



GRACE ABBOTT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

MEDICAL SOCIAL WORK

SOWK 4060/8066/8886 | 3 credit hours
Class Meetings: TBD

Instructor: TBD

Office: TBD

Office Phone: TBD

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Office Hours: TBD

Department: Grace Abbott School of Social Work

Main Office: 206 CPACS

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COURSE INFORMATION

Description

This course is an introduction to medical social work. BSSW and MSW students will focus on the knowledge base and practice skills needed to assess the holistic care of patients and their families. This course prepares students to 1) understand healthcare disparities and needs of individuals and their family, 2) apply theory and models of patient-centered care delivery, 3) develop skills for working on interprofessional teams, 4) formulate ideas for addressing barriers and improving health care access.

Rationale/Overview

This course examines micro to macro social work practice in the healthcare field. It covers the continuum of health care practice including diagnosis, treatment, palliative, and end-of-life care at the individual and family levels. Additionally, it investigates health disparities and the impact of health inequity on well-being and life longevity. This course prepares students to evaluate the needs of vulnerable populations and challenges them to create new ideas for addressing health disparities.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the unique roles of medical social workers, the diverse populations, and numerous fields and interprofessional teams where they work.
2. Examine the ethics and values of social workers in various healthcare settings.
3. Correlate the social determinants of health and health disparities to an anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) framework.
4. Utilize an anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) framework in assessing bio-psycho-social-spiritual needs of patients and their families.
5. Apply critical thinking to patient-centered, holistic theories and models of healthcare practice delivery.
6. Design biopsychosocial intervention strategies to address patient needs. (Graduate students only)

Prerequisites of the Course

Undergraduate: SOWK 3320 prior to or concurrent.

Graduate: SOWK 8130 prior to or concurrent, or BSW degree.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Required text(s)

TBD

COURSE STRUCTURE/FORMAT

Video lectures, discussions, weekly assignments, audio-visual aids, and guest speakers will be used to present course materials.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
Session 0 [open prior to semester]	Introduction to Course Syllabus Review Technical Support & Troubleshooting Canvas Review Tips for Success	Syllabus Assignment Introductory Vlog: Self-Affirmation
Session 1	Course Overview and Understanding the Role of Medical Social Workers	Read: Ch. 1 Master's group project signs
Session 2	Behavioral Health Models, Social Determinants of Health and Health Disparities Documentary Unnatural Causes: In Sickness and In Wealth	Read: Ch. 3 and Briefly Review WHO SDOH Assignment: Vignette & Apply Theory Debrief Vlog

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
Session 3	Community-based Participatory Research Documentary: Unnatural Causes: Place Matters	Read material provided in Canvas Debrief Vlog
Session 4	Bio-Psycho-Social Assessments	Read: Chp 5, 6 & Selected readings in Canvas (Patient centered care article) Assignment: Vignette & BPSS Debrief Vlog
Session 5	Culturally Sensitive Communication, Ethical Dilemmas and Meaning Making	Read Ch. 2, & 4 Debrief Vlog
Session 6	Special Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Children/Adolescents Documentary: Unnatural Causes: When the Bough Brakes	Read Ch. 11 Assignment: Community-Based Research Proposal Debrief Vlog
Session 7	Special Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Families • Caregiver Stress 	Read Ch. 11 & 12 Assignment: Vignette & Child, Family, or Caregiver Debrief Vlog
Session 8	Special Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living with Chronic Illness 	Read: TBD Assignment: Vignette & Chronic Illness Debrief Vlog
Session 9	Special Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oncology 	Read:TBD Assignment: Vignette & Oncology or Genetics Debrief Vlog

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
Session 10	Special Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genetics 	Read Ch. 14 Assignment: Vignette & Genetics Debrief Vlog
Session 11	Special Populations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palliative Care Hospice Care & End of Life Care Documentary: Being Mortal	Read Ch. 9, 12, and provided readings Assignment: Vignette & End of Life Care Debrief Vlog
Session 12	Special Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing Sexual Health Spiritual Care 	Read Ch. 14 Assignment: Social Needs Case Study Assessment Due Debrief Vlog
Session 13	Global Perspectives on Health Documentary: Unnatural Causes: Becoming American	Read Ch. 18 Post Group Presentations: Vulnerable Populations video and PowerPoint Posted Debrief Vlog
Session 14	Group Presentation	Post Group Presentations Videos by end of week.
Session 15	Group Presentations & Wrap-up	Review Presentation Videos Debrief Vlog

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)

Assignment	BSSW	MSW
Introduce yourself Discussion Board (1)	5	5
Syllabus Review (1)	5	5
Weekly Debrief Vlog (12)	60	60
Community-based Research Proposal (1)	50	50
Vignette Assignment (7)	125	125
Social Needs Case Study Assessment (1)	50	50
Group Presentation – Health Disparities (1)	25	75
	320 pts	370 pts

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

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 Epley 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 Policies 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 anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (A DEI) 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. The CSWE 2022 EPAS core competencies are identified in the first column and mapped to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), the field practicum learning contract assignments and the CSWE 2022 EPAS Dimensions.

EPAS Competency*	Course Objective/Student Learning Outcome	Assignment	Dimension *
1 = Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	1. Understand the unique roles of medical social workers, the diverse populations, and numerous fields and interprofessional teams where they work. 2. Examine the ethics and values of social workers in various healthcare settings.		
3 = Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (A DEI) in Practice	3. Correlate the social determinants of health and health disparities to an anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (A DEI) framework. 4. Utilize an anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (A DEI) framework in assessing bio-psycho-social-spiritual		

EPAS Competency*	Course Objective/Student Learning Outcome	Assignment	Dimension *
	needs of patients and their families.		
4 = Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice	5.Apply critical thinking to patient-centered, holistic theories and models of healthcare practice delivery.		
7 = Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	4.Utilize an anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (A DEI) framework in assessing bio-psycho-social-spiritual needs of patients and their families.		
8 = Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	6.Design biopsychosocial intervention strategies to address patient needs. (Graduate students only)		

*Dimensions Key:

K = Knowledge

S = Skills

V = Value

CAP = Cognitive and Affective Processing

REFERENCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

References

Current Textbooks:

Callahan, A. (2017). *Spirituality and hospice social work*. Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/call17172>

Coughlin, S. S., Sith, S. A., & Fernandez, M. E. (2017). *Handbook of community-based participatory research*. Oxford Scholarship Online. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190652234.001.0001

Gehlert, S., & Browne, T. (Eds.). (2019). *Handbook of health social work*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

- Heyman, J. C., & Congress, E. P. (2018) *Health and social work* (1st ed.). Springer Publishing Company, LLC.
- Higham, P. E. (2020). *Communication and interviewing skills for practice in social work, counseling and the health professions*. Routledge.
- Kattari, S. K., Kinney, M. K., Kattari, L., & Walls, N. E. (2020). *Social work and health care practice with transgender and nonbinary individuals and communities: Voices for equity, inclusion, and resilience* (1st ed.) Routledge.
- Kelley, A. (2020). *Public health evaluation and the social determinants of health*. Routledge
- Magnan, S. (2017). Social determinants of health 101 for health care: Five plus five. *NAM Perspectives*. Discussion Paper, National Academy of Medicine, Washington, DC. <https://doi.org/10.31478/201710c>
- Palmer, S. D. (2021). *Social work in public health and hospitals*. Routledge.
- Richardson, H. & Chowns, G. (2019). *Social work practice and end-of-life care*. Routledge.
- Sumser, B., & Leimena, T. A. (2019). *Palliative care: A guide for health social workers*. Oxford University Press.
- Wallerstein, N., Duran, B., Oetzel, J. G., & Minkler, M. (2018). *Community-based participatory research for health: Advancing social and health equity* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Brand.
- Winnett, R., Furman, R., Epps, D., & Lamphear, G. (2019). *Health care social work: A global perspective*. Oxford University Press.

Other References

- Adler, N. E., Glymour, M. M., & Fielding J. (2016). Addressing social determinants of health and health inequalities. *JAMA*, 316(16), 1641–1642. doi:10.1001/jama.2016.14058
- Braveman, P., & Gottlieb, L. (2014). The social determinants of health: It's time to consider the causes of the causes. *Public Health Reports*, 129(1_suppl2), 19–31. doi:10.1177/00333549141291S206
- Christ, G., Messner, C. & Behar, L. (2015). *Handbook of oncology social work: Psychosocial care for people with cancer*. Oxford University Press: New York.
- Corcoran, K., & Roberts, A. R. (2015). *Social workers' desk reference*. Oxford University Press: New York.
- Elk, R. & Landrine, H. (Eds). (2012). *Cancer disparities: Causes and evidence-based solutions*. NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Israel, B. A., Eng, E., Schulz, A. J., & Parker, E. A. (Eds). (2012). *Methods in community-based participatory research for health*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Marmot, M. & Allen, J. J. (2014). Social determinants of health equity. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104(S4), S517–S519.

Journals

Encyclopedia of Social Work.

Websites

American Cancer Society <http://www.cancer.org/>

American Hospital Association. http://www.aha.org/aha_app/issues/Disparities/index.jsp

Causes of Death. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs310/en/index.html>

Influencing State Policy (ISP). (n.d.). <http://www.statepolicy.org/index.html>

NASW Foundation. (2020). <https://www.naswfoundation.org/>

NIH-NCMHD National Center Minority Health and Disparities. <http://ncmhd.nih.gov/>

Office of Minority Health. <http://raceandhealth.hhs.gov/>

PubMed. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez>

Social Work Policy Institute. (2020). www.socialworkpolicy.org/

Unequal Treatment, Institute of Medicine.

http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12875&page=R1

WHO and Social Determinants of Health. http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/