I. Catalog course description
Theories, themes, and issues concerning the ongoing interaction between people as they grow, change, and develop over the life course and the social context in which this occurs. Assumptions about human behavior that may interfere with recognition of diversity in the ongoing interaction between individual, family, and group identity; social context; and social life. Values and ethical issues related to biopsychosocial development.

II. Course overview
This course is designed to provide the theoretical and knowledge base for social work practice in all forms. This course emphasizes the bio-psycho-social development patterns of individuals and families as they interact with their various environments. Various theories of human behavior pertaining to individuals and families are critically reviewed. These theoretical viewpoints are selected for their practice application. Also, the course stresses linkages with policy and research. In keeping with the School’s mission, special attention is given to vulnerable populations and how social systems can promote or deter the development of individuals and families.

III. Place of course in the program
This is a required foundation course taken in the first year. There are no prerequisites. The purpose of HBSE is to provide the theoretical underpinning for understanding the application of the problem-solving practice model in Social Work Practice I and II.

IV. Course objectives
This course will enable students to:
1. Recognize that human behavior is multi-determined and that, from an ecological perspective, biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, organizational and community systems have transactional effects on individual and family functioning;
2. Identify the ways in which the social environment can constrain (through, for example, poverty, racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia) or enhance the development of individuals and families.
3. Critically evaluate and integrate various theories of human behavior regarding individuals and families.
4. Analyze practice situations and policies in terms of relevant bio-psycho-social factors and the influence of the social environment.
5. Increase awareness of personal attitudes and values regarding human diversity and vulnerable populations and thus better articulate professional values and ethics in support of social and economic justice as a means of promoting the optimum development of individuals and families.
V. Required text


Recommended/supplemental texts


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

In addition, students are required to read other works from a selection of books and journals (indicated by asterisk (*) on syllabus). These readings are on electronic reserve. Go to Rutgers University Libraries home page (www.libraries.rutgers.edu) and then click on Reserves. Then search under “Johnson, Yvonne” or by course number (19 910 502 14). [ADD info on your list at library if you have one] Readings are listed by title of paper/chapter.

VI. Course requirements

It is expected that students will attend all class sessions having read assigned materials and fully prepared for discussion and assigned activities. Students are expected to notify the instructor prior to any absence. Students are at risk of failing the course if they have 3 or more unexcused absences. Assignments should be submitted on time and late assignments will be accepted only with prior approval from instructor.

All cell phones must be silenced and stored out-of-sight before class begins (See instructor to discuss exceptions). **Use of cell phones is prohibited in the classroom** at all times, including before class, breaks, and after class. Failure to comply will result in point deductions in grade for class participation at the instructor’s discretion.

Behavior in this course must also comply with the University's code of conduct (http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~judaff/code.htm).

VII. Course assignments and grading

[SUGGESTED]

Commentaries (30%)

Three (3) commentaries on the literature. A commentary, two pages long, will discuss a week’s assigned reading (whole or in part) and must be submitted in the class in question. So, for example, if a student wishes to discuss readings assigned for week 4, the commentary must be submitted in week four’s class, before the benefit of class discussion). Although Sheehan can be integrated into a commentary, Sheehan cannot be the sole focus of a commentary. Note: Final week for submission of a commentary is week 13. *See attached guidelines (pp.6-7).* (30%)
Take-home exam (30%)
- Take-home examination that will focus on the readings for weeks 2 through X (distributed October XX and due November XX). (30%)

Project (30%)
- Group oral presentation and paper. Groups will comprise 3 to 5 students See attached guidelines (pp. 7-10). (30%)
  OR
- Along with a colleague, thus forming a pair, or presenting solo, assume responsibility for teaching a 40 minute class unit on a topic from the course outline. In preparation, you are expected to read all of the required, assigned, material on this topic and to consult at least three additional authoritative sources on the subject. You are free to choose your own instructional methodology. The text of your presentation--which might take the form of copies of your Powerpoint slides and/or handouts distributed during your presentation—and your list of references will be your written report that will be submitted to the instructor. The tentative deadline for reservation of class time for this project is week 4. Topics will be approved and reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Use guidelines on pages 8-10 as appropriate. (30%)

Participation (10%)
- Class participation includes prompt attendance, timely submission of written work, being prepared for, and thoughtful involvement in, class discussion, and occasional brief presentations on the readings.

Designation of letter grades will be as follows:

- A 90-100
- B+ 85-89
- B 80-84
- C 70-74
- C+ 75-79
- F Below 70

VIII Course evaluation
There will be two evaluations. At mid-term, I will ask for informal feedback from students. At the end of semester, students will complete the University’s anonymous evaluation of the course.

IX COURSE OUTLINE

| Part I |
| Introduction: Broad themes (Sessions 1 through 3). |
| - Ecological perspective and systems approach |
| - Traditional and alternative theories of human behavior |
| - Critical appraisal of theories of human behavior and development, taking into account empirical evidence as well as congruence with social work values and ethics |

Week1, Semester begins September 1, 2009 Introductions, course overview, and relationship between HBSE and Social Work Practice I & II. Academic integrity and American Psychological Association (APA) writing style.
Exercise: Relating prior study to HBSE
Week 2, Why study human behavior in the social environment?
[One page, p. 16. Table: A holistic conceptualization..]

Week 3, The ecological perspective
Ashford et al. Chapter 2, pp. 41-74.
Ashford et al., Chapter 4, pp. 115-211

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part II: Individuals and the social environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Traditional theories of human behavior, e.g., psycho-dynamic, role theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stage models of human development, e.g., Eriksonian, Freudian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Phases of the life span: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bio-psycho-social aspects of development within cultural context. Special attention to social, environmental constraints, e.g., racism, poverty, homophobia, sexism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week 4, 9/24, The psychological dimension for assessing social functioning

Week 5, 10/1, Pregnancy, birth
Hutchison, Chapter 2

Week 6, Infancy
Hutchison, Chapter 3
Week 7 Early childhood
Hutchison, Chapter 4
*Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: Retrospect and prospect. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 52*(4), 664-678. [Note: In the original journal article, pages 670 and 674 have been transposed—I corrected this error on electronic reserves.]

Week 8: **Middle childhood**
Hutchison, Chapter 5

Week 9: **Adolescence**
Hutchison, Chapter 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part III: Families and the social environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What is the family? (Traditional and alternative definitions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ways in which families are affected by legal, medical and political arenas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How the social environment affects family functioning. Special attention to race, poverty, sexism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week 10: **Young adulthood.**
Hutchison, Chapter 7
Ashford et al., Chapter 10
Week 11: **Middle adulthood**
Hutchison, Chapter 8

**Group presentations**

Week 12: **Late adulthood**
Hutchison, Chapter 9
“Aging Overview”
http://www.oxford-naswsocialwork.com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/entry?entry=t203.e15-s1

**Group presentations**

NOVEMBER 26: Thanksgiving week: NO CLASS

Week 13, **Very late adulthood**
Hutchison, Chapter 10

**Group presentations**

Week 14, **Group presentations**

Week 15, week of Dec 14th: Course wrap-up

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**Guidelines for commentaries**

You are required to write 3 commentaries. A commentary will focus on the assigned readings for one specific class (weeks 2 through 12) of your choice. Restated, you will choose three different classes and write a separate commentary on the readings for each of the three classes. An individual commentary will be handed in at the class in question; so, if you choose to write a commentary on the readings for class 4, the commentary must be submitted to me at that class. Given the space limitation--2 pages, double-spaced--you are asked to discuss a sharply focused topic from the readings. You are not expected to provide a summary of the reading. You might discuss a concept (e.g., gender, role), an issue (e.g., discrimination experienced by lesbians and...
gays), or the major thrust of a theory (e.g., Piaget’s argument that young children are “ego-centric”). In the past, students have found it helpful to stagger submission of the commentaries as this allows time for you to have the benefit of my feedback before submitting the next one.

Offer the reader a clear, though brief, opening statement on your topic. There are multiple ways of proceeding. You might relate the reading to a client (in your field placement) or the Sheehan text in order to highlight your major points. When discussing a theory, you might want to discuss the strengths and limitations of the theory. Your personal experience can be included, but you must develop your thoughts on the implications for social work practice. **No matter your focus, it is important to link the readings to the field of social work.** So, if you choose to write about Freudian theory you must relate the theory to social work in a meaningful way. You may wish to ask yourself: If a stranger were to read my commentary would they be able to tell that I am writing this for a social work course and through the lens of a social work student?

As the semester proceeds, I will look for conceptual links that you are able to make to earlier readings, readings in other courses and experience you gain in your field placement.

**Grading:**

A *barely passing* (C) commentary will show, in most cases, a muddled grasp of the readings and very disjointed explication. Links to practice will more than likely be very superficial. Errors in grammar and spelling might be evident.

A *satisfactory* (C+) commentary will offer a beginning grasp of the readings and application to social work will be, in many cases, barely evident. Grammar and spelling errors might be evident. The commentary might be short.

A *good* (B) commentary will show adequate grasp of the readings, and the application of the readings to social work will be somewhat superficial, and the writer might find difficulty in using the maximum space allowed (2 pages).

The *very good* (B+) commentary will illuminate a salient issue, and relate that topic to social work practice, but critical analysis might be somewhat lacking.

The *excellent* (A) commentary, in addition to illuminating a salient issue, and relating that topic to social work practice, will critically appraise and apply the literature. Questions raised might be: Is the literature culturally sensitive? In which specific instances does the literature apply? Are there any ethical issues that the author overlooks?

General note: Occasional spelling and grammatical mistakes are to be expected but if there are many mistakes the grade assigned to your written work may be negatively affected. Your papers should adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) format and style, or another style approved by the instructor.

**General guidelines for group assignment**

The aims of this assignment are to research an area of interest, apply the course readings and outside sources to social work practice, develop skills in collaborating with peers on shared tasks, and to gain confidence in public speaking.
Talk
Groups of 3-5 students will present a talk to the class on a course topic of their choice. In the past, students have investigated the works of Erikson; Freud; feminist perspectives; and poverty as a constraining force on human development.
The following will be covered in the talk:
- Concise overview of the literature
- Case example (from either placement or Sheehan text)
- Critical evaluation of the literature
Format of presentation (for examples, lecture, debate, use of overhead, role-play) is your choice. Twenty-five minutes are allowed for presentation, with 5 additional minutes for questions.

Paper
Your group paper will be 8 (minimum) to 10 (maximum) pages long, and typed (double-spaced). Paper is due on same day as your talk. Keep in mind that sometimes an oral presentation will not read well as a written one. Hence, the script of your talk may not do as your paper. This said, the material covered in both paper and talk will, of course, overlap. Aim for at least 10-15 references.

Grading:
Everyone in your group will be assigned the same grade. Your group will be graded (50% for paper, 50% for oral presentation) on the following: preparedness, clarity of expression, level of interest engendered.
The very good (B+) paper and presentation will offer a clear description of your chosen theory/perspective or your chosen social issue. Your discussion will include insightful application of the readings to social work practice. The strengths and limitations of the literature will be illuminated.
The excellent (A) paper and presentation, in addition to the above, will exhibit exceptional conceptual analysis, and indicate that you are well able to link theory to social work practice, and demonstrate that you used initiative to research your topic. The paper will be of a professional standard, and adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) format and style or another style approved by instructor.

See, also, the notes on grading of commentaries (above).

Tips and suggestions for planning and presenting group project

Planning (mid-October)
- Agree on selected topic. Ensure that you have a manageable line of inquiry.
- Give some thought to the group’s organization. One option is to nominate a key-person who takes notes and makes sure the group keeps its deadlines. No matter the leadership style (with key-person or shared leadership), it is often useful to have written notes on responsibilities and deadlines.
- Check that you have group members’ correct email and tel. #s. Ensure that you have email addresses that are frequently checked so that you can send drafts of written work to everyone.
• Identify why this topic is of interest to you and your peers, and discuss key themes you wish to cover. (You might bring in experiences from field or Sheehan text to illuminate social work relevance or to frame a question—for example, can HBSE theories help us understand client X’s drug use?) There are a number of ways to start your discussion. One is to brainstorm as a group (voice the ideas that come spontaneously into your minds). Another way is to think briefly on one’s own, writing your thoughts on paper, then discussing your ideas in turn.

• Decide on how to share the work. For example, A could pull together what Schriver says on your topic; B scans references in the texts to identify relevant outside sources; C consults IRIS and journals available electronically, D goes to library and so on. Consult original work whenever possible. For example, if your focus is Carol Gilligan’s theories then consult her authored books and articles.

• Re-confirm that everyone has same understanding of topic. A tentative title for your paper can help. Inform instructor (I suggest mid-October) of chosen topic for final approval, and provide instructor with list of the names of group members.

Preparation (end of October to date of presentation)
• Group members share preliminary findings on literature. Identify key information.
• Re-consult the literature as needed.
• Decide whether you will use a case example/s from the field, or Sheehan’s text.
• Discuss ways in which the literature deepens (or not) your understanding of case example, and relevance of literature to social work practice.
• Share responsibilities for writing of paper and outline of talk. The paper will provide the foundation of your talk. A couple of people might work together to create first drafts with group members writing passages related to areas that they identified during planning stage. Another possibility is to separate 1. summary of literature from 2. application of literature to case example and assign respective tasks to different students.
• Distribute first draft/outline of paper/talk for comments from group members. Circulate further drafts for comments as necessary, incorporating group members’ feedback.
• See instructor during office hours/in class for guidance and feedback.
• Final outline of talk—suggested date is at least one week before presentation. [See below for possible outline of talk.]
• Rehearse your talk a few days before presentation. Give special attention to time limits (25 minutes). Offer constructive criticism. Anticipate questions form your audience. Five minutes will be allotted for questions on day of presentation.
• Copy any handouts. These are not required. (If using, keep in mind that distributing the material during a talk can be distracting. Perhaps distribute at end of presentation.)
• Inform instructor of any special needs—projector for Powerpoint; overhead; video etc.
Possible outline—not a blueprint—of a talk

Introduction
- Title
- Identify yourselves by name

Opening
- A provocative question or vignette or key theme
- Why this topic is important
- What you will show

A. What the literature (theory/empirical studies) shows
B. Practice example
C. Application of the literature to social work practice with relevant comments on usefulness/adequacy/limitations of literature.

Note: You could begin with B, then move to A and C.

Closing comments
- Summary of major points. What have you learned? What needs to be done, e.g., future avenues for research, implications for social work practice and education? Highlight what you wish the audience to remember of your presentation.

X. Academic Integrity Policy
All work submitted in a graduate course 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 constructed as an attempt to misrepresent the cited materials as your own.

Use the citation style preferred by the discipline.

Effective September 2, 2008, a revised Policy on Academic Integrity will go into effect. The new policy is posted at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml<file://localhost/owa/redir.aspx>

Please Note: Violations of academic integrity by graduate and professional students will normally be penalized more severely than violations by first-year undergraduate students. Since all violations of academic integrity by a graduate or professional student are potentially separable under the Academic Integrity Policy, faculty members should not adjudicate alleged academic integrity violations by graduate and professional students, but should refer such allegations to the appropriate Academic Integrity Facilitator (AIF) or to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. The AIF that you should contact 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.
Definition of Plagiarism
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 to 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, only materials that contribute to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some case, be a subtle issue. Any question about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.

XI. Disability Accommodation
Please Note: Any student who believes that s/he may need an accommodation in this class due to a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services, Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue; dfoffice@rci.rutgers.edu; 732-932-2847.
Students must have a letter of accommodation from the Office of Disability Services in order to receive accommodations.

XII. Bibliography:

Social work ethics

TEXTBOOKS on HBSE
Van Wormer, K. (2007). Human behavior and the social environment: Micro level, individuals and
families. Oxford University Press.

Theories of Behavior Change

Systems Theory
TCA Journal, 28 (1), 50-62. [available as e-journal]
Greene, R. R., & Blundo, R. G. (1999). Postmodern critique of systems theory in social work with the
aged and their families. Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 31 (3/4) 87-100. [available as e-
journal]
[particularly Chapter II: Organization and the system concept]
Braziller.

Ecological Perspective
Rauch (Ed.), Assessment: A sourcebook for social work practice (pp. 3-13). Wisconsin: Families
International.
Germain, C. & Gitterman, A. (1995). Ecological perspective. In Encyclopedia of social work (pp. 816-
824). Washington: NASW.
Urban Education, 29, 34-49.

Feminist Theory
Belenky, M.F. et al. (1986). Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind. New
York: Basic Books.
Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press.


**Positive psychology**


**Strengths perspective & resiliency**


**Social capital**


**Chaos Theory**


**INDIVIDUALS AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT—through the life course**

**Psychodynamic Theory**


**I. Ego Psychology**


**Psychosocial Theory**

II. Moral Development


Critiques of Theoretical Perspectives


Conception, Pregnancy, Childbirth


Infancy, Toddlerhood, Early Childhood


**Middle Childhood**

**Adolescence**


**Adulthood: Early, Middle, Later, and Very Old Age**


**FAMILIES AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**


**Diversity in Family and Community Experience & Social Work Interventions**


**Parenting and Parenthood**


**Special Challenges in Parenting: Special Needs Children, Adoptive Families, Intergenerational families**


**Impact of childhood trauma and traumatic family experiences on human development**


*Bib. updated: July 5, 20089 YMJ.*