COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the theoretical foundation of social work from both philosophical and ethical points of view.

**The Philosophical Realm**

The Philosophical nature of this class is designed to assist students in developing a philosophy of helping underpinned by the values and ethics of the profession. The classroom becomes a learning environment which engages students in a heightened level of self-understanding in order to become more aware of the very value system that they bring to the clients with whom they work.

The course content, anchored in philosophical, biblical, and spiritual frameworks, elucidates the social work philosophy of helping. The basic purpose of this course is for students to develop a philosophy of helping.

In this course, such philosophical themes as spirituality, the dual nature of the human being, conflicting conceptions of time, good and the problem of evil, loss and suffering, the Holocaust and other genocides, sin and repentance/behavior change, and social justice are studied from philosophical, and religious perspectives. Spiritual/religious and professional systems of thought, anchored in philosophical realms and social work, are studied in the course of understanding the complexity of human nature. Conflicts and similarities are highlighted.

The focus of the course is on acquiring specific knowledge and on examining values. It is organized around the following questions: What is the essence of being human? What is the role of time in human functioning? How do human beings deal with the problem of evil, and how do students and clients explain tragedy and pain? Where was God during the Holocaust and other acts of genocide and natural disasters - the crisis of faith? What is the process of behavior change for people who are unhappy with their lives? How can social justice effect social change? The goal is for students to develop conceptions of human nature – a philosophy of helping - that they can apply in their work with clients.

**The Practical and Ethical Realm**

The practical and ethical realm of the course is intended to assist students in assessing their work with individuals, families, groups, and communities from an ethical perspective. While ethics is addressed in all areas of social work education, this segment will provide the theory and framework for making sound ethical decision-making. The focus of this course begins with an overview of the values of social work practice, utilizing the NASW Code of Ethics as a framework. Students will become familiar with the challenges of negotiating value conflicts that emerge between the worker, professional standards, agency, and personal religious values versus professional values in the work environment.

The deontological, utilitarian, and moral theories will be the basis for ethical decision-making and justification models will be introduced through the use of concrete issues and cases, thus combining
theoretical frameworks with practical analysis. Students will learn the difference between a value conflict and an ethical dilemma, how to apply theory, and a model for mediating ethical dilemmas in their work with individuals, families, and groups, in social policy, and in social welfare. The exploration of values and ethics reinforces the profession’s commitment to its standards and codes of practice. It is an in-depth exploration of values introduced in first-year courses, such as Foundations of Social Work Practice, Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Cultural Diversity, and Social Welfare Organization.

This is a required course for all advanced standing students, located in the Human Behavior and Social Environment sequence. Students should have worked with clients and client systems for a year and been exposed to a range of problems and issues in social work practice. They are expected to gain insight into their experiences through the application of philosophical concepts. The course further develops themes in the Human Behavior course as we apply the duality of human beings to the stages of the life cycle and the development of the professional self. It connects to the practice courses, as students share their practice experiences to develop new ways of viewing clients and their problems. It incorporates content from Social Welfare Organization in studying the concept of social justice in social work and religion. It includes elements of feminism, substance abuse, battered women, child abuse, the elderly and minorities which are cited to illustrate various ways of understanding human nature. Research is cited in studies of behavior change.

I. COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES

The course will help students achieve the following competencies:

Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers: • make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context; • use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations; • demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication; • use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and • use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

Competency 2 – Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand 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. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

• apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
• present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
• apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Measure 1A – Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development

Measure 1B – Attend to professional roles and boundaries

Measure 2A – Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

II. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Learning will occur through a variety of methods and experiences, but mainly through a dialogical interchange of ideas, questions and answers. Students are encouraged to ask questions and seek answers to the challenging course material.

III. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING

Students are expected to attend all classes and to be on time. Grades will be determined based on class participation and the expectation that students will do the required reading specified under each course unit. Each assignment will be weighted as follows 30% for Assignment I and 50% for the Final Assignment and 20% for class participation, attendance and completion of assignments on time.

Texts for the Course

• Available on E-RES


Note: All required readings are on-line through electronic reserve (ERES). Your instructor will distribute the password and directions to access these readings.
IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Midterm – Due Session 7

This assignment measures:

(1) **Competency #1 – Engage in Ethical and Professional Behavior**
   Measure #1A – Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development
   Measure #1B – Attend to professional roles and boundaries
   Measure #1C – Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics

(2) **Competency #2 - Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**
   Measure #2A – Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

**Guidelines for Completion of Assignment**

The purpose of this paper is to integrate the themes of the course and to help you to apply religious/spiritual/philosophical values to social work values and practice.

This assignment fulfills objectives 1, 2, 8 and 10 of the course. In this paper, you are asked to choose a topic from those listed and explore your understanding of the knowledge and values that are representative of your own religious, spiritual, and ethnic group. Compare them to social work philosophy and practice and discuss their relationship to your own philosophy of helping. This entails an articulation of your conception of human beings, how you use yourself in the helping relationship, and how this influences your role as a professional.

Select one of the philosophical themes of the course,
- Dual Nature of Man
- Time
- Gender
- Loneliness
- Good and Evil
- Sin and Repentance. Other sub-themes may be acceptable, but you must gain approval from the professor first.

1. Trace the origins of your topic in the sources of your own religious/ethnic/spiritual philosophy.
2. Document its relevance to social work values and ethics using the NASW Code of Ethics; how social work understands with this topic, and social work interventions that may apply to the topic.
3. Apply the topic and your understanding of this topic to a client or a client system. This is the critical section of the paper as it reflects your creativity.
4. Discuss this topic's influence on your philosophy of helping – how you see your clients and how this influences the way you work with clients.

A minimum of 4 Peer-reviewed scholarly articles are required. 8-10 pages. Use APA style. Proofread your paper and use spell check and grammar check to correct misspelled words and
grammatical errors.

**Final Paper: Due Final Session**

**Analysis of an ethical dilemma**

This assignment measures:

**Competency # 1**: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior;
**Measure #1B** - Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the NASW Code of Ethics
**Measure #1C** - Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts.

**Guidelines for completion of the Assignment**

Select a topic, preferably from your practice, that has general social importance. Obtain prior approval of the topic from your instructor.

1. Discuss the history or genesis of the ethical dilemma and, if applicable, the values underlying the topic from the perspectives of society, the profession, religion, the agency, the client, and your own.
2. Present a case in which the social worker is in conflict with the family, agency, colleagues, group, or community over this ethical dilemma. Describe the specific conflict situation.
3. Present the ethical dilemma in one or two sentences.
4. Utilizing the Ethical Justification Model of Beauchamp & Childress, apply the model to your case. Begin with the background information
   a. Identify any value conflicts that may be present in the ethical dilemma.
   b. Identify ethical principles and theories as they pertain to the ethical dilemma.
   c. Identify possible courses of action and the benefits/costs and possible outcomes of each.
   d. Make the decision/resolution and explain how and why you arrived at that decision.
   e. Discuss how your personal values entered into the decision-making process.
5. Throughout the paper, cite a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed scholarly sources from literature on the topic and on the values and ethical considerations.
6. Use APA style consistently. Proofread and use spell-check. Approximate length: 10-12 pages. Follow this outline accurately. Deviation will lead to a lower grade.

V. **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting disability-related accommodations should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, akelsen@yu.edu, (646) 592-4280 during the first week of class. Once you have been approved for accommodations, please contact your professor directly to ensure the successful implementation of those accommodations.

VI. **E-Reserves**

What is EReserve?

EReserve (Electronic Reserve) is Yeshiva University’s on-line web based system used to provide access to journal articles, book excerpts, and other course materials. Most articles listed in each
syllabus are available on EReserve. You can access full text articles from your home or from a
university computer.

How do I use EReserve?
1. Go to the library’s online resources page: http://www.yu.edu/libraries/
2. Click on online resources.
3. Click on EReserves
4. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login
and password (obtain this from the library).
5. In the ‘search for Courses’ box, type in the name of your course.
6. Click on the link to your course.
7. Enter the password given to you by your instructor (ALL UPPERCASE).
8. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are
alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.
9. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.
10. If you have any problems, please contact John Moryl at Moryl@yu.edu

VII. PLAGIARISM

Students should remember that the school does not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction
acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else’s work as his or her own is stealing from the
authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student
directly copies another’s work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of
another’s work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new
statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of
another student and present them as one’s own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own
presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else’s work. However, the work to which
you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have
plagiarized any part of the assignment in this course will FAIL the course, and will be referred to the
Associate Dean automatically for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

VIII. HIPAA ALERT

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that
you understand that any case information you present from your work will need to be de-identified.
What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be
changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain
other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis,
race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, gender is directly related to the case
presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

IX. COURSE OUTLINE

Readings with an * are on E-RES

Unit I.
Introduction to Course: Spirituality and Religion (Session 1)
Competency 2

Learning Themes
1. Content and structure of course.
2. Objectives and expectations.
3. The role of spirituality in life and in social work.
5. Chapters I and II in Genesis.

Readings


The Nature of the Human Being Part 1: (Session 2)
Covers learning objectives 1, 2, 8, 10,

Learning Themes:
1. The creation story in Genesis and implications for understanding human nature
2. The human being in dynamic interaction
3. The individual as a spiritual being
Readings

Bible. Chapters I and II in Genesis.


The Nature of the Human Being Part 2: (Session 3) Covers learning objectives 1, 2, 8, 10,

Learning Themes:
1. The individual as a majestic being
2. Relationship to God
3. Relationship between the genders
4. Creativity and Productivity
5. The Natural Community
6. The client and social worker as Adam I.

Readings


The Nature of the Human Being Part 3: (Session 4) Covers learning objectives 1, 2, 8, 10,
Learning Themes:
1. The individual as a spiritual being
2. Adam I & Adam II in the Same Individual
3. Applying the Adam I/II Typology to Social Phenomena
4. Developmental Life Stages and Social Work
5. Feminism
6. Existential Loneliness
7. The Spiritual Faith Community
8. The client and social worker as Adam II.
9. The Dual Nature of the Human Being in Dynamic Interaction

Readings


*Soloveitchik. The lonely man of faith. New York: Doubleday, p. 16-33 & p. 54-59Eres

**Time - (Session 5)**
Covers learning objective 4

Learning Themes:
1. Conceptions of time: religious, philosophical, sociological, historical and contemporary.
2. Time as Linear
3. Time as Cyclical
4. Time Phases and the Social Worker.
5. The Concept of Process.
6. Time in a Managed Care Environment

Competencies 1 & 2

Readings:

Good and Evil: (Session 6)
Competencies 1 & 2

1. Conceptions of good and evil within the religious realm.
2. The "good" and "bad" client – making value judgments about client behavior.
3. Theodicy - the religious legitimation of evil. How clients and social workers explain suffering and personal tragedy, or, why bad things happen to good people.

Readings


**Sin & Repentance/Faith: (Session 7)**

**Competencies 1 & 2**

1. Definition of sin
2. Faith after the Holocaust & other genocides, natural disasters
3. The role of the social worker with survivors and children
4. The Psychology of Behavior Change
5. The impact of "sinful" behavior on the personality
6. The social worker's observation of clients' behaviors.
7. Repentance: The Process of Behavior Change

**Readings**


**UNIT II**

**Values: Theoretical Framework (Session 8)**
Competencies 1 & 2

I. The nature of values
2. Definition of values
3. Values in contrast to preferences
4. The functions of values
5. Values classification model

Readings:

* Casework, 205-13.
Eres


*Reamer, F.G. (2006). *Social work values and ethics*, Chapter 1&2 Eres

**Value Conflicts Between Social Worker and Client (Session 9)**
Competency 1 & 2

1. Nature of Value Conflicts between Social Worker and Client
2. Value conflicts and Cultural Competence
3. Informed Consent
4. Confidentiality/Duty to Warn
5. Paternalism vs. Autonomy

Readings:


Beauchamp, T.L. and Childress, J.F. Principles of Biomedical Ethics. Chapter 3: Respect for autonomy, Chapter 5: Beneficence

Suggested Readings:


Conflict Between Personal and Professional Values (Session 10)
Competencies 1 & 2

1. What is the social worker to do with personal values in the professional context?
2. Factors that influence personal values, with a particular emphasis on religion.
3. Dealing with personal values and ethics and their interface with professional values and ethics.

Readings:


Ethics (Session 11)
Competency 1.
1. The intersection of values and ethics
2. Nature of ethics
3. Sources of ethics

Readings:
Linzer, N., (1999) Resolving ethical dilemmas in social work practice, Chapter 4


Reamer, F. (2006) Social work values and ethics, chapter 3

**Ethical Theory (Session 12)**
1. Identifying ethical dilemmas
2. Ethical Theories - deontology, utilitarianism.
3. The process of ethical decision-making
4. Ethical Justification models justification.

Beauchamp & Childress (2012) *Principles in Biomedical Ethics (7th edition)*, Chapter 8 & Chapter 4

**Ethical Dilemmas in Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities (Session 13)**
Competency 1 & 2

Readings:


Reamer, F. (2006). *Social work values and ethics*, Chapter 4

http://mftcourses.net/documents/zygmond%20borhem%2089.pdf

Suggested Reading:


Ethics in Research, Supervision, and Administration (Session 14)
Competency 1

Readings:


