



**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a solution-focused course providing basic training and education in interviewing and counselling skills/practice/theory. The students can expect a strong emphasis in micro-skills training/application. Ongoing demonstration of skills developed is emphasized. The overall philosophy of 'solution-building' stresses the idea that clients possess the resources for growth and the Social Service Worker must learn the skills and theory that enables and supports the client to achieve greater life satisfaction.

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:**

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

1. Define 'solution-building' as it applies to counselling/interviewing.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- provide accurate definition on tests and in class
- demonstrate understanding through practice in case situations
- recognize the difference between problem-solving & solution building philosophy and interviewing methodology

2. Perform a variety of interviewing/helping/counselling skills as defined by the course professor and the course text.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- demonstrate skills in practical case simulations
- identify and label skills in class demonstrations and on tests
- demonstrate integration of skills in major course assignment
- apply skills in different types of interviews

3. Debrief (give feedback/take feedback).

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- participate in feedback sessions in class and with the course professor
- self-debrief class performance and major course assignment
- act as a supportive 'team member'

4. Utilize SSW helping skills and solution-building model.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- demonstrate beginning SSW helping skills
- apply solution-building/strengths based strategies in interviews/role plays/major assignment
- describe the steps of the solution-building model
- describe the reasons for the order of the stages of the helping relationship
- observe and accurately identify the stages of helping relationships

5. Recognize and respond to special situations.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- describe special helping situation (e.g. non-voluntary clients, children, dyads, diversity issues, crisis situations)
- demonstrate basic skills used in responding to these situations

6. Communicate effectively in a variety of media.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- produce work in written and electronic format (tape) that is clear and understandable with minimal errors, in order to stress the importance of accurate and precise communication as a fundamental counselling competency

7. Demonstrate self-care.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- show organization skills through punctuality for class and meeting assignment deadlines
- show sufficient energy, focus, and commitment to classmates, the professor, and particularly the practical demonstrations
- set and manage professional boundaries
- consistently describe and demonstrate professional behaviour including issues related to: confidentiality; dual relationships; boundaries; finding solutions to discrepancies
- perform 'self-directed learning' by being prepared for class and practicing skills

**III. TOPICS** (not necessarily in this order):

1. Background to helping/counselling: Understanding theories of helping
2. Stages of the helping relationship/SSW helping skills to facilitate effective and collaborative working relationships with clients
3. Contrasting the 'solution-building' and problem-solving approach.
4. Helping skills with individuals & families.

**IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:**

1. DeJong, P. and Berg, I.K. (2008). *Interviewing for solutions. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.)*.  
Toronto: Thomson Brooks/Cole
2. Maclean, S. & Harrison, R. (2009). *Theory & Practice A Straightforward Guide for Social Work Students*. Great Britain: Kirwin Maclean Associates Limited.
3. Blank DVD (recordable).

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:**

DVD assignment: 20%

Self-assessment/reflection of interview: 10%

Test #1: 15%

Test #2: 15%

Test #3: 15%

Participation/Skill Development: 25% (Students must maintain 70% attendance rate in course)

**Note: Students must achieve a 60% on the DVD assignment plus 50% or more overall standing in the other evaluation components.**

The following semester grades will be assigned to students:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 – 100%	4.00
A	80 – 89%	3.00
B	70 - 79%	2.00
C	60 - 69%	1.00
D	50 – 59%	0.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	
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: Mid Term grades are provided in theory classes and clinical/field placement experiences. Students are notified that the midterm grade is an interim grade and is subject to change.***

### **Assignments and their relative weights to the final grade:**

1. Students will be responsible for the submission of a visual recording of a helping interview. In the interview the “helper” is the student, and the “helpee” can be anyone over the age of 16 except a student in a human service program. A “permission to tape” form must be completed and submitted with the tape, to verify confidentiality and the age of the “helpee”. The purpose of the tape is for the student to demonstrate skills learned in the course. Length: 10 minutes. **Students must be prepared to review their interview in class as determined/scheduled by the professor.**

The DVD, the permission form, and the written assignment (see #2 below) must be submitted as a package on the due date. The professor will not grade late assignments. Medical emergencies will be considered only if supported by documentation and verified as an emergency. Students must ensure that the video is set to the beginning of their interview. Students must ensure the audio/visual quality of their recording.

**Grade:** 20%

**Due Date:** March 2, 2010(to be submitted at beginning of class)

2. Written self-assessment of tape: a brief paper in which the student assesses their own performance in the taped interview: what was positive and what needs improvement. Graded on depth and accuracy of analysis.

**Grade:** 10%

**Due Date:** March 2, 2010 (to be submitted at beginning of class)

3. Tests will be administered at three intervals throughout the course. The professor will inform students in class as to the content to be covered by the test, as well as the test format. Subsequent tests may be cumulative.

Dates:           **Test 1 (15%): February 9, 2010**  
                      **Test 2 (15%): March 23, 2010**  
                      **Test 3 (15%): April 27, 2010**

4. **Skill acquisition, demonstration of skills, and participation (25%)**

This is a participatory course. **Students must maintain a 70% attendance rate to be successful in the course.** Students who fall below the expected rate of attendance will be subject to academic penalty (full grade deduction) and/or removal/failure of the course.

Students must be prepared for each class and be willing to actively involve themselves in skill demonstration, feedback, and discussion. Students must be present in order to demonstrate these qualities. Punctuality is enforced. Students who arrive late may not be admitted to class. Students are encouraged to discuss attendance expectations with the professor. Please refer to page 10 for Expectations and evaluation criteria.

Preparation for each class will include readings and assignments, as well as the willingness to demonstrate skills as studied and according to the professor's directions. If any part of this course leads you to feel uneasy, you are advised to discuss this with the professor.

Students may be expected to videotape practice interviews as scheduled in class. Students may be expected to view practice tapes in class and provide constructive feedback regarding skill development in accordance with professor guidelines.

The grading for this section is heavily weighted toward acquisition and demonstration of skills. Attending class but not actively engaging in the assigned exercises and demonstration of skills does not meet the course expectations.

Students may be invited to individual progress meetings with the professor, as part of overall skill development.

## VI. SPECIAL NOTES:

### 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.

### 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.

### Prior Learning Assessment:

Students who wish to apply for advance credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain an Application for Advance Credit from the program coordinator (or the course coordinator regarding a general education transfer request) or academic assistant. Students will be required to provide an unofficial transcript and course outline related to the course in question. Please refer to the Student Academic Calendar of Events for the deadline date by which application must be made for advance standing.

Credit for prior learning will also be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

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

### Disability Services:

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

### Communication:

The College considers **WebCT/LMS** as the primary channel of communication for each course. Regularly checking this software platform is critical as it will keep you directly connected with faculty and current course information. Success in this course may be directly related to your willingness to take advantage of the **Learning Management System** communication tool.

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in *Student Code of Conduct*. A professor/instructor may assign a sanction as defined below, or make recommendations to the Academic Chair for disposition of the matter. The professor/instructor may:

- (i) issue a verbal reprimand,
- (ii) make an assignment of a lower grade with explanation,
- (iii) require additional academic assignments and issue a lower grade upon completion to the maximum grade “C”,
- (iv) make an automatic assignment of a failing grade,
- (v) recommend to the Chair dismissal from the course with the assignment of a failing grade.

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.

Student Portal:

The Sault College portal allows you to view all your student information in one place. **mysaultcollege** gives you personalized access to online resources seven days a week from your home or school computer. Single log-in access allows you to see your personal and financial information, timetable, grades, records of achievement, unofficial transcript, and outstanding obligations. Announcements, news, the academic calendar of events, class cancellations, your learning management system (LMS), and much more are also accessible through the student portal. Go to <https://my.saultcollege.ca>.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom:

Students who wish to use electronic devices in the classroom will seek permission of the faculty member before proceeding to record instruction. With the exception of issues related to accommodations of disability, the decision to approve or refuse the request is the responsibility of the faculty member. Recorded classroom instruction will be used only for personal use and will not be used for any other purpose. Recorded classroom instruction will be destroyed at the end of the course. To ensure this, the student is required to return all copies of recorded material to the faculty member by the last day of class in the semester. Where the use of an electronic device has been approved, the student agrees that materials recorded are for his/her use only, are not for distribution, and are the sole property of the College.

Attendance:

Sault College is committed to student success. There is a direct correlation between academic performance and class attendance; therefore, for the benefit of all its constituents, all students are encouraged to attend all of their scheduled learning and evaluation sessions. This implies arriving on time and remaining for the duration of the scheduled session.

Other Notes Pertaining to Course:

1. This course is not a therapy group/program for students. Personal gain may be achieved, and personal issues may be discussed, but the purpose is for learning of helping skills and interviewing strategies. The professor will be rigorous in monitoring this. The course is intended to be a “safe zone” for all students.
2. Cell phones, pagers, and watches that “beep” must be de-activated or put on “silent mode” during class time. Students may respond to a page or call or may check text messages outside of class. Violations of this may lead to the student being asked to leave the classroom and appropriate sanctions implemented as per Student Code of Conduct. Other types of disruptions will be treated similarly. Due to the intimate nature of the material in the course, students who arrive late may be denied entry to the class.
3. Laptops are permitted for note-taking purposes only in the lecture component. Laptops are not allowed during lab sections unless otherwise indicated by professor.
4. Students are expected to keep food out of the classroom.
5. Students will be expected to behave and dress in a manner consistent with the standards of the profession and with regard for client needs – this will be discussed in the first class.
6. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar do count in grading. These are essential components in effective communications.
7. Tests cannot be rewritten to achieve a higher grade. Any rescheduling of tests is at the professor’s discretion and *must* be arranged in advance of the test date.
8. Students are reminded of the need to be familiar with the SSW program policies and the Sault College Student Code of Conduct.

**Skill Acquisition, Demonstration of skills, and Participation Grading Criteria****ALL EXPECTATIONS MET 25 points**

- Demonstrates excellent preparation for class: has read/completed assigned material and references this in class
- Participates consistently in role plays, class exercises, video exercises
- Consistently demonstrates ability to apply basic helping and solution building skills effectively
- Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussions, keeps analysis focused responds thoughtfully and respectfully to other students' comments
- Takes the risk of verbalizing questions, concerns, disagreements
- Demonstrates consistent, active, on-going involvement in all aspects of the course
- Demonstrates good level of self-understanding and commitment to personal and professional development
- Attends all scheduled classes and arrives on time

**MOST EXPECTATIONS MET 20-24 points**

- Demonstrates good preparation for class, knows some of the material
- Is prepared with questions and insights from course material
- Demonstrates ability to apply basic counselling/solution building skills
- Contributes regularly to ongoing discussions, generates discussion with questions or insights, responds thoughtfully and respectfully to others' comments
- Takes responsibility for asking questions/seeking clarification
- Demonstrates consistent involvement in most aspects of course
- Attends 75% or higher of scheduled classes and arrives on time
- Consistent completion of requirements/expectations in a timely manner
- Demonstrates adequate level of self-understanding and commitment to personal and professional development

**SOME EXPECTATIONS MET, SOME CONCERNS NOTED 12-19 points**

- Demonstrates adequate preparation, knows basic material
- Appears interested in content of course material
- Initiates and contributes occasionally to class to class discussions, usually respectful of others' opinions and views,
- Usually takes responsibility for asking questions/seeking clarification
- Demonstrates involvement in some aspects of the course
- Demonstrates inconsistent ability to model skills learned in class
- Demonstrates a low level of self-understanding and may lack commitment to personal and professional development
- Occasionally disruptive, (involved in side discussions, difficulties staying focused or reading other material during class etc.)
- Attends 70% of class as required

**FEW EXPECTATIONS MET, SERIOUS CONCERNS NOTED 0-12 points**

- Demonstrates minimal preparation, lack of knowledge of material
- Body language has given the impression of disinterest in content of class
- Participates rarely or only when called on
- Demonstrates significant difficulties applying helping skills, interpersonal/communication skills limited
- Can be disrespectful of others opinions, can display tendency to dominate discussions or intimidate in ways that may discourage others from participating
- Does not take responsibility for asking questions/seeking clarification, and/or projects blame on others
- Demonstrates minimal involvement in most aspects of the course
- Demonstrates a noticeable lack of self-understanding and lack of commitment to personal and professional development
- Is disruptive (frequent side discussions, reading other materials during class, etc.)
- Attends class below the expectations, frequently arrives late or leaves early or engages in above noted behaviours while in class