



Course Syllabus: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II  
College of Health Sciences and Human Services  
Social Work Department  
SOWK 3554  
Spring 2022

Contact Information

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**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 Dimension:***

1. Identify the basic concepts and themes of the life span and life course perspectives.
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.

**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.

**Skills Dimension:**

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

**Cognitive and Affective Dimension:**

5. Analyze the various paradigms of knowledge about human behavior and the social environment in the assessment process.
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.

**Relationships among Core Competencies, Course Objectives, and Assignments:**

<b>Core Competencies</b>	<b>Course Objectives</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	3 & 4	Assignments # 1 & 2, Community Service Practicum, and Debates
Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice	3 & 4	Assignments # 1 & 2, Community Service Practicum, and Debates
Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities	All the course objectives	All the assignments, Debates, Community Service Practicum, reading quizzes, final exam, and class exercises.

**Required Text:**

Zastrow et al. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11<sup>th</sup>

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:** Except for weekends, I will check my emails every day. Please send your emails to the following email address: [packiaraj.arumugham@msutexas.edu](mailto:packiaraj.arumugham@msutexas.edu). Please **expect a reply within 24 hours**. In case you need any clarification, please don't hesitate to contact me either via email or via office phone. If I am not in the office, please leave a voice message.

### **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 MSU absence policy. For an absence to be excused the **student must inform the instructor 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 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 from 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 grade.**

#### 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 will have an adverse impact on attendance and participation 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:**

Academic integrity is essential to the mission of Midwestern State University. As such, 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 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:**

***Reading quizzes and Final Exam:*** There will be three reading quizzes (each worth 10 points) and a final exam (worth 30 points). The final exam will be given on the date scheduled by the university. For the quizzes and the final exam, students will be required to use Scantron.

The quizzes and 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 quizzes and final exam.

**Note:** Quizzes will be administered after a chapter has been completed. Also, quizzes will be given only on Thursdays. Hence, students are expected not to miss the scheduled quizzes lest they lose the chance to take the quiz.

## ***Human Behavior and Macro Systems (Community Service Practicum):***

One of the most important parts of every student's learning experience will be

participation in one community service practicum during HBSE II course. Students could choose agencies of their preference but should make sure they are mentored by Social Workers. Students should complete twenty-five hours of practicum in the agency.

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 agency's purposes, structure, services provided, and populations served.

Students will turn in the HBSE II Agency Report form for the agency duly signed by the mentor. In order to receive credit for the practicum, students will complete the required hours before the due date for turning in the agency report form and the student's individual report. Please note that NO LATE SUBMISSION of the form and the report will be accepted.

Students will submit a brief report (not less than 250 words) and do a brief oral presentation in class (3-5 minutes) about their volunteering experience. 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 will be part of the grade for community service practicum. Oral presentation should primarily focus on what students learned about the role of a social worker in the given setting (although they may refer to other areas as might seem fit). If time permits, there may be a brief Q & A, followed by the presentation.

**Note:** The signed and scanned copy of the agency report form, and the individual report will be submitted in D2L Drop Box.

### ***Assignment # 1: Case Study: Ray and Jean<sup>1</sup>***

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.

<sup>1</sup> 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 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 theory (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 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**.

**Note:** The assignment will be submitted in D2L Drop Box.

***Assignment # 2: Biological/Psychological/Social Problem affecting Young and middle adults/older adults and Possible Intervention(s)***

Students will be assigned to groups consisting of 3 or 4 members in each group (depending on the class size). The group will submit a group paper on any chosen biological/psychological/social problem affecting young and middle adults/older adults and possible intervention(s) to help them deal with the problem (examples: menopause, osteoporosis, divorce, poverty, elder abuse etc.). Please refer to the textbook regarding various biological/psychological/social problems affecting young and middle adults/older adults. Someone from each group will post their topic in D2L Discussion Thread to avoid overlap of topics.

The written assignment/paper should have relevant section headings. Consistent with HBSE, which is a foundation course, please make sure to keep "intervention" to the minimum possible but focus more on the biological/psychological/social problem affecting young and middle adults/older adults. There should be no more than one longer (40 words and more) direct quote. The direct quote should not exceed 50 words.

The assignment **should not exceed 8-10 pages** including the cover page and the reference page(s). Review not less than 5 peer-reviewed journal articles (**this requirement is for the entire group and not for each group member**) 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 (not for each group member) should not be less than 6**.



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

In addition to the written assignment/paper, the group will also do a PowerPoint presentation in class, for 15-20 minutes. **The group will 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. The grade given for the group will be the grade for each group member. If any group member is not doing 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.

**Note:** The assignment will be submitted in D2L Drop Box. The same group assignment will 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 (7<sup>th</sup> 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 all the assignments.

### Rubric for the Assignments 1 and 2

	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Clarity	<b>0-3</b> Ideas confusing,	<b>3-6</b> Ideas somewhat	<b>6-10</b> Ideas fairly clear, fairly	<b>10-15</b> Ideas clear, well connected, and

	disconnected, and purpose is unclear.	clear, somewhat connected, and purpose is somewhat clear.	connected, and purpose is fairly clear.	purpose is clear.
Content	<b>0-5</b> Less adequate or inadequate; citations are not connected or connected poorly	<b>5-10</b> Somewhat adequate; citations are connected somewhat well	<b>10-20</b> Adequate; citations are connected well	<b>20-30</b> Comprehensive; citations are connected very well
Relevance	<b>0-5</b> Sources are not relevant. Poor connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	<b>5-10</b> Relevance of the sources is not obvious. Fair connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	<b>10-15</b> Relevance of the sources is somewhat obvious; good connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	<b>15-20</b> 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	<b>0-5</b> The transition between ideas is extremely weak.	<b>5-10</b> There are several weak transitions between ideas.	<b>10-15</b> There are very few weak transitions between ideas.	<b>15-20</b> There are clear and effective transitions between ideas.
Writing Mechanics	<b>0-3</b> 4 or more violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	<b>3-6</b> No more than 3 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	<b>6-10</b> No more than 2 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	<b>10-15</b> 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.

If you would like to schedule a time for a tutor to give a brief presentation on the Writing Center, please complete the [Classroom Visit Request](#) form. We are happy to schedule visits during the first week of classes (8/29-9/2).

Campus Carry Statement:

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at <http://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact MSU Chief of Police Patrick Coggins at [patrick.coggins@mwsu.edu](mailto:patrick.coggins@mwsu.edu).

Concealed Carry at Clinical/Affiliate Sites:

Students must follow any rules or policies established at the clinical/affiliate site they attend. If the clinical/affiliate site does not prohibit the concealed carry of firearms, the university and the department of social work do not prohibit concealed carry at the clinical/affiliate site. However, students are reminded that at their clinical/affiliate sites the students are often required to wear "scrubs" which are thin garments which may make concealed carry of a firearm difficult if not impossible. Students may have to engage in activities such as moving patients or performing examinations which may make the concealment of a firearm difficult. Students are also reminded that intentional display of a firearm may result in criminal and/or civil penalties and unintentional display of a firearm is a violation of university policies and may result in disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion from the program and university. Students should factor the above in their decision as to whether or not to conceal carry at clinical/affiliate sites if those sites do not prohibit concealed carry.

## **EVALUATION OF COURSE OUTCOMES:**

The student's achievement will be evaluated on the basis of written assignments, class exams, 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 follows:

**Class Attendance**

**20 Points**

<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>20 Points</b>
<b>Reading quizzes (3)</b>	<b>30 Points</b>
<b>Community Service Practicum</b>	<b>100 Points</b>
<b>Assignment # 1</b>	<b>100 Points</b>
<b>Assignment # 2</b>	<b>100 Points</b>
<b>Debate</b>	<b>30 Points</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>30 Points</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>430 Points</b>

### **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**. 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 11, Tuesday & January 13, Thursday, 2022)	Course Introduction  Ch 11: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood	
Week 2 (January 18, Tuesday & January 20, Thursday)	Ch 11: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont'd...	
Week 3 (January 25, Tuesday & January 27, Thursday)	Ch 11: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont'd...	<b>Assignment # 1</b> due by 11.30 pm on <b>February 4, Friday (to be submitted in D2L DropBox)</b>
Week 4 (February 1, Tuesday & February 3, Thursday)	Ch 12: Sociological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood	
Week 5 (February 8, Tuesday & February 10, Thursday)	Ch 12: Sociological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont'd...	
Week 6 (February 15, Tuesday & February 17, Thursday)	Ch 15: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood	
Week 7 (February 22, Tuesday & February 24, Thursday)	Ch 15: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood Cont'd...  Ch 16: Sociological Aspects of Later Adulthood (*Guest Lecture on Services for Older People)	
Week 8 (March 1, Tuesday & March 3, Thursday)	Ch 15: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood Cont'd...	
Week 9 (March 8, Tuesday & March 10, Thursday)	Ch 9: Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexism	
<b>SPRING BREAK- NO CLASSES (March 14-19)</b>		
Week 10 (March 22, Tuesday & March 24, Thursday)	Ch 14: Biological Aspects of Later Adulthood (*Guest Lecture on Alzheimer's	

	disease)  Ch 9: Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexism Cont'd...	
Week 11 (March 29, Tuesday & March 31, Thursday)	Ch 10: Biological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood	
Week 12 (April 5, Tuesday & April 7, Thursday)	Ch 10: Biological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood Cont'd...  Ch 13: Sexual Orientation	
Week 13 (April 12, Tuesday)	Ch 13: Sexual Orientation Cont'd...	
<b>Holiday Break-No Classes- (April 14-17)</b>		
Week 14 (April 19, Tuesday & April 21, Thursday)	Ch 14: Biological Aspects of Later Adulthood (*Guest Lecture on the Roles of social workers in skilled nursing home facilities)  <b>Class Presentations</b>	<b>Assignment # 2</b> due by 8.00 pm on <b>April 20</b> , Wednesday ( <b>to be submitted in D2L DropBox</b> )  <b>PowerPoint due 24 hours prior to presentation</b>
Week 15 (April 26, Tuesday & April 28, Thursday)	<b>Class Presentations</b>	<b>Agency Report Form</b> (Community Service Practicum)- due by 11.30 pm on <b>April 28</b> , Thursday ( <b>Firm Deadline</b> ) ( <b>to be submitted in D2L DropBox</b> )
Week 16 (May 3, Tuesday)	<b>Final Exam (8.00-10.00 am)</b>	

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