Course Number and Title: SW 420 – Social Work Methods with Individuals

Instructor:

Contact Information:

Office Hours (physical):

Office Hours (on-line):

Credits: 3

Time:

Location:

Prerequisite: Admission to the Professional Sequence

Co-Requisite: SW 424 and SW 480

COURSE DESCRIPTION
SW 420 is one of a four-course sequence that emphasizes the competent application of skills, knowledge and values to social work practice. This course focuses on developing competency in intervening with individuals. Students will learn how to engage in each stage of the social work intervention process with individuals, including: rapport building, exploration, assessment, planning, implementation, goal attainment, evaluation and termination. This course furthers students’ understanding of the strengths-based, generalist social work perspective, in particular students will learn the various roles social workers may play in work with individuals. Special emphasis is placed on analyzing the ways in which client characteristics (i.e., biological, psychological and socioeconomic factors as well as class, gender, ethnicity, culture, and sexual orientation) interact with the resources and demands of the environment in identifying appropriate intervention strategies. Students will be asked to use critical thinking skills to identify and implement interventions with individuals that are evidenced-informed, as well as contextually and culturally relevant.
COURSE LINKAGES
This course compliments the practice content acquired in SW 424. To facilitate your understanding of evidenced-informed practice, it is taken with or after completion of SW 440—*Principals of Evidenced Informed Practice I*. This course also draws upon the knowledge you have gained in theory courses (e.g., SW 310 HBSE I and SW 311 HBSE II). Finally, this course provides valuable skills and knowledge needed for the SW 480 and SW 481: Field Practicum.

Key BSW Program (Foundation) Competencies & Associated Practice Behaviors
In accordance with the Council on Social Work Education’s (CSWE) 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), the program prepares BSW students who:

2.1.1 Identify themselves as professional social workers and conduct themselves accordingly
2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide their professional practice
2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments
2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice
2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice
2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research
2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice
2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate their interactions with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

Course Objectives / Educational Outcomes:
At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

420.1 Examine the effects of personal biases and judgments on professional interactions
420.2 Maintain healthy professional boundaries in all professional interactions
420.3 Engage in continuous self-reflection and professional-improvement
420.4 Enact the generalist social work roles in the context of helping relationships
420.5 Identify evidence-based practice for work with individuals
420.6 Support assessments, case plans and intervention strategies with empirical evidence
420.7 Prepare accurate and non-biased written assessments, reports, case plans and documentation
420.8 Incorporate feedback to alter and improve interventions
420.9 Apply models of ethical reasoning to explore complex ethical dilemmas in practice
420.10 Apply the principles of cultural humility to build rapport, conduct thorough assessments and cultural-appropriate interventions with diverse client groups
420.11 Effectively uses verbal following, empathy, and non-verbal communication to build rapport with clients
420.12 Clearly states purpose of and role within helping relationships with clients
420.13 Identifies mutually agreed-upon goals with clients
420.14 Effectively use basic communication skills and assessment tools to elicit relevant client information
420.15 Complete a written multidimensional assessment involving an actual client
420.16 Prepare a case plan with goals, tasks, roles, and timelines
420.17 Provide opportunities for closure upon terminating with clients
420.18 Critically analyze how power, role, & diverse statuses impact the helping relationship
420.19 Analyze the effectiveness of various SW intervention approaches with individuals
420.20 Apply techniques derived from the empowerment & strengths-based models to empower clients
420.21 Clearly links theoretical & empirical understandings of human behavior with assessments & case plans
420.22 Analyze the influence of organizational culture & policy on service delivery

Instructional Methods

This course will implement a variety of collaborative learning techniques. Some of these techniques will include: lecture, class discussion, small group activities, role plays, fishbowl activities and videos.

Course Policies

- **Class Attendance and Participation**: As much of the learning in this class is dependent upon class member contributions, you will be expected to come prepared and ready to actively participate in every class meeting. Active participation will include: involvement in class activities and discussions, timeliness to class, and collegial conduct.

  Students who miss 4 hours of a Saturday (face-to-face) class will drop a grade (e.g. A- to B+), and forfeit the participation points for the day. Students who miss a full Saturday session (8 hrs) will drop a full letter grade (e.g. A- to B-), and forfeit participation points. If a student misses more than 8 hrs of face-to-face class time, she/he will receive a final grade of “F”, and will therefore not pass the course. In the event of illness, a doctor’s note will be required; In the event of family emergency, please talk to me personally about the situation. The consequences of missing face-to-face class time will be at the discretion of the instructor, but the above policy will be adhered to. The reason is that the labs are designed to be experiential, and cannot be re-created for make-up purposes.

- **Disabilities**: Students who have documented disabilities that may affect their learning or performance in this class should contact the UNR Disability Services Office (Thompson Student Services Building, room 101). The instructor will make all those accommodations that are requested in writing by the aforementioned office.
• **Academic Success Services**: Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (784-4433 or www.unr.edu/mathcenter/), Tutoring Center (784-6801 or www.unr.edu/tutoring/), and University Writing Center (784-6030 or www.unr.edu/writing_center). These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

• **Academic Dishonesty**: “Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses” constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student's enrollment without a grade, giving an F for the course or for the assignment. For more details, see the UNR General Catalog.

**Course Requirements**

**Required Readings**: You will be expected to have completed all assigned readings prior to the class session. Assigned readings can be found in the Course Calendar.


- In addition, selected articles, videos, audio clips, and excerpts from other texts will be used throughout the semester. These materials will be made available through hyperlinks incorporated within SW 420’s WebCampus environment and/or placed on electronic reserve at UNR’s Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center.

**Assignments**

*Course & Lab Participation*

Participation in this class specifically refers to your participation in actual simulations in class and/or your provision of feedback to your peers. During each lab session, you will be asked to complete a feedback form. In addition, you will also be asked to participate in a role plays, simulations, and fish-bowls as mock clients. Ten points will be awarded based on your fulfillment of these roles.

*Cases*

There are 8 cases that students will use to answer a series of assessment / intervention / evaluation questions. The cases and questions will be found on the course web page, and we will use one to go into greater depth at each lab session with group discussion of the case. These cases reflect a variety of ages and client dilemmas, and are selected to help students understand that
the Generalist Model can be used effectively with a variety of cases commonly encountered by social workers in case management settings.

*Mini-Assignments (working toward final case plan assignment)*
There will be three mini-assignments that will help students work toward their final Multidimensional Assessment and Case Plan assignment. Each of these assignments is worth 50 points. The details of the assignments will be provided, along with grading rubrics. The assignments will include a Genogram & Ecomap assignment; a documentation exercise; and a draft of the final case assessment & plan, that will includes APA formatting, critical thinking, and evaluation (e.g. single system design)

*Simulations & Video Recordings*
As this class focuses largely on skill development, you will be graded on your demonstration of these skills in class. Each student will engage in two recorded simulations over the course of the semester. Students will be evaluated on their use of skills as well as their reflections on these skills. Additional instructions will be handed out during the class. Due to scheduling and limitations on time, make-up simulations will not be allowed.

*Multidimensional Assessment and Case Plan*
Each student will complete a psychosocial assessment on a client or consumer of his or her agency. Names and other identifying information should be altered to protect the client/consumer’s confidentiality. This assignment will involve interviewing, so a fictitious client will not suffice. The assessment must attend to psychological, biological, social, cultural, and spiritual factors influencing the client. The full assignment will be available via WebCampus. The due date is noted in the class calendar. This assignment is worth 200 points, and will include a case presentation to the class about your experience in assessing and case planning for this client.

*Final Exam*
There will be a final exam during the last lab session. It will contain a variety of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The total points for this exam is 200.

**Grading of Assignments:**

- Lab & Course Participation  = 10 pts per lab; 10 pts overall course = 50 pts
- Cases (8) - 25 pts each = 200 pts
- Mini-Assignments (3) = (working toward final case) - 50 pts each = 150 pts
  (1) Genogram & Ecomap
(2) Documentation
(3) Draft of case assessment

- Video Recorded Interviews (2) - 100 pts each = 200 pts
- Final Multidimensional Case Assessment, Plan, Eval (with case presentation) = 200 pts
- Final Exam = 200 pts

**TOTAL POINTS for the COURSE = 1000 pts.**

**Grading Scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A”</td>
<td>1000</td>
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<td>“A-”</td>
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<td>“D-”</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>600</td>
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</table>

Any grade below a 600 is failing and will receive an “F”


Gibelman, Margaret (2000). Say it ain’t so, Norm! Reflections on who we are. Social Work, 45, 463-466.


## Sample Week by Week Schedule – SW 420

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates (2013)</th>
<th>Lab (full day)</th>
<th>Topics &amp; Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/26 to 9/1</td>
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<td><strong>Topics:</strong></td>
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<td>• Intro to the course &amp; syllabus</td>
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<td>• Domain, philosophy and roles</td>
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<td>• Overview of the helping process</td>
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<td>• SW Values</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<td>• Hepworth Text – Chapters 2, 3, &amp; 4</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9/2 to 9/8</td>
<td>Saturday, Sept. 7th, 9:00am – 5pm (guest – Quinn McLaughlin - Disabilities)</td>
<td><strong>Topics:</strong></td>
<td>Case #1: “The Case of Trent” (Child assessment; African-Am)</td>
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<td>• Communication – Empathy &amp; Authenticity</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td>Lab - Practice Interviews; Ecomaps &amp; Genograms</td>
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<td>• Hepworth Text – Chapter 5</td>
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<td>9/9 to 9/15</td>
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<td>• Communication – verbal Following, exploring &amp; focusing</td>
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<td>• Hepworth Text – Chapter 6</td>
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<td>9/16 to 9/22</td>
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<td><strong>Topics:</strong></td>
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<td>• Eliminating counterproductive communication patterns</td>
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<td>• Hepworth Text – Chapter 7</td>
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<td>9/23 to 9/29</td>
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<td><strong>Topics:</strong></td>
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<td>• Hepworth Text – Chapter 8 &amp; 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wk</td>
<td>Dates (2013)</td>
<td>Lab (full day)</td>
<td>Topics &amp; Reading Assignments (SW 420)</td>
<td>Assignments Due</td>
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| 6  | 9/30 to 10/6   | Saturday, Oct. 5th, 9:00am – 5pm (guest: Daniel Fred – Addiction)       | **Topics:** Goals and case planning  
**Readings:** Hepworth Text – Chapter 12 | • Lab - Review cases 2,3,4  
• Lab - 1st Video Interview |
| 7  | 10/7 to 10/13  |                                                                                  | **Topics:** Planning and Implementing Change  
**Readings:** Hepworth Text – Chapter 13 | • Case #5: “Self-Disclosure & Client Discrimination” (Case Mgmt; Goal setting: Sexual Orientation)  
• Mini-Assignment #2: Documentation |
| 8  | 10/14 to 10/20 |                                                                                  | **Topics:** Developing resources, advocacy, and intervention strategies  
**Readings:** Hepworth Text – Chapter 14 | • Case #6: “In the Best Interest of the Child” (Child welfare; African-Am) |
| 9  | 10/21 to 10/27 |                                                                                  | **Topics:** Additive Empathy, interpretation, and confrontation  
**Readings:** Hepworth Text – Chapter 17 | • Case #7: “Personal Growth: A Native-American Experience” (Cultural Humility; Sub Abuse; Native-Am) |
| 10 | 10/28 to 11/3  | Saturday, Nov. 2nd, 9:00am – 5pm (guest: Valeri Bianchi-Wood – therapy) | **Topics:** Managing barriers to change  
**Readings:** Hepworth Text – Chapter 18 | • Lab - Review cases 5,6,7  
• Lab - 2nd Video Interview |
| 11 | 11/4 to 11/10  |                                                                                  | **Topics:** Evaluation & Termination phase  
**Readings:** Hepworth Text – Chapter 19 | • Mini-Assignment #3: Case Assessment Draft & Single-System Design |
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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates (2013)</th>
<th>Lab (full day)</th>
<th>Topics &amp; Reading Assignments (SW 420)</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 | 11/11 to 11/17 |                | Topics:  
• Putting it all Together  
Readings:  
• Hepworth Text – review all chapters with study guide for final exam | Case #8: The Case of Trent Revisited: SSD (Behavior modification; Child; African-American) |
|    | 11/18 to 11/24 |                | Topics:  
• Catch-up and prep for Final Project (Case Assessment & Plan)  
Readings:  
• Hepworth Text – review all chapters with study guide for final exam | |
| 14 | 11/25 to 12/1 |                | Happy Thanksgiving! | |
| 15 | 12/2 to 12/8 | Saturday, Dec.7th, 9:00am – 5pm | Topics:  
Readings: | Lab - Student Case Presentations  
Lab - Review cases 1 & 8  
Lab – Final Exam |
| Final | 12/9 to 12/15 | Due by midnight 12/15 |    | Final Case Assessment, Plan, Evaluation (SSD) |