Human Behavior in the Social Environment

Mission Statement: The mission of Ottawa University is to provide the highest quality liberal arts and professional education in a caring, Christ-centered community of grace, which integrates faith, learning and life. The University serves students of traditional age, adult learners and organizations through undergraduate and graduate programs.

Prerequisite Advisory: Please be advised that you (the student) are responsible to have completed all course prerequisites necessary for this course prior to participating in the course. Not completing required prerequisites may negatively impact your ability to successfully complete this course.

Ottawa Student Email: Ottawa e-mail is the official account to be used for e-mail communication. It is the responsibility of the student to check his or her e-mail account on a regular basis for the duration of the course. Failure to read one’s e-mail will not be a valid excuse for lacking information communicated via e-mail. In addition, any campus emergencies will be announced via the Ottawa email system. If you are encountering difficulties with your e-mail, please contact the Helpdesk at 855-268-4357 from 8 a.m. to midnight Central Time.

Course Number: HUS 30063
Course Title: Human Behavior in the Social Environment
Credit Hours: 3
Prerequisites: N/A

Textbook: Understanding Human Behavior in the Social Environment
9th ed. (2013)
Zastrow, C.
Belmont, CA: Cengage

Additional Resources: Required reading: All students are expected to become familiar with the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and to readily access the NASW Code of Ethics at www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp Class discussions of ethical principles and codes will be based on the NASW Code of Ethics.


Readings: Additional readings may be required by the instructor.

Course Description: This course is a study of human behavior including conduct, actions, and responses and the environment in which this occurs throughout the life span. Social systems examined include individual, family, group, organizational, and communities in which people live.
Client assessment and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being are emphasized.

Course Objectives: 

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss theoretical models of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development across the lifespan.
2. Identify and discuss the range of social systems in which human development occurs, including individual, family, group, organizational, and community systems.
3. Analyze characteristics of particular social systems that deter humans from achieving and maintaining health and well-being.
4. Analyze characteristics of particular social systems that foster and encourage achieving and maintaining health and well-being.
5. Learn to assess the factors that affect a client’s behavior, functioning and well-being, the systems involved and the ethical issues or challenges that may be present.

Grading /Evaluation: 

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<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Presentation</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biopsychosocial History Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Personal Development Timeline</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Special Topic Paper</td>
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The grading scale for undergraduate courses is:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>72-81</td>
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<td>D</td>
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Final Grades: All student work must be submitted by the last class session of the term. Instructors must turn in final grades by the University’s deadline. If, due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. childbirth, accident, death of a loved one), you are not able to satisfactorily complete a course within the term, contact the instructor immediately. Your final grade will be based on the work you have submitted by the end of the term. If the instructor agrees that your circumstances merit turning in work after the end of the term, you must submit the work by the agreed-upon deadline. If, upon evaluating your work, the instructor determines that your final grade should be changed, he or she will submit a Change of Final Grade form to the University registrar. If the instructor determines that the work you submitted does not warrant a change of the final grade, the original final grade will stand.

Online Grade Book: Professors may use the Blackboard online grade book (TBA)

Submissions: Professor may advise student on submission of coursework online (TBA)
Course Outline:

Course Requirements

**Reading Assignments:** There will be one or more reading assignments each week. Students are expected to read the assignments prior to class and to be ready to discuss the material. All students are expected to have obtained the textbook(s) in time for the first class session.

**Writing Assignments:** There may be writing assignments due each week. Students are to apply critical thinking in all writing. While content is very important in a writing assignment, students are expected to check the spelling (do not always rely on the spell check on your computer) and to use correct grammar in all assignments. Please submit all assignments including presentations given in class via Blackboard.

Late Assignments: All assignments are due by the deadline provided by the instructor. If you know that you will not be able to meet the deadline, contact the instructor well in advance to discuss the possibility of an extension. It is up to the instructor to grant or deny an extension.

**Assignments**

**Developmental Stage Presentation:**
During the first half of the term, students will present each week on a particular phase of development. Students will research infant, child, adolescent, or adult development related to biological, psychological and social components of development. Students discuss common accepted timeframes for particular components of development as well as discuss how this information aids social workers or human service workers in the course of their work with clients. Each presentation should be 15 minutes in length and should include at least 4 professional references including your textbook. Students will sign up week 1 for their topic and week to present.

**Biopsychosocial Client History:**
You will conduct a biopsychosocial history interview with an adult in the middle to late adulthood developmental phase. Do not choose family members or close friends as your “client.” You will follow an outline and be required to obtain specific information as typically required of social workers in practice. This assignment will allow you to reflect on the important aspects of your “client’s” development including their strengths, weakness, and the systems in which they interact. There will be no presenting problem from the client for this assignment; instead it is designed to allow you to gather as much information as possible about your client while practicing your interviewing and assessment skills. See additional handout for further instructions and formatting (Zastrow, Kirst-Ashman & Vogel, 2013, p. 18-27).

**Personal Assessment:**
Students will examine their own life experiences and the events that shaped their lives. These should include both positive and negative experiences as well both small and big impact events. Students should then choose 8-10 events over the course of their lifespan and discuss their relevance and effects on your life, including how they impacted your development, behavior and the systems in which you interact. In your
introduction, please include your personal demographic information. In your conclusion, please reflect on the different events you have discussed as well as their impact on your practice as a social worker in the near future. Full points will only be awarded to those who include this crucial concluding portion of the assignment. Please use headings to aid in logical organization of this paper. Also, please utilize your textbook as a primary reference. Students should also use two additional professional references in paper. In-text citations should also be used as necessary. This assignment should be approximately 5-8 pages in length.

Special Topic Paper:
Each student will choose a special topic related to human behavior and social work practice. Your textbook discusses many special topics related to human behavior and its implications for culturally competent practice and/or ethical issues. Special topics could include disabilities, cultural/ethnic issues, gender development/identification, sexuality, parenting, divorce or many others. Once an issue is identified, the student should do additional research related to the topic and its ethical considerations within social work practice. The student will then write a paper discussing the topic, how that particular topic impacts human behavior and the primary ethical implications for social work/human service practice based on the various codes of ethics (including but not limited to NASW Code of Ethics) presented in class. At least 3 additional references should be used in addition to the ethical codes provided and the textbook for a minimum total of 5 sources. Papers should be 4-7 pages in length and properly formatted in APA.

Developmental Observation/Interview Instructions:
Prior to your observation/interview, please do the following:
1. Select your subject and determine if an observation or interview would be more appropriate based on that person’s developmental level. For example, you could interview an adolescent or observe them (with permission) in a social/education situation or setting. If you were selecting a 2 year old child, you would do an observation (again with permission). For an older adult, you would select an interview format. For all observations of minors, please seek permission from their parents prior to conducting your observation. Remember, do not use your own children or family members for this assignment.
2. Identify the stage that applies to your subject and review the chapters on that stage.
3. Choose a section or particular topic within those chapters to focus on and identify at least 6 questions (interview) or behaviors (observation) you would like to discuss/observe. For example, in an observation of a 4 year old child, I may choose to focus on gross motor skills and observe which skills that particular child exhibits.
4. Following the observation or interview, please complete the write-up as indicated below.

Directions for Dev. Observation/Interview Paper (please use these categories as headings):
1. Introduction: Introduce your subject (please change your subjects name for confidentiality and use first names only) indicating their age and other identifying demographic information. Identify which stage of development that applies to your subject and what skills or important pieces of that developmental stage you are choosing to focus on and why. Finally, tell me why that part of this developmental stage interests you.
2. **Observation/Interview Summary**: Tell me about your interview or observation in detail. Include information from your text and additional source(s) about the section or topic you choose to concentrate on within your subject’s developmental stage, using proper APA citation. If you choose to do an interview, you may choose to include the interview narrative as a script in addition to summarizing your learning or you may choose to discuss it in paragraph form.

3. **Conclusion**: Conclude this assignment by summarizing your experience and the knowledge gained both through the textbook and the interview/observation itself. Relate this knowledge to future social work practice.

4. **References**: Please include your textbook in a reference page as well as your additional reference(s).

**Further guidelines:**
- Paper should be in APA format and any use of your textbook including direct quotes or paraphrasing must be cited properly.
- This paper should be a minimum of 3 pages depending on subject and developmental stage chosen.
- In each of your 3 interviews/observations, please choose a different subject in a different developmental phase.

**References**


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**Week 1**
- **Readings**: NASW Code of Ethics, NASW Culturally Competent Practice Standards
- **Activities**: Ice Breaker, Syllabus and course overview, Discuss assignments for course, Review Chapter 1
- **Related Outcomes**: 1-5

**Week 2**
- **Readings**: Read: Chapters 2-4, Review: Chapter 1
- **Activities**: Begin Infancy & Childhood discussion/activities
- **Related Outcomes**: 1-5

**Week 3**
- **Readings**: Read: Chapters 6-9, Review: 2-4
- **Assignments**: Developmental Observation/Interview
Activities Complete Infancy & Childhood discussion/activities
Begin Adolescence discussion/activities
Related Outcomes 1-5

Week 4
Readings Review: Chapters 6-9
Activities Complete Adolescence discussion/activities
Related Outcomes 1-5

Week 5
Readings Read: Chapters 10-13
Assignments Social History
Activities Discussion of Social Histories
Begin Young & Middle Adulthood discussion/activities
Related Outcomes 1-5

Week 6
Readings Review: Chapters 10-13
Activities Finish Young & Middle Adulthood discussion/activities
Related Outcomes 1-5

Week 7
Readings Read: Chapters 14-16
Assignments Personal Development Timeline
Activities Later Adulthood discussion/activities
Discuss Personal Timelines
Related Outcomes 1-5

Week 8
Readings Read: Chapter 5
Review: Chapters 9, 13 & other applicable chapters
Assignments Special Topic Presentation
Activities Presentations and Ethical Dilemma Discussions
Related Outcomes 1-5

Final Examination: N/A

Policies:
All course-specific policies for this course are spelled out in the University course policy document available in the Blackboard shell of your course. You are responsible for reading and understanding all of these policies. Failure to understand or abide by these policies could have negative consequences on your experience in this course.
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Last Updated: January 2016
Lead Faculty: Rhoda Miller

Disclaimer: Course content and schedule may vary from this outline to meet the needs of a particular group of students. The instructor will explain the rationale for any variance as it occurs.