



Course Syllabus: **Communication, Interviewing, and Intervention Skills**

College of Health Sciences and Human Services

SOWK 3713 TR 1:00-2:20 Centennial Hall 334

Fall 2021 August 23-December 11, 2021

Contact Information

Instructor: Catherine Earley

Office: Centennial Hall #450F

Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 8:30-11:00, Tuesday & Thursday 10-10:30
or by appointment (Zoom meetings by appointment)

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the process of interviewing and intervention. Students are introduced to the principles, types, and phases of interviewing various clients. The course emphasizes essential communication and intervention skills and techniques. It also develops students' ability to use interviewing, intervention, and documentation skills to enhance relationships with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and community systems.

Students will learn the oral and written skills necessary for social work practice. These skills include interviewing, assessment, intervention, documentation and evaluation. Students will learn interviewing skills to engage clients. Student will learn to assess clients and to develop mutually agreed upon intervention goals and objectives. Students will learn the skill of documenting the social work process. Throughout the class students will have the opportunity to evaluate progress in acquiring the oral and written skills necessary for social work practice.

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

Course Delivery

This course has been planned as a fully face-to-face course for Fall 2020. To keep everyone safe and to reduce close contact that could result in quarantine, **face coverings are strongly recommended**. The class will meet in its regularly scheduled rooms all scheduled days. Students with health concerns or any symptoms of illness should not attend in person but rather communicate with the professor in advance so that they may attend live classes via zoom. Students attending by Zoom without medical need will be given a daily participation grade of zero.

If Midwestern State University campus operations are required to change because of health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible course delivery or course format will change. Should that be necessary, students will be advised of the changes.

Course objectives

The knowledge, values and skills expected of a student who completes SOWK 3713 are described below. A student who has successfully completed the course will be able to do the following:

Knowledge

1. Discuss the skills used to engage and interview others in the practice of social work.
2. Discuss the generic content usually included in social histories and assessments.
3. Discuss the specialized content that would be appropriate for histories and assessments depending on the client population.

Skills

1. Demonstrate and apply interviewing skills to engage clients and gather information.
2. Assess clients orally and in writing after observing and conducting interviews.
3. Select appropriate interventions in mutual agreement with clients.
4. Clearly write measurable interventions and document progress.
5. Evaluate the application of interviewing skills and to suggest alternative skills appropriate to the situation.
6. Evaluate the quality of written assessments.
7. Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation.
8. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication for professional practice.
9. Orally facilitate and communicate goal setting.
10. Orally facilitate and communicate interventions.

Values

1. Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continued professional development.
2. Support other students in developing their professional skills and in their self-correction process.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Evans, D. R., Ivey, A. E., Hearn, M., & Uhlemann, M. R. (2017). *Essential interviewing: a programmed approach to effective communication* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

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.

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 or listen to music while in class. Please note that using electronic devices during class time will have an adverse impact on participation grade.

Writing Assistance

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the [Tutoring & Academic Support Programs](#), located off the first floor of the Moffett Library. The MSU TASP Learning Center offers drop-in tutoring support for most general subject areas including but not limited to Writing, Math, Science, Business, and Foreign Languages. Students check in to work one-on-one with a tutor typically for an hour regarding specific concepts.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Grading

Table 1: The student's achievement will be evaluated on the basis of written assignments, D2L quizzes, class exams, and class participation.

| Assignments | Weight |
|---|--------|
| Quizzes (12 quizzes averaged for total) | 20% |
| Class Participation | 10% |
| Documentation of a group meeting | 10% |
| Social history of a student | 10% |
| Social history of a community member | 20% |
| Self-reflection paper | 10% |
| Final Exam | 20% |

Table 2: Weighted average will be used to calculate final grade.

| Grade | Percentages |
|-------|--------------|
| A | 90-100 |
| B | 80 to 89 |
| C | 70 to 79 |
| D | 60 to 69 |
| F | Less than 60 |

Social Work Program Grade Policy

A course grade of below a C or an average of below 70% will be considered a failing grade. ***Social work students must repeat social work courses in which they receive a grade of D or F.***

Homework

Questions may be assigned for selected chapters to be answered and handed in at the next class.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be completed outside of class through D2L. Students will complete weekly quizzes by 11:30 pm on Fridays based on the required book chapters and lectures as indicated in the class schedule. Assigned reading should be completed before beginning each quiz. The quizzes are open book and notes, but there will be limited time to complete them. Twelve quizzes will be required. Thirteen quizzes will be available and students completing all 13 will have their lowest quiz grade dropped. No requests for late access will be considered unless the student has submitted documentation through the Dean of Student's office proving incapacitation for the entire week that the quiz was available. Anything presented via assigned readings or in class may be included in quizzes.

Final Exam

There will be a final exam. The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, true or false statements, short answer, and essay questions. Since class instruction will be based on the text as well as materials from other sources, what is presented in class may be included in the final exam.

Projects Required

Experiential Class Participation: Students will be expected to participate in role-play activities demonstrating specific interviewing skills presented in each chapter of the text. Active participation is critical in this class as it is not enough to read the information but the skills must be practiced in order to be learned.

APA style formatting is required for all written work in this course. Be sure to use appropriate APA style citations for any information you take from the textbook, handouts, lectures, reference materials, websites, or other outside sources while completing written assignments.

Written assignments are due by 11:30 on their due date. **Assignments should be submitted through the appropriate drop box folder in D2L.**

Documentation of a group meeting: Due 10/14

Attend and document what occurs at any organized meeting that you are allowed to attend. It can be a task group, board meeting, committee, counseling group, community meeting etc. If you are in a field practicum a meeting which occurs in your placement is acceptable. In 2 pages or less state the type of meeting you attended and summarize the group process and the content of the meeting. That is, how did the group operate, did the way the group operated change over time during the meeting? Summarize the group content (what was talked about). What were the group norms? What was the purpose of the meeting and did the group accomplish it? What was the affective mood of the meeting?

You will have the opportunity to earn 10 bonus points on this paper by utilizing the MSU Writing Center while preparing this assignment to be turned in. Please submit the form attached to the syllabus with your Reflection Paper as proof of your utilization of the MSU Writing Center. While reading your Reflection Paper it should be evident to me that you utilized the writing center before submitting your paper. In addition, your visit, as documented on the form, must match the Writing Center Student Utilization Report in order to receive 10 bonus points.

Assessment by Social History: Due 10/27

Social history interview (in class): All students will be randomly paired. Each will alternately play the role of social worker and client. In the client role the student will present himself as if he is a real client with a real problem, realistically acting out his role so the student in the social worker role can do a comprehensive social history interview. When playing the role of social worker, the student will need to take notes which he will use for completing the Social History Form provided by the professor. Roles could be placement of a parent in a nursing home, perpetrator of family violence, low functioning in various domains or other social problems.

Written Social History: outside of class students will complete the Social History, in a word document, based upon their notes, memory and observations. Each student will summarize their own experience and reactions to the assignment.

This assignment will be evaluated in the class immediately following the due date. To receive full credit, students must bring a paper copy of their assessment to class, be present for, and fully participate in classroom evaluation of the assessment.

Social History of a Community Member: Due 11/18

The social history you did in class was preparation for the next step. Find a community member who is voluntarily willing to allow you to interview them for the purpose of documenting their social history. You will offer them confidentiality and maintain their confidentiality by changing their name and any other identifying information in the Social History report. During your interview, take notes while completing the Social History Form. After your interview complete the Social History, in a word document, based upon your notes, memory and observations.

Self-reflection Paper: Due 11/30

The purpose of this assignment is to evaluate yourself with respect to the effect of this course on yourself by answering the following questions and using them as headings for the paper. Compare your interviewing skills on the first day of class to your current skill level. Compare your documentation skills before this class to your current skills. Compare your comfort level in demonstrating social work skills in class to your comfort level at the end of the semester. What professional skills do you think the program has not offered you enough opportunity to develop? The paper should be double spaced and be 2 pages in length.

Late Work

Late work will be penalized ½ letter grade per 24 hour time period. Failure to submit any assignment within 7 calendar days of the due date will result in a failing grade for the assignment. You should get with the instructor as soon as possible if an emergency occurs interfering with your ability to meet a due date.

Make Up Work/Tests

All assignments must be submitted on time. Late assignments will have a negative effect on your grade. Failure to submit any assignment within 7 calendar days of the due date will result in a failing grade for the assignment.

Students who, for whatever reason, need additional time to complete assignments must meet with the instructor at least one class session prior to the assignment due date to make arrangements to discuss the accommodations that need to be made. It is the student's responsibility to request this meeting.

Make up exams will only be considered in cases of university excused absences or verifiable emergencies. Students will not be allowed to take make up exams after the original exam has been given. If you cannot take the exam on the required day and time, you must make arrangements in advance to take it PRIOR to the scheduled administration of the exam.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 23-26

Deadline to file for graduation: September 27 for December Graduation, October 4 for May Graduation

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" 4:00pm October 25

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

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Social Work Program Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all meetings of this class. If unable to attend class, please inform the instructor directly via email or office phone before the class start 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" a 0 will be assigned for the class period participation grade. Coming late to class, inattentive or disruptive behavior during class (including inappropriate cellphone use), and leaving early from class will have an adverse impact on attendance and participation grade.**

Students are allowed three excused absences as defined by 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. Please note that **for each absence beyond the 4th, 5 points will be taken off from the student's final course (average) grade.** A **student who has missed five classes** (including the three excused absences) will **receive a full lower letter grade. After six absences the student will be dropped from the class.**

Authorized absences due to required participation in university-sponsored activities must be approved by the college dean or Athletic Director and the Provost. These absences will not count against the student when the student presents a signed letter to the instructor at least two class days prior to the date of the absence. Only prior notification can guarantee lack of penalty for these absences. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with the instructor to make up all work missed during an authorized absence. Academically-related activities (class field trips, attendance at conferences, etc.) which result in absences require the cooperation of individual faculty members. Even though such activities are educational in nature, they do not qualify as university-sponsored activities.

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Instructor Class Policies

All students registered for courses in the Social Work Department are expected to adhere to the responsibilities, and behavior as articulated in both the [Student Handbook](#) and the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) [Code of Ethics](#). An essential feature of these codes is a commitment to maintaining intellectual integrity and academic honesty. I generally have a **zero-tolerance policy for cheating or plagiarism**, and violations will result in substantial penalties including a failing grade on the assignment with no make-up opportunity and/or a referral to the Dean of Students.

Repeated **accidental or willful cheating or use of someone else's words, ideas, or evidence without attribution will be met with a failing grade in the course and a referral to the Dean of Students**, regardless of whether the first occurrence was in this course. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Students are expected to display professional decorum at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting classmates and the instructor. In this regard, it is expected that students will not hold side conversations, use cell phones, or engage in other types of unprofessional behaviors once class has begun.

Professional Expectations of Student Behavior

Midwestern State University Department of Social Work is mandated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to foster and evaluate professional behavioral development for all students in the social work program. The Department of Social Work also bears a responsibility to the community at large to produce fully trained professional social workers who consciously exhibit the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession of social work. The values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Given this context, all students in the social work program will be expected to exhibit the following ethical standards of behavior.

1. **Accountability:** Attend class, arrive on time, and return from break in a timely manner.
Participate in group activities and assignments at a comparable level to peers.
Complete work in a timely fashion and according to directions provided.
Come to class prepared, with readings and other homework completed.
2. **Respect:** Treat all your peers, your instructors and all those you come in contact with, with dignity and respect at all times.
Listen while others are speaking.
Give feedback to peers in a constructive manner.
Approach conflict with peers or instructors in a cooperative manner.
Use positive and nonjudgmental language.

3. **Confidentiality:** Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential.
Maintain any information shared in class, dyads or smaller groups within that unit.
Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the classroom. (Class time should not be used as therapy or treatment. If students feel the need to talk about issues they are struggling with, they may consult with their instructor to receive a referral for counseling.)
Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information in the classroom.
4. **Competence:** Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness, meeting all deadlines as given by your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.
Come to class with books, handouts, syllabus, and pens
Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements.
Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignment.
Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.
5. **Integrity:** Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.
Academic: Commit yourself to learning the rules of citing other's work properly.
Do your own work and take credit only for your own work.
Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed.
Accept and benefit from constructive feedback

Submission of Papers: Students will submit their written assignments electronically. Electronic copies will be subject to plagiarism analysis and will be kept in electronic file for future reference. A student may not submit the same paper, or essentially the same, paper, project, assignment, or finished project to an instructor, which has been submitted to another instructor, unless specifically authorized by both instructors to do so.
6. **Diversity:** Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and creeds that you are not familiar with. Embrace diversity.
Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, or stereotyping.
Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons.
Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.

7. **Communication:** Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as these skills are used heavily in interactions with clients and peers and also with creating client records.
Demonstrate assertive communication with peers and instructors.
Practice positive, constructive, respectful and professional communications skills with peers and instructor: (body language, empathy, listening)
8. **Social Justice:** Strive to deepen your commitment to social justice for all populations at risk.
Demonstrate an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impede the experience of social justice for individuals and groups.
Strive to learn about methods of empowering populations and enhancing social justice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

The Department of Social Work may terminate a student's participation in the program on the basis of professional non-suitability if the Department's faculty members determine that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, the MSU of Social Work Student Manual, or the MSU Academic Policies and Regulations. Examples of violations that may lead to termination include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Failure to meet or maintain academic grade point requirements as established by the University and the Social Work program.
2. Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism (turnitin.com will be used to check the originality of the text).
3. Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
4. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, or emotional stability requisite for professional practice.
5. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, or staff (at the department or in the field placement).
6. Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional relationships (for example, unable to demonstrate nonjudgmental attitude or unable to allow client self-determination).
7. Documented evidence of criminal activity occurring during the course of study.

For additional university-wide policies and regulations, see the MSU [Undergraduate Catalog](#). This web site contains information on grading, incomplete grades, cheating on exams, plagiarism, and expectations of student behavior.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

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. **The law does NOT allow open carry on campus.** For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

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 respond to them. Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Communication, Interviewing, and Intervention Skills Course Schedule

(The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus schedule as needed.)

| Week & Dates | Chapters | Assignments |
|---|--|---|
| Week 1 August 23 – August 28 | Course Introduction Discussion of course assignments Overview of APA and plagiarism | |
| Week 2 August 29 – September 4 | - Ch. 1: Programming a Foundation for Learning | - Quiz 1 |
| Week 3 September 5 – September 11 | - Ch. 2: Attending Behavior | - Quiz 2 |
| Week 4 September 12– September 18 | - Ch. 3: Questioning | - Quiz 3 |
| Week 5 September 19– September 25 | - Ch. 4: Reflecting Content | - Quiz 4 |
| Week 6 September 26– October 2 | - Ch. 5: Reflecting Feeling | - Quiz 5 |
| Week 7 October 3 – October 9 | - Ch. 6: Integrating your Listening and Exploration Skills | - Quiz 6 |
| Week 8 October 10 – October 16 | - Ch. 7: Confronting | - Quiz 7 - Documentation of a group meeting: Due 10/14 |

| Week & Dates | Chapters | Assignments |
|--|--|---|
| Week 9 October 17 – October 23 | - Ch. 8: Communicating Feeling and Immediacy | - Quiz 8 |
| Week 10 October 24 – October 30 | - Ch. 9: Self-Disclosing | - Quiz 9 - Assessment by Social History: Due 10/27 Evaluate in Class 10/28 |
| Week 11 October 31- November 6 | - Ch. 10: Interpreting November 4 Guest Speaker: Laura Hetrick, Title IX | - Quiz 10 |
| Week 12 November 7- November 13 | - Ch. 11: Information Giving | - Quiz 11 |
| Week 13 November 14- November 20 | - Ch. 12: Structuring for Exploration, Clarification, and Action | - Quiz 12 - Social History of a community member: Due 11/18 |
| Week 14 November 21- November 27 | - Ch. 13: Enlisting Cooperation Thanksgiving Break-no class Thursday | - Quiz 13 |
| Week 15 November 28- December 4 | - Ch. 14: Putting It All Together | - Self-reflection paper: Due 11/30 -Final Exam December 2 1:00- 2:20** |
| Thursday, December 9 | Finals Week ** If class sessions run long the Final Exam will be moved to December 9 th 1:00-3:00 | |

Writing Center Visit Documentation

Please submit this form with your Reflection Paper as proof of your utilization of the MSU [Tutoring & Academic Support Program](#). Your visit, documented on this form, must match the Student Tutoring Utilization Report in order to receive 10 bonus points.

1. Take at least one copy of the draft of your paper to your session
2. Take the assignment (In this syllabus)
3. Take some time to determine the most pressing issue(s) you wish to discuss with the tutor
4. Plan on a focused, 30-minute session
5. When your session is over, you may take advantage of the computer lab to work on the revisions suggested by the tutor.

Please understand that tutors cannot edit your paper; instead, the MSU lab provides a space for you to get some productive feedback from experienced readers, who will offer specific suggestions for strengthening a specific essay and improving the overall quality of your writing.

Date and Time of Consultation

Printed Name of Tutor

Signature of Tutor

Student Name (Printed)

Student Signature

STUDENT COURSE AGREEMENT

Communications

Please review the course syllabus. Once you have read and understand the syllabus and all faculty expectations, please sign and return this agreement. Please pay special attention to attendance and late/make-up work policies as well as the Instructor Class Policies and Professional Expectations of Student Behavior sections. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at catherine.earley@msutexas.edu.

This agreement of understanding should be completed only after thoroughly reading the course syllabus. Sign, date & return this document to Professor Earley prior to the second class session.

Semester

Printed Student Name

I have read and understand the syllabus and faculty expectations for this course. I agree to come to class prepared and to participate fully in this course.

Date

Signature