

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed as a co-requisite to Fieldwork 1. The seminar is intended to support and enhance the students professional learning and growth within both the academic and placement settings. Within an atmosphere of trust and respect, students will have the opportunity to share experiences, strengths and challenges. Self awareness within the professional field is emphasized. Students will be introduced to skills related to strengths-based and solution-focused assessment and intervention models. Also, students will continue to develop professional communication skills. Integration of learning and knowledge from other SSW courses will be referenced.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES and ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

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

1. Initiate and perform ongoing self-assessment and self care to promote awareness and enhance professional competence.

Potential Elements of the performance:

- *Identify learning objectives for one's professional development and the strategies to accomplish these*
 - *Incorporate feedback and suggestions made in the classroom, through supervision, role plays, videos, presentations, and reports*
 - *Establish reasonable and realistic personal goals for oneself to enhance self care and work performance*
 - *Act in accordance with ethical and professional standards*
 - *Evaluate own performance using College reporting formats and evaluations*
2. To develop and apply strengths-based and solution-focused intervention strategies with individuals and communities.

Potential Elements of the performance:

- *Recognize and understand the difference between problem-solving and solution-building.*
- *Demonstrate ability to assess strengths, resources and barriers from a "person-in-environment" perspective*
- *Use language in both oral and written reports that is suitable to the profession and reflects a strengths-based orientation*

- 3. Maintain effective working relationships with consumers, colleagues, peers, and supervisors.**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- *Function effectively as a member of a team*
 - *Research new strategies that may be needed to increase skills*
 - *Evaluate and act upon constructive feedback.*
 - *Participate effectively in conflict-resolution process*
 - *Demonstrate collaborative and respectful relationships with others*
- 4. Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken visual format. Fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of audiences.**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- *Plan and organize communications according to the purpose and audiences, by completing various written and oral reports and activities*
- *Incorporate various presentation formats including written, oral, visual and computer-based*
- *Evaluate communications and adjust for any errors in content, structure, style and mechanics*

- **TOPICS:**

1. Introduction to strengths-based helping models and application of strategies within the field
2. SSW and strengths-based writing techniques - both oral and written.
3. Professional standards and practice
4. Self awareness, self care, and professional development
5. Field placement experience will be utilized and processed as part of shared professional learning

III. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:

Corey, M., & Corey, G. (2003). 4th Ed. Becoming A Helper. Scarborough: Nelson Thompson Learning

IV. REQUIREMENTS:

1. Regular attendance at Seminar is expected. Ninety percent of class hours per semester is the minimum requirement. The total grade will be reduced if attendance falls below 90%. Attendance is critical to promote student responsibility and professional commitment, for individual and group learning, self and professional development. Also, regular attendance ensures that presentations are done before a receptive, contributing audience. Professional-level participation is expected and one cannot participate if absent!. Allowance is made here for exceptional illnesses and emergencies - the instructor reserves the right to ask for verification of absence in any case. Grade reduction will correspond to the percentage of classes missed. If less than 60% of classes are attended, the student may be asked to repeat the course.
2. Preservation of confidentiality as per SSW policy on confidentiality and adherence to the professional code of ethics.
3. Punctual completion of various assignments and readings. All written submissions must be in word processing format. APA style required. Missed or late assignments or tests are at the professor's discretion for substantial and substantiated reasons. Assignments submitted following the due date **may not be graded, and/or grades deducted**. Students are responsible to discuss directly with the professor.
4. Participation in presentations, role-plays and discussions at a professional level is expected. This is a professional responsibility and will be considered a display of commitment. Lack of participation will lead to grade demotion.

VI. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM

Student Presentation	15%
Self Reflection Paper	15%
Agency Setting Report	15%
Social Problem Report	15%
Placement Experience Report	20%
Attendance and Participation	20%

The following semester grades will be assigned to students in postsecondary courses:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 - 100%	4.00
A	80 - 89%	3.75
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
R (Repeat)	59% or below	0.00
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field placement or non-graded subject areas.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field placement or non-graded subject areas.	
X	A temporary grade. This is used in limited situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course (see <i>Policies & Procedures Manual – Deferred Grades and Make-up</i>).	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office. This is used to facilitate transcript preparation when, for extenuating circumstances, it has not been possible for the faculty member to report grades.	

VII. Specific Assignments –Outline. Due Dates will be announced in class.

1. **Class Presentation:** Students will be grouped and assigned specific chapters to present to the class. The content of the chapters will be presented in a condensed format and your individual response to the material presented should be included - in a brief and professional manner. Three questions on each chapter should also be prepared for class discussion. Schedule will be drawn up in class.

2. **Self Reflection Paper:** This exercise is designed to assist students' ability to apply the strengths-based perspective within their own lives and to develop their awareness of their personal and environmental strengths, resources and needs. As social services workers, self awareness is critical to our professional development. Students will describe both their personal and environmental strengths, how these strengths were developed, the origins and influences which shaped these assets. Students are invited to share how these strengths and resources assist them in the social services field. Students are encouraged to discuss any current needs or concerns, along with future goals. Additional instructions will be provided by the professor in class.

3. **Agency Setting Report:** Students will submit a typed report/description of their field placement agency/organization. Guidelines for the report include:
- Name of agency/organization
 - Location/ mailing address/email address of agency
 - Describe the mission statement, mandate and goals of the agency
 - List the agency's major programs/services
 - Describe the legislation governing the services
 - Describe the type of clientele that the agency serves
 - Describe the types of problems, concerns, or needs of the clientele
 - Describe the intervention methods/approach used
 - Describe/Include a copy of the organizational structure and decision-making process
 - Describe authority, funding and annual budget
 - Identify and list community resources/partnerships used by the agency
 - Identify and describe the roles of agency workers and list the skills/competencies required to fulfill the roles
 - Describe the agency environment/morale. Identify what factors may contribute to this.

Students may be expected to briefly present the key components of their placement in class. Presentations will be a maximum of ten minutes to ensure all students have sufficient time to share.

4. **Social Condition/Social Problem Report:** Students will identify one social condition or social problem that has a significance on the field placement and/or consumers of the organization. Guidelines for the typed report include:
- Name one social problem/condition your placement agency attempts to address
 - Within the geographical area served by your placement, how many people are estimated to have this specific need. How do these numbers compare with provincial/national statistics regarding the prevalence of this social problem/condition?
 - What, if any, particular subpopulations are most likely at risk? (age group, gender, racial or ethnic group, socio-economic class etc)
 - In what ways does the existence of these social conditions, problems and needs impact the community or violate the values, beliefs, norms or safety of the community?
 - In what ways does the existence of these social conditions violate your own core values, beliefs, norms? How are you personally affected by such problems?
 - Was there a time in the past when the community/society paid little or no attention to the conditions/problems? If yes, what happened to bring about social change?

- In what ways are the problems/concerns addressed by your agency related to other broad social problems such as poverty, crime, racism, violence, unemployment etc?
- Are there different opinions about the seriousness of the problem? Describe opinions staff, consumers, others in community?
- Describe how the agency attempts to address the social problem/need.
- What steps/actions do you believe would be needed to prevent these problems in the future?

5. **Placement Experience Report:** Students will submit a typed report about an experience/incident within the field placement. Examples may include a client observation/ interaction, staff/team meeting, community meeting, case conference meeting. Students will include the following in their report:

- i) Field Placement Agency:
- ii) Social Service Worker Student's Name:
- iii) Date:
- iv) Description of Incident: Describe fully a significant interaction or helping situation which occurred. (Pertinent details).
- v) Background to incident: Describe the participants and specific events which led up to this situation.
- vi) Disposition of Situation: Describe the manner in which this situation was handled and why it was handled this way (eg. describe helping skills observed, therapeutic approach)
- vii) Evaluation of Action Taken: Describe what you learned from this situation and what you believe others learned from the situation.
- viii) Evaluation:
 - How would you handle the situation in the future, given the same set of circumstances and the same agency frame of reference?
 - How would you like to handle that situation in the future if you had the chance to change the approach used and the agency frame of reference?

IX. 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 instructor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit Room E1204 or call Extension 493, 717, or 491 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 postsecondary institutions.

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of "academic dishonesty" in *Student Rights and Responsibilities*. 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.

X. 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.

XI. 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.