WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE I
SWK 6003
Block, 2015

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This is the first of a two-semester sequence in social work practice. This course provides students with introductory knowledge of social work methodology within the context of agency-based practice. As such, the focus of this course will build upon a liberal arts foundation to develop beginning relationship and assessment skills. As a foundation generalist course, it provides a framework for the beginning student to gain an understanding of how to help people in any setting using a multiplicity of skills grounded in a systems approach.

Core principles and concepts such as “starting where the client is”, the worker's conscious use of self, social work as a planned change process in which knowledge, value, skill and purpose determine professional action, are studied in depth and provide the foundation for the development of specific practice skills. As this course is taken in conjunction with the field practicum, this course provides the theoretical basis for beginning social work practice. A foundation approach to the helping process is stressed which utilizes micro, mezzo and macro content. Broad based practice skills are introduced which include communication between client and worker, interviewing, relationship building, assessment, and problem solving, sensitivity to issues of difference and their impact on practice, and work with vulnerable and at risk populations including the elderly, women, those socioeconomically disadvantaged and the disabled. Within the overall curriculum for beginning students, this course is linked conceptually to Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Research I, and Social Policy.

The course will stress the environmental, social, cultural, economic and psychological factors that affect clients’ lives and their capacities for seeking and using help, as well as those that affect workers’ capacities to provide the type of help and service needed. Within the context of practice, the course infuses content on values and ethics throughout the semester as it applies to the various learning modules.

COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. They will engage in learning and supervision and consultation, they will practice self-reflection, demonstrate professional demeanor, and recognize boundary and integration issues (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.1).

2. Apply social work ethical principles that guide professional practice. They will be able to recognize their personal values, make informed ethical decisions, and manage professional boundaries (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.2).
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. They will analyze relationships between the client, family and worker and use appropriate practice models (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.3).

4. Engage diversity and difference in practice. They will manage potential conflicts between personal feelings and institutional responsibility, recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping lives, gain self-awareness to eliminate the personal bias (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.4).

5. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. They will use conceptual frameworks to guide the process of assessment, intervention and evaluation (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.7).

6. Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. They will engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate their clients (CSWE Advanced Competencies 2.1.20 a, b, c, and d).

**PLAGIARISM**
Students should remember that the School will 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 work 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 your 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 any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

**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, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**
Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

**Students with Disabilities**
Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is
E-RES (Electronic Reserve)
Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [E-RES]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

How do I Use E-RES?
1. Go to the library’s online resources page:

2. Click on E-RES. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login and password.

3. Click on “Search E-RES” or on “Course Index,” and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author. [all Foundations courses will be listed under Beder, the sequence chair].

4. Click on the link to your course.

5. Enter the password given to you by your instructor. Code is BESWK.

6. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.

7. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.

To view documents that are in pdf format, the computer you are using must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software. You can download it FREE at www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

Required Texts:
ISBN: 978-1-133-31259-8, $112.00

ISBN: 978-1-111-63320-2, $122.00

Suggested Texts:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Assignment I - Due 2nd class session

Asking for Help: An Experiential Paper

This assignment measures the practice behavior in Core Competencies 2.1.1 (Identity as a social worker) and 2.1.9 (Respond to contexts that shape practice).

Describe a situation in which you found it necessary to ask someone for help. Describe your feelings before, during and after this experience. The request need not have been made of a professional but it should not have been a trivial matter.

The focus of this assignment is on the thoughts and feelings you experienced in relation to asking for help rather than on the situation itself.

Please answer the following questions in your discussion:

1. What have you learned from this experience of seeking help?

2. How will this experience influence your approach to clients who are asking for help in an agency in which you are placed?

3. Discuss how your experience relates to the conceptualization of social work practice that has been presented in your readings and in class discussions.

This paper should not exceed five, double spaced pages.

- Identify any internal (staffing issues, space, etc) /external (political, funding, community) pressures on this agency/organization that impact service delivery?

Assignment II – Engagement, Assessment, Goal Setting and Contracting

This assignment measures the practice behavior in Core Competencies 2.1.2 (Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice), 2.1.3 (Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments), 2.1.4 (Engage diversity and difference in practice), 2.1.7 (Apply knowledge of human behavior in the social environment) and 2.1.10 (Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities).

This assignment asks the student to consider the process of developing a relationship with a client/client system and discusses the process of engagement, assessment, contracting and goal setting. If you have never done volunteer work or worked with a client system, make up a client in collaboration with your professor.

Answer each question.

1) Identify and describe a client system with whom you have been engaged or anticipate being engaged.

2) Describe in detail your expectation in being able to engage this client. What might the differences
and similarities between you and the client system (racial, age, ethnic, socioeconomic, religion, etc.) be and discuss how these differences/similarities affect the engagement process.

3) Describe the strengths and challenges of the potential client.

4) What social work literature has informed your approach to engaging with this client/client system? What specific readings/text material will guide you?

5) What goals and contracting arrangements would you and the client decide upon? What does the literature say about setting goals with the client/client system?

7) Describe any ethical dilemmas anticipated in working with this client/

This paper should be between 6-8 pages and uses a minimum of 5 references beyond the required texts, to include journal articles, other texts and related readings.

All written assignments require understanding of theoretical concepts and materials presented in the readings. References should be made to relevant materials and integrated into the discussion of practice. All papers are to be written observing current APA format, double-spaced using 12 point font.

EVALUATION
This course will be graded in the following manner:

75% Written Assignments (3)
   Assignment I - ungraded
   Assignment II - 30%
   Assignment III – 45%

25% Class Attendance and Participation

TEACHING METHODS
Required and suggested readings;
Personal reactions to readings;
Lectures and discussions; Films or Speakers;
Use of students' work experience in the field;
Analysis of teaching records;
Role-plays and classroom exercises;
Audio-visual aides; Films and tapes;
Assignments.

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit I. Foundations of Social Work Practice (Sessions 1, 2, 3)
Content Covered:
1. The culture and professional milieu of social work;
2. Social work values and ethics;
3. The Generalist Practice model of social work practice.
A. Introduction to Generalist Practice (Session 1)

Required Readings:
Hepworth, et al: Chapter 1, The challenges of social work, 3-21; Chapter 2: Direct Practice, 25-34; Chapter 3: Overview of the helping process, 35-56.

Shulman: Chapter 1, An Interactional Approach to Helping, 2-47.


Suggested Readings:


B. Social Work Values and Ethics (Session 2)

Required Readings:

Hepworth et al: Chapter 4, Operationalizing the cardinal social work values, 57-86.

Suggested Readings:


C. Introduction to the Core Skills in Social Work (Session 3)
Required Readings:
Hepworth et al: Chapter 5, Building blocks of communication, 89-134.

Suggested Readings:
Compton & Galaway: Chapter 8, Engaging potential clients, 197-232.

Unit II. An Overview of Practice Approaches (Session 4-5)
Micro Practice
Required Readings:
Hepworth et al: Assessing family functioning in diverse and cultural contexts, 240 – 282
Shulman: Part II, Social Work with Individuals, 67-220

Mezzo Practice
Required Readings:
Shulman: Part IV, Social Work with Groups, 265-470

Macro Practice
Required Readings:
In Social Workers’ Desk Reference...
Mizrahi: Community organizing principles and practice guidelines. 517-524.
**Unit III.  Assessment and Role of the Agency in Social Work Practice (Sessions 6)**

**Required Readings:**
Hepworth et al: Chapter 8, Assessment: Exploring and Understanding Problems and Strengths, 179-205.
Hepworth et al: Chapter 9, Assessment: Intrapersonal and Environmental Factors 206-239.

**Suggested Readings:**
Compton & Galaway: Chapter 10, Data collection and assessment, 346-394.

**Unit IV.  Planning and Contracting in Social Work Practice (Sessions 7 & 8)**

**Required Readings:**
Hepworth: Chapter 12, Negotiating goals and formulating a contract, 313 - 354.
Shulman: Chapter 4, Beginnings and contracting skills, 74-110.

**Skills in the Work Phase (Session 9, 10)**

**Required Reading:**
Shulman: Chapter 5, Skills in the Work Phase, 146-220.
Shulman: Chapter 11, The work phase in the group, 387-435.
Hepworth, Chapter 13 – Planning and Implementing Change Oriented Strategies, 379-438.

**Suggested Readings:**


**Unit VI.  Vulnerable Clients and Communities (Session 11-12)**

**Required Readings:**

**Women - choose two or more articles**


**Elderly - choose two or more articles**


**GLBT - choose two or more articles**


**Children & Adolescents -choose two or more articles**


**Unit VI. Social Action and Community Social Work (Sessions 13)**

**Required Readings:**


Shulman: Chapter 16, Social Work in the Community, 540-576.

**Suggested Readings:**


**Unit VII. Practice Across Difference (Session 14)**

**Required Readings:**

Compton & Galaway: Chapter 9, Communication across cultures, 235-252.


Bibliography


