

SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO



Sault College

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE TITLE: Ethics & Professionalism
CODE NO. : SSW221 **SEMESTER:** 2
PROGRAM: Social Services Worker Program
AUTHOR: Leanne Murray, MSW, RSW
DATE: Jan 2006 **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:**
APPROVED:

		_____ DEAN	_____ DATE
TOTAL CREDITS:	3		
PREREQUISITE(S):	N/A		
HOURS/WEEK:	2		

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For additional information, please contact the Dean,
School of Health and Human Services
(705) 759-2554, Ext.2603

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce students to ethical decision-making approach, standards and values within the social services field. Students will become familiar with the Social Work & Social Service Work Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice in order to make informed ethical decisions in their practice. An ethical stance requires careful reflection, self-monitoring and self-awareness. Therefore in this course there is an emphasis on personal/professional value awareness, development and self reflection.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the values and ethics in social service practice.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- A) Define and describe basic ethical concepts and principles.
- B) Recognize the role that values play in everyday practice.
- C) Demonstrate familiarity with and adherence to the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.
- D) Analyze how personal value systems may be a factor in developing collaborative relationships with others.
- E) Identify and understand key ethical guidelines such as confidentiality, competence, professional boundaries, multiple relationships and informed consent.

2. Recognize and identify ethical dilemmas in practice and adhere to legal and ethical standards.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- A) Identify and apply a model of ethical decision-making to selected client and professional situations.
- B) Value the use of a consistent process for addressing ethical challenges.
- C) Establish working relationships that reflect professional values and ethics.
- D) Describe the dimensions of ethical decision-making.

3. Promote and develop “professional” self and an ethical stance.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- A) Maintain professional helping relationships that adhere to ethical and legal standards.
- B) Solicit constructive feedback relating to one’s own ethics, values, strengths and areas of growth.
- C) Commit to ongoing personal and professional development.
- D) Identify and explore own values and implications for practice.
- E) Identify values, ethics and obligations of the profession.
- F) Demonstrate an ability to accept views/values different from their own, particularly with respect to gender, culture, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation.

III. TOPICS:

1. Introduction and overview on ethics.
2. The Social Service Worker as a person and as a professional.
3. Values and Social Work Principles/Code of Ethics.
4. Theories & Models of Ethical Decision-making.
5. Ethical issues in the Social Services Field (confidentiality, informed consent, boundaries, record-keeping, client rights, competence).
6. Professional Growth (self awareness and value clarification and development of an ethical understanding and stance).

IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:

1. Corey, G., Corey, M., & Callanan, P. (2003). 6th Ed. *Issues & Ethics In The Helping Professions*. Scarborough: Thomson Learning
2. Ontario College of Social Workers & Social Service Workers *Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice*

V. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Mid-Term Exam | 25% |
| 2. Ethical Dilemma Case Study Assignment | 20% |
| 3. Ethical Dilemma Case Study Assignment | 20% |
| 4. Final Exam | 25% |
| 5. Attendance & Participation | 10% |

The following semester grades will be assigned to students in post-secondary courses:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 – 100%	4.00
A	80 – 89%	
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
D	50 – 59%	1.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	0.00
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.	
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.	

Note: For such reasons as program certification or program articulation, certain courses require minimums of greater than 50% and/or have mandatory components to achieve a passing grade.

It is also important to note, that the minimum overall GPA required in order to graduate from a Sault College program remains 2.0.

VI. SPECIAL NOTES:

Special Needs:

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your professor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit Room E1101 or call Extension 2703 so that support services can be arranged for you.

Retention of Course Outlines:

It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other post-secondary institutions.

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Course Outline Amendments:

The professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

Other Notes:

1. All submissions must be in word processing format and follow APA guidelines.
2. Late assignments will be handled at the professor's discretion and **only for substantial and substantiated reasons**. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements directly with the professor. Late assignments will be subject to a 10% grade reduction per day (including weekends). No late assignments will be accepted or graded after **one week** following the due date. Students are encouraged to proactively discuss with the Professor any serious circumstances that might interfere with the timely completion of their assignment.
3. Students are responsible to contact the professor directly and **immediately** when substantial and substantiated reasons create the need for missing an exam. Students must **email** the professor immediately requesting a make-up test and state the reasons why this is needed. Consideration and determination of the opportunity to make up a missed exam is at the professor's discretion. Generally, this is granted only for exceptional circumstances.
4. Students will be expected to come prepared to class to facilitate discussion and review of course material. Grades assigned for participation will reflect the student's knowledge of the content discussed, willingness to share thoughts about the material, and ability to respect viewpoints different from their own. Final grade is at the discretion of the professor.

5. All attempts are made by the Professor to start and end classes on time. Students who arrive late for class may not be permitted entry, and those who chronically arrive late will be asked to meet with the Professor. Marks will be deducted for chronic lateness and will be reflected in the class participation mark.
6. Students must follow established and agreed upon classroom conduct. Students are expected to model in the classroom behaviour reflective of the profession.
7. Cell phones, pagers, and watches that 'beep' must be off or on vibrate mode. Students may respond to calls/pages after class time.
8. The provisions of both the College Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Social Service Worker Program Policies will apply at all times in this course.
9. Beverages/food is allowed in class on the condition that students' dispose of garbage and it does not interrupt learning of others. This privilege will be rescinded if these conditions are not followed.
10. Students are encouraged to discuss their learning needs and assignments with the Professor. If a student has a particular concern about the grade of a particular assignment, or overall mark in the course, they must email the professor and request an appointment to discuss this issue. Students are expected to come prepared to the meeting with a written summary of their concerns, comments.

VII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

VIII. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS:

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain a direct credit transfer form from the Dean's secretary. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course in question.

Course Assignments:**Mid-term and final exams:**

Exams will be completed in class. Exams will be based upon the readings, video presentations, classroom lectures and discussions. Additional instructions will be provided.

Mid-term Exam Date: Friday, February 17, 2006

Final Exam Date: Friday, April 28, 2006

Participation & Attendance

Grade: 10%

Grades for participation will reflect attendance, punctuality and active participation in class. Students will be expected to actively contribute to class discussions and to participate in role-plays/demonstrations. Demonstrated growth in topic knowledge is expected.

Ethical Dilemma Case Study Assignments:

Students will be expected to complete **two** case studies. Submissions must reflect depth of thinking, critical evaluation, and ability to apply theory/model to practice situations, professional judgment and insight. Evidence that you have read the relevant material and/or supplementary research is required. Submissions must be typed and a reference page included according to APA style. The professor in class will provide the case studies and additional grading criteria.

Case Study #1 Due Date: February 10, 2006

Grade: 20%

Requirements of final report:

- Must be typed, Times New Roman or Arial font, #12 font size, minimum 1.5 cm margin on both sides, black on white only.
- Responses must be following the headings below and numbered to match the numbering of the questions.
- Full sentences and paragraphs must be used.
- Grading will be based on the clarity, accuracy, and thoroughness of the responses. Your responses will be measured against the material studied in class, including but not limited to the text book and the SSW Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. **Referencing is required throughout the paper to provide support/rationale for student responses.**
- **Each student will be graded on his or her own report.** In preparing the responses, collaboration with other students in the class is encouraged, in keeping with the professional expectation that in resolving ethical dilemmas you will consult and collaborate. However, with this noted, final submissions must be completed independently. Any submissions that are or appear to be similar or exact responses will receive a **grade of zero**.

The Case:

Background: Leah is a Social Service Worker who has been employed by a youth outreach program for the past 5 years since her graduation and registration. Currently her work is in area high schools where she provides programs to encourage youth to stay in school and to go on after graduation to some form of post-secondary education. Leah has been providing lunch-time drop-ins, special focus groups, and supplementary assistance to hard-to-serve or at-risk youth. Often youth from her groups will request individual supportive counselling sessions. She has been assisting a considerable number of youth in making the transition from high school to college. Leah's work is respected and she gets along well with co-workers. She may be in line for a promotion in the near future.

Leah is very close to her family, both immediate and extended. For Leah, this is a cultural norm. Her family has been very supportive as far back as she can remember. Her parents did not have much extra money after providing for the children, and Leah is well aware that they gave up vacations and made other sacrifices in order to help support her years in college to become a Social Service Worker. Leah tries to return that support to her now-aging parents. Between work and family, Leah has little time for socializing. She does not see that as a problem because, as she notes, her parents will not be around forever.

Gina is a student in one of Leah's groups and has also been meeting alone with Leah for general chat and support. Gina and Leah communicate easily and have met three or four times. No significant issues have emerged but Gina says she just likes the chats and Leah believes these times are important and in keeping with her mandate.

Lately Gina and Leah have been talking about the transition from high school to university. Gina will graduate in about two months. She plans to attend the university in the same city in which she lives. The university campus is about a 30 minute car ride from Gina's home. According to Gina, her parents have been supportive of Gina going this university and have offered to buy her a car to help her out (in addition to paying her tuition and books costs). Gina, notes Leah, is pretty, fashionably dressed, and outgoing. She has an easy sense of humour and seems most comfortable and energetic when talking about herself.

The situation: Gina is seeking increased independence and wants to break away from her parents and be 'free'. She believes her parents want her to stay at home while she goes to university, but Gina wants to live on campus in the dorms (there is enough space in the dorms for same-city students). In yesterday's session, Leah suggested that Gina talk with her parents about this, but Gina just wants to move out, without any discussion with her parents. Gina is convinced that her parents will continue to financially support her, in fact saying that she simply expects this from them. Leah is concerned about what her parents' reaction might be if Gina moves out without involving them in this decision. Near the end of yesterday's session Gina said "I don't want to be under their thumb anymore. I could really care less what they think." Leah wants Gina to think about the consequences and the effect on her parents and the fact that they have made sacrifices for her. Leah feels that Gina is being self-centred and ungrateful toward her parents.

The Questions:

1. Identify your own values regarding the above situation. How do your identified values impact your thoughts/reactions to the above situation?
2. What do you imagine it would be like to be the client in this situation?
3. How do you react to how Leah is dealing with Gina? What do you believe are the values/beliefs that are impacting Leah's work/approach with Gina? What are the potential consequences/risks to the client?
4. How would you react to Gina's statement "I could really care less what they think"? (Share your personal reflections and discuss a professional response that is consistent with the SSW profession (i.e. respectful/honouring of client).
5. What main ethical issues for the counsellor do you think this case illustrates?
6. How might you begin to work with Gina in this situation? In answering this question, consider the issues of 'autonomy', 'non-maleficence', and 'beneficence'. Which of these principles would most influence your interventions in this situation? Are there other considerations? Are there any cautions or barriers to effective intervention that you would need to consider or control? Explain fully.
7. If you were a colleague of Leah's and she sought consultation from you, which of the following options might you suggest to her? You can choose more than one. Provide a brief explanation for each one chosen.
 - Support the client in her attempt to establish her independence
 - Encourage the client to bring her parents into a counselling session with her
 - Ask the client to write a letter to her parents telling them why she wants to live away from home
 - Persuade the client to think of how her actions might hurt her parents
 - Challenge Leah, the counsellor, on her philosophy of counselling
 - Encourage Leah to explore her own possible counter-transference
 - Suggest to Leah that there is not a good match between counsellor and client
 - Encourage Leah to refer the client because of a values conflict

Grading Criteria for Case Study #1:

1. Assignment is formatted as required, free of grammar and spelling errors, APA style.
0 .5 1
2. Student responses are thorough and show evidence of integration of class material with appropriate use of and referencing of text, OCSWSSW Standards of Practice/Code of Ethics
0 .5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3
3. Student identifies and discusses his or her own personal values that apply to the situation and how these values may impact their approach to the situation.
0 1 2 3
4. Student discusses and is able to convey a professional understanding of the client this situation.
0 .5 1 1.5 2
5. Student describes and identifies accurately the worker's values/beliefs in the situation. Student discusses thoroughly the potential risks/consequences to the client given the worker's position.
0 .5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3
6. Student shares his or her own personal reflections about client statement and documents clearly a professional response that is consistent with the SSW profession.
0 .5 1 1.5 2
7. Student identifies the correct ethical issues involved in the case and supports their response with the SSW Code of Ethics & Standards of practice.
0 .5 1 1.5 2
8. Student describes how he or she would begin to work with Gina. Student identifies which principle would most greatly influence the work with this client. Student identifies any cautions or barriers to effective intervention that he or she would need to consider.
0 .5 1 1.5 2
9. Student selects a suggestion from colleague and provides a full rationale for this choice.
0 .5 1 1.5 2

Case Study #2**Due Date:** Friday, March 24th, 2006**Grade:** 20%**Colleague Misconduct: What's An Intern To Do?****Practice Context and Case Presentation:**

A nonprofit, community based agency's mission is the provision of crisis intervention to underserved populations. The majority of clients are low-income and of a Native descent. The agency is staffed by a variety of disciplines.

A second year SSW student is placed at the agency. This is the first fieldwork placement at this particular organization. The student is supervised by a MSW graduate who was hired three months ago.

The SSW student became aware that the social worker failed repeatedly to respect the privacy of clients by discussing client information in the lunchroom and in the hallways where other clients and staff could easily overhear her. Additionally, the student has heard her field supervisor make racial slurs and jokes regarding the clientele served.

The ethical issue revolves around SSW's responsibility to address misconduct by professional colleagues. While both professionals and students have this responsibility, student interns are especially vulnerable, and there is often a reasonable fear of confrontation or retaliation that may negatively influence the student placement. The possibility of poor grades, conflict, termination isolation make reporting professional misconduct difficult for students on placement, and the self-determined need for self protection may limit reporting.

One side of the dilemma is the student's right to self-determination in not reporting and thus maintaining an appropriate working environment to support her goals of achieving professional education. The student has put a great deal of effort in preparing for the SSW program and a positive student placement is important to her. The risk of reporting could severely damage her placement and rapport with the staff.

On the other hand, one of the marks of a profession is self-monitoring, and there is a clear obligation to report misconduct by colleagues. Poor representation of the profession's ethical codes compromises the clients' best interest, welfare of vulnerable clients and the status of the social work profession (Rothman, J.2005)

The ethical dilemma may be phrased as:

Obligation to Report Colleague's Misconduct vs. Self-Determination**Using the ETHIC Model respond to the following:**

1. Examine and identify relevant personal, social, agency, client, and professional values that apply to the above situation.
2. Identify which ethical standards of the Code of Ethics apply to this situation and provide a rationale for your response.

3. Hypothesize about different courses of action and possible consequences. For each course of action identify who will benefit and who will be harmed in view of social service worker's commitment to the most vulnerable.
4. Following consultation with your colleagues/faculty, identify what is the most ethical choice and provide rationale for your decision.
5. In the context of your own field placement setting, develop and document a plan of action you will take if you observe professional misconduct. On what basis would you decide to take action? Whom would you approach? What steps would you take?

Requirements of submitted report:

- Must be typed, Times New Roman or Arial font, #12 font size, 1.5 cm margin on both sides, double spaced, black on white only.
- Responses follow the headings above and must be numbered to match the numbering of the questions.
- Full sentences and paragraphs must be used.
- Grading will be based on the clarity, accuracy, and thoroughness of the responses. Your responses will be measured against the material studied in class, including but not limited to the textbook and the SSW Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. **Specific referencing in your responses is required** to enhance the quality of your analysis and provide rationale for your responses
- **Each student will be graded on his or her own report.** In preparing the responses, collaboration with other students in the class is encouraged, in keeping with the professional expectation that in resolving ethical dilemmas you will consult and collaborate. However, with this noted, final submissions must be completed independently. Any submissions that are or appear to be exact responses of another student or show evidence of collaboration with another student's written work will receive a **grade of zero**.

Case Study #2 Grading Criteria:

Assignment is formatted as required, free of grammar and spelling errors.

0 .5 1

Student responses are thorough and show evidence of integration of class material.

0 1 2 3

Student identifies and discusses the personal, social, agency, client and professional values that apply to the situation.

0 1 2 3 4

Student identifies the correct ethical standards of the Code of Ethics that applies and provides a rationale for his or her response.

0 1 2 3

Student hypothesizes about different courses of action and possible consequences. The student identifies clearly, who will benefit and who will be harmed with each possible course of action.

0 1 2 3 4

Student identifies what is the most ethical choice in the situation and provides a rationale for this decision.

0 1 2

Student documents a detailed plan of action if he or she observes professional misconduct during his or her own fieldwork placement.

0 1 2 3

Schedule for SSW221

Week	Topic	Related Readings
1 Jan 6 th , 2006	Review of course outline/expectations Introduction to Professional Ethics	Chapter 1 & Social Work/Social Service Worker Code of Ethics
2 Jan. 13 th , 2006	Intro con't & Overview of Social Work Legislation & Impact Ethical Decision Models/Screening Tools	Chapter 1 Supplementary material/in-class discussions Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998 (available on-line)
3 Jan 20 th ,	Personal Responsibilities/Self Awareness	Chapter 2
4 Jan. 27 th	Personal Responsibilities/Self Awareness Values, Social Work Principles & the Helping Relationship	Chapter 2 continued Chapter 3, supplementary materials
5 February 3 rd	Values continued	Chapter 3
6 February 10 th	Client Rights & SSW Responsibilities/Standards of Practice	Chapter 5, OCSWSSW Standards of Practice Booklet Case Study #1 due in class
7 February 17 th	Mid-term Exam	Mid-term Exam in class
8 March 3 rd ,	Client Rights & Responsibilities Ethical responsibilities & multicultural/diversity issues	Chapter 5 continued Chapter 4
9 March 10 th ,	Ethical responsibilities & Multi-cultural/diversity issues Ethical issues related to confidentiality	Chapter 4 Chapter 6, OCSWSSW Standards of Practice Booklet
10 March 17 th ,	Confidentiality continued & Mandatory Reporting Requirements	Supplementary material & OCSWSSW Standards of Practice Booklet
11 March 24 th	Professional Boundaries & Multiple Relationships/Professional Misconduct	Chapter 7, OCSWSSW Standards of Practice Case Study #2 due in class
12 March 31 st	Boundary issues continued	
13 April 7 th ,	Record-keeping/Ethical responsibilities regarding professional documentation	OCSWSSW Standards of Practice & Supplementary materials
14 April 14 th	Professional Competence	Chapter 8, OCSWSSW Standards of Practice
15 April 21 st ,	Special Topics on Ethics Wrap up & Exam review	Supplementary material
16 April 28 th	Final Exam	Final Exam in Class