

**UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS**  
**School of Social Work**  
**SW 715-1003 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I**  
**Fall 2016**

**Time:** Tuesdays, 5:30-8:15pm

**Classroom:** GUA 2204

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Phone:**

**Email:**

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

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Human Behavior in the Social Environment I (HBSE I, SW 715) provides content about theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development and functioning of individuals and families. The course provides an understanding of the interaction between human beings and their environment. Its focus is on the way in which human behavior is affected by and affects human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems. HBSE I examines areas of communality and difference across gender, race, ethnicity, class, physical and mental ability, and sexual orientation. The impact of social and economic forces on individual and family well-being are also examined.

### **COURSE PURPOSE AND RATIONALE**

The emphasis throughout the foundation is on the development of generalist practitioners who have a generic base of knowledge, values, ethics, and skills in the areas of practice, social policy, human behavior and the social environment, and social research. In keeping with the generalist and strengths-based perspective of the MSW foundation curriculum, SW 715 maintains a focus on social systems, particularly individuals and families. This course links the problems of individuals and families to a critical understanding of larger social problems, conditions, and policies, and on the general social work base of values, knowledge, and skills which enable work at the micro and mezzo levels. SW 715 provides the basis for the next HBSE course (SW 735) which will emphasize groups, organizations, culture, and institutions.

### **PREREQUISITES:**

As part of the foundation curriculum, SW 715 must be taken in the appropriate sequence as outlined for full and part time students.

### **PROGRAM COMPETENCIES**

The program competencies for the MSW 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):

- Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
- Competency 2: Engage diversity and difference in practice
- Competency 3: Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
- Competency 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
- Competency 5: Engage in policy practice
- Competency 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Competency 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 of 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: Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power
  - Measured through classroom discussions and self-reflective paper
- Practice behavior: Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
  - Measured through classroom discussions and self-reflective paper

Competency #6: Engage with 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 to engage with clients and constituencies.
  - Measured through classroom discussions, quizzes, self-reflective paper, and midterm and final exams
- Practice behavior: Critique and apply knowledge to understand the person and environment
  - Measured through classroom discussions, quizzes, self-reflective paper, and concept project

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

#### **Attendance and Participation**

**10%**

Students are expected to attend class and participate actively.

The evaluation of the attendance and participation portion of the grade will be based on a combination of the student's participation in class and between class activities, internet work, and the submission of written assignments as directed by the instructor.

Students are expected to be fully prepared for class by completing all assigned readings and engaging in ongoing learning opportunities. Assigned readings should be incorporated into writing assignments. Full credit will **not** be given for late assignments.

Each student is responsible for signing the attendance sheet during each class session. Other students are not permitted to sign your name. Credit will be given for those days in which the student's signature appears on the attendance sheet. Credit will not be given to students who forget to sign the attendance sheet – **no exceptions**. The instructor is not responsible to make sure that students sign in each week. **More than two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.**

Although the use of technology makes life more convenient, it also can be a distraction in class. Therefore, students who text in class will be considered absent. **All electronic devices are prohibited during class, including any and all cell phones, computers, and tablets.**

#### **Self-Reflection Paper**

**30%**

## **Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> Online via WebCampus by 5pm**

The issue of cross-cultural competence involves understanding both one's own and the client's culturally-based perspectives. The first step in this complex process is understanding how one's own cultural background informs his/her perspective as a practitioner. This paper seeks to increase knowledge and understanding in diversity issues through self-reflective work.

A text [McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., and Pearce, J.K. (Eds.). (2005). *Ethnicity and family therapy*. NY: The Guilford Press] is on reserve in the library. This book has an extensive list of contributors, speaking to characteristics and values of particular ethnic groups (nearly 50 chapters). Hopefully, the ethnic group(s) most relevant to you is/are discussed in this text. Review the first chapter of the McGoldrick et al. book, overviewing the concepts discussed. Then, review the chapter(s) most appropriate to you or other literature sources most appropriate to you.

You will need to do some additional research on the ethnic group(s) most relevant to you (citing at least 3-5 scholarly sources from peer-reviewed journals, in addition to the McGoldrick et al. text). Include in your paper a discussion about the immigration history, traditions, culture, norms, values, position in relation to privilege, social mobility, world view, etc.

Write a paper of approximately 7 -10 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, with proper APA citations) in which you:

- Describe your family of origin's ethnic/cultural membership. This may certainly involve more than one group membership.
- Discuss values you personally have incorporated and/or rejected as a result of your family's ethnic/cultural membership.
- Describe the "goodness of fit" between your culture of origin and the "dominant" culture in this country. Give examples to support your response.
- Given your discussion above, identify cross-cultural issues you believe will be most challenging in your work as a social worker. For example, you may want to look at the expectations you hold to consider whether you might hold them for clients. Demonstrate your ability to think critically about the impact that your worldview, race, ethnicity, gender, age, etc. will have on your ability to work effectively with diverse populations.

**All papers must be submitted online by the due date and time or have significant grade reduction.**

## ***Midterm Exam***

**20%**

### **Tuesday, October 18th**

The midterm exam will cover the first 7 weeks of class.

**Literature  
Review**  
**40%**

---

**Tuesday, December 13th**

Choose a family social problem (e.g. chronic illness, family violence, substance abuse, child maltreatment, etc.) and write a literature review about the problem. First, narrow your paper down to a few features of the problem (e.g. a few ways that children are affected by a parent who is chronically or mentally ill). Locate empirically-based research studies that inform us about this particular social problem, but do not focus on treatment or interventions. What are the latest findings? Review and use at least 10 studies.

Write a paper 12-15 pages in length, using proper APA style formatting and citations, including headings and subheadings to organize the content of the paper. The literature review should include the following:

- Introduction – Tell the reader why this is a problem, why we should discuss it or do anything about it. In other words, what is the purpose of writing this paper? Why is it important? This may include demographic information telling how serious the problem is for people. Also, consider and address the costs to society resulting from this problem.
- Literature Review – In the main part of your paper, integrate your findings.
- Conclusion – What are your final conclusions? What were the basic findings from your review? What are the implications for the field of social work? What future research is needed?

**EVALUATION CRITERIA/GRADING SCALE:**

Students are expected to use accurate spelling and proper grammar in written assignments. Grades will be lowered for incorrect spelling and grammar. Students are expected to demonstrate Masters' level competency in their writing skills. Work submitted for a grade should reflect your best effort. **No extra credit** work will be accepted.

95-100	A	74-76	C
90-94	A-	70-73	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
84-86	B	64-66	D
80-83	B-	60-63	D-
77-79	C+	<60	F

NOTE: A grade of C- or below is equivalent to a failure to pass and will require re-enrollment in the class to receive credit.

**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>.

**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/teachandlearning>  
<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/>.

**Rebelmail**—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail 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.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>.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

Robbins, S., Chatterjee, P., & Canda, E. (2011). *Contemporary human behavior theory: A critical perspective for social work* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Hutchinson, E.D. (2015). *Dimensions of human behavior: The changing life course* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

**OPTIONAL TEXTBOOKS (ON LIBRARY RESERVE):**

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., and Pearce, J.K. (Eds.). (2005). *Ethnicity and family therapy*. NY: The Guilford Press

Longres, J.F. (2000). *Human behavior in the social environment* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers.

**SCHEDULE:**

DATE	TOPIC ( <i>Instructor reserves the right to change, however, students will be notified of any adjustments</i> )
Aug 30	<b>Introduction and overview</b>
Sep 6	<p><b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 1 The Nature of Theories</li> </ul> <p><i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 1 Introduction to Human Behavior &amp; the Social Environment</li> </ul>

Sep 13	<p><b>Introduction to Theories</b>  <u>Required Reading:</u>  <i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 2 Systems Theory</li> <li>• Ch 8 Theories of Lifespan Development</li> </ul>
Sep 20	<p><b>Introduction to Theories &amp; Ethics</b>  <u>Required Reading:</u>  <i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 4 Theories of Empowerment</li> </ul> <p><i>McGoldrick et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 1 Overview: Ethnicity and Family Therapy</li> </ul> <p><i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> (available online)</p>
Sep 27	<p><b>Prenatal Development</b>  <u>Required Reading:</u>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 2 Conception, Pregnancy, &amp; Childbirth</li> </ul> <p><i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 6 Theories of Assimilation, Acculturation, Bicultural Socialization, &amp; Ethnic Minority Identity</li> </ul>
Oct 4	<p><b>Infancy &amp; Toddlerhood</b>  <u>Required Reading:</u>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 3 Infancy &amp; Toddlerhood</li> <li>• Ch 4 Early Childhood</li> </ul> <p><i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 7 Psychodynamic Theory</li> </ul>
Oct 11	<p><b>School Age</b>  <u>Required Reading:</u>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 5 Middle Childhood</li> </ul> <p><i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 9 Theories of Cognitive &amp; Moral Development</li> <li>• Ch 12 Behaviorism, Social Learning, &amp; Exchange Theories</li> </ul> <p><b>DUE: Self Reflection paper</b></p>
Oct 18	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
Oct 25	<b>Adolescence</b>

	<p><b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <p><b>Ch 6 Adolescence</b></p>
Nov 1	<p><b>Young Adulthood</b>  <b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 7 Young Adulthood</li> </ul> <p><i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 11 Phenomenology, Social Construction, &amp; Hermeneutics</li> </ul>
Nov 8	<p><b>Middle Adulthood</b>  <b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 8 Middle Adulthood</li> </ul> <p><i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 5 Feminist Theory</li> <li>• Ch 13 Transpersonal Theory</li> </ul>
Nov 15	<p><b>Late Adulthood &amp; Very Late Adulthood</b>  <b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Hutchison</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 9 Late Adulthood</li> <li>• Ch 10 Very Late Adulthood</li> </ul>
Nov 22	<p><b>Family Organization</b>  <b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Longres</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 10 The Family as a Social Organization: Identifying Well-Being</li> </ul>
Nov 29	<p><b>Application of Theories</b>  <b><u>Required Reading:</u></b>  <i>Robbins et al.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch 14 Application of Theories</li> </ul>
Dec 6	<p><b>Course Wrap-up; Final questions for Literature Review</b></p>

### 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 are 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

The School of Social Work Writing Center:

The School of Social Work also maintains a Professional Writing Skills Lab for students in GUA 3133. Contact School of Social work office at the number above to obtain schedule and contact information for an appointment.

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:

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

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 a 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. For more information, please email [uasws@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:uasws@unlv.nevada.edu).