

Fall 2024

MSW Elective Course Descriptions

HWC 506 Human Rights and Social Work: Tools for Clinical Practice and Advocacy

The goals of social work are intertwined with the premise that the realization of universal human rights are essential to a just and ordered society. This class stresses the need for social workers to use a human rights framework for practice, especially in our interconnected global economy. Human rights can help link micro practice to macro practice and connect the varying roles of the social worker. This class will highlight timely issues such as human trafficking and environmental justice. This class will provide students with advanced clinical practice skills rooted in human rights as well as advocacy strategies needed to create policy based on human rights.

HWC 542 School Social Work: Practice Policy and Research

Examines the practice of school social work in an in depth manner. It gives an overview of the central issues that occur in schools. It discusses strategies to build a positive and safe school climate for diverse and disenfranchised populations. The course will cover evidenced-based practices including DBT and CBT for schools. It examines the social/political context of working in the school. Topics will also include working with students struggling with psychiatric, psychological, substance use, and familial issues as well as assisting students in special education. Crisis intervention techniques and trauma-informed educational practices will be discussed.

HWC 545 Individual and Family Treatment of Alcohol and Substance Abuse

This course is an advanced practice elective. It is open to second year MSW students. This course serves as one of the electives within the Integrated Health: Physical, Psychological & Social Well-being specialization. The course is designed to help students to recognize the bio-psycho-social aspects of addiction and recovery; implement an SBIRT assessment utilizing evidence based practice models (e.g. Motivational Interviewing; Stages of Change);and develop a foundation of clinical skills to facilitate their clients' change.

Special emphasis will be placed on how the social worker links assessment to treatment with individuals, groups and families in a variety of agencies and settings. The role and function of professional social workers in alcoholism and substance abuse agencies will be examined as part of the course. The complementary use of self-help groups will be explored in detail. The importance of racial, ethnic and cultural sensitivity in the intervention process will be examined. Common themes that arise in a variety of 12 step programs; i.e. Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Al-Anon, Alateen will be identified and compared to clinical models for care.

A variety of models and techniques that have proven useful in supporting a client's recovery process will be reviewed including: Motivational Interviewing, Stages of Change, SAMSHA's Screening-Brief Intervention- Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) model, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, and the use of medication in supporting the recovery process. The use of family systems and group therapy as they apply to chemical dependency will be explored. Student will explore the intersection of AOD use and the issues of shame, grief, loss, and traumatic experiences. Current thinking about cultural practices, spirituality, and folk medicine will be examined in the course as well.

Students will become adept at making a substance abuse assessment. In addition, they will become responsive to the fact that alcohol and substance abuse may be probable cause of such presenting problems as: marital discord, sexual dysfunction child-parent relationship difficulties, suicide attempts, medical complaints, etc. As part of a psychosocial history students will gain a better understanding of taking an alcohol and/or drug use history.

HWC 548 Adolescent Development and Health Promotion

The effect on adolescent development of physiological changes, relationships with peers and family, and societal expectations are examined. Emphasis is on the development of assessment and engagement skills for working with adolescents and their families to help counteract adolescent self-destructive behavior and promote well-being. Class meets two hours in-class and one hour of instructor directed assignments.

HWC 569 Childhood Sexual /Abuse and Long Term Sequelae

Introduces students to the incidence and prevalence of childhood sexual abuse as a national problem. Covered are definition issues, sequelae during childhood, family constellation and adult sequelae. Addressed are assessment and current treatment modalities, particularly for families and offenders, as well as ethical and legal dilemmas and the subsequent health related difficulties of this childhood trauma. Special attention is paid to the cultural dynamics in sexual abuse. Students are expected to develop an awareness of and critically analyze current research. Focus is on examination of policy issues and legislation.

HWC 577 Program Evaluation

This course provides an in-depth analysis of the technical requirements of program evaluation and the organizational and political constraints that influence the evaluation process. Techniques in the design and implementation of evaluation research in the health and human services fields are covered.

HWC 579 Special Topics in Social Work; Social Work Practice and Aging

This course focuses on social work practice with older adults and families within a life course perspective. We are in the midst of an aging revolution. Nearly 10,000 people turn 65 years old each day, most of whom will live long enough to experience multiple chronic conditions that will result in dependency and require some level of care. This course emphasizes micro and macro level practice skills essential to effective work with older adults. Major areas of focus include: assessment and diagnostic tools; evidence-based interventions; coping with age-related changes; caregiving demands; legal and financial planning; elder abuse; and grief and loss. A thoughtful exploration of the diverse dimensions of aging will include: ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender identity, material status, race, religion or spirituality and sexual orientation.

HWC 588 The Dynamics of Trauma

This course will examine the complexity and range of traumatic events. For example, the way temperament, genetic pre-disposition and environment impact traumatic reactions; as well as the physiological and psychological reactions that individuals experience. Throughout this course we will examine therapeutic interventions with different populations (children, adults, groups, elders) as they recover from trauma experiences. This course will cover the range of psychological models that comprise trauma theory and examine the protective factors that mediate post-traumatic growth. Throughout this course we will examine cultural, legal, judicial and policy issues that impact trauma treatments.

HWC 591 SW in Higher Education: Practice in College and Universities

Through an interdisciplinary approach, which draws from social work strengths and empowerment perspectives, student affairs perspectives, and college student development theories, this course emphasizes how the community on the college campus is influenced and shaped. Historical developments in higher education and student development as well as the impact of societal issues are introduced. This course will follow a student-community development lens and discuss a variety of important topics in higher education including: overview of major policies and programming, campus safety, campus climate and inclusion, social determinants, financial aid, relationships, and mental health.