

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SCWK 140: Introduction to Community Service  
Course Code # 46334  
Section 2**

**FALL SEMESTER, 2009**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Ruth Jacobsen, MSW, LCSW  
**CLASSROOM:** TBA

**OFFICE LOCATION:** WSQ 217  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Thurs. 8am-9am  
or by appt.

**CLASS MEETING TIME:** Thursday 12-2:45pm

**VOICEMAIL:** 831-425-3113  
**EMAIL:** Ruth.Jacobsen@sjsu.edu

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Volunteer experience with a community service organization that will provide the student with exposure to clients/client systems prior to Field Practicum I. Six to eight hours weekly in community based agencies and on-campus seminars. **(3 Units)**

**Co or Prerequisite:** SCWK 110 is a prerequisite or co-requisite for SCWK 140 or consent of Advisor

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This pre-professional preparation course combines classroom and field learning by placing students in community service agencies as an introduction to the field practicum. Students are acquainted with at risk populations served by community agencies as well as the agency's service delivery system by completing six hours a week of direct service. The volunteer experience is augmented by a bi-monthly mandatory seminar on campus which focuses on issues of diversity, values and ethics, social and economic justice and populations at risk. Students will have an opportunity to explore their areas of interest, motivating factors and level of investment in the field of Social Work. In addition, students will gain an understanding of the organizational structure, function, and financing of social service agencies. The course is particularly important for those students who have limited social work experience and/or may be seeking an opportunity to develop themselves professionally.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this course, students will be expected to:

1. Describe changes in attitude toward their clients and toward the social work profession.  
Program Objectives: B2.2 (Self-evaluation)
2. Demonstrate knowledge of populations most at risk in the United States and of community resources for meeting the needs of clients.

Program Objectives: B1.1 (Transcultural model); B1.2 (Diversity); B1.3 (Values/Ethics); B2.4 (Practice Knowledge & Skills); B3.3 (History)

3. Develop the ability to provide examples of how one's own values shape one's perceptions and behaviors toward others.  
Program Objectives: B2.2 (Self-evaluation)
4. Demonstrate sensitivity in serving clients from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.  
Program Objectives: B1.1 (Transcultural model); B1.2 (Diversity); B3.1 (Power, Privilege, Oppression)
5. Demonstrate ability to describe examples of changes in policies that will make service delivery more effective and efficient.  
Program Objectives: B3.2 (Impact of Social Policy)
6. Explain the mission, goals and objectives of the agency in which the student is placed, how the agency is structured, how it is financed, and how it functions to serve its clientele.  
Program Objectives: B3.4 (Organization/Agency)
7. Demonstrate beginning knowledge about generalist social work practice methods utilized in serving at risk populations at both direct and community practice levels.  
Program Objectives: B1.2 (Diversity); B2.3 (Communication); B2.4 (Practice Knowledge & Skills)

### LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Group exercises and class discussion will be emphasized in the mandatory bi-monthly seminars held on campus. Students are expected to be prepared to participate in class discussion by integrating assigned readings and field experiences. Students will also complete weekly journal entries focusing on their attitudes and client interactions in the agency.

### GRADING AND EVALUATION

**CR/NC Grading \*\*Completion of this course with a grade of CR will be an indication of readiness for field placement. A grade of NC may prevent the student from moving forward to field placement. Students must satisfactorily complete all of the following in order to receive a grade of Credit for the course:**

1. Six hours per week for 12 weeks of volunteer service in an agency setting serving at risk populations and weekly supervision at the agency. Weekly supervision includes weekly contact with supervisor and/or agency staff regarding issues related to clients, agency policies, practices and services. The total number of hours equals 72.

2. Participation in class sessions will be evaluated.
3. Completion and timely submission of all volunteer packet papers. (Agency-Student Contract, Mid Semester Student Report, and Final Student Report).
4. A weekly journal of volunteer service will be turned into the class instructor twice during the semester (due dates indicated on class calendar in bold print). Weekly journal entries shall record the responses to, and reflections on, the student's experiences at the field site. The journal is designed to offer you an opportunity to reflect on your experiences at your volunteer placement. All journal material will be held confidential. During the course of the semester, you can write about thoughts and feelings related to the following areas: 1) understanding yourself and your clients – value and cultural difference; 2) ethnic dilemma(s) and decision making steps; 3) addressing self-disclosure and other boundary issues; 4) working in and with teams – working under supervisor; and 5) professional issues- ongoing education and self-care. In all areas, you need to provide a brief description about the situation. Besides the above listed topics, the journal entry also may include reflection on meaningful experiences and how these experiences have affected attitudes about at risk populations, and/or knowledge of the agency (function, mission, and delivery system). Each entry should be typed and 1-2 pages long.
5. "Reflection Paper" due on the last day of class.  
(See attached sheet for instructions on reflection paper)
6. Ability to demonstrate professional readiness both in the field and in the classroom by having consistent attendance, demonstrating the ability to communicate clearly (verbal and written), adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics, dealing effectively with change and/or challenging situations, and taking an active role in one's professional development.

**A grade of No Credit will be given for missing three or more seminars. Also, one or more of the following reasons will result in a grade of No Credit:**

- Incomplete hours for volunteer service
- Minimal class participation in seminar
- Incomplete or inadequate performance on assignments
- Consistent delays in submission of assignments
- Inadequate understanding or adherence to the NASW code of ethics
- Poor performance appraisal of student by agency supervisor

**Consistent tardiness to class or leaving class before it has ended** is disruptive and will not be tolerated. Please be prepared to start class on time.

### **Request a Waiver Policy**

Students currently employed in a social services agency may request a waiver for the volunteer hours required for this course. Previous experience is not acceptable since you

must be currently working with clients in some capacity to complete the assignments for this course. The purpose of this policy described below is to set forth the circumstances and procedures for requesting a waiver of volunteer hours. The student is required to complete all other assignments for the course. (see 2-6 on page 3)

Students should contact the instructor to request a waiver of volunteer hours. A waiver review will be initiated upon instructors receiving a written request. The written request must include the following:

- 1) Your information - name, contact information, and student identification number.
- 2) The justification for your request, including your social work experience, detailed description of your agency, your work responsibilities, and types of clients served.
- 3) Plan for how to fulfill the assignments for this class.
- 4) Name and contact information of your supervisor. After receiving written request, the instructor may contact the party or parties identified in the request and any other person(s) with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the request.

Once the instructor approves the waiver of volunteer hours, the instructor will sign and date the request and turn it into the School of Social Work office for the student record.

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old tests, quizzes when preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have already taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor and can ruin the university's reputation and the value of the degrees it offers. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment which practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Development for disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University. Additional information on academic integrity can be found at:

[http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/faculty\\_and\\_staff/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/faculty_and_staff/academic_integrity/index.html)

**Campus policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act:** “If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.” Additional information on the Disability Resource Center can be found at:

<http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/>.

SPECIAL NOTE

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case of the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. My office location and hours are listed on the front page of this syllabus.

### TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Readings will be assigned and/or distributed in class according to topic.

The textbook used for SW 110 will be required text for this course:

DuBois, B. & Miley, K. K. (2007). *Social Work: An Empowering Profession*, (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

### TOPIC OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS\*

\*subject to change with fair notice

- AUG. 27                      Overview of course
- Student profiles: Experience, Interests, Motivation, and Self-awareness
  - Volunteer Agency Discussion/Sign-ups
  - Distribution of course packet - Agency-Student Contract, Mid Semester Student Report, and Final Student Report).
- SEPT. 10                      Social Work Practice
- Social work: A helping profession
  - Definition of generalist social work practice
  - Understanding the client system – micro, mezzo, and macro level
  - Introduction to the basic knowledge and skills for the first contact with clients
- Reading: DuBois & Miley, Chapter 1 & 2

SEPT. 24

Social Work with Diverse Populations

- Introduction to Transcultural Perspectives
- Five domains and linkage to the course:  
1) cultural competence, 2) cultural knowledge, 3) power, privilege and oppression, 4) respectful partnership, and 5) positionality and self-reflexivity

Reading: DuBois & Miley, Chapter 7

Students' Field Experience Sharing I

**\* Contracts Due**

OCT. 8

Communication skills

- Importance of communication skills
- Relationship Building
- Basic communication skills

**\* Journals Due**

**\* Mid-Semester Student Report Due**

OCT. 22

Ethics in Social Work Practice

- Values and ethics: NASW Code of Ethics
- Confidentiality and mandatory reporting

Reading: DuBois & Miley, Chapter 5

Social work with organization and community

- Understanding social service settings and delivery system
- Working within an agency
- Community Resources –Referral process and How to build, maintain and utilize a resource directory

Reading: DuBois & Miley, Chapter 4

Review of journal feedback and class discussion

- NOV. 5                    Social work with oppressed populations I: children and families
- Issues facing children and families
  - Child maltreatment & child welfare system
  - Child Protective Services – the process

Reading: DuBois & Miley, Chapter 13

- NOV. 19                    Social work with oppressed populations II
- Working with people with health and mental health problems
  - Social work and disabilities
  - Social work and criminal justice
  - Social work with aging seniors

Reading: DuBois & Miley, Chapter 11, 12, &14

Termination with clients and agency

- Things to consider for termination with clients

- DEC. 3                    Semester reflection and integration of the volunteer experience
- Student's Terminating/closure experience
  - General Field Experience Sharing II

\* **Journals Due**

\* **Final Student Reports Due**

\* **Reflection Papers Due**

## Instructions for Reflection Paper

Due Last Scheduled Class

The Reflection Paper is the final assignment for the service-learning component of the course. It is a vehicle to assist you through the process of closure - the end of the academic semester and the service learning practicum at your respective agencies. Several questions are posed for you to consider concerning your professional growth and development working directly with clients and within the agency system.

1. Briefly describe your agency; mission and goals, structure/organization, programs and staffing, service delivery, and funding sources. (No more than ½ page)
2. Discuss your observations and impressions about how systems (individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) impact on your ability to help your clients. Provide examples from your experiences this semester to illustrate. Also, discuss any changes you would make in order to improve service delivery to better meet the needs of clients. (Approximately 1-2 pages)
3. Discuss the overall impact your volunteer experience with vulnerable populations has had on your personal beliefs and value system. Special focus should be on attitudinal changes you might have experienced. Also, discuss assigned readings or classroom experiences that relate to a specific client you worked with, or that impacted you in a significant way. (Approximately 1-2 pages)

**Requirements:** The paper must be typewritten, double-spaced. The due date is the last seminar class.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Finn, J. & Jacobson, M. (2003). *Just practice: A social justice approach to social work*. Peosta, IA: Eddie Bowers Publishing Co.
- Gardner, F. (2001). Social work students and self-awareness: How does it happen? *Reflective Practice*, 2(1), 27-40.
- Grobman, L. M. (Ed.). (1996). *Days in the lives of social workers: 41 professionals tell "real-life" stories from social work practice*. Harrisburg, PA: White Hat Communications.
- Gutierrez, L., Parsons, R. & Cox, E. (1998). *Empowerment in social work practice: A sourcebook*. Pacific Grove, CA.: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
- Harper, K. V. & Lantz, J. (1996). *Cross-cultural practice: social work with diverse populations*. Chicago: Lyceum Books.
- Kozol, J. (1995). *Amazing grace: The lives of children and the conscience of a nation*. New York: Harper-Collins Publishers.
- Lum, D. (2004). *Social work practice and people of color*. Belemont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning.
- National Association of Social Workers. (1999). *Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
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- Taylor RL (Ed). (1994). *Minority families in the United States: A multicultural perspective*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall.