

**SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY**

**SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO**



Sault College

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**COURSE TITLE:** Counselling Skills for Social Services Worker

**CODE NO. :** SSW 204                      **SEMESTER:** 2

**PROGRAM:** Social Service Worker

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**DATE:** Jan. 2007      **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:** Jan. 2006

**APPROVED:**

	_____	_____
	<b>DEAN</b>	<b>DATE</b>

**TOTAL CREDITS:** 3

**PREREQUISITE(S):** HSC 103 or permission of Program Coordinator/Professor

**HOURS/WEEK:** 3

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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 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 with applications in real situations. Ongoing demonstration of skills 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 situations
- 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 general counselling theory and solution-building model.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- describe stages of the helping relationship and 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
- accurately describe and demonstrate (at all times) professional ethics including issues related to: confidentiality; dual relationships; policy
- perform 'self-directed learning' by being prepared for class and practicing skills

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

1. Background to helping – history, general theoretical orientation for Social Service Work
2. General theory on the stages of the helping relationship.
3. Contrasting the ‘solution-building’ and problem-solving approach.
4. Micro skills of helping/interviewing/counselling.
5. Inviting the client.
6. Focusing the interview and moving it forward.
7. Feedback to clients.
8. Measuring progress
9. The involuntary client, working with children, dyads
10. Crisis.
11. Diversity issues and special situations.

**IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:****Course text (Required by each student)**

1. DeJong, P. and Berg, I.K. (2002) *Interviewing for solutions* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Toronto: Brooks-Cole (Wadsworth)
2. VHS video tape or Blank DVD (recordable).



#### 4. Skill acquisition, demonstration of skills, and participation.

This is a participatory 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. Absence beyond the first three hours missed will result in a 2% deduction for every class hour or part thereof that is missed. Students who fall below 70% attendance may be subject to penalty, suspension or removal from course. Students are encouraged to discuss attendance expectations with the professor.

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 asked to discuss this with the professor.

Students are 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.

**Grading: (a passing final grade includes achieving 60% or more on the tape assignment plus 50% or more overall)**

Tape assignment: 20%

Written self-assessment of tape: 15%

Test #1: 10%

Test #2: 15%

Test #3: 15%

Participation and Skill Development: 25%

**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%	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:** 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:

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 counseling theory, skills and strategy. 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 after class ends. Violations of this may lead to the student being asked to leave the classroom and referred to the Dean’s office. 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. Laptops are permitted for note-taking purposes only.
3. Students are expected to keep food out of the classroom.
4. 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.
5. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar do count in grading. These are essential components in effective communications. Professionals are expected to ensure that all communications are clear.
6. 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.
7. Students are reminded of the need to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct.

### 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 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 postsecondary 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.

Students are expected to review, sign and adhere to a confidentiality and agreement statement. Professor will provide additional information in class.

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

**VII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:**

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor.

**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.