

School of Social Work
 North Hall
 University of Iowa
 Salome Raheim, Director

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Center: Iowa City
 Session: Fall 2002

COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Human Behavior in the Social Environment 42:140 section 002
 3 semester hours Grading Status: Letter graded

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Human behavior and development in the context of social/ecological systems and human diversity. Overview of theoretical perspectives applied to understanding biopsychosocial dimensions of the person, individual behavior and development throughout the lifespan, and within contexts of diversities of family, group, community, organizational, and cultural systems.

Co-requisite and Pre-requisites:

Graduate standing, as well as admission to the Social Work program

Optional Additional Elective:

Students enrolled in this class are eligible to enroll in an intergenerational service-learning project. This opportunity involves spending time in West Liberty, a small town about 15 miles from Iowa City, to work with elders. Students interested in enrolling should register for 1 s.h. credit in Fieldwork in Gerontology (42:150). This class will also be made available in the spring for students enrolled in Social Work Practice With Individuals, Families and Groups. There will two teams. One will go on alternate weeks on a weekday and the other on alternate weekends. Travel will be provided by University van and each visit, including travel time, will be about three hours. Students will attend five activities with an older person and a special event celebrating the program. Some of the activities include assisting elders write letters to elementary school penpals, playing cards, reminiscing, and socializing. A short paper about reminiscing will dovetail with an assignment in this class, where students not enrolling in this elective will interview people in another stage of the lifecycle.

Rationale:

This is the first course focused upon relationships between individuals and larger social systems. It introduces social work and other related theories about development and change within the context of human diversity. As a survey course, it provides a foundation for further development of one's own theory and knowledge base in subsequent courses.

Instructional Method: Reducing the "Teacher" and "Learner" Dichotomy

Traditional roles of teacher and learner imply a linear relationship inconsistent, in this professor's view, with social work theory and values. Teachers are those who impart "truth" learners passively accept as just that. This may work in teaching someone how to tie a shoe, but is not appropriate when exploring various theories others have constructed in an attempt to explain human behavior. Our intent in this class is to apply **critical thinking** when exposed to theory so that each of us can take from the class what seems of value in further constructing theory bases to apply to individual interpretation of the social world and social work practice.

Please do not expect to be taught. You will be "professed". As a professor, my role is to state my opinions and beliefs. I will be the first to admit that they may be wrong. My hope is that this class will offer all an opportunity to develop relationships where each of us are both professors and learners.

Bumper Sticker Logic Related To This Class

"Question Authority" – To gain as much as possible from this class it is important that you do so (although the command is paradoxical). In other words, critically analyze course content and reject what does not fit for you. Also, be open to questioning your own authority: be willing to critically analyze perceptions you brought into the classroom.

"Speak English or Go Home" – we will be covering traditional paradigms (those most of us grew up believing) and alternative paradigms (coming from minority voices). Paradigms are all encompassing worldviews in which we are so submerged it is difficult to consider that other ways of knowing may be as valid. Appreciating alternative paradigms is a pathway toward **cultural competence**. My belief is that appreciation of diversity aids emotional health in addition to being essential to effective social work practice.

"God Is Too Big For One Religion" – No one holds a monopoly on truth. Today people are killing each other because they believe they know ultimate truths. In addition to religious or spiritual views, it is a necessity for healthy living to listen to and appreciate

views of others. Seemingly different beliefs about what is true may not be as different as we think if we take to learn them.

III. GOALS OF THE COURSE

- A. To develop theoretical foundations for practice by applying critical thinking skills to knowledge and theory of human behavior
- B. To apply an ecological systems perspective to understanding mutual effects that individuals and larger systems have upon each other, including social and economic forces, in either promoting (empowering) or deterring people from achieving optimal health and well-being.
- C. To apply an ecological systems perspective along with other course content to identify strengths of various social systems, as well as environmental obstacles to their optimal health, well-being, and empowerment **throughout the lifecycle**.

IV. ACADEMIC OUTCOMES OF THE COURSE

- A. To critically analyze and apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development
- B. To demonstrate an understanding of how the scientific method as well as different ways of knowing contribute to research guiding effective practice.
- C. To apply theories of person-in-situation and theories of development to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and larger social systems (i.e. families, groups, organizations, communities, and cultures).
- D. To analyze how theory and knowledge presented in this course fit with strengths-based practice and empowerment of individuals and larger social systems.
- E. To articulate social and economic justice needs within and between the range of social systems as directed by social work values and ethics.
- F. To integrate knowledge and theory in developing culturally competent practice.
- G. To critique how various theories of human behavior – including theories of bio-psycho-social and lifespan development - apply to diverse individuals and groups, including diversity by race, culture, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, spirituality, and national origin **throughout the lifecycle**.

V. REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Required Texts

Schriver, J.M. (2001). Human behavior and the social environment: Shifting paradigms in essential knowledge for social work practice. (3rd ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Frankl, V,E, (1984). Man's search for meaning. (4th ed.). New York: Simon and Schuster.

Readings

Barber, B.R. (1996). Introduction to Jihad vs mcWorld: How globalism and tribalism are reshaping the world. New York: Ballantine. 3-23.

Beck, C.Y. (1993). "Whirlpools and stagnant waters". in Nothing special: Living zen. San Francisco: Harper.

Germain et al, "The ecological perspective". Encyclopedia of Social Work.

*Hall, E.T. (1989). "The paradox of culture". in Beyond Culture. New York: Anchor Books. 9-23.

Korten, D.C. (1995). "Prologue: A personal journey". in When corporations rule the world. co-publication of Berrett-Koehler Publishers & Kumarian Press.

*Payne, M. (1997). Modern social work theory. (2nd ed.) Chicago: Lyceum Books. (selected sections only)

*Pollitt, K. (1995). "Marooned on gilligan's island: Are women morally superior to men?" in Reasonable creatures: Essays on woman and feminism. New York: A. Knopf.

Schulick, B. (2002). "All quiet on the homefront." Yoga Journal. July-August.

*Sermabeikian, P. (1994). "Our clients, ourselves: The spiritual perspective and social work." Social Work. 39(2). 178-183.

*Wambaugh, K.G., Grant, D. & Chatterjee, P. (1997). "Can HBSE classes discuss socially sensitive topics without being labeled "politically correct"? in Bloom, M. & Klein, W.C. Controversial issues in human behavior and the social environment. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Witkin, S.L. (1998). "Human rights and social work". Social Work. 43(3). 197-200.

VI. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

A. DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATION METHODS

(1) Expectations of student performance

- a. All enrolled are expected to attend unless illness or other circumstances make absence necessary. When possible, the professor should be informed prior to the class missed.
- b. Active participation in class is encouraged. Often "students" have insights to offer the "professor" does not have. Please share them (refer to guidelines for classroom discussion).
- c. Assignments, including readings, exams, and papers are due as scheduled unless prior arrangement is made. The professor reserves the right of not accepting material turned in late. Please see the following graded assignment and the weight attached to each.

(2) Graded assignments used to evaluate student performance

Final course grade is determined by a combination of three in-class exams and a final paper. Each is weighted as 25% of the total grade. Please refer to section VIII for further description, when exams are scheduled, and due date for the final paper

B. GRADING PROCEDURE

The University plus/minus grading will be used weighed as follows:

100 – 97 = A+	96 – 93 = A	92 – 90 = A
89 – 87 = B+	86 – 83 = B	82 – 80 = B-
79 – 77 = C+	76 – 73 = C	72 – 70 = C-

69 – 67 = D+ 66 – 63 = D 62 – 60 = D- 59 = F

Statement on Blind Grading:

When feasible and appropriate, the professor will blind grade student papers, tests, and exams. Students are to submit all such assignments with their social security number rather than their name.

VII. UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL POLICIES

A. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

Federal Law requires that the University make reasonable efforts to accommodate students with disabilities. A student with a disability will bring to the instructor a confidential form (available in the Office of Student Disability Services) completed and signed by a counselor in the Office of Student Disability Services, verifying the need for accommodation. If the student and instructor disagree on how course requirements may be altered without compromising the integrity of the course, the student will contact the Director. The Director will work with the student, the instructor, and the Office of Student Disability Services to resolve such differences. Questions may be addressed to the Office of Student Disability Services, 335-1462.

B. RESOURCES FOR OBTAINING ADDITIONAL HELP.

The School provides support and assistance to students who, for a variety of reasons, may be experiencing academic problems. Such students should speak with the Undergraduate or Graduate Coordinator or the Director of the School to arrange for special support services.

C. STUDENT GRIEVANCES.

A student wishing to grieve a grade should discuss the matter with the instructor. If the grievance is not resolved, students should use the School's appeal process as described in the School's student handbooks (Appeals Committee). In the event that the grievance still has not been resolved, the student should send a letter describing the grievance to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, who attempts to resolve the matter. The Associate Dean changes a grade only if it was

assigned in violation of College or University policy and only after consultation with the School's Director.

D. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT.

An incident of inappropriate citation (i.e., plagiarism) or other forms of academic dishonesty, such as the fabrication of research data, will result in a reduction of the student's grade for the course, at minimum, or a failing grade, depending upon the severity of the transgression. Graduate student's misconduct will also be reported to the Graduate Coordinator, at which point further disciplinary action may be taken. Please refer to the Educational Handbook for the Master of Social Work Program, Student Advancement Policy, pp. C-1 through C-6. For undergraduate students, academic misconduct will be reported to the Undergraduate Coordinator.

VIII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All exams are essay and short answer. Questions will primarily be drawn from between each testing period, although general content from the entire course to exam time must be able to be applied.

The final paper's content is suitable to developing your outline for it throughout the semester. You will be asked to describe what specific course content has contributed to developing your theory base for practice, and why these fit for you. a handout will be given further clarifying expectations of the paper following class discussion and consultation. Reflective thought put into the paper should help development of both **critical thinking**, preparation for further coursework, and eventual practice.

20 points possible	Exam I – September 26 th
20 points possible	Exam II – November 14 th
15 points possible	Lifecycle Interview Paper November 21 st
20 points possible	Exam III – December 12 th
25 points possible	Final paper – due December 12 th or before

Please see following page for content within these timeframes

IX. CLASS TOPICS AND CLASS SCHEDULE*

*Subject to minor revision as learning needs and opportunities may arise

Thursday August 29th

Introductions

Overview of Course, professor's perspective of the learning relationship and HBSE

Open discussion of students' interests and hopes regarding class

Group Activity: Getting To Know You

Mini lecture: Foundations of contemporary social work theory: ecological systems, strengths and empowerment-based perspectives

Activity: Shared assumptions about human behavior

Handout and discuss: "All Quiet on the Homefront"

Readings for next class: Schriver Chapter one pp. 1-21

Chapter three pp. 138-148

"The Ecological Perspective" (in folder)

"Nothing Special: Living Zen" (in folder)

Activity to do prior to the next class: Play the "Longevity Game" at:

<http://www.Northwesternmutual.com/games>

**Be prepared in small groups (it would be good to have notes
Prior to class) the following to the extent that you are comfortable:**

- 1. In examining your life expectancy, what lifestyle choices are associated with either long or short life? Had you ever considered these factors consciously? What changes, if any, might you consider in order to improve the quality and/or quantity of your life?**
- 2. Looking at a potential life expectancy, what things have you done or not done to prepare to live into old age? What additional planning or changes are necessary for you to accommodate your own aging?**
- 3. What were your emotional reactions to "playing" this "game"? Why do you think you experienced those particular emotions?**

Rationale: To help facilitate wellness in clients' lives it is Important that we examine the degree to which We commit to our own wellness.

It is not possible to be dispassionate when learning About the human lifecycle and aging; it is an Emotional issue for all. To be effective in practice We must be confront our own challenges of the Lifecourse including aging and dying

Thursday September 5th

Introduction to concepts of traditional and alternative paradigms/ways of knowing and paradigm analysis

Shifting dominant historical worlds and theories

Applying an ecological perspective

Handouts: Traditional Western Mappings of the Social Structure: Classical Economic Theory, Organicism, Functionalism, and Dialectical Conflict

Linear and Systemic Views of Relationships

The Positive Functions of Poverty (Gans)

Readings for next class: Schiver, Chapter one pp. 21-28
Chapter two pp. 104- 113
"The Paradox of Culture" (in folder)

Thursday September 12th

CULTURE: The all encompassing social system
The paradox of culture
Inter-linking concepts? Ethnicity, race, and culture
What is "cultural competent" practice?
Accommodation vs. Assimilation of diversity

Activities: Limits of cultural accommodation
Cultural values clarification instrument

Application: Case Study – Margret and Sandor (to be handed out)

Readings for next class: Schriver, Chapter three pp. 116 - 129

“Can HBSE classes discuss socially sensitive topics without being labeled “politically correct?” (in folder)

Thursday September 19th

Discussion: balancing self with “political correctness” of social work perspectives
Assessing your own ways of thinking (theory) for the “Social Work tool box”

Appreciating metaphor and ambiguity

The person as political

Language as constructor of reality

Discussion: Defining each of our emerging theory bases
Preparing for exam 1

Thursday September 26th

EXAM ONE

Handout and discussion: Final paper

Readings for next class: Schriver, Chapter 9 pp. 498 – 542

Handout: “Rules of conduct for the non-working poor”

Activity prior to next class: Design Your Dream Downtown

Go to: <http://desmoinesregister.com/extras/funcity/index.html>

- Be ready to discuss:
1. What your ultimate downtown included
 2. Why you chose to include what you did
 3. What your selections indicate about your sense of what and who make up your ideal community; what might you have included in the possibilities that was not listed.

Thursday October 3rd

COMMUNITIES

Traditional and newer concepts of what a community is
 Functions of communities
 Discrimination and communities: blockbusting, steering, and red-lining
 Alternatives models of community
 Communities and diversity
 Discussion of web exercise about the ideal downtown
 Activity: discussion of Will article: regulating the morality of poor communities

Hand out: Description of Lifecycle Interview Assignment Due November 21st

Readings for next class: “Human rights and social work” (in folder)
 “To really feel good, build relationships” (handout)
 “My father was certain the world could be humane” (handout)

Thursday October 10th

Dimensions of small towns and neighborhoods
 Constructs of rural and urban lives
 Globalization of the rural U.S.
 Outmembers: youth, the unemployed, internationals, **the elderly**

Activity: assessing our own communities

Readings for next class: Schriver, Chapter 8 pp. 432 – 440
 “When corporations rule the world” (in folder)
 Introduction, Jihad vs. McWorld (in folder)

Thursday October 17th

ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction to organizations and social services
 The three C’s: capitalism, corporations, and McCulture

Discuss handouts: Three views of capitalism
 Top 10 grossing films in other countries (corporation vs. culture)

Readings for next class: Schriver Chapter 8 pp. 440 - 451
 Read sections of interest to you pp. 451- 477

Thursday October 24th

Traditional theories of organizations and bureaucracy
Organizational cultures

Guest speaker: Humanocracy and an organizational alternative – Tom Walz

Reading for next class: Schriver Chapter 7 pp. 391 - 424

Thursday October 31st

GROUPS

Groups and Social Work
Functional and systemic perspectives on groups and group roles
Dimensions of groups and groupwork
Oppression and groups
Varying group roles of elders in cultures and societies

Reading for next class: Schriver Chapter 6 pp. 315 – 344
Begin reading Man's Search for Meaning

Thursday November 7th

GROUPS AND FAMILIES

Families and Groups: shared societal functions
Social Work and family-focused practice
Traditional models of the family
Differential roles of ages in families

Guest speaker on family roles in Native American Cultures

Activity: What are “family Values”?

Readings for next class: Schriver Chapter 6 pp. 344 - 374
“Our Clients, ourselves: The spiritual perspective and social work practice” (in folder)

Thursday November 14th

EXAM TWO

Human diversity and familiness
The Spiritual Context
Effects of multigenerational life experiences on human behavior in families

A strengths perspective toward family diversity

Small group exercise: write down and discuss with group members a) what the ideal family constellation you think would have been best for you as a child, then b) describe the ideal family constellation you would like as an adult, and finally, c) **what would you most like your family constellation to be when you are very old.**

Readings for next class:

- Schrive Chapter 4 pp. 187 – 193 (for review of Freud)
- Payne Chapter 3 pp. 72 – 79 “psychodynamic perspectives” (in folder)
- Chapter 5 pp. 114 – 124 “Cognitive – behavioral theories” (in folder)
- Chapter 8 pp. 174 – 180 “Humanist and Existential Perspectives (in folder)

Thursday November 21st

THE PERSON THROUGH THE LIFESPAN

Traditional theory bases regarding individual human behavior and development

Contributions of Freud, Skinner, Piaget, and Rogers

Discussion: Finding Meaning in Life (Frankl)

Class activity: The Case of Michael Youngbear: Applying medical, psychological, and Environmental factors in assessment of an ethnic minority

Class activity: Discuss in mixed groups similarities and differences between three stages of

Life interviewed.

Interview Summary Paper Due

Readings for next class:

Schrive Chapter 5 pp. 236 - 241

Payne Chapter 10 pp. 214 – 221 “Radical and Marxist Perspectives”

Payne Chapter 11 pp. 238 – 246 “Anti-discriminatory and Anti-oppressive Perspectives”
 “Lifespan and Adult Development Models and People of Color” –Schrive pp. 256-260

Thursday November 28th

No class: University holiday

Thursday December 5th

Alternative theory bases regarding individual behavior and development in the context of oppressions: Marxist, feminist, and minority voices

Readings for next class:

Schrive Chapter 4 pp. 193 - 204

“Marooned on Gilligan’s Island: Are women morally superior to men?” (in folder)

“Grandparents as parents” in Schriver pp. 342-344

Thursday December 12th

Traditional Lifespan and moral development Theory: Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg, and Gilligan

EXAM THREE

FINAL PAPER DUE

Guidelines for Classroom Discussions

The content of this course will be intellectually, personally, and emotionally challenging. In order to achieve the objectives of the course, the classroom environment must be a safe one for all to participate. Therefore, it is important that all members of the class are free to discuss their thoughts and feelings, ask questions, and state their opinions. It is equally important that all statements made are respectful and do not demean or humiliate any individual present or any group of people. The following guidelines for classroom discussions are adapted from materials written by the Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis. We offer them here as a starting point for negotiating the ground rules we will adopt and agree to observe as a class to create a safe environment that will promote productive interaction.

1. Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, physical and mental differences and other characteristics exist.
2. Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups, whether we belong to a majority or minority group.
3. Agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
4. Assume that people--both those we study and those in this class--do the best they can.
5. Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can't disagree, only that you must do so respectfully.

The following are example of statements that honor these guidelines and statements that do not.

Acceptable: I really disagree with you. It makes me angry when I hear people say that feminism is responsible for the decline of the family. [elaborate why...]

Unacceptable: You sexist pig! I can't believe anyone would say anything so stupid.

Acceptable: I've thought about it a lot, and I really don't believe that homosexuals should be allowed to marry and adopt children [because...]

Unacceptable: Gays are disgusting. If you're gay you shouldn't hang around influencing kids.

Acceptable: It doesn't seem fair that I have to wait until I'm financially secure to have kids, but mothers on welfare get my tax money to support their families and don't have to work.

Unacceptable: People on welfare are just plain lazy...all the time driving Cadillacs and buying drugs with their welfare money.