



Course Syllabus: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II-SL
College of Health Sciences and Human Services
Social Work Department
SOWK 3554-J01
Spring 2024

Contact Information

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Fridays: 3.00-4.00 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of this course is to provide information about the multiple factors, which affect the assessment of human growth, personality development, and behavior. This course will focus on the interactions between the developing person, his/her family, and the social systems in which that lifelong development takes place. Human development is studied within the context of those biological, psychological, and socio-cultural systems, which affect, and are affected by, human beings. Incorporated into this context is current knowledge related to spiritual development, racial and ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as disadvantaged and oppressed groups. In connection with such course content, attention is also focused on differences in values and lifestyles, and the issues that they generate for the understanding of human development, and for the role of the social worker.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

Knowledge dimensions:

1. Identify the basic concepts and themes of the life span and life course perspectives (EPAS 6 & 7).
2. Describe the relationship between the life course perspective and individual unique life stories as a configuration of specific life-events and person-environment transactions over time (EPAS 6 & 7).

Value dimension:

3. Examine the various dimensions of the life course from young adulthood to later adulthood and the implications of social work practice across the lifespan from young adulthood to later adulthood (EPAS 6 & 7).

Skills dimension:

4. Demonstrate skills in observing, analyzing and interpreting human behavior and the social environment in which it takes place.

Cognitive and Affective Dimensions:

5. Analyze the various paradigms of knowledge about human behavior and the social environment in the assessment process (EPAS 6 & 7).
6. Identify issues related to the effects of gender, race, ethnicity and culture, social class, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and position in global community/immigrant, on life course trajectories (EPAS 6 & 7).

Required Text:

Zastrow et al. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.).

Cengage: Boston, MA.

COURSE INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This course will be taught through use of lectures, class discussions, and audiovisual presentations. Students are expected to attend classes and to actively participate in discussions. The expectation is that students will have read the assigned readings to facilitate class dialogue and interaction.

Note: Please send your email on outlook (instead of D2L). Except for the weekend, I will check my emails during all the weekdays. Please expect a reply within 24 hours. In case you need any clarification, please don't hesitate to contact me via email. Please ***BE PROFESSIONAL** in your emails.

D2L

D2L will be used throughout the semester for communication between class sessions. The course material (Syllabus, Power points, and other relevant items) will be posted onto D2L.

COURSE REQUIRMENTS:

Social Work Program Attendance Policy

Students are allowed three excused absences as defined by the MSU absence policy. For an absence to be excused the *student must inform the instructor of the reason for the absence* and provide documentation supporting the need for the class absence. A *student who has missed five classes* (including the three excused absences) will *receive a lower letter grade. After six absences the student will be dropped from the class. If the sixth absence were to happen after the last day for "W", the student will receive a grade "F."*

It is expected that students attend every class. If unable to attend class, please inform the instructor before the class starts (or before class time). If unable to attend class due to an emergency, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Please note that *for each "uninformed class absence" 5 points will be taken off the final points.* Please note that the

instructor should be informed directly via email or office phone. In case of an emergency, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. ***Coming late to class and leaving early from class without any prior notice will also have an adverse impact on attendance and participation grades.***

Class Participation:

It is expected that students will contribute to the maintenance of a healthy learning environment, by paying attention to lectures, to fellow students' contributions in the class and by not being disruptive in class. It is expected that students actively participate in class discussions and exercises. It is also expected that everyone who shares ideas/views is respectful of others' time and ideas/views. We could agree to disagree but we ought not to be disagreeable.

Class participation is expected not only at the time of class discussions but also during lectures by raising pertinent questions, by contributing relevant ideas and by sharing relevant examples. Students will be expected to read all the assigned materials prior to class and be prepared to engage in class discussions related to the class topics.

While participation grades will be assigned based on the level, relevance, and substance of participation, the instructor reserves the right to assign participation grades based on the instructor's judgment. **General criteria** followed for assigning participation grade will be as follows:

- **Poor** (participates **only in group** discussions): 0-5 points
- **Fair** (besides **group** discussions participates **occasionally in class**): 5-10 points
- **Good** (besides **group** discussions participates **often in class**): 10-15 points
- **Very good**: (besides **group** discussions participates **very often in class**): 15-20 points

Note: There will be two debates this semester with a separate grade for the same. Specific details will be provided in class.

Laptop and Cell Phone regulation:

No Photographing, recording, text messaging is allowed without the permission of the instructor. Please turn off or set cell phones on vibrate. Please do not surf the internet, listen to IPOD music while in class. ****Please note that using electronic devices during class time (including the examination week) will have an adverse impact on overall grade.***

Students with Disabilities:

Note: Individuals requiring special accommodations according to the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, please present the instructor with a special Accommodation Request Form from the Midwestern State University Counseling Center.

Academic Integrity:

As explained in the student handbook (2023-2024), academic integrity is essential to the mission of Midwestern State University. Academic dishonesty will have an adverse impact on a student's grade, as decided by the instructor. The student can appeal the grade assigned by the instructor (please refer to the 2023-2024 student handbook for further details). Students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old papers when preparing for this paper, nor may they consult with students who have already written the paper. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students, and the course instructor and can ruin the university's reputation and the value of the degrees it offers. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment which practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Student affairs for disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion from Midwestern State University.

All students are expected to submit their own original work. The presentation of another's words or ideas as your own, without giving credit to the source is regarded as plagiarism. Academic fraud, plagiarism, dishonesty, and cheating are serious acts of academic misconduct. If you are unclear about the proper use and citation of sources, or the details and guidelines for any assignment, you should discuss your concerns prior to the due date with the instructor.

Academic fraud and cheating includes these and other misrepresentations:

- presentation of the ideas of others without credit to the source;
- use of direct quotations without quotation marks and without credit to source;
- paraphrasing without credit to the source;
- participation in group project which presents plagiarized material;

- failure to provide citations for material obtained through electronic research;
- downloading and submitting work from electronic data bases without citation;
- submitting material created/written by someone else as one's own;
- copying during exam;
- copying from someone else's exam, homework, or laboratory work;
- allowing someone else to copy or submit one's work as his/her own;
- accepting credit for a group project without doing one's share;
- submitting the same paper in more than one course;
- using notes or other materials during test without authorization;
- not following the guidelines specified by instructor for "take home" exams; and the fabrication of research data.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Final Exam:

There will be a final exam (worth 50 points). The final exam will be given on the date scheduled by the university. For the final exam, students will be required to use Scantron. The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and true or false statements. As class presentations will be based on the text as well as materials from other sources, **ONLY** what is presented in class will be included in the final exam.

Human Behavior and Macro Systems (Community Service Practicum):

One of the most important parts of every student's learning experience will be participation in community service practicum during HBSE courses (HBSE I and II). Students could choose agencies of their preference but **MUST** make sure they are **mentored by Social Workers (social workers should have a social work degree and does not need to be licensed)**.

Students must complete **30 hours** of practicum in the agency. It is imperative that students complete the required 30 hours and **NOT LESS THAN 30 hours**. No student who does not complete the required 30 hours will get any partial credit but will only get a **zero**. Therefore, it is entirely students' responsibility to start the community service practicum as early as possible and complete the required hours before the due date.

As discussed in the text, individual human behavior is affected by macro systems namely, communities, and organizations. Therefore, the purpose of this practicum is to observe how individual human behavior is affected by the macro systems, and also to gain understanding of the roles of social worker(s), agency's purpose(s), structure, services provided, and populations served.

After completing the required hours, students will obtain a typewritten letter on the official letterhead from their social work mentor. The letter should be addressed to the instructor stating that the student has completed the required 30 hours, and duly signed by the social work mentor. On or before the due date, the letter thus obtained should be scanned and submitted in D2L DropBox, along with their individual typewritten report (not less than a page, double-spaced, 12-point font size). Please note that **NO LATE SUBMISSION** of the scanned copy of the letter and the report will be accepted.

Depending on availability of time, students will also do a brief oral presentation in class (3-5 minutes) about their community service practicum experience. Class presentation should focus on the following: (1) Name of the agency; (2) Primary purpose of the agency; (3) Responsibilities carried out during community service practicum; and (4) Roles of social worker(s) observed during the practicum.

As students may complete the required hours at different times, they may do the oral presentation in class, as and when they complete the hours. Oral presentation may be a part of the grade for community service practicum. If time permits, there may be a brief Q & A, followed by the presentation.

Assignment # 1: Case Study: Ray and Jean¹

Ray, age 80, and his wife Jean, age 75, have been married for over 50 years. He suffered a stroke several years ago. Jean takes care of Ray at home, with the help of two of her four children and occasional assistance from a home health agency. He is difficult to care for at home. He is heavy. His left arm and leg are partially paralyzed, making mobility difficult. He becomes verbally abusive when immobility, incontinence, noisy grandchildren, and other irritations frustrate him. He has adamantly refused to consider going to a nursing home or other care center. Jean provides care for him although it takes a toll on her physical and psychological well-being. She would feel

extremely guilty about having to send Ray to a nursing home or any other facility. Her own mother cared for her father when he became elderly and infirmed.

Ray had always been the family breadwinner; working at the same factory for 30 years and retiring at age 65. Jean had stayed home and had raised four children. Ray had abused alcohol and was alternately verbally abusive or morose when he had too much to drink. He had stopped drinking when he was 55 and attended Alcoholics Anonymous meetings regularly for several years.

Ray and Jean's youngest child, Marge, has struggled with addiction to cocaine and other drugs. Currently, she is serving a jail term for possession of cocaine. Because her addiction has interfered with her parenting abilities, Jean and Ray have been the primary caregivers for Marge's son, Jason, now a teenager, since he was a small child. Jason has been skipping school and he is uncommunicative. Recently, the police arrested him and two friends after they tried to steal some CDs from a local music store.

Miranda, another daughter, is concerned that Jean can no longer meet the needs of her husband and grandson. Jean is not attending to her own physical and mental health. Miranda would like to spend more time helping her parents, but her work as an office manager for a small construction company keeps her busy, especially recently. Miranda's employers are not always willing to give her the time off needed to pay attention to her parents. When she does try to help her parents with household chores or transportation to medical appointments, Miranda finds herself becoming angry and impatient with her father, who was often verbally abusive to her and her siblings when she was growing up.

Miranda has contacted you, a social worker in a family service agency, to talk about ways to "get help" for her parents. You need to assess Ray and Jean's situation so that you will develop understanding that will lead to a plan that can help the family through this life stage transition.

¹ Adapted from Gero-Ed Teaching Resources – case study originally entitled, "Intergenerational Issues in Caregiving" and developed by Hood College, Social Work Program.

Guidelines:

Using this case study, you will be applying the concepts of any **TWO** theories of human behavior covered in class. Your paper should include the following elements, but not simply be responses to the questions asked. Instead, your paper should consist of an integrated assessment and a hypothetical treatment plan for this family and sections should be well-integrated with one another. In addition to the following guidelines, you should also feel free to integrate any other additional course material into your assignment as well.

1. As Jean's abilities are a concern, your assessment and treatment plan will focus on her as the primary client but should also include her family system. Please summarize the significant concerns regarding Jean's functioning.
2. Describe Jean as her own bio-psycho-social-spiritual system and how her challenges in one aspect of her life may be impacting other aspects using the chosen theoretical perspectives. Give concrete examples from the case study to support your assertions.
3. Expand the scope of your assessment to include an analysis of Jean's current functioning and challenges in relation to her family system. Explain how the behaviors of family members are impacting on Jean and vice versa. Broaden your assessment even further and specify how outside institutions, societal forces, etc. impact on this family. Use and application of several key concepts related to the chosen theories are required.
4. Discuss the role of culture in care giving for the elderly.
5. Design a brief hypothetical treatment plan based on the chosen theories (be sure to include both micro- and macro-level interventions).
6. The assignment **should not exceed 6-7 pages** including the cover page and the reference page(s). Review **not less than 4 peer-reviewed journal articles published** within the **last 5 years**. Further details (if needed) will be discussed in class. In addition to the peer-reviewed journal articles, the textbook should also be referred to. Thus, the **total number of references for the entire assignment must not be less than 5**.

Note: The assignment must only be submitted in D2L Drop Box and not emailed to the instructor.

Assignment # 2: Biological Issues affecting Adolescents or Young Adults or Middle Adults or Later Adults, and Possible Intervention(s)

Students will be assigned to groups consisting of 2 or 3 members in each group (depending on the class size). Each group will submit a group paper on the topics assigned by the instructor (the topics will be chosen from the textbook).

Consistent with HBSE, which is a foundation course, please make sure to keep the “intervention” section to the minimum possible. Avoid incorporating too many direct quotes but paraphrase ideas. If you choose to use direct quotes, there should be only one direct quote and it should not exceed 50 words and cited according to the APA format.

The assignment **should not exceed 7-8 pages** including the cover page and the reference page(s). Review **not less than 4 peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last 5 years**. Further details (if needed) will be discussed in class. In addition to the scholarly sources, the **textbook** should also be referred to. Thus, the **total number of references for the entire assignment should not be less than 5**.

APA format (7th ed.) is required throughout the assignment. *Please note that the assignments that do not meet the criterion in terms of the required number peer-reviewed journal articles and the textbook will be assigned a “C” grade.

In addition to the written assignment/paper, the group will also do a PowerPoint presentation in class, for 15-20 minutes. As decided by the group, someone from each group should **email** their **PowerPoint** to the instructor at least **24 hours before** their presentation. **Late submission will have an adverse impact on the grade.** Each group member should spend roughly an equal amount of time for the presentation. The PowerPoint should be readable. The presentation should consist of more explanations and less readings and should consist of relevant scholarly material.

The grade given for the group will be the grade for each group member. If any group member is not contributing to the work as decided by the group, then that group member will be required to submit an individual paper and do an individual class presentation. But the instructor should be

informed of such non-participation by the group member at least one week before the assignment is due.

Note: The assignment must only be submitted in D2L Drop Box and not emailed to the instructor. The same group assignment must be submitted by each group member.

Requirements:

All the assignments must meet the following requirements:

The assignments will be evaluated on the basis of content, writing style (including organization, clarity, grammar, and punctuation) and timeliness of submission. **While citations should be sufficient enough, they must not outdo students' own ideas and critical thinking.**

1. Include a title page, and a references page.
2. Abstract is NOT required.
3. Double-space throughout, leaving a one-inch margin on all sides.
4. As permitted by APA, use an easily readable font such as, Times New Roman (12-point), or Calibri (11-point), or Arial (11-point), or Lucida Sans Unicode (10-point), or Georgia (11-point). Whichever font you choose, you should use the same font and font size throughout the assignment.
5. Provide relevant section headings.
6. The required writing style is that of the *American Psychological Association (APA) Publications Manual (7th ed.)*.
7. ***Please note that assignments that do not meet the criterion in terms of the required number of sources will be given a "C" grade.**
8. Review carefully the RUBRIC given below for both the assignments.

Rubric for the Assignments 1 and 2

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Clarity	0-3 Ideas confusing, disconnected, and purpose is unclear.	3-6 Ideas somewhat clear, somewhat connected, and purpose is somewhat clear.	6-10 Ideas fairly clear, fairly connected, and purpose is fairly clear.	10-15 Ideas clear, well connected, and purpose is clear.
Content	0-5 Less adequate or inadequate; citations are not connected or connected poorly	5-10 Somewhat adequate; citations are connected somewhat well	10-20 Adequate; citations are connected well	20-30 Comprehensive; citations are connected very well
Relevance	0-5 Sources are not relevant. Poor connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	5-10 Relevance of the sources is not obvious. Fair connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	10-15 Relevance of the sources is somewhat obvious; good connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	15-20 Peer-reviewed journal articles are within the last 5 years; relevance of the sources is obvious; excellent connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).
Logic	0-5 The transition between ideas is extremely weak.	5-10 There are several weak transitions between ideas.	10-15 There are very few weak transitions between ideas.	15-20 There are clear and effective transitions between ideas.
Writing Mechanics	0-3 4 or more violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	3-6 No more than 3 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	6-10 No more than 2 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	10-15 Appropriate use of APA formatting and appropriate use of grammar and punctuation.

Take advantage of MSU Writing Center:

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the MSU Writing Center, located off the 2nd floor atrium of Prothro-Yeager! Tutoring is available Monday through Thursday from 9am to 4pm; you can also find a tutor at the satellite location in Moffett Library Honors Lounge, Sunday and Thursday from 6pm to 9pm. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide support and feedback at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

Weather Closure Practice:

During inclement weather, notification occurs through official campus channels and in communication with the local news networks. MSU channels include MSU Alert, MSU Safety app, Postmaster, and website headers. MSU Police and the Office of Marketing and Public Information. Classes will either be held or not held, depending on the university’s delay/closure times.

Important Dates

Final Deadline for May graduates to file for graduation: February 12, 2024.

Last Day to drop with a grade of “W:” March 25, 2024

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

EVALUATION OF COURSE OUTCOMES:

The student's achievement will be evaluated on the basis of written assignments, class exams, participation in debates, class attendance and class participation.

The final grade will be calculated based upon the points that a student has accumulated throughout the term. A student may earn points as shown in the following table:

Grade Item	Points
Class Attendance	20
Class participation	20
Debate	30
Community Service Practicum	100
Case study analysis	100
Biological issues	100
Final Exam	50
Total	420

Late Assignments

Late assignments shall have a negative effect on grade. Only electronic copy of the assignment will be accepted. **Late assignments are assessed a penalty of 5 points per day.** The assignments will **NOT** be accepted **two days after** the due date. Do your assignments early to avoid computer, printer, or family emergencies. If anyone has difficulty with writing, please seek help from the University Writing Center.

Course Changes:

Although much thought, study, and research has gone into designing the course and learning opportunities, often the most significant learning comes in unexpected moments. The instructor cannot predict these times but only respond to them. **Therefore, the instructor reserves the right to alter the course outline, assignments, or examination dates in order to incorporate these unexpected learning moments.**

GRADING SCALE

The total grade for the course is an accumulation of the points earned on each assignment. **The following letter grades are used:**

- A=90% of available points
- B=80-89% of available points
- C=70-79 % of available points
- D=60-69% of available points
- F=0-59% of available points

Social Work Program Grade Policy

A course grade of **below a C** or an average of below 70% will be considered a **failing grade**.

Students **must repeat** social work **courses** in which they receive a grade of **D or F**.

Note: This grade policy is in effect since the Fall of 2020.

COURSE SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE)

Week	Chapters	Assignments
Week 1 (January 16, Tuesday & January 18, Thursday, 2024)	Course Introduction Ch 6: Biological Development in Adolescence & Ch 8: Social Development in Adolescence	N/A
Week 2 (January 23, Tuesday & January 25, Thursday)	Ch 6: Biological Development in Adolescence & Ch 8: Social Development in Adolescence Cont'd... Ch 11: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood	N/A
Week 3 (January 30, Tuesday & February 1, Thursday)	Ch 11: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont'd...	N/A

Week	Chapters	Assignments
Week 4 (February 6, Tuesday & February 8, Thursday)	Ch 16: Sociological Aspects of Later Adulthood: Guest Lecture on February 6, Tuesday: “Available services for those in Later Adulthood” Ch 11: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont’d...	Assignment # 1 due by 11.59 p.m. on February 9, Friday (to be submitted in D2L DropBox)
Week 5 (February 13, Tuesday & February 15, Thursday)	Ch 12: Sociological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood	N/A
Week 6 (February 20, Tuesday & February 22, Thursday)	Debate Ch 12: Sociological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont’d...	First Debate- Same Sex Marriage (February 20, Tuesday)
Week 7 (February 27, Tuesday & February 29, Thursday)	Ch 15: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood	N/A
Week 8 (March 5, Tuesday & March 7, Thursday)	Ch 15: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood Cont’d...	N/A
Spring Break- No classes (March 10-16)	N/A	N/A
Week 9 (March 19, Tuesday & March 21, Thursday)	Ch 15: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood Cont’d... Guest Lecture on March 21, Thursday: “Developing an understanding of other cultures and their treatment of elderly population”	N/A
Week 10 (March 26, Tuesday)	Ch 9: Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexism	N/A
Holiday Break-No Class (March 28, Thursday)	N/A	N/A
Week 11 (April 2, Tuesday & April 4, Thursday)	Ch 9: Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexism Cont’d...	N/A

Week	Chapters	Assignments
Week 12 (April 9, Tuesday & April 11, Thursday)	Debate Ch 9: Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexism Cont'd...	Second Debate-Euthanasia (April 9, Tuesday)
Week 13 (April 16, Tuesday & April 18, Thursday)	Ch 10: Biological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Ch 13: Sexual Orientation	N/A
Week 14 (April 23, Tuesday & April 25, Thursday)	Ch 14: Biological Aspects of Later Adulthood: Guest Lecture on April 23, Tuesday: Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia	Assignment # 2 due by 11.59 p.m. on April 26, Friday (to be submitted in D2L DropBox) PowerPoint due 24 hours prior to presentation
Week 15 (April 30, Tuesday & May 2, Thursday)	Class Presentations	Agency Report Form & Individual Report (Community Service Practicum)- due by 11.59 pm on May 2, Thursday (Firm Deadline) (to be submitted in D2L DropBox)
Week 16 (May 7, Tuesday)	Final Exam (8.00-10.00 am)	N/A

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