

**UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS**  
**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**  
SW 425: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II  
Fall 2016

Tuesday 5:30-8:15 p.m.

Class: GUA 3217

Office: GUA 3137

Office Hours:

Phone:

WebCampus: <http://webcampus.nevada.edu>

Email:

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Human Behavior and the Social Environment II (SW 425) focuses on theories and concepts of behavior at the level of groups, organizations, community, and culture. The primary aim of the course is to provide the student with a foundation for understanding how large scale (macro) systems influence human behavior and how they promote or deter optimal health and well-being. The systems theory and the ecological perspective are used as a framework for understanding the complex interactions between individuals, groups, communities and organizations and the impact of social and cultural forces on institutions, organizations, and communities. The Human Behavior and the Social Environment courses, in keeping with the generalist perspective of the undergraduate curriculum, incorporate social work values and ethics in relation to the course content.

**COURSE RATIONALE**

The content area of Human Behavior and the Social Environment (HBSE) is central to social work education and provides a foundation and basis for social work practice. The ability to understand and assess human behavior is fundamental to all methods of social work practice. The first HBSE course (SW 315, HBSE I) is designed to introduce students to theories and knowledge useful for understanding human behavior at the level of individuals, families, and groups. The second HBSE course (SW 425, HBSE II) provides a framework for understanding human behavior in the large system components including communities, groups, organizations, and cultures.

**PROGRAM COMPETENCIES**

The program competencies for the BSW Program flow from the mission, goals, and objectives of the School of Social Work and reflect the standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)—Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS):

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
3. Advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
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.

### **COURSE COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

In the HBSE sequence, course competencies place an emphasis on critical thinking, respect for human diversity, and the application of knowledge in assessment in individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The course material, instruction, and assignments will allow students the opportunity to achieve the following competencies:

#### **Competency #2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.**

Practice behavior: Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;

- Measured through the self-assessment of group process and dynamics of group formed for group presentation on group identity and diversity.
- Measured through the instructor's assessment of the group's presentation on group identity and diversity.
- Measured through the student assessment of the other groups' presentation on group identity and diversity.

#### **Competency #7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.**

Practice behavior: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies (at the level of groups, organizations, and communities).

- Measured through Working Paper #1; midterm exam.

Practice behavior: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies (at the level of organizations).

- Measured through the final exam.

Practice behavior: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies (at the level of neighborhoods and communities).

- Measured through Working Paper #2; final exam.

### **PRE-REQUISITES**

Acceptance into the BSW Program and completion of SW 315.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- **Participation.** Students are expected to actively participate in all classes as a part of a professional education. **(50 points).**
  - Attendance is one way of showing participation; therefore, attendance will be taken for each class. (Remember that this is a block class, with two classes combined.) Points will be deducted from the participation grade for missing classes. No points will be given in this category if the student misses more than three classes; in fact, more than three missed classes may result in failing the course.
  - Preparation for class through assigned readings is also a part of the participation grade. Readings should be printed and brought to class for use in class exercises. You are expected to actively participate in all discussions and activities. If necessary, you may be required to submit summaries of the readings, or otherwise demonstrate your completion of them (presentation, pop quiz, etc.).
  - You are expected to actively engage in the assessment of group presentations, as well as any other class activities.
  - You are required to check WebCampus for any updates on the course.
  
- **Working papers.** Two short working papers will be required throughout the semester. Specific requirements for each paper will be given prior to the due date. Each paper will reflect your thinking about a topic discussed in class or in the textbook. Evaluation of the papers will be based on the clarity of ideas, organization, understanding of the material, and style and grammar. Additional instructions and format will be provided. **(Maximum 25 points each).**
  - Theoretical perspectives. Take a social problem or issue and discuss the issue in terms of one of the theories we discuss in class. Discuss how the theory or perspective does or does not help you understand the issue.
  - Neighborhood walk. This is a chance to get to know your neighborhood as a community organizer might know it. Students will particularly consider the localization of issues of social and economic justice.
  
- **Group presentations.** Groups and topics will be chosen during the second week of class. Each group will be responsible for developing a one-hour class presentation describing issues related to a specific group or population in Las Vegas. Localized issues of social and economic justice will be emphasized. Groups will be able to use some class time during the course of the semester to discuss and plan the presentation. **(100 points).**
  
- **Midterm Exam. (100 points).**
  
- **Final Exam. (100 points).**

## **EVALUATION**

All work is expected to meet academic standards, following APA format (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Late assignments will receive a 10% deduction.

94-100	A	73-76	C
90-93	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-66	D
80-82	B-	60-62	D-
77-79	C+	<60	F

## **ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

Professional social work education is an opportunity to learn, practice, and teach the professional principles necessary for ethical social work practice. You are expected to be on time for class, and come prepared to enhance the class discussion. You need to be prepared to engage in respectful and thoughtful discussions in class, deepening and broadening your repertoire of knowledge and skills in the interaction with others with different perspectives. Although our discussions sometimes necessarily involve our own experiences, please remember that the class situation is not a professional setting in regard to confidentiality.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

Kirst-Ashman, K. K. (2014). *Human behavior in the macro social environment: An empowerment approach to understanding communities, organizations, and groups* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks Cole.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

## **RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK**

McKnight, J. & Block, P. (2010). *The abundant community: Awakening the power of families and neighborhoods*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Readings outside the required texts (as noted in the course outline) will be posted on WebCampus. There may be additional readings as assigned, as the right to amend the syllabus is reserved.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Session 1...August 30

Introduction to the course; review of syllabus

Introduction to macro theories and use in generalist practice

Reading: Syllabus

## UNIT ONE: PARADIGMS & THEORIES IN SOCIAL WORK

Session 2...September 6

Social stratification

Macro theories—History of development, definition and scope

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 1
- Queralt, Chapters 1, 3
- **Group formation for presentations**

Session 3...September 13

Theories for social work practice

Generalist practice, the strengths and empowerment perspectives

Ethical values and principles

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 2

## UNIT TWO: GROUPS AND THEORIES ABOUT GROUPS

Session 4...September 20

Theories and perspectives on groups

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapters 3-4
- Putnam, Chapters 1, 5, 6

Session 5...September 27

Theories and perspectives on groups (continued)

- Putnam, Chapter 7, 8, 9
- **Working Paper #1 Due**

## UNIT THREE: ORGANIZATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES

Session 6...October 4

Theories and perspectives on organizations

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapters 5-6
- **Review for midterm exam**

Session 7...October 11

**Midterm Exam**

Session 8...October 18

**NO CLASS** (Presidential Debate on 19<sup>th</sup>)

**...BUT...**

**Online:** Theories and perspectives on social service organizations

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapters 7-8
- Hasenfeld, Y. (1992). The nature of human service organizations. In Y. Hasenfeld (Ed.), *Human services as complex organizations* (pp. 3-23). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

**Extra Credit! Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 530 pm in SU, Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone*. New book, *Our kids: The American dream in crisis*. Reflection paper, guidelines provided.**

#### **UNIT FOUR: COMMUNITIES IN SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY THEORIES**

Session 9...October 25

Theories and perspectives on neighborhoods

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 11
- Warren, R. B. & Warren, D. I. (1977). How to diagnose a neighborhood. In R. B. Warren & D. I. Warren, *The neighborhood organizer's handbook* (pp. 167-196). Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame.

Session 10...November 1

Perspectives on community

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapters 9-10
- Putnam, Chapter 2-4
- Dionne, E. J. (2012, May 24). Conservatives used to care about community. What happened? *The Washington Post* at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conservatives-used-to-care-about-community-what-happened/2012/05/24/gJQAsR8inU\\_story.html?hpid=z3](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conservatives-used-to-care-about-community-what-happened/2012/05/24/gJQAsR8inU_story.html?hpid=z3)

Session 11... November 8

**NO CLASS...ELECTION DAY/NIGHT**

#### **Online:**

Diversity, Populations-at-Risk, and Empowerment

- Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 12
- **Working paper #2 Due**

#### **UNIT FIVE: GROUPS IN ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES: IDENTITY AND EMPOWERMENT**

Session 12...November 15

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

Session 13...November 22

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

Session 14...November 29

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

Session 15...December 6

**GROUP PRESENTATION**

- Wrap-up and review

FINAL EXAM...Tuesday, December 13...6:00-8:00 p.m.....GUA 3217

### UNLV POLICIES

**Academic Misconduct**—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at:

<https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

**There is to be no use of laptops, cell phones, or any other audio/visual/electronic technologies by students during class periods without specific approval by the instructor. Also, per NSHE policy, there is to be no audio/videotaping in the classroom without instructor approval or accommodations determined by the Disability Resource Center.**

**Copyright**—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, #702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

**Religious Holidays Policy**—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the

religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

**Transparency in Learning and Teaching**—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

**Incomplete Grades**—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the “I” grade.

**Tutoring and Coaching**—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

**UNLV Writing Center**—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

**Rebemail**—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebemail accounts only. Rebemail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary

ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always [@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:unlv@unlv.nevada.edu). **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

**Final Examinations**—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Student Lounge: There is a small student lounge in the School of Social Work for your use. A file cabinet contains folders for faculty and administrative communication with each of you. There is also a phone and a couple of computers for your shared use.

Personal Assistance: Please be reminded that this class is not a confidential setting. The following numbers may be helpful to you in this regard:

School of Social Work office	702-895-3311
UNLV Counseling and Psychological Services	702-895-3627
United Way Clearinghouse	702-892-2320
Clark County Social Service	702-455-7200

Campus Assistance: The following link will provide you direct access to campus organizations that can assist you: [http://tlc.unlv.edu/student\\_success.htm](http://tlc.unlv.edu/student_success.htm)

Lied Library: The University Libraries offer free, brief clinics and workshops to help you increase your research skills and save time searching. Take your topic to a Research Clinic for in-depth, one-on-one consultation with a research expert, or attend one of the more structured workshops on topics such as finding books and articles, successful search strategies, or Internet research. Check out the schedule at the library website or call #895-2123 for more information.

Social Work Subject Librarian:

Lied Library has a librarian assigned to assist social work students, as well as other students in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs, in regard to research and other library resources:

Ms. Susie Skarl  
 Urban Studies Librarian  
 Phone: (702) 895-2141  
 Email: [Susie.Skarl@unlv.edu](mailto:Susie.Skarl@unlv.edu)

School of Social Work Professional Writing Skills Lab--The School of Social Work has set up a service to assist our students to develop their professional writing skills. The

Professional Writing Skills Lab is located in GUA 4118 and is staffed by our graduate assistants.

National Association of Social Workers: <[www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org)>

The University Association of Social Work Students: The University Association of Social Work Students (UASWS) at the UNLV School of Social Work functions as a student organization specifically directed toward social work majors. UASWS is an excellent forum for social work students on the BSW and the MSW levels to share ideas, experiences, concerns, and to have a voice within the Social Work department. Participation in UASWS can enrich the educational and professional opportunities of its members by connecting social work students to their community. During the past few years UASWS members have participated in numerous community-focused events such as the following: Stand Down for the Homeless, Shade Tree Women's Shelter, Street Teens, Aid for Aids of Nevada Annual Walk, and the Ronald McDonald House. UASWS is only as good as its members. The more involvement, the more enjoyment! For more information, please email <[uasws@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:uasws@unlv.nevada.edu)>.

### Bibliography

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