of learning presented with the unit itself herein. We recognize that this course requires significant effort.

**Learning Outcomes and Means of Assessment (evidence of learning-the grade):  
general requirements:**

There are four learning units and thus outcome assessments used in this course, each applicable to several competency requirements within each unit. The assignments, in conjunction with course content, explicate the minimum learning outcomes for the course. You are expected to display “best practices” when you graduate and thus, your work in this course is considered best practices in terms of your demonstrated evidence of learning.

All written assignments are to be submitted on or before the due date and will be returned, graded and with comments, the next class meeting. All papers are to be submitted in hard copy to the instructor.

Each learning assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.. However the instructor reserves the right to reduce grades based on inadequate attendance, excessive lateness, inadequate participation in class, and unreasonable/unexcused tardiness in submission of assignments. I do not expect the above to be applicable to any student in this class.

For each assignment, synthesize the respective class presentation, pertinent content from the various chapters, outside readings, guidance from your field instructor, and apply to your agency and professional development. The assignments do not consist of rote responses to rote questions, but rather, require professionalism, critical thinking, and judgment. Assignments should be written, where applicable, in the first person; it is you and your learning that we are concerned about and your internship, as the signature pedagogy for your social work education, is to be considered a “lab” for beginning level generalist practice, albeit in recognition that you are in a specialized field learning environment. Make sure to include a cover page that includes your name, date of submission, the number of the learning unit, and give your paper a title. APA is obvious. Use subheadings wherever applicable.

In addition to the required readings that need to be specifically cited insofar as assignments (all assigned readings for a unit), all assignments should include cited reference to at least two other valid, reliable sources.

Due dates for respective assignments will be discussed with the class and subsequently promulgated. The class will meet, as per University Policy and NJ State Law for the final exam period, during which students will submit the last paper, discuss this assignment, and complete the final Program course/instructor evaluation form.

Unit I. Comprehending and developing skills for working within and improving bureaucracies. 25% of course grade. The competencies presented below, for which you must demonstrate learning, are not presented in any rank order; they are all equally important. We also realize that many competencies overlap in various units, and will signify this herein where applicable and reasonable. We also realize that this, as well as those that follow, are difficult assignments.

**Competency Requirements: 2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.** This will include information both about this course content and your internship, with emphasis on supervision; attending to professional roles and boundaries; and demonstrating professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication. **2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principle to guide professional practice.** How do you handle personal, professional, and organizational values. What are the issues? **2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.** Organizations often have rules that apply to everyone. What affect might this have on service delivery? How does or should your agency address this? **2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.** How does your agency use research evidence to inform practice? Any model? Library? Allowance for staff to attend seminars and conferences? **2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.** Is part of the intake and assessment and other components of the helping process incorporate information about the clients' social environment. The organization you are in is also a social environment. How might this affect behavior of staff. **2.1.8 Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.** Is your agency involved with social change? How much professional sharing with colleagues, in and out of the organization, do you see? **2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.** Discuss leadership, and hopefully any role you have had, that exists for promoting improvement in the quality of social services.

Readings:

Johnson and Yanca, Chapter 7 (pp. 138-151), Chapter 10 (pp. 230-232), Chapter 11 (pp. 246-252);

Marsiglia and Kulis, Chapter 11, pp. 209-215; Chapter 13, pp. 237-240;

Saleebey, Chapter 12 (in this reading we are considering your agency as part of the social environment of clients; in some instances, a major part of their social environment);

Assignment 1. For this assignment you should summarize major points from the readings, class discussions, and relate to your practicum. What specific issues pertinent to functioning within a bureaucracy seem to be clear, efficacious, and responsible at your agency; what areas seem to need improvement; and your suggestions for achieving improvement. Keep in mind that your presentation should focus primarily on course

content and only use practicum experiences as anecdotal material to support your methodological knowledge, competency, and concerns. Also, please keep in mind that we will be spending considerable class time on these issues. **Your responses should specifically address the competency requirements noted above.**

This assignment should be about five pages; not counting the cover page and Works Cited or References pages (preferably longer and in great depth)

Unit II. Best Practices: What we are doing; what we should be doing (25% of course grade)

**Competency Requirements (please note that all competencies are in fact “best practices” however we have narrowed these down as competencies are included in all units of this course).**

**2.1.2 Apply ethical principles to guide professional practice.** How have you learned to do this at your agency, emphasizing our Code of Ethics. **2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.** How does your agency compare with the best practices presented in *Social Work Speaks* and good practices presented by Johnson and Yanca. **2.1.10a,b,c,d. Describe your agency in terms of how it addresses engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation.** Would you consider these best practices? Does the agency strive for effectiveness, efficiency, humaneness? **2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice.** Does your agency operate such that it understands forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination? Does it do anything, or does staff, or are you involved with advocating for human rights and social and economic justice? **2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.** Does your agency understand and operate in this regard. Do staff (and you) view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants (teachers)?

Assignment 2: For this assignment you should indicate your understanding of best practices in social work, using applicable readings in conjunction with your agency experiences and focusing on above competencies (or more if you like). Your written assignment, as well as class discussions and should be a critical analysis of how and to what degree your agency strives for best practices and what the literature indicates to you should be done. Summarize the applicable good/best practice and relate to your practicum. Use critical thinking and evidence to demonstrate and analyze. Also, include wherever applicable your opportunities for gaining these competencies in terms of organizational behaviors.

Your written presentation should be no less than five pages in length (preferably longer and with exceptional depth of thought and feeling). Keep in mind that this is a

theory and practice course and we are concerned about both contemporary practice and, simultaneously, improvements in the future. Page criteria do not include the cover page or the References/Works Cited pages. The paper must very clearly present, at minimum, your understanding and beginning level competency with regard to the aforementioned competencies. We recognize that this is a difficult assignment. The sooner you start the better.

The due date for this assignment will be discussed with the class and subsequently promulgated.

Readings:

Johnson and Yanca, Chapter 16, pp. 400-402; pp. 416-437 as applicable; Chapter 15, pp. 369-373 (social justice and needs assessment);

*Social work speaks*, applicable chapter(s) pertinent to your agency, clientele, social problem and so forth;

*Cultural competence* (NASW brochure) will be distributed to the class);

The Social Work Code of Ethics;

Marsiglia and Kulis, Chapter 14, Culturally Grounded Evaluation and Research;

York, Chapter 1, pp. 25-26 (scientific research and cultural competence); any and all readings in the book that illustrate what your agency does (or doesn't do) in terms of gathering evidence about the efficacy, efficiency, and humaneness of service delivery).

Unit III. Comprehending the needs and strengths of groups and communities and developing and implementing strategies for change and improvement. 25 % of course grade.

**Competency Requirements: 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.**

What evidence is there that your agency incorporates, considers, and engages diversity (broadly defined) and difference in practice? What efforts have both you and the agency done such that you are informed of the possible unique diversity of clients served. Any implications for de facto denial of service? **2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.** Does the agency consider and competently use knowledge of the social environment of clients without generalization, but still being competently aware and responsive? **2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.** As environments change, does your agency respond to this? Is your agency a leader in

promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services, particularly with regard to engaging diversity. Are staff representative of the diversities of clients? Does your agency have an advisory board; describe and discuss. **2.1.10 a,b,c,d.** Does your agency have any formal arrangements with other organizations and community representatives and leaders?. Does it engage in, or have strategies for working with other organizations, community representatives, and representatives of government in terms of problem solving and proactive intervention.

Readings:

Johnson and Yanca, Chapter 14; Chapt. 15, pp. 383-388;

Marsiglia and Kulis, Chapters 10 and 11;

You should find *The Encyclopedia of Social Work* particularly informative.

Be especially careful in this learning assignment to note that much information that you receive is collective or normative for a respective client group (however you choose/identify your client population) but the actual persons being served are individuals. Be careful of generalization.

Assignment 3: For this assignment you should summarize major points from the readings, class discussions, and relate to your practicum. What specific issues seem to be clear at your agency in terms of all pertinent variables presented in the readings and discussion; what areas seem to need improvement; and your suggestions for achieving improvement. Present your agency and your emerging competencies in terms of the aforementioned competency learning outcomes.

This assignment should entail no less than five pages, not counting the title page and Works Cited/References pages (preferably longer and with much insight and depth). The date of submission in hard copy will be discussed with the class and subsequently promulgated.

Unit IV. Further comprehending and developing beginning level competencies regarding social justice, large scale interventions, and the global community. (25% of course grade)

**Competency Requirements: 2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.** Keep in mind that competency is an ethical imperative. Describe how you and your agency are, or could be, involved with large scale interventions in terms of the array of large scale problems of marginalization, exploitation, need for better laws. **2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice.** Be sure to define social justice using the *Social Work Dictionary* by Barker (in Program library). Social injustice is the opposite of this. Or obtain a definition of social and economic justice from another valid, reliable, scholarly source and cite this. Note: definitions must be in

quotes. Considering this definition, how could you see yourself at this agency or elsewhere fulfilling this competency requirement. Note: We very strongly encourage you to attend any conferences, particularly the one sponsored by Monmouth University involving a trip to the United Nations for discussions about this. The Program will pay for any fees involve with this, other than transportation and you are strongly encouraged to speak with Prof. Arancibia as soon as possible to inquire and make arrangements for this important event. We will also inform you of the annual conference held at Rutgers University-Newark each March. This is typically held on a Friday in March and is free. Topics at this half day conference focus on this competency. We consider this implicit part of our curriculum to be critical and expect students to participate in at least of one of these learning opportunities. Notices will be posted in hard copy on bulletin boards and sent electronically. Please speak with Prof. Arancibia as soon as possible; space is often limited because these initiatives are unique and informative. The trip to the UN is a learning experience of a lifetime, however we must signal to organizers that we will be attending asap. In addition, the Social Work Program Director is a member of the NASW-NJ Committee on Diversity and plans, with the approval of the instructor, to invite a guest speaker who is an expert on this competency.

#### Readings:

The Social Work Code of Ethics;

Johnson and Yanca, Chapt. 2, pp. 29-31, Social Work in the Twenty-First Century; pp. 392-395;

Marsiglia and Kulis, Chapter 15, Culturally Grounded Social Work and Globalization;

Saleebey, Chapter 6, pp 115-117, Community Practice;

Assignment 4: For this assignment you should summarize major points from the readings, class discussions, and relate to your practicum, basing your responses on the aforementioned requisite competencies. With regard to your practicum, despite its potential small size, keep in mind to think act locally and think globally. Also, changes in one part of a system affect other systems (systems theory from T and P I).

This assignment should entail no less than five pages, not counting the title or Works Cited/Reference page (preferably longer and with great insight and depth) and is due no later than the date and time of the final exam period.

It has been a privilege to have served as one of your teachers and to have helped you along the way to your professional career. I thank you.

### **GUIDELINES FOR ALL COURSES OFFERED BY**

## **THE SOCIAL WORK Program**

Please note this is applicable to all social work courses, so some of this might not apply and we expect certain items here to be self-evident to senior social workers who are expected to have internalized such applicable information. Nevertheless we include this as standard procedure in a continuous effort to assure that students are informed.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Exams and papers are expected to represent the student's own work. Information, ideas, and so forth which are attributable to others require documentation as such. In the event a student is unsure about documentation, please see the instructor at least several days prior to submission. Any exam or paper which misrepresents the work of others as the student's own will be counted as zero in the computation of the student's final grade. There may be additional sanctions for breaches of academic integrity.

### **POLICY ON SPECIAL CONDITIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

The following is the official University position in this regard. *Disability Services Statement: Students at Seton Hall University who have a physical, medical, learning or psychiatric disability, either temporary or permanent, may be eligible for reasonable accommodations at the University as per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In order to receive such accommodations students must identify themselves at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), provide appropriate documentation, and collaborate with the development of an accommodation plan. The DSS phone number is (973) 313-6003. For further information, please go to our website at; <http://studentaffairs.shu.edu/dss/>*

The Department of Social Work enthusiastically supports the intent and mandate of legislation/policy providing optimal learning environments for all students.

### **TERM PAPERS, EXAMS, AND OTHER LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS**

Term papers and similar assignments are to be submitted on or before the final due date. For those assignments that are to be submitted in class by a specified date, this is defined as submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the class session. Late papers will be penalized one full grade for each calendar day late. Written assignments will not be accepted via e-mail. No staff or faculty member in the department of social work, other than the respective instructor, is authorized to receive/accept any written material from a student.

There are no automatic incomplete grades. Students who have reason to request such must do so by completing a formal request. Without an approved request for an incomplete grade, within the time frame required for processing (typically about one week), students will receive a grade of F for the course, which may be changed

subsequently. Students are expected to complete exams and similar learning assignments on time. In the event a student misses an exam, only one make-up will be scheduled for all students who missed the exam. The instructor will schedule only one make-up exam session for each exam missed and this will be at the convenience of the instructor. Make-up exams can cover all content (lectures, readings, and so forth) for any particular learning unit being tested. Prior to the submission of final course grades, any makeup final exam which is arranged can and will cover content from readings, lectures, and other learning opportunities for the entire semester. Due to scheduling issues, it may not be possible to arrange a make-up for a missed final exam until the subsequent semester and any make-ups must be tentatively scheduled and approved by the respective faculty member.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions.

### **CITATION STYLE – this is Program Policy but is certainly understood by this class by now.**

Please note that the following is intended to help students think and write in a scholarly manner. It is designed to be helpful; not punitive. Particularly with regard to lower level courses, the Department recognizes that some students may have limited familiarity with scholarly writing. Students are strongly encouraged to speak with instructors regarding citations within the body of the text of any paper as well as on a Works Cited page.

For social work majors:

The Department of Social Work requires use of the APA style of citations used by the National Association of Social Workers. The Department recommends: (1) in the event a student is unsure of the use of this style, see the instructor early with a typed draft reflecting use of citations in the body of the paper and reference page(s); (2) purchase the Publication Manual published by the American Psychological Association; (3) compare style with any recent article in Social Work, the official journal of the National Association of Social Workers. This journal left justifies the first line of a reference and indents every subsequent line in a citation.

For non-social work majors:

Students majoring in disciplines other than social work may use the preferred style of their discipline.

Internet sources are not acceptable as reference material for assignments with the exception of official government documents and websites and those materials that are scholarly and peer reviewed and available through social science search engines.

### **CLASS CANCELLATION**

The class will meet as presented on the University calendar. Classes will not be cancelled unless: (1) the University cancels classes due to weather or other emergencies, and this will be announced on WOR radio, or (2) instructor emergency, in which event

attempts will be made to notify the class as soon as possible if a substitute teacher is not available.

With timely prior written notice to students and the Chairperson of the Department, and with approval of the Chairperson, and at times with approval of the entire faculty, instructors reserve the right to modify syllabi as necessary.