



Course Syllabus: **Family Systems and Substance Abuse**

College of Health Sciences and Human Services

SOWK 4363

Spring 2024

Contact Information

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Course Description

This course focuses on the family life cycle and family development. The origins of family intervention are deeply rooted in the profession of Social Work. The tradition of viewing the person and the presenting problem in a contextual framework is congruent with the theoretical adherence of social work to an ecological approach. Interpersonal and societal transactions are seen as equally vital areas of both assessment and intervention in social work practice. The family is the basic unit of social analysis in this approach. Different theories regarding the improvement of family functioning are covered such as structural, problem-solving, communication, solution-focused, and intergenerational systems theory. Specific attention to the effects of drugs and alcohol on the family is addressed in the textbook.

Course Objectives:

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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the different family therapies and their application with regard to working with families.(knowledge, skills, cognitive & affective processes)
- Distinguish the theoretical basis and techniques of different family therapy approaches used in treating chemical dependency.(knowledge, skills, cognitive & affective processes)
- Explain why some people misuse substances while others stop or control use without negative consequences.(knowledge, skills, cognitive & affective processes)
- Describe the stages of change and debate the importance of the social work motto "start where the client is" when responding to the unique needs of each addicted client.(knowledge, skills, cognitive & affective processes)
- Apply strengths perspective for assessment and intervention.(knowledge,

skills, cognitive & affective processes)

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Required: Fisher, G. L., & Harrison, T. C. (2018). *Substance abuse: information for school counselors, social workers, therapists, and counselors* (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Recommended: American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the [MSU Writing Center](#), located off the second-floor atrium of Prothro-Yeager. The MSU Writing Center is committed to serving the university's academic mission. It provides trained writing tutors and facilitates writing workshops. Students are invited to bring any kind of writing to the Writing Center. They do not provide an editing service; instead, they offer feedback and support to help writers develop into more effective communicators.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook 2023-2024](#)

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 [Student Handbook](#) and the Academic Dishonesty Policy & Procedures section, found in Part II.

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 an 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](#).

MSU Counseling Resources

The MSU Counseling Center recognizes that during this time of change, many may feel uncertainty and fear along with a host of other emotions. We are committed to helping our campus community through this difficult time.

The Counseling Center has counselors working remotely to help students. Therapy sessions are conducted through the Therapy Assist Online (TAO) video conferencing platform. Students at home or on campus can have a telephone or video conference session using this platform. Appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Call to schedule 940-397-4618. We are not scheduling in-person sessions in the center in order to keep everyone safe and healthy. [Click here to access additional counseling resources.](#)

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. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#).

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 the 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."](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

Midwestern State University seeks to provide a safe, healthy, pleasant environment for its faculty, staff, and students. To this end, the use of tobacco products, including smoke and smokeless tobacco, and the advertising, sale, free distribution, and discarding of tobacco products shall be prohibited in all indoor and outdoor facilities and in all university vehicles. The policy extends to faculty, staff, students, vendors, guests, and visitors.

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 prohibit 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.

Professional Expectations of Student Behavior

The 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 social work courses. 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 taking classes in the social work program will be expected to exhibit the following ethical standards of behavior.

1. **Accountability:** Complete reading assignments, participate in class discussions, and submit assignments on time.
 - a. *Participate in group activities and assignments at a comparable level to peers.*
 - b. *Complete work in a timely fashion and according to directions provided.*
2. **Respect:** Treat all your peers, your instructors and all those you come in contact with, with dignity and respect at all times.
 - a. *Give feedback to peers in a constructive manner.*
 - b. *Approach conflict with peers or instructors in a cooperative manner.*
 - c. *Use positive and nonjudgmental language.*
3. **Confidentiality:** Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential.
 - a. *Maintain any information shared in class, dyads, or smaller groups within that unit.*
 - b. *Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the class. (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.)*
 - c. *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.
 - a. *Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements.*
 - b. *Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignments.*
 - c. *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.
 - a. *Academic: Commit yourself to learning the rules of citing others work properly.*
 - b. *Do your own work and take credit only for your own work.*

- c. *Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed.*
- d. *Accept and benefit from constructive feedback*

Submission of Papers: Students will submit their written assignments on paper and electronically. Electronic copies will be subject to plagiarism analysis and will be kept in an 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.
 - a. *Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, or stereotyping.*
 - b. *Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons.*
 - c. *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.
 - a. *Demonstrate assertive communication with peers and instructors.*
 - b. *Practice positive, constructive, respectful, and professional communication 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.
 - a. *Demonstrate an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impedes the experience of social justice for individuals and groups.*
 - b. *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 a nonjudgmental attitude or unable to allow client self-determination).
7. Documented evidence of criminal activity occurring during the course of study.

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 six classes** (including the three excused absences) will **receive a full lower letter grade (10 points).** **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.) that 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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Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. **Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student help desk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive 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 primary 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.

Grading

Table 1: Student achievement will be evaluated on the basis of written assignments, class exams, class participation, and class presentation.

Assignments	Due	Percentage
Discussion board assignments & discussion thread participation	Weekly - Fridays @ 11:59pm	35%
Meeting Observation Paper	March 22	10%
Quizzes	weekly @ 11:59pm	35%
Final Exam	posted 4/19-5/3	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. **Students must repeat social work courses in which they receive a grade of D or F if they are enrolled in the Social Work Program.**

Discussion Thread/Board Participation:

As indicated in the course schedule, the instructor will post question(s) on D2L for the class. There are **two** parts to each discussion. Everyone should post an initial response to the question(s) and should also respond to at least two peer's posts by Friday @ 11:59pm. The discussion board is a mandatory component. Students are expected to read all discussion board instructions and to participate actively throughout the semester. Students are expected to write formally (no shorthand or text messaging abbreviations) and use APA format and referencing where appropriate. There will be general questions relating to the chapter(s), case vignettes, current events, and/or watching a video and posting your response. Thoughtful responses, constructive critique of fellow students, and meaningful participation are expected. Please keep in mind the discussion board is a formal assignment and part of your grade.

NOTE: If a student asks you a question on your post, you should be courteous and answer the question.

I will review your posts and responses and give individual feedback when grading posts. I may respond in the discussion thread to a select few posts and/or responses or respond collectively to the class. This does not mean only the posts and/or responses of those to whom I respond are good and other posts and/or responses are not good.

Discussion Rubric

Points	Responses	Expectations
4	Reply to Instructor's Questions	Discussion posts should answer all the questions and show that you put thought into your answers.
2	Response to peer #1	Consistently responsive to classmates, including answering questions. Each reply should be related to current chapter discussion and should develop questions related to objectives to facilitate discussion. Reply generates or stimulates group discussion and presents creative approaches to the topic.

2	Resources	Use of accurate, reliable resources and reference page in APA style of resources (if applicable)
2	Grammar Quality	Written responses are free of grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. The style of writing facilitates communication.

Quizzes

Students will complete weekly quizzes by 11:59pm on Fridays based on the required book chapters and unit notes as indicated in the class schedule. The quizzes are open book and notes, but there will be only 30 minutes to complete them. **Quizzes cannot be made up if missed, and a grade of zero (0) will be recorded.**

Meeting Observation Paper

Due March 22: Attend and document what occurs at an **open** AA/NA/Al-Anon, CODA, or ACOA meeting. The meeting must be one that you attend during the current semester. Write a 1-2 page summary (not including your cover page). Include at least one scholarly citation in your summary (use APA manual 6th ed. Guidelines) and a final page for your reference(s). Use these headings:

- Demographics: Describe the demographics of the group (such as age, gender, socioeconomic status)
- Culture/Atmosphere: Describe the culture of the meeting (friendly, formal, rigid, chaotic?)
- Structure/Format: Describe the structure of the meeting (how was it conducted?)
- Effective Components: List and describe things you thought were effective or healing about the meeting.
- Room for Improvement: List and describe things you thought were ineffective or counterproductive about the meeting.
- Personal Reflection: How did it feel attending the meeting (nervous, intimidating, judged, etc.)? Examine your own attitudes about addiction, addicts, and other issues in relation to attending the meeting.

You will be expected to use appropriately cited and referenced professional or scholarly information when presenting your observations and recommendations.

*SPECIAL NOTE: These meetings are **anonymous**. This means you do not need to tell them you are there for a class assignment. Please refrain from these kinds of statements.

Discussion Post: Your paper will be uploaded to the assignment drop box and the text and reference portions of your paper need to be posted in the Week 10

discussion board for peer review and class discussion.

Final Exam

Due May 3: There will be a cumulative, open book final exam at the end of the semester that will be completed in D2L. You will have 90 minutes to complete the exam. If the exam is missed due to an unexcused absence, the student will receive a score of zero (0). If the exam is missed due to an officially excused absence (documentation must be provided), a make-up will be arranged.

Course Schedule:

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

Week and Dates	Chapters/Readings	Exams and Discussions Due: Fridays @ 11:59pm
Week 1 due Jan. 19	Introductions Chapter 1: Role of the Professional	- Discussion Introduction - Discussion Chapter 1 - **No Quiz this week
Week 2 due Jan. 26	Chapter 2: Classification of Drugs Chapter 3: Models of Addiction	- Discussion Chapters 2 & 3 - Quiz Chapter 2 & 3
Week 3 due Feb. 2	Chapter 4: Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Populations	- Discussion Chapter 4 - Quiz Chapter 4
Week 4 due Feb. 9	Chapter 5: Confidentiality and Ethical Issues	- Discussion Chapters 5 - Quiz Chapter 5
Week 5 due Feb. 16	Chapter 6: Screening, Assessment, and Diagnosis	- Discussion Chapter 6 - Quiz Chapter 6
Week 6 due Feb. 23	Chapter 7: Motivational Interviewing and Brief Interventions	- Discussion Chapter 7 - Quiz Chapter 7
Week 7 due March 1	Chapter 8: Treatment of Alcohol and Other Drugs	- Discussion Chapter 8 - Quiz Chapter 8
Week 8 due March 8	Chapter 9: Co-occurring Disorders and Other Special Populations	- Discussion Chapter 9 - Quiz Chapter 9
<i>March 11-15</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>No assignment</i>

Week 10 due March 22	Chapter 10: Relapse Prevention and Recovery Chapter 11: Twelve Step and Other Support Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting Observation Paper due - Discussion- post Meeting Observation Paper and two peer responses - **No Chapter 10/11 discussion this week - Quiz Chapters 10 & 11
Week 11 due March 29	Chapter 12: Children and Families Chapter 13: Adult Children and Codependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Chapters 12 & 13 - Quiz Chapters 12 & 13
Week 12 due April 5	Chapter 14: HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Chapter 14 - Quiz Chapter 14
Week 13 due April 12	Chapter 15: Gambling and Other Behavioral Addictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Chapter 15 - Quiz Chapter 15
Week 14 due April 19	Chapter 16: Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Chapter 16 - Quiz Chapter 16
Week 15 due May 3	Final Exam - due May 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final exam posted 4/19 - 5/3