

Indiana University
School of Social Work

Spring 1993

S532
Instructor: Dr. Eldon Marshall

: Social Work Practice II: Interpersonal (Clinical)

Course Description and Rationale

This course focuses on the knowledge and principles basic to differential social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups across a range of practice settings. Emphasis is on development of competence in enabling effective problem-solving in diverse social contexts and facilitating the helping process from beginning to end including establishment of the treatment relationship, problem-exploration and definition, assessment and goal-setting, treatment planning and intervention, and termination and evaluation.

The Social Work Practice II: Interpersonal course builds upon the practice theories and principles addressed in Social Work Practice I, the knowledge bases explored in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses, the content examined in the initial Social Policy course, and the values, experiential knowledge and interactional skills developed in Practicum I. For those students pursuing the interpersonal/clinical track of the MSW curriculum, Social Work Practice II: Interpersonal constitutes the first in a sequence of direct social work practice courses. For students following the planning and management track, S532 represents the final required direct practice course.

The general purpose of this course is to provide the MSW student with opportunities to further develop the knowledge, skill, and judgment necessary for competent social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups. Increasingly, social workers in various settings practice with client systems of different size and composition. Often the complex characteristics of the client system, the ecological situation, and the presenting problems require that the social worker assess and intervene in several arenas. Multiple perspectives are frequently necessary for adequate understanding, assessment, and intervention. Therefore, for the purposes of this course, system size is viewed as a multi-faceted concept which can be utilized as a perspective for assessment as well as a context and approach for intervention.

In a course which seeks to examine the nature of social work practice with different size systems, it is difficult for the student to avoid becoming confused by the multitude of theories and the relevance of those theories to systems of different size. However, it is possible to conceive of professional social work practice as a practice which a) follows a predictable process, b) is based upon certain humanistic values and guided by the ethics of the social work profession, c) is supported by theoretical conceptualizations and validated by empirical research, and d) incorporates both direct and indirect means of intervention.

Course Objectives

It is anticipated that through regular attendance, participation in class activities, and completion of relevant readings and assignments, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of both common and unique concepts, principles, and processes relevant for social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups;
2. Demonstrate awareness of the values and ethics of the profession, a sensitivity to the value and ethical issue inherent in social work practice, and a capacity to incorporate value and ethical considerations for all phases of social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups;
3. Demonstrate a recognition of the socioeconomic and political context within which clients function and demonstrate an understanding of the implications for social work practice of working with different client populations in terms of age, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to integrate knowledge of human behavior and development for one's social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups;
5. Demonstrate an ability to locate, assess, and utilize professional literature for social work practice with individuals, families, and small groups;
6. Demonstrate an ability to prepare and deliver professional communications related to the practice of social work with individuals, families, and small groups;
7. Demonstrate an ability to analyze case material and to develop multidimensional assessments which incorporate for social work practice knowledge from various areas of the curriculum;
8. Demonstrate an ability to prepare theoretically defensible intervention plans by which client/worker goals might be achieved - this includes the ability to differentially select methodological approaches and intervention strategies according to the unique characteristics of each client system, problem, and ecological situation;
9. Demonstrate the accurate self-awareness critical for the professional use of oneself in social work practice with client systems of different size;

10. Demonstrate an ability to identify and propose strategies of evaluation relevant for practice with individuals, families, and small groups - this includes both an ability to objectively evaluate one's own social work performance as well as an ability to aid clients in the evaluation of their own progress toward goals attainment.

Course Design and Procedures

A major emphasis of this course is on broadening student competence in helping clients in differing system contexts. Hopefully, students will become progressively more knowledgeable about the components of effective individual, family, and group treatment and skillful at assisting clients in these contexts.

A didactic-experiential instructional format will be used to advance the course objectives. Class sessions will encompass and combine the following: 1) lectures, 2) discussion of readings and practice experiences, 3) case presentations, 4) tapes and films of select social treatment practices, 5) structured role-plays and simulations, 6) videotaping of practice interactions, 7) observation and feedback, and 8) written exercises and assignments.

Students are expected to participate in activities and discussions fully. When possible practice simulations will be implemented to afford some opportunities for skill-building. The number and kind of practice activities will, in part, be influenced by time constraints as well as developments in the class process. Simulations conducted in previous classes have included practice in use of role-playing for treatment purposes, application of systematic group problem-solving, practice in task-centered interviewing, and so forth. Practice role plays will require that students be able to move flexibly into roles of client, practitioner, and observer. While involvement in experiential activities requires a measure of risk-taking, generally learning from most educational endeavors is, in part, a function of the level of one's involvement in the process. Following simulations students may be asked to complete brief evaluation forms that call for some analysis of the experiential activity.

In accordance with course objectives and to assure a common frame of reference for meaningful discussion, students will be expected to complete required readings related to designated topic areas. In view of the extensive body of literature related to social work treatment and the limits of time, readings can at best only be selective. Designating certain readings as required is in no way intended to restrict the scope of literature that students pursue. In fact, you are strongly encouraged to extend your reading in areas of special interest. A supplementary bibliography will be provided for this purpose.

It is expected that each student who enrolls in the S532 course has a good understanding of the substantive areas addressed in the courses of the first semester. Any student who does not believe her/himself to be adequately prepared in any or all of the subject areas identified below should contact the instructor for an additional reading list: 1) human growth and life-cycle development, 2) dynamics and significance of the worker-client relationship, 3) theories of human behavior, 4) patterns and consequences of various

manifestations of oppression and their implications for practice, 5) processes associated with beginning, exploration, problem-definition, assessment, goal-setting, intervention, evaluation, and termination phases of social work practice, and 6) ethics of the social work profession.

Given the importance of written communication in professional practice, it is especially appropriate that standards for written work be at a professional level. Accordingly, all written work should be submitted in good editorial condition with respect to clarity, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and form. Grades will be lowered for work submitted in poor editorial condition. Additionally, written work should be turned in on the designated due date at the latest. Incompletes can be given only under compelling circumstances (e.g., family crisis, serious illness or accident, etc.) and must conform to University guidelines which require that 3/4 of the required course work be completed and at a passing level at the time of the request. Requests for incompletes should be submitted to the instructor in writing at the earliest possible date.

It is expected that written assignments will be submitted on time. Grades will be lowered one-half grade level for assignments submitted late and one whole letter if more than 5 days late without special arrangements.

It is especially important that students attend regularly if they are to derive full learning benefits from the class. Out of courtesy to classmates and the instructor, students are encouraged to be at class on time. Late arrivals can be disruptive to the class process.

Major Requirements and Assignments

1. Mid-term examination (30%)
The mid-term examination will assess student learning from the readings, lectures, videotapes, class handouts, and experiential activities. It will consist of objective, short-answer, and essay-type questions.
2. Final examination (30%)
The final examination will resemble the mid-term exam in the type of questions presented and will focus on content/material covered beyond the mid-term. It will take into account the readings, lectures, videotapes, hand-outs, and experiential activities and will consist of objective, short-answer, and essay-type questions.
3. Experimental Group (30%)
Beginning the 5th or 6th week of class a small group experiential process will be initiated to provide opportunity for development of skills as leaders/members of groups and acquire familiarity with and beginning level competence in the application of structured group formats and processes. Students will be formed into small groups and asked to rotate in leader and member roles throughout the duration of the group. The process will be organized around

specific group exercises designed to further knowledge and skill in the implementation of cognitive-behavioral group methods. Students will complete written evaluation forms and exercises related to given group tasks. A final written evaluation and analysis of the group will be submitted at the end of the experience. It should range from 4-5 pages (double-spaced, typewritten) in length and follow an outline provided in class prior to beginning the group.

4. Class attendance and participation (20%)

Overall evaluation of class participation will take into account the manner and extent to which the student: 1) attends regularly and on-time, 2) shares own experiences, viewpoints, and reactions, 3) raises relevant questions and issues, 4) participates in analysis of practices under discussion, 5) gives and uses feedback constructively, 6) completes written exercises, and 7) evaluates own performance in an objective and discriminating way. While the Instructor assigns the final grade for participation, at the end of the course students will submit a self-evaluation form pertaining to their participation. Relative to participation, there are three broad, free-standing criteria that bear on one's grade. These include a) attendance, b) and c) overall level of professionalism shown. At a minimum, an "A" grade for participation requires that the student contribute to the class in an active and professional manner and miss no more than one class session. A "B" or lower grade for participation may be given to students missing more than one class session without compelling reason and prior arrangements with the instructor. Certainly, however, factors beyond attendance may figure into a low participation grade.

Evaluation and Grading

Students may expect to be graded in accord with the following scale:

A+	96 - 100
A	94 - 95
A-	91 - 93
B+	87 - 90
B	84 - 86
B-	81 - 83
C+	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C-	70 - 73
D	60 - 69
F	59 - Below

The contribution of each major assignment to the overall grade is as follows:

30%	Mid-term examination
30%	Final Examination
30%	Group evaluation/analysis
10%	Class attendance/participation

Required texts

Epstein, L. (1992). Brief treatment and a new look at the task-centered approach. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Rose, S. (1989). Working with adults in groups. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Reader on family therapy (Available at Laser Graphics in Castleton)

Recommended text

Vinogradov, S. & Yalom, I. (1989). Group psychotherapy. Washington, D. C.: American Psychiatric Press, Inc.

Course Schedule and Assignments*

Session #1 Orientation to the course
January 12 Characteristics of brief treatment
 Task-centered model

Session #2 Individual assessment
January 19 Contracting and goal-setting

Assignments

Epstein, pp. 5-34, 39-77, 113-150

Session #3 Treatment planning/implementation
January 26 Intervention methods

Session #4 Intervention methods
February 2

Assignments

Epstein, pp. 223-264

Session #5 Termination and evaluation
February 9 Orientation to experiential process

Assignments

Epstein, pp. 265-320

Session #6 Mid-term examination
February 16

Session #7 Orientation to group work
February 23 Key leadership tasks

Assignments

Rose, pp. 1-22

Yalom, pp. 1-29

*Please note: Some changes in the course schedule may be necessary along the way to accommodate unanticipated developments in the class process.

Session #8
March 2 Group formation and initial sessions

Assignments

Rose, pp. 45-149
Yalom, pp. 30-42, 43-56

Session #9
March 9 Group process and structure
Intervention methods/techniques

Assignments

Rose, pp. 23-44, 150-226

Session #10
March 16 Spring Recess - No Class

Session #11
March 23 Group problem-solving
Termination and evaluation

Assignments

Rose, pp. 243-308
Yalom, pp. 133-160

Session #12
March 30 Family-centered practice
Understanding family systems

Assignments

Reader references: 1) The context of family-centered practice (Hartman), 2) The meta-frameworks perspective (Bruenlin/Schwartz/Karrer)

Session #13
April 6 Family assessment/contracting

Assignments

Reader references: 1) Diagrammatic assessment of family relationships (Hartman), 2) Assessing family functioning (Hepworth/Larsen)

Session #14
April 13 Brief therapy with families

Assignments

Reader references: 1) Problem-centered systems therapy of the family (Epstein/Bishop), 2) Structural family therapy (Nichols/Schwartz)

Session #16
April 27 Examination