

Human Behavior and the Social Environment SW4164-5164

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Class Delivery	Online / Blackboard Learn
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Course Information

Course Description

SW 4164 (450:164g). Human Behavior and the Social Environment — 3 hrs.

Integrates multiple sources of knowledge in the analysis of models of human behavior from a person-environment perspective; attention is paid to structural components in oppression and the importance of difference in shaping life experiences. No prerequisites for this GIS course. Junior standing is recommended. The purpose of the course is to prepare the student for work in the field with an emphasis on relevant knowledge to all aspects of human behavior, such as the mental health-normal and abnormal, developmental issues across the life span with special emphasis on turning points in one's life and the challenges presented at each stage. The first part of the course focuses on the biological and psychological realms of human behavior; the purpose of the second part is to impart an understanding of how organizations function and the role of corporations in shaping political and social policies. Topics related to oppression and group behavior are discussed throughout. The chapter on the natural environment is designed to raise the student's consciousness on environmental justice and injustice related to race and class. All of the course content is related through examples and narratives with social work practice.

Taken as a whole, the sequence is from theoretical perspectives of human behavior to challenges from childhood through adulthood through old age, then from a macro-level perspective a study of group dynamics in nations and organizations, and communities. Note that the ecosystems framework linked to an empowerment model are the organizing theoretical models for both volumes. Resilience is a theme infused throughout volume 1 and sustainability through the second volume.

Learning Objectives

University Level Objectives

- **Critical Thinking**

Graduates will demonstrate critical thinking through the ability to evaluate, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources in order to develop reasoned positions and solutions to problems.

- **Communication**

Graduates will display competence in oral, written, and visual communication, as appropriate for their discipline.

- **Program Content Knowledge**

Graduates will demonstrate discipline-specific knowledge and skills in their major fields of study

Program Level Objectives of Social Work at UNI Are To:

- Provide an integrated curriculum that builds on a liberal arts foundation and addresses knowledge and skills essential for beginning generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Infuse social work values and ethics throughout students' educational experience to serve as guides for practice in field placements and future professional social work practice settings.
- Promote student understanding of diversity through curriculum that identifies the experiences and needs of vulnerable and oppressed groups while emphasizing resilience and strengths.
- Increase students' understanding of the types and processes of discrimination and oppression and enhance their ability to promote social and economic justice through advocacy and social reform.
- Prepare students to critically assess and apply empirically based knowledge, evaluate their own practice effectiveness, and participate in the evaluation of programs and policies.

Course Level Objectives: To aid the student to

1. Identify the broad range of basic needs and social and personal risks (e.g., gender, old age, death, disability, illness, accidents, violence and war) across the life span.
2. Describe the purposes, function, and organized structure of activities of the social worker across the life span in working with vulnerable populations.
3. Analyze organizational processes and leadership styles as well as the impact of the forces of globalization on ordinary social work practice.
4. Compare philosophical stances or ideas reflected by theorists who have had considerable impact on social work teachings and knowledge.
5. Analyze cultural differences in values pertaining to treatment of women, minorities, gays and lesbians, and other vulnerable populations.

6. Construct an ecosystems/empowerment framework for viewing the personal dimension within the social environment as well as other relevant theoretical perspectives.
7. Analyze scientific facts regarding climate change, pollution and other contamination of the earth's resources, and strategies of preservation of such resources within the present public health crisis.
8. Explore the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies of change that advance social and economic justice.
9. Distinguish the dynamics of restorative justice and environmental justice as important for social work practice and knowledge.
10. Relate knowledge of human behavior—the biology, psychology, and social aspects—to working with populations across the lifespan.
11. Develop a greater awareness of community life including mutual aid processes and political behavior.
12. Explore family dynamics and relationships in terms of family systems and roles played.
13. Master assignment material in preparation for achieving an acceptable level of critical analysis of concepts learned as demonstrated on the midterm and final exams.

Course Requirements

Required Texts/Readings/Other Content

- *Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Micro Level: Individuals and Families* (3rd ed.) by Katherine van Wormer (2017), Oxford University Press. Chapters 1-7.
- *Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Macro Level: Groups, Communities* (3rd ed.) by Katherine van Wormer (2017), Oxford University Press. Chapters 2, 3, 5, 7, 8.

In addition, occasional links to short public domain news stories are listed with the assignments.

Instructional Methods

This course consists of the following activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the course and instructional units/modules objectives. Each assignment you will work on consists of short essay responses and longer, creative ones that involve more critical thinking.

- Type all assignments using Microsoft Word and save the file.
- Submit your assignment by clicking on the Assignment Submission link in the Course Content menu on the left and uploading your assignment. Need help? See the Blackboard Tutorials for instructions on how to submit an assignment.
- Each of the 11 assignments consists of five short essays and one or two more extensive creative assignments. Each general question should be

approximately two paragraphs each; creative assignments should be approximately one page. Please restate each question before answering it.

- Boxes or boxed readings referred to are brief essays in the text. Reference to READING pertains to articles reprinted for this course (these articles may also be provided as web links in the course content).
- I enjoy personal reactions and examples in your responses, so feel free to relate the question to the meaning it has for you. If you're answering a question about HIV/AIDS or health insurance, for example, and you lost someone to AIDS or have had a personal experience obtaining health insurance, you might share your experiences.

Readings and Assignments

- Note that readings for assignments 1-6 are in the HBSE, micro text. Readings for assignments 7-11 are in the HBSE, macro text, which is the 2nd volume.
1. Assignment I Human Behavior: Theoretical Concepts, Chapter 1, Micro text. Additional reading: The Loose Screw Awards, Psychology Today.
 2. Assignment II Biological Factors in Human Behavior, Chapter 2. Additional reading: "Just Say No – To Bad Science," Newsweek, 2007.
 3. Assignment III The Psychology of Human Behavior, Chapter 3. Additional readings: "How Different Are Men's and Women's Brains?" 2017, Medical News Today and "Historical Trauma and Social Work: What You Need to Know", New Social Worker, 2018
 4. Assignment IV Birth Through Adolescence, Chapter 4. Additional reading: Chapter 4: "Beyond Rivalry, a Hidden World of Sibling Violence," The New York Times, 2007
 5. Assignment V Early Adulthood through the End of Life, Chapters 5 and 6.
 6. Assignment VI The Individual in the Family, Chapter 7.

MID-TERM EXAMINATION

7. Assignment VII The Social Psychology of Human Behavior, Chapter 2, Macro HBSE text. Note that all the readings to follow are in the 2nd volume of the HBSE text.
8. Assignment VIII The Family in Society, Chapter 4
9. Assignment IX Community and Community Development, Chapter 6. In addition, read the article: America's Changing Religious Landscape. Pew Research Center, 2015.
10. Assignment X Human Behavior and the Organizational Environment, Chapter 7
11. Assignment XI Human Behavior and the Natural Environment, Chapter 8. Additional short reading: "What Will Happen When the Seas Rise and the Rivers Dry Up?" Huffington Post, 2018.

SECOND EXAMINATION

Evaluation Methods

There will be two exams, the first covering the first six chapters, the second on the remaining six chapters and epilogue. These exams will be the essay and short answer format with matching questions. The second exam is not comprehensive.

Grading

Grading is in the standard A, B, C, format. Here is the value of each section of the course:

- Mid-Term 1/3
- 2nd Exam 1/3
- 11 Assignments 1/3

Please note that UNI Guided Independent Study requires that you complete all assignments and exams to receive a grade in the course. Assignment feedback will take place several days after submission if not sooner.

Exams are graded as soon as I receive them with the score available in My Grades. However, as I am in Wisconsin and the exam has to be mailed to UNI from the testing place, then to me and back, allow for one or two weeks for this process to take place.

The grading rubric is the same for each assignment. It is as follows:
For most of the assignments, each answer is worth 16 points for the five short answer questions. The creative question or questions are worth another 20 points out of 100. If there are six questions or no creative question, the variation is explained with the assignment.

Determination of Grades

Final grades will be reported using the following scale:

Grading scale					
93-100%	A	80-82%	B-	63-69%	D+
90-92%	A-	77-79%	C+	56-62%	D
87-89%	B+	73-76%	C	50-55%	D-
83-86%	B	70-72%	C-	< 50%	F

Academic Integrity

To ensure academic integrity and to follow UNI policies on Student Academic Ethics (see: IV. Academic Ethics Violations), students will not plagiarize, misrepresent, fabricate, or cheat. Unless otherwise instructed and approved by the instructor, students will take quizzes and exams **individually**, without collaboration with other parties and/or using notes or other texts. Similarly, students will submit work (papers, presentations, and other assessments) that is their own work (in regard to violations of these ethics policies, see: V. Academic Ethics Sanctions).

Course Communication and Technology

Online Component:

This course is completely an online utilizing eLearning for instruction, materials, and communication. This online component can be accessed through the following [UNI Blackboard website](http://elearning.uni.edu/): <http://elearning.uni.edu/>

All of the handouts and information for this course will be available in Blackboard. Students are advised to check the website and their e-mail for communication. Any changes to the course syllabus or schedule will be announced through Blackboard. Assignments are due as specified in the course schedule and on the course Blackboard page. Students are responsible for learning how to use Blackboard for on-time submission of assignments. [Blackboard](https://help.blackboard.com/Filter/Student/College_or_University) tutorials: https://help.blackboard.com/Filter/Student/College_or_University

Communication with Instructor

I will communicate with students via email, and you can expect a response the same day. I will provide feedback on assignment submissions and respond to your individual answers with personal comments to show

appreciation for your work. Any points that I take off will be thoroughly explained on the assignments.

Online Netiquette

Because this is a fully online class, you will mostly be communicating with me and others through email, discussion forums, and other online communication. It is important to think of this communication as a formal dialogue. Be sure that in all communication you create an appropriate subject line, identify yourself, and craft professionally worded content. For example, shorthand messages from your cell phone are generally inappropriate. Always submit assignments through Blackboard and never via email.

Finally, read the Albion [Core Netiquette Rules](http://albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html) <http://albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html> and always remember to address your professor and other students in a respectful manner.

Technology Requirements

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology successfully in this course. You are required to have access to and ability to use:

- UNI Gmail account
- Microsoft Office
- High speed internet connection
- Blackboard is supported on Firefox and Chrome (Internet Explorer and Safari do not support eLearning and users can experience difficulty opening files)

Technical Support

If you experience any technical problems, do **not** contact the instructor. Please contact the **Office of Continuing and Distance Education** at 319-273-7740 (local), 800-772-1746 (toll-free) or cesp-consult@uni.edu. Support hours are available Monday – 4:30pm.