

**RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW  
JERSEY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Outline**

**Course Title: Aging and Society**

Instructor Name:

Telephone:

Email:

Office:

The purpose of this course is to help students learn about different experiences that can occur during mid and older adulthood and prepare them for engaging with older members of society in their personal and professional roles. Systems that impact the aging experience during mid and older adulthood will be reviewed and analyzed. Students will be encouraged to reimagine their understanding about older members of society and identify anti-oppressive approaches for supporting this subpopulation. The effects of ageism, ableism, and other types of discrimination and prejudice will also be examined in this course. Lastly, students will leave the course with a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges individuals may experience as they age. This course is primarily intended for students planning to pursue careers in social work, hospitals, community-based agencies, mental health settings, healthcare policy development, and health care management.

**Place of Course**

There are no pre-requisites for this course. It is recommended for social work majors and is open to all undergraduate students as an elective.

**Course Learning Objectives**

After taking this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe ageism, its impact on individuals and systems, and the ways it intersects with other forms of oppression, prejudice, and discrimination;
2. Recognize the opportunities and challenges that occur as we age;

3. Describe service systems, technology, and healthcare policies that impact older adults in the US;
4. Identify and consider effective strategies for working with older adults and their networks.

### **School of Social Work Mission Statement**

The mission of the School of Social Work is to develop and disseminate knowledge through social work research, education, and training that promotes social and economic justice and strengths individual, family, and community well-being, in this diverse and increasingly global environment of New Jersey and beyond.

### **School Wide Learning Goals**

Upon graduation all students will be able to:

Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior;

Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice; and

Engage, Assess, and Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

### **Diversity Statement**

The RU SSW supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity, individual differences and identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) are respected and recognized as a source of strength. Students and faculty are expected to respect differences and contribute to a learning environment that allows for a diversity of thought and world views. Please feel free to speak with me if you experience any concerns in this area.

### **Course Readings and Texts**

This course has no required text. Required readings can be accessed through the course Canvas site reading tab.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Participation**

Students are expected to be active learners and collaborators. Students are expected to contribute knowledge and observations to discussions. Regular class attendance with active participation is expected. When students participate actively in class discussions learning is enhanced. It is important that reading assignments be completed prior to each session. Please take responsibility for seeking clarification of difficult material encountered in the text, readings, and lectures. At the end of each class session, readings for the subsequent class will be assigned.

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to notify the instructor prior to missing a session. Please note that students who arrive significantly late and/or leave significantly early will be marked as absent. You will not be penalized for missing class if emergencies arise and/or for religious observances. In these circumstances, please advise the instructor with as much notice as possible. Please arrange with your instructor if you have a planned, excused absence the day an assignment is due.

### **Assignments**

All written work must be typed and submitted in Word. All written assignments must follow APA format.

### **Grading Standards**

Grades represent the level or quality of the student's performance measured against standards of knowledge, skill, and understanding as evaluated by the instructor. Grades are reported to the university registrar at the end of each term by the following symbols:

Grade	Definition	Numerical Equivalent
A	Outstanding	4.0
B+	Very Good	3.5
B	Good	3.0
C+	Very Satisfactory	2.5
C	Satisfactory	2.0
D	Poor	1.0
F	Failing	0.0

## **Course Grading Breakdown**

Participation and Attendance – 15%

Experiential Assignment – 25%

Midterm Assignment – 30%

Final Paper – 30%

## **Assignments**

### ○ **Experiential Assignment AARP Walk Audit**

After driving, walking is the most popular mode of transportation in the United States. However, in many towns, cities and neighborhoods, the only way to get around is by car because walking is just too dangerous.” (Retrieved from, <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/info-2014/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html>).

The environment can impact one’s aging experience tremendously. Use the AARP Walk Audit Tool (link below) to assess an area of where you live. Complete each worksheet and complete a letter to your local agency on aging with your recommended changes for the area. Students will submit the completed tool and letter to the instructor, and then to the agency on aging.

Depending on course format, these worksheets should either be emailed to Instructor directly or submitted via Canvas.

### ○ **Family History Paper -Part One (Midterm)**

Students will develop a questionnaire and interview two individuals age 65 or older in their own family, or outside of their family. Friends, neighbors, community members, etc. are also ok for this assignment. The interviews can be completed in person, over the phone, via e-mail, or via Zoom.

Students will submit first;

- A draft of interview questions submitted for approval by Instructor (50 points)

- Interview questions should focus on the lived experience of the two individuals interviewed. Asking questions about generational differences, experiences of the generation to which they belong to, work and education history, important relationships throughout their lives, big moments. Also, about how their experiences have been/currently are shaped by their race, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, and socioeconomic status.

Then; Students will submit the interview (typed) to the instructor for review (50 points)

○ **Family History Paper –Part Two (Final)**

Drawing on interviewees’ responses, students will incorporate their own history and make at least 2 connections to their own lived experiences.

The final paper should be 5–7 double-spaced pages, have no more than 1-inch margins, and use APA format. Make sure to cite the sources of the interview, including the date of the interview and any additional sources used for this paper. You may use the name of your interviewee only if they have given you written permission to do so.

**Course Schedule**

Threshold Concept One – Ageism: A Human Rights Concern		
Week	Class Description	Required Reading Before Class
Week #1	<p><b><u>How do we define age?</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Basic terms review (young old, mid old, and old old)</li> <li>-Use of biological markers and other indicators for judging age</li> <li>-Define Ageism and its origin using Terror Management Theory</li> <li>-Learn about the Reframing Aging Initiative</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hulko, W., Brotman, S., Stern, L., &amp; Ferrer, I. (2019). Gerontological Social Work in Action: Anti-Oppressive Practice with Older Adults, Their Families, and Communities. Routledge. Chapter 1 – Age/ism: Age as a Category of Difference</li> <li>2. Applewhite, A. (2019). Eight Surprising Facts about Getting Old in America. Retrieved from <a href="https://nypost.com/2019/03/09/eight-surprising-facts-about-getting-old-in-america/">https://nypost.com/2019/03/09/eight-surprising-facts-about-getting-old-in-america/</a></li> </ol>

<p>Week #2</p>	<p><b><u>Micro (aka direct) instances of ageism</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Defining benevolent and hostile instances of ageism</li>   <li>-Describe the internalization of ageism and its impact</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eisenberg, R. (2020). Will Covid-19 Make the Decline Narrative of Aging Worse? Retrieved from <a href="#">Will COVID-19 Make the Decline Narrative of Aging Worse?   Next Avenue</a></li>   <li>2. Levy B. Stereotype Embodiment: A Psychosocial Approach to Aging. <i>Curr Dir Psychol Sci.</i> 2009 Dec 1;18(6):332-336. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8721.2009.01662.x. PMID: 20802838; PMCID: PMC2927354.</li> </ol>
<p>Week #3</p>	<p><b><u>Macro (aka structural) ageism</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Defining structural ageism</li>   <li>-Identify domains of structural ageism (i.e., ageism in the media, in entertainment, in the workplace, in healthcare)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ouchida, K. M., &amp; Lachs, M. S. (2015). Not for doctors only: Ageism in healthcare. <i>Generations Journal</i>, 39(3), 46-57.</li>   <li>2. Robson, D. (2022). Can You Think Yourself Young? Retrieved from <a href="#">Can you think yourself young?   Science   The Guardian</a></li>   <li>3. Kita, J. (2019). Workplace Age Discrimination Still Flourishes in America. Retrieved from <a href="#">Age Discrimination Still Thrives in America (aarp.org)</a></li> </ol>
<p>Week #4</p>	<p><b><u>Intersectionality and Aging</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Define intersectionality</li>   <li>-Describe how ageism interacts with other isms like racism, genderism, and ableism</li>   <li>-Describe Anti-Oppressive Gerontology (AOG)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Calasanti, T., &amp; King, N. (2015). Intersectionality and age. In <i>Routledge handbook of cultural gerontology</i> (pp. 215-222). Routledge.</li>   <li>2. Listen to Intersectionality Matters Podcast -<a href="#">Age Against the Machine: The Fatal Intersection of Racism &amp; Ageism In the Time of Coronavirus</a></li>   <li>3. Review: SAGE &amp; National Resource Center on LGBT Aging (2021). Facts on LGBT Aging. Retrieved from <a href="#">sage-lgbt-aging-facts-final.pdf (sageusa.org)</a></li>   <li>4. Review:</li> </ol>

		Kushel, M. (2020). Homelessness among older adults: An emerging crisis. <i>Generations</i> , 44(2), 1-7.
<b>Threshold Concept Two – Changes that Occur as We Age</b>		
<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Description</b>	<b>Required Reading Before Class</b>
Week #5	<p><b><u>Biology and Aging</u></b></p> <p>-Describe changes in physical health that may occur</p> <p>-Aging with acute and/or chronic illnesses</p>	<p>1. American Psychology Association. (2017). Older Adults' Health and Age-related Changes: Reality Versus Myth. Retrieved from <a href="#">Aging_hang.indd (apa.org)</a></p> <p>2. Warner, D. F., &amp; Brown, T. H. (2011). Understanding how race/ethnicity and gender define age-trajectories of disability: An intersectionality approach. <i>Social science &amp; medicine</i>, 72(8), 1236-1248.</p>
Week #6	<p><b><u>Mental Health and Aging</u></b></p> <p>-Describe the experience of acute and chronic mental health illnesses</p> <p>-Define dementia and discuss how to preserve the voice of someone living with memory loss</p>	<p>1. Gerlach, L. B., Maust, D. T., Solway, E., Kirch, M., Kullgren, J. T., Singer, D. C., &amp; Malani, P. N. (2022). Perceptions of Overall Mental Health and Barriers to Mental Health Treatment Among US Older Adults. <i>The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry</i>, 30(4), 521-526.</p> <p>2. Malani, P., Kullgren, J., Solway, E., Gerlach, L., Singer, D., &amp; Kirch, M. (2021). National Poll on Healthy Aging: Mental Health Among Older Adults Before and During COVID-19 Pandemic.</p>
Week #7	<p><b><u>Social Connections and Aging</u></b></p> <p>-Social networks and their power</p> <p>-Changing dynamics in relationship and life roles across the lifespan</p>	<p>1. Allen, K.A. (2019). The Importance of Belonging Across Life: A developmental perspective of our need to belong. Retrieved from <a href="#">The Importance of Belonging Across Life   Psychology Today</a></p> <p>2. Watch, "<a href="#">The Power &amp; Science of Social Connection</a>" TedTalk</p> <p>3. Luong, G., Charles, S. T., &amp; Fingerma, K. L. (2011). Better With Age: Social Relationships Across Adulthood.</p>

		Journal of social and personal relationships, 28(1), 9–23. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407510391362">https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407510391362</a>
Week #8	<p><b><u>Workforce Changes</u></b></p> <p>-Describe the multigenerational workforce and its value</p> <p>-Describe the experience of retirement</p>	<p>1. Anderson, G. Oscar. <i>Mentorship and the Value of a Multigenerational Workforce</i>. Washington, DC: AARP Research, January 2019. <a href="https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00270.001">https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00270.001</a></p> <p>2. Marleen Damman, MSc, Kène Henkens, PhD, Matthijs Kalmijn, PhD, Missing Work After Retirement: The Role of Life Histories in the Retirement Adjustment Process, <i>The Gerontologist</i>, Volume 55, Issue 5, October 2015, Pages 802–813, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnt169">https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnt169</a></p>
<b>Family History Paper – Interview Questions Due</b>		
<b>Threshold Concept Three – Systems that Impact Older Adults in the US</b>		
Week	Class Description	Required Reading Before Class
Week #9	<p><b><u>Aging and the Environment</u></b></p> <p>-Describe the impact of neighborhoods (i.e., “the aging in place” movement, &amp; age-friendly movement)</p> <p>-Describe aging experiences in other environments like prison and house insecurity (a newer demographic trend)</p>	<p>1. Sherbune-Michigan, M. (2022). Neighborhoods that Helped (and Hurt) Older Adults During the Pandemic. Retrieved from <a href="#">Neighborhoods helped (and hurt) older adults during pandemic - Futurity</a></p> <p>2. Smith, R. J., Lehning, A. J., &amp; Kim, K. (2018). Aging in place in gentrifying neighborhoods: Implications for physical and mental health. <i>The gerontologist</i>, 58(1), 26-35.</p> <p>3. O’Dea, C. (2022). NJ Prisons have a Geriatric Problem. Retrieved from <a href="#">The geriatric problem in NJ prisons   NJ Spotlight News</a></p>
Week #10	<p><b><u>Longterm Healthcare in the US</u></b></p> <p>-Define longterm healthcare</p>	<p>1. National Institute on Aging. (2017). What is Long-Term Care? Retrieved from <a href="#">What Is Long-Term Care?   National Institute on Aging (nih.gov)</a></p>



	<p>-Describe the roles of insurance in long-term healthcare for older adults in the US</p> <p>-Explain the complexities of longterm healthcare from a macro and micro perspective</p>	<p>2. Kaye, H.S., Harrington, C., LaPlante, M.P. (2010). Long-Term Care: Who Gets It, Who Provides It, Who Pays, and How Much? Long-Term Care: Who Gets It, Who Provides It, Who Pays, And How Much? (healthaffairs.org)</p> <p>3. Melanie Plasencia, Age-Friendly as Tranquilo Ambiente: How Socio-Cultural Perspectives Shape Older Latinos’ Lived Environment, Innovation in Aging, Volume 5, Issue Supplement_1, 2021, Pages 237–238, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igab046.911">https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igab046.911</a></p>
Week #11	<p><b><u>Technology and Aging</u></b></p> <p>- Identify technology advancements</p> <p>- Debunk myths about older adults and tech usage</p> <p>-Describe ageism and ethical concerns associated with surveillance technology</p>	<p>1. World Health Organization. (2022). Ageism in artificial intelligence for health: WHO policy brief. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2022. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO</p> <p>2. Pruchno, R. (2019). Technology and aging: An evolving partnership. The Gerontologist, 59(1), 1-5.</p>
<b>AARP Audit Tool Assignment Due</b>		
<b>Threshold Concept Four – Harmonious Aging and Resiliency in Older Age</b>		
Week	Class Description	Required Reading Before Class
Week #12	<p><b><u>Aging Narratives in the US</u></b></p> <p>-Compare and analyze different descriptions of the aging experience (i.e., healthy aging, successful aging, harmonious aging)</p>	<p>1. Liang, J., &amp; Luo, B. (2012). Toward a discourse shift in social gerontology: From successful aging to harmonious aging. Journal of aging studies, 26(3), 327-334</p> <p>2. Applewhite, A. (2018). Who’s Going to Create a Better Narrative of Old Age in America? Retrieved from <a href="#"><u>Who’s Going to Create a Better Narrative of Old Age in America? - ChangingAging</u></a></p>

Week #13	<p><b><u>Resiliency in Older Age</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Define resiliency</li> <li>-Identify factors that can promote or threaten resiliency as we age</li> </ul>	<p>1. Clark, P. G., Burbank, P. M., Greene, G., &amp; Riebe, D. (2018). What do we know about resilience in older adults? An exploration of some facts, factors, and facets. In Resilience in aging (pp. 61-80). Springer, Cham.</p> <p>2. Watch Clip – “<u>Not Another Second</u>”</p>
Week #14	<p><b><u>Course Debrief/Putting it All Together</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identify opportunities we can advance long and healthy lives</li> </ul>	<p>1. <a href="https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/advance-long-and-productive-lives/">https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/advance-long-and-productive-lives/</a></p> <p>2. <a href="https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/harness-technology-for-social-good/">https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/harness-technology-for-social-good/</a></p>
<p><b>Family History Paper Due Via Canvas (on last day of class)</b></p>		

**Resources**

**Writing Assistance**

Success in graduate school and within the larger profession of social work depends on strong writing skills. Several resources are available to help students strengthen their professional and academic writing skills. Writing assistance is available to all MSW students as described below.

**New Brunswick Campus**

All MSW SSW students (New Brunswick, Camden, Newark, Intensive Weekend, online and blended) are eligible to access writing assistance at the New Brunswick Learning Center. Online tutoring may also be available.

<https://rlc.rutgers.edu/student-info/group-and-individual-academic-support/writing-coaching>

**Newark Campus**

The Newark writing center is available for MSW students on the Newark campus by appointment.

<http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>

## **Camden Campus**

The Camden learning center provides writing assistance for MSW students on the Camden campus.

<http://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/writing-assistance>

## **Additional Online Resources**

### **APA Style**

All students are expected to adhere to the citation style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition (2020). It can be purchased at APA Manual 9th Edition. The Purdue OWL website also provide assistance with APA style

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)

### **Academic Integrity**

As per Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, “Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity and abiding by them in all aspects of their work at the University. Students are also encouraged to help educate fellow students about academic integrity and to bring all alleged violations of academic integrity they encounter to the attention of the appropriate authorities.” All SSW students are expected to review and familiarize themselves with the RU Academic Integrity Policy in its’ entirety.

As per Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, “The principles of academic integrity require that a student: make sure that all work submitted in a course, academic research, or other activity is the student’s own and created without the aid of impermissible technologies, materials, or collaborations; properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, images, or words of others; properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work; obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with the student’s interpretation or conclusions; treat all other students ethically, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This principle requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress; uphold the ethical standards and professional code of conduct in the field for which the student is preparing.”

Students should review all types of Academic Integrity Violations per the RU Academic Integrity Policy. Below are some of the more common violations, as articulated in Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy:

“Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words, ideas, images, or results, no matter the form or media, without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, a student must identify every direct quotation using quotation marks or appropriate indentation and cite both direct quotation and paraphrasing properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are: Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution; Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one’s own words another person’s written words or ideas as if they were one’s own, regardless of the nature of the assignment; Incorporating into one’s work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other non-textual material from other sources, regardless of format, without proper attribution.”

“Cheating: Cheating is the use or possession of inappropriate or prohibited materials, information, sources, or aids in any academic exercise. Cheating also includes submitting papers, research results or reports, analyses, and other textual or visual material and media as one’s own work when others prepared them. Some common examples are: Prohibited collaboration: receiving research, programming, data collection, or analytical assistance from others or working with another student on an assignment where such help is not permitted; Copying another student’s work or answers on a quiz or examination; Using or having access to books, notes, calculators, cell phones, technology, or other prohibited devices or materials during a quiz or examination; Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructors involved; Preprogramming a calculator or other device to contain answers, formulas, or other unauthorized information for use during a quiz or examination.; Acquiring a copy of an examination from an unauthorized source before the examination; Having a substitute take an examination in one’s place; Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement;

Submitting as one’s own work a term paper or other assignment prepared, in whole or in part, by someone else.”

Any faculty member or academic administrator who becomes aware of a possible academic integrity violation must initiate a formal complaint with the Office of Student Conduct and the SSW’s Academic Integrity Facilitator (Laura Curran at lacurran@ssw.rutgers.edu). The AIF deciding the case (the “adjudicator”) shall notify the accused student of the allegation in writing or by electronic communication within fifteen working days of the time the faculty member becomes aware of 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 more information, see RU Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures for Adjudicating Academic Integrity Violations.

### **Disability Accommodation**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’ disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

### **Other Resources**

Our school is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We understand that sexual violence can undermine students’ academic success and we encourage

students who have experienced some form of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need.

Confidential support and academic advocacy are available through the Rutgers Office on Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance, 732.932.1181, <http://vpva.rutgers.edu>. Services are free and confidential and available 24 hrs/day, 7 days a week.

### **Active Shooter Resources**

Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of active shootings on campus. It is important that you know what to do in cases there is an active shooter on campus. Please go to this site to retrieve information that will reduce your personal risk in case of an active shooting on campus- <http://rupd.rutgers.edu/shooter.php>

### **Support Resources:**

- National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)
- National Institute of Mental Health
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
- National Mental Health Association
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

### **The Council on Social Work Education Policy and Accreditation Standards**

The MSW Program at Rutgers is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE's accreditation standards can be reviewed at [www.cswe.org](http://www.cswe.org). In keeping with CSWE standards, the Rutgers School of Social Work has integrated the CSWE competencies within its curriculum. These competencies serve as program level Learning Goals for the MSW Program and include the following. Upon completion of their MSW education students will be able to: demonstrate ethical and professional behavior; engage in diversity and difference in practice; advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice; engage in practice informed research and research informed practice; engage with individuals, families, groups organizations and communities; intervene with individual, families, groups organizations and communities; and evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

This course will assist students in developing the following competencies:

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Practitioners in clinical social work recognize the importance of the therapeutic relationship, person-in-environment and strengths perspectives, professional use of self, and adherence to ethical-and value-guidelines for professional practice. Clinical social workers differentially utilize theories, research, and their clinical skills to enhance the well-being of individuals, families and communities in an ethical manner. Clinical social work practitioners acknowledge the complexities involved in their practice, including the need to navigate ethical issues in an organizational context, and they use clinical supervision to ensure that their practices are congruent with social work values and ethics.

Extending and enhancing ethical and professional practice from the foundation level requires that clinical social workers reflect on their own family of origin to assess how it impacts their clinical work. Advanced-level practitioners must manage complex systems while understanding how cultural and developmental aspects of self and their clients influence their work. Clinical social workers recognize their own strengths and weaknesses in developing, managing and maintaining therapeutic relationships. Practitioners of clinical social work must continually adapt to rapidly changing technology in an ethical and professional manner.

**Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Clinical social work practitioners are knowledgeable about many forms of diversity and difference (e.g., culture, age, health/mental health functioning, educational attainment, sexual orientation/gender identity socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity etc.) and how these components influence the therapeutic relationship and clients' presenting concerns. Clinical social workers understand how various dimensions of diversity affect explanations of health/mental health and well-being, as well as help-seeking behaviors. Practitioners in clinical social work value cultural strengths and recognize the importance of tailoring their engagement strategies, assessment tools, and interventions to meet the diverse needs of their clients. Practitioners in clinical social work monitor their biases, reflect on their own cultural beliefs, and use and apply knowledge of diverse populations and complex health/mental health delivery systems to enhance client well-being.

Clinical social workers recognize the need to conceptualize cases using an intersectional perspective and to identify their clients' strengths and resiliencies, while learning to critically evaluate their own family history, privileges, and characteristics. In presenting case material, clinical social work practitioners integrate anti-oppressive stances and attend to clients' experiences of oppression and marginalization while also working to avoid undue pressure or use of power over clients.

### **Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Clinical social workers understand the importance of the assessment process and recognize that it is ongoing and that it directly informs their interventions. Clinical social workers value holistic assessment and therefore use the bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment process as well as analysis of clients' strengths and resiliencies, their coping skills, and their adaptation to traumatic and stressful life events in a full assessment. Practitioners of clinical social work understand how their personal experiences may impact the assessment process. Clinical social workers recognize the power of intergenerational family patterns on individuals and explain these to clients while avoiding deterministic approaches to identifying such patterns. When applicable, clinical social workers rely on the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* to enhance their assessment, to conduct differential diagnosis, and to communicate with other healthcare providers about clients' presenting problems and symptomatology. Clinical social workers elicit client feedback about their experience of the assessment process, reflect upon varied meanings of the assessment, and share these assessment outcomes with clients.

### **Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities**

Clinical social workers select effective modalities for intervention based on the extant research as well as the client's cultural background. Clinical social work practitioners integrate their knowledge of various individual, family, and group psychotherapeutic modalities, as well as crisis intervention techniques and community-wide referrals, to intervene effectively; demonstrate flexibility by tailoring interventions to suit the needs of multiple client populations; and understand the effects of the social environment on client well-being. Clinical



social workers therefore recognize the need to intervene on mezzo and macro levels. Practitioners in clinical social work critically select, apply, and evaluate best practices and evidence-informed interventions; they value collaboration with the client and other professionals to coordinate treatment plans. Clinical social workers maintain knowledge of the communities they serve in order to ensure that clients are connected with relevant services and resources in an effective manner, while eliciting client feedback about how the interventions are impacting the client.

**Competency 10 (RU SSW Specific): Liberatory Consciousness**

Social workers identify how the development of a liberatory consciousness is a pre-condition for engaging in effective liberation and social justice work. Social workers recognize that all members of society have been socialized into various systems of oppression and that the development of a liberatory consciousness “enables humans to live their lives in oppressive systems and institutions with awareness and intentionality, rather than on the basis of the socialization to which they have been subjected” (Love, p. 470). Social workers understand and actively engage the four elements of developing a liberatory consciousness (awareness, analysis, action, and accountability/allyship) in order to challenge oppression and promote social, racial and economic justice.