I. Catalog Course Description

This is the first half of two required sequential courses in the Professional Foundation Year. It provides the basic knowledge and skills as a foundation for the advanced practice curriculum. Using a problem-solving model in an ecological perspective, the course prepares students to apply a generalist practice perspective to systems of all sizes and levels. Essential values, concepts, and ethical considerations as they pertain to generalist social work practice are explored.

II. Course Overview

This course approaches social work practice from a generalist perspective using a problem-solving process, which engages individuals, families, small groups, organizations and the community, in the larger society. The problem-solving process is combined with an ecological perspective. Practice content includes the following skills: developing professional relationships; collecting and assessing data; defining problems; using appropriate practice research knowledge; goal-setting; planning and contracting; identifying alternative interventions; selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action; using empirical measurement to monitor and evaluate outcomes; and concluding intervention. Emphasis is given to facilitative and constraining effects of the social context surrounding practice. Special attention is given to human diversity and populations-at-risk, such as persons of color, women, and gays and lesbians.

III. Place Of Course In Program

This is the first of two generalist practice foundation courses. The course is co-requisite with Field Placement I, and is a prerequisite for both Social Work Practice II and Field Placement II.

IV. Course Objectives

Students will upon completion of the course have beginning competence to

1. identify the purposes and objectives of social work practice;
2. identify values and ethics that direct and guide practice;

3. develop awareness of how personal attitudes influence professional practice; develop and monitor professional use of self, consistent with the professional value base;

4. clarify and interpret professional roles in working with varying client systems, target systems, and contextual systems;

5. apply the problem-solving process to social work practice with diverse population groups (women, people of color, the poor, gays and lesbians etc.), targets of change and problem situations;

6. demonstrate basic skills in each phase of the problem-solving process, including appropriate communication skills;

7. discriminate among various skills and roles in the light of the agency’s mission and the goals of the client system;

8. select and critically evaluate interventions in beginning generalist practice with individuals, families and groups by use of theory and empirical literature on practice;

9. use a person-in-environment perspective to recognize and appraise the effects of context on their practice at various levels.

V. **Required Readings**

*Books:*


Books are available for purchase at the Rutgers University Book Store at 1 Penn Plaza, Ferren Mall, New Brunswick, (732) 246-8448. New Jersey Books (at 108 Somerset St., New Brunswick) may also sell texts.

Students also are expected to read other works drawn from a selection of additional books and journals. These readings are available on electronic reserve via the Rutgers University Library. Go to Rutgers University Libraries home page (www.libraries.rutgers.edu), click on “Search IRIS and Other Catalogues,” and then click on Reserves. Readings can be found by searching under the course name and number: Social Work Practice I (19:910:500:11, Curran). Assigned readings are listed alphabetically by title, with individual titles arranged on several consecutive web pages (to advance to the next screen, use the “next” and “previous” page buttons appear at the bottom of each screen).
Please note that all of the role-plays and exercises are group together as one item under the umbrella title of “Class Exercises.”

Additional readings may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Important Note on Bisman Chapters:** Chapters from Bisman will be posted on electronic reserve two weeks before they are to be read. However, each chapter will be available online for only one week due to copyright regulations on this material. Since the Bisman chapters are available for a time-limited period only, please make sure to mark your calendar to download and/or print out the Bisman material on a weekly basis while it is still available online.

VI. Course Requirements

All assignments for this class must reflect social work values and ethics including awareness of issues of diversity and economic and social injustice

**Major Assignments:**

(1) There will be an in-class mid-term examination held during the ninth class meeting (November 3rd). Students are responsible for all required readings that have been assigned through this date.

(2) The final assignment, which is due on the 14th day of class (December 8th), is a scholarly paper in which you are asked to present a case study from your field placement setting that demonstrates an understanding of the agency, and a beginning ability to understand and use the skills of engagement, goal setting, intervention, and evaluation with client systems.

(3) Participation in discussions with colleagues is an integral part of professionalism. Each student will be expected to present case material during class time, integrate it with the course readings and learning derived from other classes in the School, as well as to help in developing a facilitative class climate by assisting in other colleagues’ learning. Throughout the semester, students will be assigned short homework assignments, including material found on the CD-ROM from the Shulman text.

(4) Students will be expected to make a short oral presentation (approximately 5-10 minutes in length) to their colleagues on their agency, and develop a “one-pager” about their agency, together with agency brochures, for distribution to each member of the class. This assignment will begin on the 5th day of class (October 6th) and will continue until all members of the class have had an opportunity to present.

More detailed instructions about assignments will be distributed in a later class.

**Students’ Responsibilities:**

*Regular class attendance with active participation is expected.* When students participate
actively in class discussions, learning is enhanced. Students are expected to come to all class meetings well prepared to participate actively in class discussions about assigned readings, as well as about case study and lecture materials.

**Attendance is required.** One point will be deducted from a student’s class participation score for each unexcused absence. Absence, early departure, or lateness to class is acceptable only for compelling reasons, such as illness or religious observances. It is imperative to notify the course instructor in advance of any anticipated class absence. Absences related to field or work responsibilities will not be excused nor will absences related to vacation travel. Five or more absences (excused or otherwise) will result in course failure. Multiple unexcused departures or late arrivals will also result in course failure.

Absence on the day of the in-class exam or of your scheduled presentation will result in a “0” grade. No opportunities for make-ups will be given unless the student provides documentation of extenuating circumstances.

**Respect for others in the classroom.** As social work entails multiple and diverse perspectives and opinions, it is imperative that class members bring an attitude of openness to the learning process. Intellectual growth rests upon an atmosphere of mutual respect. This includes a willingness to non-judgmentally consider others’ experiences and ideas, to proactively voice your own professional perspectives and thoughts in a constructive, respectful manner, and to self-reflexively evaluate, and re-evaluate, one’s own views.

The use of cell phones (including text messaging), Blackberries, PDAs, or of any similar type of electronic device is not permitted in class. Please turn all such devices off prior to class. If there is a bona fide emergency and you need to leave your cell phone on, please turn it to “silent mode” and attend to the call in the hallway so that you will not disturb your colleagues.

**Final papers are due at the beginning of Class 14 (December 8th).** Late papers will be penalized ½ a letter grade for each day they are overdue. Papers not received in the first 30 minutes of class on their due date but submitted before the end of class will be considered a full day late and will be penalized accordingly. Papers overdue by five days or more will not be accepted and will result in a “0” grade. Students are urged not to wait until the night before the due date to write the paper as personal emergencies occurring three days or less before the due date will not be considered grounds for an extension.

Professional social workers keep case records, write treatment reports for referral sources and managed care companies, correspond with judges and other professionals, develop policy, and advocate for their clients. All of these tasks require excellent writing skills. Therefore proper grammar, syntax, spelling, and appropriate referencing are expected for all assignments. You must adhere to the style guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Edition)*. Failure to do so will result in substantial deductions from your paper’s grade. Quotation marks should be used for direct quotations and to delineate paraphrased material. If you are unsure of how to cite sources, please consult the instructor.

*Remember that plagiarism is a serious offense and violates the University’s standards for academic integrity. Please be sure to review the section on Academic Integrity in Section X*
(p. 12) of the course syllabus, below.

Students are expected to conform to ethical standards described in Rutgers University guidelines (see School of Social Work Student Handbook) and the NASW Code of Ethics. The entire University Code of Conduct can be attained from the Student Judicial Affairs Office or on-line at http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judaff/code.htm. Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy Online: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.

Writing assistance is available at the Rutgers’ Student Writing Center (732/932-1149). See below for additional writing and style guide resources.

Writing & Style Guide Resources:

- **American Psychological Association (APA) Online Style Tips**: http://apastyle.apa.org/ (full access via Login to Rutgers University Libraries home page: http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/)
- **RefWorks (Rutgers University Libraries Web-based Bibliography and Database Manager)**: http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/refworks/refworks.shtml
- **Rutgers University Libraries Searchpath (Online Tutorial for enhancing information literacy skills)**: http://searchpath.libraries.rutgers.edu/
- **Rutgers University Libraries Online Research Resources**: http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_tutorials.shtml
- **Rutgers Learning Centers (Academic Support Programs to Support Student Achievement)**: http://lrc.rutgers.edu/
- **Rutgers Writing Program**: http://wp.rutgers.edu/

Rutgers University Library Social Work Research and Practice Resources


Guidelines for Respecting and Maintaining Client Confidentiality:

In employing client case history information from the field, it is imperative that client confidentiality be adequately safeguarded. In discussing case material, it is crucial that all client identifying information be effectively disguised (e.g., specific names, addresses, places of employment and/or schooling). In most instances, it is acceptable to refer to clients by first name (unless the name is very unusual) or by using the initial of a client’s actual last name. In addition, it is acceptable to name the general area/region in which a client resides and to describe the type of employment/schooling in which a client engages (unless this is very unusual), yet without revealing specific names or addresses of employers/schools. In presenting case material, it is also is acceptable to mention clients’ ages and ethnic/racial
background (i.e., general background information that does not reveal a client’s specific identity is acceptable). Also, please make sure to disguise the names of all collateral contacts, such as teachers, doctors, or home health aides. Importantly, please check with your field instructor in order to be fully appraised of, and in compliance with, any specific confidentiality criteria/policies that may be required by your field site agency.

VII. **Grading**

Computation of the final grade will be based on the following point distribution (200 pts.):

- **35%** (70 points total)  
  In-class mid-term examination (November 3rd)
- **50%** (100 points total)  
  Final assignment (Due in class: December 8th)
- **10%** (20 points total)  
  Class participation and homework assignments
- **5%** (10 points total)  
  Class presentation and handout (Beginning on October 6th)

The final paper will receive a letter grade, and will be calculated at the following numerical equivalents: A = 94; B+ = 88; B = 82; C+ = 76; C = 70; F = 60. Designation of letter grades for the course will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85-89 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-84 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75-79 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-74 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The University Code of Student Conduct (catalogue, pages 23-25, and online at http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judaff/code.htm) provides that the penalty for graduate students who cheat on examinations or who plagiarize material from any source (including electronic sources) may result in permanent expulsion from the University. Students are held to the honor code of the University for their own conduct, and they are expected to report others’ violations of academic integrity to their instructors.

VIII. **Course Evaluation**

Rutgers University issues an online survey that evaluates both the course and the instructor. Students complete this survey at the end of the semester, and all answers are confidential and anonymous. The instructor also may choose to add questions to the end of semester evaluation and/or to conduct an additional evaluation at mid-semester.

IX. **Course Outline and Required Readings**

*To be determined by Professor

X. **Academic Integrity Policy**

All work submitted must be your own. It is unethical and a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy to present the ideas or words of another without clearly and fully identifying the source. Inadequate citations will be construed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited materials as your own. It is important that you refer to
the APA Style Manual for the correct procedures in citing material.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “To paraphrase Plato’s comment…” and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, materials that contribute to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed in a timely manner with the course Instructor. Students should be aware that violations of academic integrity, for example plagiarism of any kind, must be reported to the University and may result in expulsion.

Please Note: Violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable offenses according to the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members shall not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but shall refer all such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. The AIF for the School of Social Work is Antoinette Y. Farmer, 732.932.2621. The student shall be notified in writing, by email or hand delivery, of the alleged violation and of the fact that the matter has been referred to the AIF for adjudication. This notification shall be done within 10 days of identifying the alleged violation. Once the student has been notified of the allegation, the student may not drop the course or withdraw from the school until the adjudication process is complete. A TZ, or incomplete grade, shall be assigned until the case is resolved.

For additional information on the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy:

- Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity:
  http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

- Rutgers Academic Integrity Resources for Students:
  http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/students.shtml

- “Don’t Plagiarize/Document Your Research” Online Guide:
  http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml

XI. Disability Accommodation
Please note: Any student who believes that they may need an accommodation for this class because of a disability should contact the Rutgers University Office of Disability Support Services (at Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue, Suite. 123, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; tel.: 732/932-2848; email: dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu; website: http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/) for a letter of accommodation. Students must have an officially approved letter of accommodation in order to receive disability accommodations. Any student who has already received a letter of accommodation should notify the Instructor to discuss implementation of these accommodations. Failure to do so may jeopardize the timely implementation of disability accommodations.

XII. BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND INTEREST

I. Professions and Professionalization


**II. Social Work Values and Ethics**

*a. Overview of Social Work Ethics*


*b. Self-Determination and Paternalism*


c. Practical Applications of Social Work Values


d. Legal Issues


e. Confidentiality


f. Culture and Ethics


*g. Social Justice and Social Work*


h. Research and Ethics


**III. Race-Ethnicity and Practice**


IV. Gender and Practice


V. **Assessment and Intervention with Individuals**


VI. Assessment and Intervention with Families


VII. Assessment and Intervention with Groups


with Groups, 18, 67-80.


VIII. Assessment and Intervention with Organizations

a. General Approach


b. Women and Organizations


b. Leadership and Management


IX. Assessment and Intervention with Communities
a. Community Organizing


b. Community Development/Urban Planning


X. Research and Practice

a. General Perspective


b. *Needs assessment*


