GRACE ABBOTT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SOCIAL WORK WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

SOWK 4020-8026 | 3 credit hours
Class Meetings: TBD

Instructor: TBD

Office: TBD

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Office Hours: TBD

Department: Grace Abbott School of Social Work
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COURSE INFORMATION

Description

This course seeks to develop in students an awareness and understanding of some of the social and psychological/cognitive realities influencing the behavior of African American youth and families across the lifespan. The content draws upon theories, research and social work practice skills relevant to African American youth and families, as well as the cognitive process and social systems which impact African youth and families.

Rationale

This course enhances students' understanding of social, psychological, and historical factors that have shaped the African American family. Emphasis is placed on using an Afrocentric paradigm for engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation with African American families. Discussions will be directed at increasing students' awareness of how African American cultural values and strengths can lay the foundation for strengths based social work practice. Students will be presented with materials that highlight the importance of simultaneously engaging in micro, mezzo, and macro social work practice to positively effect change with African American youth and families.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

1. Examine the contexts, experiences, and traumas both historical and current of African American communities, acknowledging them as experts in their own lived experiences.

2. Appraise competent and ethical practices that social workers can utilize when working with the African American family.
3. Consider systemic barriers that have contributed to the marginalization and oppression of the African American family, with particular attention to anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI).
4. Survey the U.S. criminal justice system and its impacts on African American families in the United States.
5. Critique evidence-based practices regarding assessment and intervention with African American communities. (Graduate students only)

REQUIRED TEXT(S)/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS
Required Text(s)
Congress, E. P., & González, M. J. (2013*). Multicultural Perspectives In Social Work Practice with Families* (3rd ed). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
Wells-Wilbon, R., McPhatter, A., & Vakalahi, H. (2015). *Social Work Practice With African Americans in Urban Environments.* New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

COURSE STRUCTURE/FORMAT
Lecture, discussion, experiential learning experiences, video and Internet resources, and guest presentations.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
Session 1 [date]	Introduction to the course and review syllabus Lecture: African American families – historical context	Read: Ch. 5 (WW)
Session 2 [date]	Lecture: Identity development, theoretical approaches, evidence-based practices	Read: Ch. 1 (WW) and Ch. 10 (C&G)
Session 3 [date]	Lecture: Intergenerational perspectives, genograms, and cultural values and practices	Read: Ch. 1 (C&G) Read: Waites (2009) Reflection Paper #1
Session 4 [date]	Lecture: Structural barriers, institutional oppression, and resilience	Read: Ch. 24 (WW)
Session 5 [date]	Community visit View and discuss: "Adam Ruins the Suburbs"	
Session 6 [date]	Lecture: African American families and religious institutions	Read: Edwards and Wilkerson (2018) Quiz #1
Session 7 [date]	Lecture: African American families and educational systems	Read: Ch. 23 (WW) and Ch. 5 (C&G)
Session 8 [date]	Lecture: African American families and the criminal justice system Guest speaker	Read: Ch. 15 and 20 (WW) Read: Kleider-Offutt, Bond, and Hegerty (2017)

Session/Date	Topic	Assignment
Session 9 [date]	Lecture: African American families and health systems	Read: Ch. 9 (WW)
Session 10 [date]	Lecture: Gender and sexuality in the African American community Guest speaker	Read: Ch. 6 (WW) Literature review
Session 11 [date]	Lecture: African American families and the child welfare system	Read: Ch. 3 (WW) Read: Bruster, Land, and Smith (2019
Session 12 [date]	Lecture: Mental health in the African American community	Read: Ch. 4 and 11 (WW) Reflection #2
Session 13 [date]	Lecture: Caregiving in the African American community	Read: Ch. 13 (WW)
Session 14 [date]	Lecture: Community organizing in the African American community	
Session 15 [date]	Lecture: Class wrap-up	Final project

IMPORTANT DATES
Last day to drop a course (via MavLink) and receive a 100% refund   January 19, 2020
Last day to withdraw from a course (via MavLink) with a grade of "W"   April 3. 2020

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 AND ASSIGNMENTS)
Pre-Test (25 points) This quiz is designed for you to assess your background knowledge about African Americans. You will take the same test at the end of the semester so that you can measure your learning. You will earn 25 points for taking the pre-test regardless of how many questions you get right. Therefore, I encourage you not to use resources when testing. The purpose is for you to assess your knowledge of course content not how well you can search the internet.

Discussion Posts (20 points) The purpose of discussion posts is for you to have an opportunity to interact with your peers and practice articulating your thoughts about various topics related to social work practice with African American families. There will be one discussion post per module (5 total) and you can earn up to 10 points for your initial post and up to 10 points for responding to two peers (5 points per response). There is no set word limit for posts but they are expected to be thoughtful and demonstrate you actually put time into crafting your response.

Class Facilitation Video (100 points) You will create a video for your peers and post it on Canvas. You will select a topic discussed in class to serve as the foundation for your video. The video will be between 30 to 45 minutes long. You will be asked to also provide a resource to

your peers for continued learning. You will decide during the second week of class if you would like to complete this assignment in a group or individually.

Literature Review (Graduate Students Only, 100 points) You will have a chance to use your research skills by completing a literature review. The review will be on a topic of your choice that relates to the African American family. Paper topics do need to be approved by me before you begin. You are expected to use at least 6 professional references (i.e., books or peer reviewed articles) and can use as many informal references (e.g., websites, newspapers, etc.) as you would like. Details about this assignment will be available on Canvas.

Case Study Analysis (250 points) The case study gives you an opportunity to synthesize the knowledge you learned from the course and apply that knowledge to a life-like scenario. Specific details about this assignment will be given after Semester Break.

Post-Test (25 points) You will retake the pre-test so you can see how much you learned over the semester. You will earn 25 points for taking the pre-test regardless of how many questions you get right. Again, I encourage you to take this exam without using resources so that the score is a better reflection of your knowledge of course content.

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 for 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 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, if 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, 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. Course objectives are italicized to distinguish them from the core competencies set forth by the CSWE's 2022 EPAS.

EPAS Competency*	Course Objective/Student Learning Outcome	Assignment	Dimension *
1 = Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	2.Appraise competent and ethical practices that social workers can utilize when working with the African American family.		K, S, V, CAP
3 = Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice	3.Consider systemic barriers that have contributed to the marginalization and oppression of the African American family, with particular attention to anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI). 5. Critique evidence-based practices regarding assessment and intervention with African American communities. (Graduate students only)		K, V
4 = Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice	1.Examine the contexts, experiences, and traumas both historical and current of African American communities, acknowledging them as experts in their own lived experiences.		K, CAP
5 = Engage in Policy Practice	4.Survey the U.S. criminal justice system and its impacts on African American families in the United States.		K

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

REFERENCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

References

Algood, C., & Davis, A. (2019). Inequities in family quality of life for African-American families raising children with disabilities. *Social Work in Public Health, 34*(1), 102-112.

Belgrave, F.Z. & Allison, K.W. (2019) *African American psychology: From Africa to America.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bent-Goodley, T., Fairfax, C. N., & Carlton-LaNey, I. (2017). The significance of African-centered social work for social work practice. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 27*, 1-6.

Bent-Goodley, T., Snell, C., & Carlton-LaNey, I. (2017). Black perspectives and social work practice. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 27*(1-2), 27-35.

Dixon, P. (2017*). African American relationships, marriages, and families: An introduction.* (2nd ed.). Oxfordshire: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group

Hollingsworth, L., & Phillips, F. (2017). Afrocentricity and social work education. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 27*(1-2), 48-60.

Kokaliari, E., Roy, A., & Taylor, J. (2019). African American perspectives on racial disparities in child removals. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 90*, 139-148.

St, V., St, V., & Fairfax, C. (2019). Posttraumatic slave syndrome, the patriarchal nuclear family structure, and African American male-female relationships. *Social Work, 64*(2), 139-146.

Whitehead, M. (2018). Applying Afrocentric theory to mezzo practice with African-Americans. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 28*(2), 125-141.

Williams, J., Simon, C., & Bell, A. (2015). Missing the mark: The image of the social work profession in an African-American community. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, *24*(1), 56-70.

Classic References

Hattery, A., & Smith, E. (2012). *African American families today: Myths and realities*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. (2012).

Waites, C. (2009). Building on strengths: Intergenerational practice with African American families. *Social Work, 54*(3), 278-287.

Waites, C. (2008). *Social Work Practice with African –American Families: An Intergenerational Perspective.* New York, NY: Routledge