

WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MASTER SYLLABUS

**SW 4020 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE METHOD IV: (3 credit hours)**

**I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES**

This course focuses on social work theory and methods relevant for social work practice with macro systems. The course focuses on content relevant to the context in which macro practice occurs, i.e. neighborhoods and communities, organization, and the legislative arena. Students develop an understanding of the reciprocal relationships people have with the larger social systems in which they live and how social systems of varying size can promote or deter human functioning. Students learn and practice skills in assessing and intervening (e.g., building power and human resources, planning, managing resources, marketing, developing organizations, taking action and evaluating change) in large systems, especially those who have been oppressed, to promote social and economic justice.

**II. SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OBJECTIVES**

**Knowledge Objectives: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate knowledge of:**

1. The contexts in which generalist social workers practice occurs within organizations and communities.
2. Social work's commitment to social change with larger systems to promote the well being of people, empowers populations at risk, and advances social and economic justice.
3. Values and ethical concerns which generalist social workers may face in practice with organizations and communities and the application of the NASW Code of Ethics to social work practice with larger systems.
4. Organizational and community theory used to assess the impact of the reciprocal relationships between people and the organizations and communities in which they live and interact on human functioning.

**Skill Objectives: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate beginning skills in:**

1. Assessing strengths and problems regarding the auspices and dynamics of human service organizations and their effects on individuals and the delivery of services.
2. Building professional relationships needed for practice with organizations and communities (e.g. self evaluation, critical thinking, communication skills, and plan for continuous

- professional development).
3. Applying organizational and community-based planned change and problem-solving processes (e.g. define issues, collect and assess data, plan and contract, identify alternative interventions, select and implement interventions, evaluate outcomes, terminate process) to reduce the cause and effects of discrimination and oppression on populations-at-risk.
  4. Applying ethically sound practice with organizations and communities, including clarification of and strategies for resolution of ethical differences and value issues.

**III. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:**

Students are to demonstrate comprehension of the course content and acquisition of knowledge and skill through a variety of assignments. Students are expected to develop competence in oral and written communication skills. Papers which do not adhere to the college-level standards for scholarly writing will be marked down. Student are also expected to utilize APA style of referencing including: organization in the presentation of ideas; correct use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, heading, subheadings, quotations; and avoid bias in language. All students are expected to submit their own original work. The presentation of another’s words as your own without giving credit to the source is regarded as plagiarism. Plagiarism is the same as lying and stealing. Any work that is submitted in this class and found to contain portions that are plagiarized will receive a **ZERO**.

**IV. GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS**

There will be three major assignments in this course. The assignments will contribute to the final grade as follows:

- Organizational Analysis
- Community Analysis

**Grading Policy:** Students may pass the course with a grade of **D** but must maintain a **C** average during the junior and senior year. (See Undergraduate Bulletin, Wayne State University P.317).

Grade distribution:

100-95	94-90	89-85	84-80	79-75	74-70	69-65	64-60	59-55
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+

**V. Texts and Required material**

Kirst-Ashman, K., & Hull, Grafton H. (2001). *Generalist practice with organizations and communities* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Belmont CA: Wadsworth / Thompson Learning.

## VI. Organization of the course

The format will be varied and will include the use of lectures, discussion, problem-solving exercises and films or videos. Interactive discussions with an experiential basis will be encouraged. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

## VII. Role of the Student and Instructor

See University Statement of Obligation of Students and Faculty Members of the teaching - learning process.

## VIII. Course Outline

Session	Content	Assignment
I	Introduction to the course and each other. Review of syllabus: course purpose, format, norms, and assignments. Introduction to generalist practice in organizations and communities: historical perspective, focus on empowerment and resiliency assimilation of professional values and ethics.	Read Chapter 4 Understanding organizations.
II	Discussion chapter 4 – defining organizations; organizational theories; nature of organizations; common problems encountered in organizations.	Read Chapter 5 Decision making for organizational change.
III	Discussion chapter 5 – change in organizations; beginning the change process; process of organizational change.	Read Chapter 6. How to implement macro-intervention: changing agency policy.
IV	Discussion Chapter 6 – the planned change process for organizational change; macro intervention.	Read Chapter 7 Project implementation and program development.
V	Discussion Chapter 7 – Initiating and implementing a project.	Read Chapter 8 Understanding neighborhoods and communities.
VI	Discussion Chapter 8 – Role of social workers in neighborhoods and communities; using the systems perspective; the community as an ecological and social system; power in the community.	Read Chapter 9 Macro practice in communities.
VII	Discussion Chapter 9 – Change in communities; beginning the change process.	Read Chapter 10 Evaluating macro practice.
VIII	Discussion Chapter 10 – overview of evaluation; key concepts in evaluations; kinds of evaluations; stages in evaluation; ethics and values in evaluation.	Read Chapter 11 Advocacy and social action with populations at risk.

IX	Discussion Chapter 11 – Defining Advocacy, social action and populations at risk; advocacy; case example involving services to the elderly.	Read Chapter 12 Ethics and ethical dilemmas in macro practice.
X	Discussion Chapter 12 – professional values and ethics in macro contexts; NASW Code of Ethics Personal values; ethical issues.	Read chapter 13 Working with the courts.
XI	Discussion Chapter 13 – significance of the legal system; differences between courtroom protocol and social work practice; presentation in court.	Read chapter 14 Developing and Managing Agency Resources
XII	Discussion Chapter 14 - working with the media; using technology in your Agency; fund-raising; grants and contracts; how to apply for a grant	
XIII	Presentations of Community Needs Assessment Outcome	
XIV	Presentations continue Wrap-up administration of SET.	
XV	Final Exam	

Note: Syllabus may be modified by instructor based on the needs of the class

## Course Assignments

### A. Organizational Analysis

This paper should be 10-12 pages in length. It should be typed, double space, with standard margins and approximately 250 words per page. The paper must include ten citations from at least five different sources (professional journals, interviews, textbook). You must follow APA guidelines for citations and references.

Select a human service organization to analyze. You should in most situations choose your field agency. Be sure to be specific in your comments and observations. Use examples to support your comments.

1. Name and describe the work of the organization. Specify the auspices of the agency (public, nonprofit, for profit).
2. Discuss your selected agency in relation to one or more of the organizational theories described in the text. How does the theory apply to your organization/agency? How could it be used to understand your agency and to improve its functioning?
3. Describe the organization's external environment. Discuss the shifting macro environment in which it operates. How does it achieve legitimization in its external environment? Where do its clients come from? What is the organization's relationship with other organizations in its environment?

4. What are the official and operative goals of the organization? How were the goals determined? How does the organization deal with its multiple goals? Has goal displacement occurred in the organization? If so, describe what influenced it to occur? What is the result of the goal displacement on the organization? How has service delivery been effected by the goals and/or goal displacement?
5. Describe the organizational structure of the organization. How does this structure influence the distribution of power and control in the organization? Describe the lines of authority in the organization. Discuss the approaches of management used in your agency and how management approaches effect the functioning of employees and clients.
6. Summarize the major strengths and weakness of your agency/organization. What recommendations would you make to increase effectiveness and decrease problems in your agency? Assess how realistic your recommendations are considering the external environment of the organization. What organizational resistance to change might get in the way, and how would you propose to deal with this resistance?
7. What positions in the organization are held by women, people of color, gay and lesbian persons or persons with disabilities? Discuss special issues that they may face in the organization?

Criteria for evaluation of Paper.

A. Organization of Paper and clarity of writing style.

1. Use of consistent style.
2. Use of headings and subheadings, as needed for transition
3. Check grammar, spelling, sentence, and paragraph construction.
4. Make certain that the paper flows logically.

B. Quality of Analysis

1. Use of appropriate references, as needed
2. Ability to write analytically, as well as descriptively.
3. Incorporation of concepts and principles learned in readings, discussed in class and found in the library.

## **2. Community Analysis**

The purpose of this assignment is to develop your understanding of a community and its cultural diversity so you might better plan and develop interventions to address issues and problems facing the community. The assignment focuses on the community in which you grew up or another community of which you were a member. If you lived in a number of places during your younger

years, select the one with which you are most familiar. If you are uncertain regarding which community to select, please consult the instructor.

### **Part 1. Understanding your community**

To begin your understanding of your community, gather statistics and data to describe your community (for example: How many persons live in the city and/or in the town? What are their cultural/racial characteristics? What are their incomes, ages, political affiliations etc?) Census data are available in the documents section of the library. If your community of origin has a Chamber of Commerce you might write them for up-to-date information.

Please draw from class readings, lectures, discussions, and from library sources that will help you analyze your community.

The paper should follow this outline.

1. Describe your community as it is was when you where growing up. Describe your community as it is now (industrial, residential, service, commercial etc.) using the concepts discussed in your chapter including competition, centralization, concentration, invasion, gentrification, stratification and succession.
2. Analyze the implications of the changes in your community of origin. Give special concern how these changes may have impacted diverse populations and populations-at-risk.
3. Assess the current nature of interactions among different racial and economic population groups. How are these interactions impacting the community's relationships with other communities?
- 4 As you reflect, consider how the community (its location, demographics, events) have contributed to who you are including your ethnic or cultural identity
5. Describe your community from both a system and ecological perspective. Identify a problem that your community is currently experiencing.

### **Part II Community Assessment and Intervention Plan:**

1. Describe the problem that you have identified that your community currently experiencing. Discuss the probable etiology of the problem; your opinion, but backed with literature
2. Discuss the elements and characteristics of the community that make it vulnerable to this problem. Discuss the strengths of the community that give the community resilience and the potential for overcoming the problem.

3. Identify major institutions – schools, factories, churches, attraction sites. How are these institutions contributing to or inhibiting the community’s ability to address the problem?
4. Who is most affected by the problem? Provide demographic information regarding the population e.g. race, gender, age, socio economic status.
5. Identify and interview at least three lay leaders in the community to determine if they are in agreement with your assessment the problem. Discuss their perceptions of the problem.
6. Develop an assessment tool to assess how community members view the issue. Do community members see the problem as a problem? Do they agree on their perceptions of the problem? Incorporate information you learned from lay leaders about the identified problem into the development of the survey.
  - Prior to administration of the instrument, you must develop a consent form to provide to those answering the survey. You must receive permission from the Human Investigation Committee of Wayne State University to conduct the survey. (Faculty will provide information regarding this process). You are also required to complete the HIC online training if you have not already completed this.
7. Administer your survey to at least 20 members of the community. Try to select people from diverse backgrounds for instance (income level, family composition, employment, grade level, race, and ethnicity).
8. Analyze survey responses from community members. From the survey responses, discuss three possible actions that could be taken to address the problem
9. Select one possible action and develop a plan for action. Discuss community factors that would support this action plan. Discuss community factors that would discourage this action plan.
10. Discuss a plan for evaluating the change effort.

#### Criteria for Grading Papers

\_\_\_\_\_ The paper utilizes adequate sources of information and identifies the perspective and limitations of data used.

\_\_\_\_\_ The paper contains all of the requisite elements of the assignment presenting the information gathered clearly and with appropriate emphasis, delineating findings and your observations

- \_\_\_\_\_ The paper provides an accurate, comprehensive picture of the community, its historical and contemporary context and its current strengths and challenges
- \_\_\_\_\_ The paper addresses a problem facing the community and recommends thoughtful, well-supported strategies to address it.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ The paper is well written, demonstrating basic master of sentence structure, with no grammatical spelling or typing errors.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ The paper incorporates concepts from course readings in its description and analyses and cites sources appropriately.

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