



COURSE OUTLINE: SSW102 - CONCURRENT DISORDERS

Prepared: Nicole Falldien, MSW, RSW

Approved: Karen Hudson - Dean

Course Code: Title	SSW102: INTRODUCTION TO CONCURRENT DISORDERS
Program Number: Name	1203: SOCIAL SERV WORKER
Department:	SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER
Academic Year:	2025-2026
Course Description:	This course introduces students to the mental health and substance use fields of SSW practice. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the interplay between mental health, substance use/abuse and trauma. Students will be able to identify signs and symptoms of common concurrent disorders and their impact on individuals, families and communities. Students will learn strengths and recovery oriented approaches along with further knowledge of community resources and relevant legislation.
Total Credits:	3
Hours/Week:	3
Total Hours:	42
Prerequisites:	There are no pre-requisites for this course.
Corequisites:	There are no co-requisites for this course.
This course is a pre-requisite for:	SSW205
Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLO's) addressed in this course:	1203 - SOCIAL SERV WORKER
Please refer to program web page for a complete listing of program outcomes where applicable.	VLO 1 Develop respectful and collaborative professional and interpersonal relationships that adhere to professional, legal, and ethical standards aligned to social service work.
	VLO 3 Integrate a practice framework within a service delivery continuum, addressing the needs of individuals, families and communities at micro, mezzo, macro and global levels, and work with them in achieving their goals.
	VLO 4 Plan and implement accessible and responsive programs and services, recognizing the diverse needs and experiences of individuals, groups, families and communities, and meeting these needs.
	VLO 5 Examine current social policy, relevant legislation, and political, social, historical, and/or economic systems and their impacts for individuals and communities when delivering services to the user/client.
	VLO 6 Develop strategies and approaches that support individual clients, groups, families and communities in building the capacity for self-advocacy, while affirming their dignity and self-worth.
	VLO 7 Work from an anti-oppressive, strengths-based practice, recognizing the capacity for resilience and growth of individuals and communities when responding to the diverse needs of marginalized or vulnerable populations to act as allies and advocates.



	<p>VLO 8 Develop strategies and approaches to implement and maintain holistic self-care as a member of a human service profession.</p> <p>VLO 9 Work with individuals, groups, families and their communities to ensure that service provider strategies promote social and economic justice, and challenge patterns of oppression, discrimination and harassment, and sexual violence with clients, coworkers and communities.</p> <p>VLO 10 Develop the capacity to work with the Indigenous individual, families, groups and communities while respecting their inherent rights to self-determine, and to identify and address systemic barriers that produce ill-effects, developing appropriate responses using approaches such as trauma informed care practice.</p>				
Essential Employability Skills (EES) addressed in this course:	<p>EES 1 Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.</p> <p>EES 2 Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.</p> <p>EES 4 Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.</p> <p>EES 5 Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.</p> <p>EES 6 Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.</p> <p>EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.</p> <p>EES 8 Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.</p> <p>EES 9 Interact with others in groups or teams that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.</p> <p>EES 10 Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.</p> <p>EES 11 Take responsibility for ones own actions, decisions, and consequences.</p>				
General Education Themes:	Social and Cultural Understanding				
Course Evaluation:	<p>Passing Grade: 50%, D</p> <p>A minimum program GPA of 2.0 or higher where program specific standards exist is required for graduation.</p>				
Other Course Evaluation & Assessment Requirements:	*Note: This course introduces SSW Vocational Outcomes & Elements of Performance: 1.c,d,f,i,k,m,3.a,b,c,e,f,4.a,b,e,5.a,b,d,e,6.f,g,7.a,b,f,h,8.d,9.a,d,10.f				
Books and Required Resources:	<p>A Concise Introduction to Mental Health in Canada by Goldner, E.M., Bilsker, D., Jenkins, E., and Slemmon, A.</p> <p>Publisher: Canadian Scholars Edition: 3rd edition (Aug. 30 2022)</p> <p>ISBN: 978-1773382524</p>				
Course Outcomes and Learning Objectives:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Course Outcome 1</th> <th>Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Define and describe mental health, the continuum of substance use, and concurrent</td> <td> 1.1 Define mental health and differentiate between mental illness and mental health 1.2 Gain understanding of the mental health continuum 1.3 Differentiate between substance use, misuse, abuse and </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Course Outcome 1	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1	1. Define and describe mental health, the continuum of substance use, and concurrent	1.1 Define mental health and differentiate between mental illness and mental health 1.2 Gain understanding of the mental health continuum 1.3 Differentiate between substance use, misuse, abuse and
Course Outcome 1	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 1				
1. Define and describe mental health, the continuum of substance use, and concurrent	1.1 Define mental health and differentiate between mental illness and mental health 1.2 Gain understanding of the mental health continuum 1.3 Differentiate between substance use, misuse, abuse and				

	disorders.	dependency related to alcohol and drugs 1.4 Describe signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, substance abuse disorders and concurrent disorders 1.5 Describe the neurophysiological approach to understanding and addressing concurrent disorders 1.6 Discuss factors related to positive mental health and resiliency
	Course Outcome 2	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 2
	2. Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between trauma, mental health and substance abuse.	2.1 Describe the relationship between trauma, mental health/illness and substance abuse issues 2.2 Describe principles of a trauma-informed approach as applied to concurrent disorders field with diverse populations 2.3 Identify risk and protective factors related to mental health, substance abuse or concurrent disorders 2.4 Describe common stereotypes, myths, and the harmful impacts of stigma on individuals, families and communities impacted by concurrent disorders 2.5 Recognize and discuss social justice and diversity factors related to gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, and culture, and their relationship with mental health and substance use
	Course Outcome 3	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 3
	3. Describe approaches to treatment of mental health disorders, substance use disorders and concurrent disorders.	3.1 Describe and apply the Stages of Change (TTM) approach and principles 3.2 Describe the principles of harm reduction and abstinence based models 3.3 Describe the importance of incorporating a neuropsychological approach in treatment 3.4 Describe the principles of the recovery model 3.5 Introduce the role of integrated service continuums to address needs at micro, mezzo, and macro levels for individuals, families and communities
	Course Outcome 4	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 4
	4. Develop beginning levels of professional social service worker skills and knowledge required to assist individuals with mental health, substance abuse, and concurrent disorders.	4.1 Describe the importance of working with individuals, families and communities to identify sources of resilience and self-determination 4.2 Describe the roles and scope of practice of a social service worker within the concurrent disorders field 4.3 Understand the fundamental right to respect dignity and self-determination of all individuals experiencing mental health disorders, substance use disorders, or concurrent disorders 4.4 Describe awareness of self related to beliefs, values and attitudes to determine own impact on



	relationships with others experiencing concurrent disorders
Course Outcome 5	Learning Objectives for Course Outcome 5
5. Demonstrate beginning knowledge of relevant services, policies, and legislation related to concurrent disorders.	5.1 Identify key local/provincial/Canadian organizations committed to supporting individuals experiencing concurrent disorders, and the programs/supports offered 5.2 Demonstrate ability to use credible resources for research/information in the concurrent disorders field 5.3 Demonstrate knowledge of the Mental Health Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act

Evaluation Process and Grading System:

Evaluation Type	Evaluation Weight
Case Studies	20%
Chapter Questions	15%
Learning Modules	5%
Research Assignment	20%
Skill Acquisition and Professional Development	10%
Tests/ Exams	30%

Date:

June 17, 2025

Addendum:

Please refer to the course outline addendum on the Learning Management System for further information.

