| GRACE ABBOTT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT II

SOWK 3020 | 3 credit hours
Class Meetings: TBD

Instructor: TBD

Office: TBD

Office Phone: TBD

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Office Hours: TBD

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COURSE INFORMATION
Description

This course is the second part of a two-semester sequence within the BSSW required curriculum. It focuses on major contributions of theories from the biological, social, and behavioral sciences that help to understand human functioning across the lifespan, emphasizing functioning at the mezzo and macro levels of practice. This class is designed to build upon the theories of lifespan development presented in the initial course of the sequence.

Rationale/Overview

The purpose of this required course sequence is to provide the student with basic knowledge of major contributions of the biological, social, and behavioral sciences to the understanding of human functioning across the lifespan. This course focuses on the reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments within the context of micro- and macro-level social systems (e.g., individuals, families, groups, institutions, organizations, and communities). Within a social systems framework, this course emphasizes theories of biological, psychological, sociological, cognitive, moral, and cultural development. These lifespan development theories are applied to dimensions of human life, including culture, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, ability, sexual orientation, spirituality, and gender. The intent of this course is to develop students' ability to assess and intervene with social

work clients, utilizing a strengths-based, person-in-environment perspective in a way that will foster the health and well-being and promote social and economic justice.

Student Learning Outcomes
1. Examine human behavior and functioning from a biopsychosocial framework and social systems theory perspective and its usefulness in social work practice on the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities).
2. Analyze the impact of oppression, discrimination, and economic deprivation upon populations at risk across the lifespan, including its relation to anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI).
3. Apply theories of group and organizational development into generalist social work practice.
4. Compare various types of communities and the role of communities in protecting or hindering the well-being of individuals and families within local to global contexts.
5. Analyze the significance of theories from the biological, social, and behavioral sciences in conducting a critical assessment and intervention plan for diverse client systems across the lifespan.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS
Required Text(s)

TBD

COURSE STRUCTURE/FORMAT
Class lectures, discussions, in-class assignments, audio-visual aids, and guest speakers will be used to present course materials.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
Session 1 [date]	Course Overview	
Session 2 [date]	Introductions, course overview, expectation setting Syllabus Review	
Session 3 [date]	Perspectives on Individuals & Families	
Session 4 [date]	Traditional and alternative perspectives on the individual	Read: Section 2 Chapters 7 & 8
Session 5 [date]	Individual characteristics	Read: Section 2 Chapters 9 & 11 Due: Reading and Media Reflection
Session 6 [date]	Families	Read: Section 3 Chapters 12, 13 & 14
Session 7	Perspectives on Groups & Organizations	

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
[date]		
Session 8 [date]	Groups and Groupthink	Read: Section 4 Chapters 15 & 16 and Section 5 Chapter 17 Due: Privilege Interview
Session 9 [date]	Organizations	Read: Section 6 Chapters 18 & 19 Due: Reading and Media Reflection
Session 10 [date]	Organizations	Read: Section 6 Chapter 20
Session 11 [date]	Perspectives on Communities	
Session 12 [date]	Communities	Read: Section 7 Chapters 21 & 22 Due: Organizational Analysis Paper
Session 13 [date]	Communities & special considerations for rural and urban communities	Read: Section 7 Chapter 23 Due: Reading and Media Reflection

IMPORTANT DATES

Last day to drop a course (via MavLink) and receive a 100% refund   TBD
Last day to withdraw from a course (via MavLink) with a grade of "W"   TBD

NOTE: This syllabus is written as an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and expected learning outcomes. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule that may result in enhanced or more effective learning for students. These modifications will not substantially change the intent or objectives of this course.

ASSESSMENTS (ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXAMS)

Reading and Media Reflection 4 @ 25 points each   **100 points**
Privilege Interview   **75 Points**
Organizational Analysis Paper   **50 Points**
ADEI Statement Assignment   **50 Points**
Attendance and Participation   **Optional**
                    Course Total = 275 points

GRADING SCALE

Percent	Final Grade	Quality Points
98–100%	A+	4.00
94–97.9%	A	4.00
91–93.9%	A-	3.67
88–90.9%	B+	3.33
84–87.9%	B	3.00
81–83.9%	B-	2.67
78–80.9%	C+	2.33
77–77.9%	C	2.00
71–73.9%	C-	1.67
68–70.9%	D+	1.33
64–67.9%	D	1.00
61–63.9%	D-	0.67
Below 60.9%	F	0.00

READING & MEDIA REFLECTIONS

Throughout the semester, you will complete 4 Media Reflections. The media will be provided to you and linked on our Canvas site. The media includes podcasts, newsmedia articles, TEDtalks, and more. You will interact with the media and provide a reflection based on the prompts below. Each reflection will be worth 25 points.

You will choose a different media item for each of the four assignments. You will note that there are more than 4 items to choose from which means you will not review all of them in the semester. You will read, listen to or watch your selected media and then reflect on the following:

1. Which media item did you select and why? (5 points)

2. How does this media relate to what you know about social work and social work practice (you can think about how this relates to the direct work or to the values and ethics of the profession itself)? (5 points)

3. Using critical thinking skills, reflect on whether you view this media as valid and reliable. Discuss how you might go about determining validity and reliability in media sources. (for instance, you might consider your familiarity with the source, whether the content is compatible or incompatible with your experience with the issue being discussed, etc.) (5 points)

4. What is one open-ended question (not able to be answered with a simple "yes" or "no") that you have after interacting with this media? (5 points)

5. Spend a paragraph or 2 trying to answer your question from prompt #4 (5 points)

This assignment is designed to help you connect ideas that may otherwise be unconnected. There aren't really any "right" or "wrong" answers here but this is instead an opportunity to do some critical thinking and then practice writing out your own perspective. Credit will be based on apparent effort and thoughtfulness. This assignment should only take about 30 minutes to

complete once you've viewed the media. You are simply capturing your "in-the-moment" responses.

PRIVILEGE INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT

Talking about race and privilege can be challenging but is incredibly necessary. Avoiding these discussions perpetuates cycles of discrimination, oppression, and white supremacy. So, how can we have these conversations in a constructive and healing way? That seems to be the question that comes up over and over again, and (hopefully) this assignment will provide you with an opportunity to facilitate a conversation that examines another person's perception of privilege. Additionally, it will allow you to reflect on their reaction and your reaction to their responses to these often-sensitive topics.

This assignment is also designed to give you the opportunity to practice your interview skills, something that is critical in social work practice. To help prepare you for this practice, your instructor will provide specific training on interviewing which will include role play.

For this assignment, you will complete the following sections: (75 points total).

Description of Assignment/Directions:

- For this assignment, **please choose someone that you know personally** who has a different experience with privilege from your own. This could be someone from a different racial, economic, sexual, religious, age, immigration, language, education or ability background. **It is important that you select a person that you interact with at least somewhat regularly to avoid tokenizing your interviewee.**

- This interview will be conducted with you as the objective observer/information gatherer. It is important to remember that this is meant to be a conversation, not a debate. When someone agrees to share their experience with us as social workers, it is extremely important that we honor their experience, regardless of whether or not that experience is congruent with our own beliefs and experiences. The purpose of this exercise is to help facilitate conversations with others as well as ourselves around experiences of privilege, not to regulate the emotions or experiences of others.

- This structure will give you the opportunity to use some social work practice skills as well as really analyze your own opinions about privilege and how another person's background and perceptions can really shape the way that they see the world and, in turn, navigate their environment.

- This assignment will have two parts: 1). the actual interview & 2). a written reflection of your experience

The Interview: (35 points)
When conducting your interview, you will need to have your interviewee answer/explore the following questions:

- How would you define privilege?

- Do you feel that you experience any privilege? Can you please explain why or why not?

- o Has your definition of privilege changed over time? If it has, can you please explain what that has looked like in your own life?

- o Have you observed any instances or situations of privilege outside of your own experience? Maybe out in public spaces, in the media or in conversations you've had with others?

- o Do you think we, as an American society, do a good job talking about and pointing out the role of privilege in our everyday life? Why or why not?

- o Do you see privilege impacting any larger systems such as education, housing, criminal justice, healthcare, or the economy?

- o What do you think is the most important factor in reducing inequality that results from privilege?

- You are welcome to add additional questions, but these themes should guide your interview.

- Once you have completed your interview, you will generate this portion of your paper in a Question-Response format. You will use the question as your heading and their response as the "content." The interview does not need to be transcribed perfectly/completely. It is just important that you are able to capture the responses from your interviewee in as accurate a way as possible. If you would prefer to type the responses verbatim, please make sure to obtain permission from your interviewee to do so. If you choose to record your interview and transcribe it later, please make sure to obtain permission to record.

The Reflection: (40 points)

- For this section of the assignment, you will reflect on your experience before, during, and after you conducted this interview. **Please answer the following questions in short answer format:**

  - o Whom did you choose to interview and how did you choose this person?

  - o Based on their responses (not your opinion of them) how would you explain your interviewee's relationship with privilege?

  - o Did you relate in some ways to their responses? Why or why not?

  - o Were there any responses that surprised you? That you struggled with?

  - o Do you believe that this was a beneficial/helpful/healing conversation? Why or why not?

  - o How did you feel when you first heard about this assignment?

  - o How did you feel during the interview?

  - o How did you feel after the interview?

  - o What did you gain from this interaction?

- Each question should require a response of at least a paragraph, sometimes more. You can expect this reflection to be about 3 pages in length utilizing APA formatting.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS PAPER

This assignment will give you the opportunity to examine and analyze an organization and determine their impact on micro, mezzo, and macro systems. This assignment is worth 50 points and will be submitted to Canvas.

Description of Assignment/Directions:

Reflect on a past employment experience where you felt impacted (whether positively or negatively) by the organization and answer the following questions. Your instructor will keep the information you provide confidential. You are not obligated to share any identifying information about the organization.

Organization name (optional). If you choose to not identify the organization by name, which is fine, please give the organization a title that you will use to identify it throughout the paper (e.g. "my high school employer;" "my favorite job"; "Acme social work company;" etc)

In a paragraph for each, answer the following based on information you receive in the textbook and other resources provided in class or accessible online (textbook chapters 19-20):

1) Type of services provided at the organization & organizational mission statement 5 pts

2) Provide an example of cooperation that you observed or participated in within the organization. 5 pts

3) Explain the concept of competition and provide an example of competition that you observed or participated in within the organization. 10 pts

4) Explain the concept of organizational conflict and provide an example of conflict that you observed or participated in within the organization. 10 pts

5) Identify a social OR ethical dilemma faced by yourself as an employee, OR by the agency. Example: the process to prioritize individuals on a wait list to receive services, issues of pay equity in an environment with limited funding resources, equitable treatment of staff or clients, staff working double shifts. See Chapter 19 for examples.15pts

6) Which NASW code of ethics apply to the scenario described above? Describe how the code you identified applies to the scenario. 5 pts

ANTI-RACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (ADEI) STATEMENT ASSIGNMENT

Reflecting and committing to paper what your goals, actions, and plans around anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) are just one of the ways in which you can advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. Writing an ADEI statement can promote reflection on the strategies you use in your work, exhibit how you engage in ADEI efforts through your work and reveal opportunities for commitment that you might want to explore in the future. (University of Texas at Austin, 2022).

The exercise of writing, reviewing, and committing to a statement of equity, diversity, and inclusion can be instructive to all members of the social work community (Canning & Reddick, 2019).

For this assignment you will draft a personal ADEI statement.

An ADEI Statement will ideally address multiple facets of how your values and experiences advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in your work.

There is no required format for this assignment. Bullet points and short answers are acceptable. Your paper should be concise and include **specific examples and goals for yourself.**

In this two-four page short answer writing assignment include the following:

1) The NASW Code of Ethics emphasizes cultural competence. This includes diversity, equity, and inclusion. In your own words, describe diversity, equity, and inclusion. 10 pts

2) Has your understanding of ADEI changed over time? If so, what specific things/events helped you to develop your current understanding of ADEI? 10 pts

3) Provide examples of how you prioritize anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in your daily life? 15 pts

4) In the future, what specific activities do you hope to accomplish to further ADEI? 10 pts

5) Have someone read your statement and provide feedback. Who did you ask for feedback and what feedback did they provide? 5 pts

ADEI statements should be an honest evidence-based account of your growth, best practices, ability, and potential. It is customary to write the statement in the first person. Refrain from using buzzwords, jargon, or vague statements (eg: I love all people).

Some may wonder how much personal information they should disclose about themselves when writing these statements. There is not a universal answer for this question. Those who hold social identities that have been historically marginalized may choose not to disclose that information, as personal biases are shown to affect evaluation of written application materials (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). If you **do** want to discuss your social identity, consider discussing your identity and the impact of your identity on your work, interests, and actions (Sylvester et al., 2019). For example, you might state: "My experience as a member of an underrepresented group has helped me build a toolkit for mentoring students who face similar challenges based on their identity" (Morris, 2018, slide 13). If you share a story about yourself, do not draw false parallels between your own experience and that of others.

WRITING GUIDELINES
Students should make sure that writing assignments are free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Papers should adhere to the most recent citation style outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA).

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

In this course, students will submit written work by making use of information and ideas found in print or online sources. Whenever material from another writer is used, it is important that students quote or paraphrase appropriately and cite the source.

The UNO Academic Integrity policy defines plagiarism as "presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person."

Failure to cite sources appropriately is plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will not be accepted. Consequences for plagiarism are up to the discretion of the instructor; they may range, for example, from rewriting all or part of a paper to a grade of F for the course. Students who plagiarize more than once are subject to disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the university.

Students SHOULD NOT GUESS when it comes to using or citing another writer's work. Students should contact the instructor or a consultant at the UNO Writing Center with questions. Students should take a printout of the original source as well as the paper that is being written to the consultation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found responsible for violating the policy on Academic Integrity shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Violations of the policy on Academic Integrity include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating, fabrication and falsification, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials and/or equipment, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsifying grade reports, and/or misrepresentation to avoid academic work. More information about these areas and the procedures addressing academic integrity is available from the Office of Academic and Student Affairs (EAB 202 | 402.554.2262).

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to arrive on time to class meetings. Students should come to class well prepared, meaning readings and other assignments have been completed. Students are expected to be respectful of their classmates and the instructor. Distracting and/or disrespectful behaviors will not be tolerated.

CELL PHONES, MOBILE DEVICES, AND LAPTOPS

Students are welcome to use cell phones, mobile devices, and/or laptops in class provided they are used for academic purposes such as note taking, accessing course materials, or researching course concepts and their use does not disrupt fellow classmates. Please silence devices if at all possible. A student who receives a phone call or text, should step outside the classroom to respond. DO NOT take pictures or video during class.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students will be expected to have access to a computer frequently, as all writing assignments used will be typed out and not handwritten. The software students use to write assignments is irrelevant, as long as the writing guidelines outlined in this syllabus are followed. It is recommended that students have access to a computer weekly. Public computers are available on the UNO campus. Consult Information Technology Services and the Criss Library, for more information on equipment locations and availability.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technical support for common university systems, including Canvas and email, is available from Information Technology Services technical support located in Eppley Administration Building (EAB) 104.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: H&K 104, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)

CRISS LIBRARY

UNO's Criss Library offers a wide variety of resources that support student learning. Subject specialist librarians have in-depth knowledge of researching within specific disciplines and can provide guidance for a specific area of study. Students are encouraged to explore customized resources featured on the Criss Library website.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The University of Nebraska at Omaha is prepared for a wide range of emergencies. Students should familiarize themselves with procedures and assistance available on UNO's emergency information page. If travel to campus is not feasible due to a declared emergency, a combination of Canvas, teleconferencing, and other technologies will be used to facilitate academic continuity. Students will be notified of procedures through Canvas course site announcements and email as appropriate.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement or threatening weather, students should use his/her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Students who are not able to attend class due to adverse weather conditions, should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Similarly, if the instructor is unable to reach the class location, students will be notified of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (by approximately 1 hour before class starts and by posting an announcement in Canvas). Students who cannot get to class because of weather conditions, will be provided allowances relative to attendance policies as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.

PREFERRED NAME AND PREFERRED GENDER PRONOUNS

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. The instructor will gladly honor a student's request to be addressed by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise the instructor of this preference early in the semester so that instructor records may be changed appropriately.

WRITING CENTER

The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, go to unomaha.edu/writingcenter or visit their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall (ASH) 150.

SPEECH CENTER

The UNO Speech Center provides free consulting and coaching services to all UNO students, faculty, and staff in preparing oral presentations. The Speech Center Consulting Room can help students with presentation preparation, outlining, effective delivery techniques, along with any other presentational needs. Speech consulting will help at any stage in the speech-making process. For more information, visit the UNO Speech Center in Arts and Sciences Hall (ASH) 183 and 185.

STUDENT SAFETY

A variety of resources are available to support student safety and security. Students have experienced or are experiencing a difficult personal situation, should consult the resources available through the Division of Student Success.

OUTCOMES MAP AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Competencies

The student learning outcomes for this course are built upon the following nine social work core competencies set forth by the CSWE's 2022 Educational Polices and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) which is required for all accredited social work programs.

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice.
3. Engage in Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in practice.
4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice.
5. Engage in policy practice.
6. Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
7. Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
8. Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
9. Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

This map is intended to show how course topics, content, and activities align to the student learning outcomes outlined above. Consider: Course objectives are aligned with the core competencies set forth by the CSWE 2022 EPAS.

EPAS Competency	Student Learning Outcome	Assignment	Dimension*
3 = Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice	2. Analyze the impact of oppression, discrimination, and economic deprivation upon populations at risk across the lifespan, including its relation to anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI).		
4 = Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice	3. Apply theories of group and organizational development into generalist social work practice.		
6 = Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	1. Examine human behavior and functioning from a biopsychosocial framework and social systems theory perspective and its usefulness in social work practice on the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities).		

EPAS Competency	Student Learning Outcome	Assignment	Dimension*
7 = Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	1.Examine human behavior and functioning from a biopsychosocial framework and social systems theory perspective and its usefulness in social work practice on the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities). 4.Compare various types of communities and the role of communities in protecting or hindering the well-being of individuals and families within local to global contexts. 5.Analyze the significance of theories from the biological, social, and behavioral sciences in conducting a critical assessment and intervention plan for diverse client systems across the lifespan.		

*Dimensions Key:
   K = Knowledge
   S = Skills
   V = Value
   CAP = Cognitive and Affective Processing

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