The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
School of Social Work

Course No: SOWO 570 (Tuesdays, 9:00 –11:50am)
Course Title: Social Work Practice with Organizations & Communities, Fall 2014
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Office Hours: Mondays 10am - 1:30pm & Tuesdays 12 – 1:30pm
(Please request appointment as I occasionally attend meetings and events during these hours)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, participants explore frameworks, values, and skills to meet individual and family needs through interventions with work groups, organizations, and communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. Articulate and define social work roles and effective engagement, communication and use of self skills in organizations and communities working with diverse populations by age, race/ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities and immigrant/refugee status.
2. Relate social work roles in organizations and communities to the NASW Code of Ethics, particularly concerning social justice, self-determination, cultural competence and social and political action in working with disadvantaged populations.
3. Understand basic explanatory theories and perspectives that guide social work practice with work groups, organizations, human service systems and communities.
4. Demonstrate how to assess a community issue(s), including the strengths and needs of neighborhoods and various population groups - racial and ethnic minorities, older adults, children and youth, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees – or other groups who have experienced disadvantage.
5. Understand organizational structure, culture, climate, power and decision-making processes in human service organizations.
6. Articulate strategies for how human service organizations can increase cultural competency, multiculturalism and anti-oppression.
7. Articulate how to support self-advocacy efforts among consumer and population groups that have experienced disadvantage.
8. Understand various evidence-based intervention approaches to community change through social planning, social action, community organizing and community development practice models.
9. Demonstrate how to plan an organizational, human service system or community intervention aimed at measurably improving the quality of life for a group of people.

EXPANDED DESCRIPTION: The core idea of this course is that problems exist in communities that negatively affect whole groups of people, requiring more than helping people one-on-one and usually the efforts of more than one organization. Social workers need to understand these problems, and help develop and implement solutions. Thus, the focus of this course is to help students develop skills in community assessment, intervention planning, advocacy, and group facilitation.

The key assumptions of this course are:
1. Communities have both problems (risk factors) and assets (protective factors) that influence people’s behavior outside of the family or household.

2. Social and economic opportunities are not equally distributed in communities. Certain groups of people experience disadvantage and/or discrimination that stands in their way of getting what they need for a decent quality of life.

3. The best efforts to help a group of people are those with a) a clear focus on outcomes (intended quality of life improvements like increased income); b) the involvement of people most affected by the problems; c) clear ideas guided by the best available evidence about how change will occur; and d) a plan for evaluation.

4. Human service organizations need to work together (collaborate) and with groups of residents, businesses, local government, and faith communities to solve community problems.

5. Sometimes it is better for people to help or advocate for themselves than to be helped by human service organizations or the government. Sometimes our role as social workers is to figure out how to support people in their efforts to do so.

RESOURCES
All course lectures, syllabus, assignment information, and external links to useful web sites are or will be available on Sakai, at http://sakai.unc.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS & READINGS:
There is no required text book for this course, but there are required readings, which are available on the Sakai course site, unless otherwise noted.

TEACHING METHODS
I use a team-based learning approach. Each student will be assigned to a team to answer questions about assigned readings and engage in learning exercises. In their teams, students will also participate in a series of course assignment “checkpoints” in which students share their assignment ideas and receive team feedback and develop questions for the instructor to clarify expectations. Students will engage with the full class for simulations, videos, interactive presentations, and group discussion. This is a course that depends on a high level of engagement and critical thinking by students. Lecture will be used sparingly to introduce a topic, present key concepts, offer practice examples, and/or review research findings.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS
Student performance will be evaluated based on the following assignments, which are briefly described below (full, detailed assignment instructions and grading guides are available on Sakai):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due Date*</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Assessment</td>
<td>09/30/14</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention Plan</td>
<td>11/04/14</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy/Facilitation Demonstration</td>
<td>11/25/14 or 12/02/14</td>
<td>15</td>
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*Students have the option of turning in either the Community Assessment or Intervention Plan assignment one week later than the due date.
All written assignments should be submitted electronically on Sakai using your PID, not your name by the start of class time on the due date.

**Class Attendance (10 points)**
Students will be awarded points as follows:

- No more than one class missed: 10 points
- Two classes missed: 5 points
- Three classes missed: 0 points

A pattern of being late for class and/or leaving early may affect how many points are awarded.

**Class Participation (10 points)**
Participation points will be awarded based on peer and self assessment concerning the extent to which the student a) was prepared for class having completing the readings and assignment checkpoints; b) made active and thoughtful contributions to class discussions and learning activities; and c) contributed to a positive and constructive team learning environment and experience. Peer assessment will be conducted through assigned learning teams.

**Community Assessment (30 points; Due 09/30/14)**
Students will select a community problem for which they will conduct an abbreviated assessment that is related to their field placement, such as the need for improved job opportunities for adults living with developmental disabilities. Students will demonstrate the ability to use secondary data and research findings and conduct key informant interviews to understand the problem. Students will also identify community assets that can be used to help solve the problem and describe how they would understand the problem from the perspective of persons directly affected by it.

**Intervention Plan (35 points; Due 11/04/14)**
Students will describe an intervention – a set of activities and/or services aimed at solving the problem they identified in the Community Assessment assignment - using a logic model and theory of change. Students will describe the group of people they hope to help, the outcomes they hope to achieve for this group of people, and the key activities and/or services of their intervention. Students will also explain why they think the selected activities and/or services will result in the desired outcomes, using research evidence to back up their claims. Lastly, students will complete an assessment of one or more organizations that think would be a good home for the intervention.

**Advocacy/Facilitation Demonstration (15 points; Due 11/25/14 or 12/02/14)**
In their assigned learning teams, students will either a) conduct a presentation in class to persuade a decision-making body (e.g., county Board of Commissioners) to support and/or participate in an intervention to solve a community problem; or b) demonstrate the facilitation of a task group meeting to plan an intervention.

Detailed instructions and grading guides for each of these assignments are available on Sakai in the Assignments folder.

**HOW COURSE ASSIGNMENTS RELATES TO THE FOUNDATION CURRICULUM**
The assignments you complete in this course are part of a foundation year learning sequence focused on how to plan and implement a community intervention related to your foundation field placement and that continues in the spring semester with SOWO 517 (Planning for Social Work Interventions).
In **SOWO 517** in the *spring*, you use your intervention ideas from SOWO 570 to plan a program or intervention to be carried out by your field placement agency or another organization, 1) describing specific services and/or activities; 2) creating a staffing plan, job descriptions, and a budget; and 3) identifying possible sources of funding. In other words, you create a **specific, concrete plan** for the ideas you developed in SOWO 570.

*The assignment work you do in both SOWO 570 and SOWO 517 can help you identify Community, Management, and Policy Practice (CMPP) learning goals and tasks for your field placement learning agreement.* Therefore, it is important to discuss your assignments with your field placement supervisor.

In addition, assignments in SOWO 570 will also help prepare you for work you will complete in SOWO 510 (Evidence-Based Practice and Program Evaluation), e.g. learning how to create a logic model and describe a theory of change.

**GRADING SYSTEM:**
The School of Social Work operates on an evaluation system of Honors (H), Pass (P), Low Pass (L), and Fail (F). The numerical values of these grades are:

H: 94-100; P: 80-93; L: 70-79; F: 69 and lower

A grade of P is considered entirely satisfactory. The grade of Honors (“H”) — which only a limited number of students attain -- signifies that the work is clearly excellent in all respects.

*Grading System and Philosophy*
Grading guides are included with detailed instructions for each assignment. Criteria that reflect the learning objectives for each assignment are described and used as the basis for awarding points. Different ranges of points awarded for each criterion to reflect “excellent”, “good”, and “fair” work.

Most students are expected to receive most of their assignment criteria points in the “good” range, which will result in an assignment score in the P range. “Good” criteria reflect standard assignment requirements. “Excellent” criteria reflect work *above and beyond* standard requirements, both in the amount and quality of work. Students must receive most if not all of their points in the “excellent” category to receive an assignment score in the H range. “Fair” criteria reflect below standard requirements. Scores that fall mostly in this range will result in an assignment score in the L range, while criteria scores that do not achieve the “fair” standard will result in an assignment score in the F range. Seldom do I give students assignment scores in the L or F range. Whenever I have, it has very clearly been a case of lack of effort by the student.

The purpose of this system of grading system reflects a simple contract between you, the student, and I, the instructor. I will:
1. Provide detailed instructions for each assignment.
2. Make my grading standards as clear as possible.
3. Spend time in class answering questions students have about the assignment.
4. Assign readings and facilitate classroom learning exercises that prepare students to complete each assignment.

In return, I ask that each student carefully review assignment instructions and grading guides, ask for clarification if needed, and exert an effort on assignments that reflects her or his goal for achieving an H or P in the course.
EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
Students are expected to use good academic English; grades will be lowered for poor grammar, syntax, or spelling. Those who have difficulty writing are STRONGLY encouraged to use online resources of the campus Writing Center (http://writingcenter.unc.edu/) and the School of Social Work (http://ssw.unc.edu/students/writing) and/or seek assistance from Diane Wyant or Susan White in the School of Social Work.

The School of Social Work faculty has adopted APA style as the preferred format for papers and publications. All written assignments for this course should be submitted in APA style. Exceptions to this requirement are that students are expected to format and present their written work based on 1) assignment instructions and 2) single spacing and any format the student desires for presenting bulleted and numbered lists, tables, charts and other in-text objects that results in a professional and attractive presentation expected by human service organizations.

Information concerning APA style and writing resources are listed below:


- [http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx](http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx) (Frequently asked questions about APA Style)
- [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/) (Additional APA Style guidance)
- [http://www.bartleby.com/141/](http://www.bartleby.com/141/) (electronic version of Strunk’s The Elements of Style which was originally published in 1918)
- [http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/](http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/) (The Harvard University Writing Center)

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
A paper is considered late if it is emailed in any later than the start of class on the day it is due. The grade for late papers will be reduced 10% per day, including weekends. Therefore, a paper that would merit a grade of 100 on Friday will receive a grade of 70 if submitted on Monday. Similarly, a paper due at 2pm on Monday handed in at 3pm will be considered 1 day late.

Students have the option of turning in the Community Assessment or Intervention Plan assignment one week later than the due date. This is meant to give students flexibility in meeting multiple assignment deadlines.

A grade of Incomplete is given only in exceptional and rare circumstances that warrant it, e.g. family crisis, serious illness. It is the student’s responsibility to request and explain the reasons for an Incomplete. The instructor has no responsibility to give an Incomplete without such a request.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:
It is the responsibility of every student to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing in actions involving the academic processes of this class. Students will properly attribute sources used in preparing written work and will include the following pledge on the first page of all written assignments: “I have not given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work.” Credit will not be awarded for unpledged work. Please refer to the APA Style Guide, The SSW Manual, and the SSW Writing Guide for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism and appropriate use of assistance in preparing assignments. In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action as required.
POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University's Disabilities Services (http://disabilityservices.unc.edu) and provide documentation of their disability. Disabilities Services will notify the instructor that the student has a documented disability and may require accommodations. Students should discuss the specific accommodations they require (e.g. changes in instructional format, examination format) directly with the instructor.

POLICY ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM
Use of electronic devices is permitted for learning purposes such as taking notes and looking up information relevant to a discussion or small group activity, but is prohibited for purposes not relevant to the class and/or when it is distracting to others or keeps the student from being engaged in class.

Class Schedule & Reading Assignments

Class 1 - 8/26 Introduction

Objectives
1. Understand course learning objectives, content, and assignments.
2. Review team based learning course format.
3. Describe the importance and key characteristics of social work practice with organizations and communities.

Class 2 - 9/2 Understanding Communities, Organizations & Macro Practice

Objectives
1. Understand key characteristics and functions of communities and human service organizations.
2. Explain how community issues are identified and understood to be problems.
3. Understand the basic characteristics of macro social work practice.

Readings


Class 3 - 9/9 Community Assessment, Part 1

Objectives
1. Describe the purpose of and methods for conducting community needs and asset assessments.

Readings
The Community Tool Box. (2013). Chapter 3: Assessing community needs and resources. Read the following sections:
Section 2: Understanding and describing the community.
Section 4: Collecting information about the problem.
Section 5: Analyzing community problems.


Class 4 – 9/16 Community Assessment, Part 2

Objectives
1. Explain why understanding the assets, not just needs, of a community is important.
2. Describe how community assessments include the participation of residents and other stakeholders.
3. Explain how community assessments guide community interventions.

Readings
The Community Tool Box. (2013). Chapter 3: Assessing community needs and resources. Read the following sections:
   Section 6: Conducting focus groups.
   Section 8: Identifying community assets and resources.
   Section 16: Geographic information systems: Tools for community mapping.


Class 5 – 9/23 Planning Interventions to Solve Community Problems, Part 1

Objectives
1. Understand the key steps in planning an intervention to solve a community problem.
2. Explain how to identify promising or evidence-based practices and interventions to adapt and use in your community.
3. Understand characteristics of successful interventions, including cultural adaptability.

Readings
The Community Tool Box. (2013). Chapter 19: Choosing and adapting community interventions. Read the following sections:
   Section 1: Criteria for choosing and adapting community interventions.
   Section 2: Understanding risk and protective factors: Their use in selecting potential targets and promising strategies for intervention.
   Section 3: Identifying strategies and tactics for reducing risks.
   Section 4: Adapting community interventions for different cultures and communities.
   Section 5: Ethical issues in community interventions.
   Section 6: Promoting the adoption and use of best practices.
Class 6 - 9/30  Planning Interventions to Solve Community Problems, Part 2

Objectives
1. Draft a logic model to identify the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of a program or intervention that address an identified problem(s) from a community assessment.
2. Articulate a theory of change for a program or intervention – a coherent, evidence-based explanation of how program or intervention activities will result in desired outcomes.
3. Understand how to use the best available evidence to support your theory of change.

Readings

Also: Review/skim the Community Tool Box’s Links to databases of best practices and the “Online sources for practice evidence” document on Sakai in the folder for the Intervention Plan assignment. Visit a couple of websites and search for intervention evidence related to your assignment topic.

Class 7 - 10/7  Solving Community Problems: Strategies, Part 1

Objectives
1. Understand, compare, and contrast different types of community interventions.
2. Describe ways that multiple organizations can collaborate to solve community problems.
3. Explain the differences between conflict- and consensus-based community organizing and when one approach is better indicated to solve a community problem.
4. Describe the different professional roles social workers adopt in community change efforts.

Readings


Class 8 - 10/14  Solving Community Problems: Strategies, Part 2

Objectives
1. Understand, compare, and contrast different types of community interventions.
2. Describe ways that multiple organizations can collaborate to solve community problems.
3. Explain innovative and non-traditional approaches to solving community problems.

Readings

Pitt-Catsouphes, M., diZengotita, L., & Berzin, S. (2012). *Leading the way: Social innovation in Massachusetts*. Retrieved from the Center for Social Innovation at the Boston College School of Social Work website: [http://b.3cdn.net/pcouncil/43225de545795d4abd_i9m6bk01o.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/pcouncil/43225de545795d4abd_i9m6bk01o.pdf) (Read pp. 1-23)

### Class 9 – 10/21  Facilitating Community Change

**Objectives**
1. Describe the process of community change to improve quality of life for disadvantaged groups of people and the role of social workers in facilitating this change.

**Readings**
TBA – will be assigned in conjunction with a guest speaker and/or film screening and/or simulation exercise.

### Class 10 – 10/28  Organizational Change and Innovation, Part 1

**Objectives**
1. Understand how organizational social context (culture and climate) affect the experiences of human service organization employees, interns, volunteers, and participants and human service organization performance.

**Readings**


### Class 11 - 11/4  Organizational Change and Innovation, Part 2

**Objectives**
1. Describe organizational factors associated with the successful implementation of evidence-based practices.
2. Identify strategies and actions that social workers can take to help make programs and services more effective in human service organizations.

**Readings**


### Class 12 - 11/11  Organizational Change and Innovation, Part 3

**Objectives**
1. Describe organizational factors associated with the successful implementation of evidence-based practices.
2. Identify strategies and actions that social workers can take to help make programs and services more effective in human service organizations.
Readings


Class 13 - 11/18 Advocating for and Facilitating Change in Organizations and Communities

Objectives
1. Describe different organizational and community change advocacy strategies.
2. Explain how to effectively facilitate meetings and lead constructive discussions in organizational and community settings.

Readings
The Community Tool Box. (2013). Chapter 16: Group facilitation and problem-solving. Read the following sections:
   - Section 1: Conducting effective meetings.
   - Section 2: Developing facilitation skills.
   - Section 4: Techniques for leading group discussions.


Class 14 - 11/25 Community Advocacy/Facilitation Demonstrations

Class 15 – 12/2 Community Advocacy/Facilitation Demonstrations (cont’d), Course Review & Evaluation