



GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

[WWW.SW.UH.EDU](http://www.sw.uh.edu)

COURSE TITLE: SOCW 7325, Assessment in Social Work Practice

TIME/ SECTION/ ROOM: Thursdays, 1 pm – 4 pm (22412); Room: TBA

FACULTY:

McClain Sampson, M.S.S.W., Ph.D.

OFFICE HOURS: GCSW, 403

Tuesdays 12:30-2:30

Thursdays 4:00-5:30pm

Additional meeting time is available by appointment. If you need to meet at another time, please request via e-mail

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TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA): Cappreese Crawley

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I. Course

A. Catalog Description

Knowledge and skills for assessment of clients at the individual, group, family, organizational and community levels.

B. Purpose

This advanced practice course prepares students to conduct assessments of clients at the individual, group, family, organizational and community levels. Utilizing a strengths perspective, it focuses on the collaborative nature of assessment

and the design and implementation of assessments that include evidence based strategies.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Describe how assessment informs all levels of social work practice;
2. Delineate the tasks involved in the process of assessment;
3. Compare and contrast the differences and similarities between problem-based and strengths-based assessment;
4. Discuss the collaborative nature of assessment and its relationship to social work values;
5. Determine the validity and reliability of different assessment tools;
6. Choose appropriate assessment tools for use with clients at the individual, group, family, organizational and community levels;
7. Explain how assessment methods are used in the evaluation process;
8. Utilize culturally sensitive models for assessment of racial/ethnic minority clients, families and communities;
9. Demonstrate assessment skills that take into account special client considerations including, but not limited to, race/ethnicity/social class, gender and sexual orientation;
10. Conduct a strengths-based assessment with clients at the individual, group, family organizational and community levels.

III. COURSE CONTENT

This course will include the following topical (content) areas:

1. Evidenced based methods;
2. Individual, family, organization, community and self-assessment;
3. Assessment tools to address various issues and age levels, inclusive of multicultural content and special groups.

IV. COURSE STRUCTURE

This spring 2012 semester course will consist of 14 class periods. The content will be delivered in seminar format, utilizing a variety of teaching and learning techniques including: lectures, in-class group discussions, group activities, case studies, handouts, and online activities via Blackboard.

- V. **TEXTBOOKS** – The citation for the textbook is provided below. Additional readings are posted on the class Blackboard site and/or are indicated on the course syllabus in APA-formatted reference.

Required:

Jordan, C. & Franklin, C. (Eds.) (2011). *Clinical assessment for social workers: Quantitative and qualitative methods* (3rd ed). Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc. [ISBN: 978-1-933478-80-7]

Recommended:

Ragg, D. M. (2011). *Developing practice competencies. A foundation for generalist practice*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

VI **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

A. **Reading Assignments:** Readings are listed on the class outline and are to be completed prior to the scheduled class. Please note that the lectures are designed to clarify and supplement the assigned readings--they are not designed to review them in detail. It is critical that you remain current with the readings in order to participate fully in class discussions and activities. Some readings are assigned directly from the textbook, while other readings can be found via the UH Library, the internet, or posted on the class Blackboard site.

B. **Written Assignments**

1. **Family Self-Assessment and Genogram (20%).** Self-awareness and use of self are critical components when conducting assessments. This first homework assignment allows students to reflect on their own experiences, values

and beliefs. Students will receive a handout with specific questions to be answered for a self-assessment. In addition to completing a cultural chart and writing a brief self-assessment, students will turn in a genogram of their family.

2. **Family Assessment (20%):** Students will view a film and will develop a family assessment based on the characters in the film.
4. **Community or Organizational Assessment Case Study (20%):** Students will use a handout to guide them in an assessment of their field practicum agency. If students are not in field at the time, arrangements can be made to conduct assessment of workplace or another agency.
3. **Rapid Bio-psychosocial Assessment (20%).** Because of the busy settings in which social workers assess, this assignment offers a chance to conduct a rapid and brief but multi-dimensional assessment on an individual. Students will take notes of their observations while viewing a therapy session. The focal person in the video is the focus on this individual assessment. The assessment will focus the on biological, social and psychological dimensions of the case.
5. **Class Attendance and Participation (20%):** Attendance and participation are expected for the full length of each class session. Full participation includes preparation for class, contributing to class discussions (large and small group), and respectfully providing thoughtful feedback to classmates. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. **Two or more UNEXCUSED absences will result in a 1-letter grade reduction at the end of the semester (E.g., A to B, B to C, C to D, or D to F). Excused absences MUST be negotiated with the professor.**

VII. EVALUATING AND GRADING

A. Grading Distribution:

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|--|-----|
| 1. Self-Assessment | 20% |
| 2. Family Assessment | 20% |
| 3. Organization Assessment | 20% |
| 4. Bio-psychosocial Assmt. With Individual | 20% |
| 5. Attendance / Participation | 20% |

B. Grading Scale: Scores from each written assignment and the class participation grade will be converted according to the grading distribution indicated above. The scores will then be combined and final letter grades will be based on the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	100-96	C+	79.9-76
A-	95.9-92	C	75.9-72
B+	91.9-88	C-	71.9-68
B	87.9-84	D	67.9-64
B-	83.9-80	F	Below 64%

C. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete): Please refer to the UH Graduate and Professional Studies Bulletin for the university policy regarding a grade of Incomplete (I). Incompletes will be given only in accordance with this policy. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class session for which they are due, as indicated in the course outline below. Late assignments will be reduced by 5 points for each day they are late. Please plan accordingly so that you are able to complete and submit your assignments on time, and inform me ASAP should any problems arise. If an emergency prevents you from attending class on the day an assignment is due, you must

notify me prior to the class so that appropriate arrangements may be planned. An *unexcused* absence will also result in a grade of zero (0) on any in-class assignments administered on the day of the absence.

D. POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM:

Although I do not expect to encounter academic dishonesty or plagiarism in this class, I want to be very clear about my standards. Students are expected to demonstrate and maintain a professional standard of writing in all courses, do one's own work, give credit for the ideas of others, and provide proper citation of source materials. Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an "I" for the class with a recommendation that a grade of F be assigned, subsequent to a College hearing, in accordance with the University policy on academic dishonesty. Other actions may also be recommended and/or taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty. All papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced using APA style format (or as approved by the instructor), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you must set the quote in quotation marks or use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must clearly indicate that this is a direct quotation. Please consult the current APA manual for further information. Academic dishonesty includes using any other person's work and representing it as your own. This includes (but is not limited to) using graded papers from students who have previously taken this course as the basis for your work. It also includes, but is not limited to submitting the same paper to more than one class. If you have any specific questions about plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please raise these questions in class or make an appointment to see

instructor. This statement is consistent with the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty that can be found in your UH Student Handbook.

VIII. CONSULTATION

This course will be delivered by Dr. Sampson. My office is located on the fourth floor of the GCSW. My office telephone number is (713) 743-6719. Scheduled office hours are indicated on page 1 and posted on my office door. If you need to meet with me at a time other than the allotted office hours, please schedule an appointment. My email is mmsampson@UH.edu

IX. **POLICY ON ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.** Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who *request and require them*. For more information and/or assistance, please contact the Center for Students with Disabilities at 713-743-5400.

X. EXPECTATIONS FOR MAINTAINING A SAFE, RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Cellular Phones and Pagers: Students are asked to turn off (or activate the vibrator mode on) cellular phones and pagers during class time. Disruptions of this nature compromise the academic process, and therefore will not be tolerated. If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from honoring this classroom rule, please schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible to advise me of your situation.

Classroom Behavior: The **GOLDEN RULE** for expected behavior in the classroom is to *be respectful of yourself and your colleagues*. By virtue of the nature of our profession, we will often engage in content and discussions in this course that elicit varied opinions, perspectives, and emotions. This will provide a well-rounded educational experience for all of

us, if we practice and demonstrate the core values of social work. Social Work classes are a good training ground for professional conduct.

A FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT AND CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS

Week 1 Thursday, January 19: Course Introduction

- Course overview & logistics: Introductions, syllabus, assignments, Blackboard site
- Overview of Assessment Process
- Lecture: Phases of Assessment and the value of self-assessment
- Required Readings:
Course Syllabus & Review Blackboard Site

Week 2 Thursday, January 26: Self-Assessment

- Lecture: Assessment phases: Assessment, Treatment Planning, Intervention,
- Guest Lecture: Engagement and Self-Assessment process
- Required Readings:
Jordan & Franklin– Chapters 1
In class- handout-Table 4.2: common content areas of data collection for different client systems

GATHERING DATA

Week 3 Thursday, February 2: Considerations of data collection

- Lecture: Collection of data within the context of a bio-psychosocial model; Sources of data for Macro & Micro
- In-class activity: practice engaging client and gathering information using a MI approach (handout of techniques; including scale)
- Required Readings:
J & F-Chapter 2 "Quantitative Clinical Assmt. Methods"

Ragg: Chapter 4 "Assmt & Service Contracting"

Week 4 Thursday, February 9 : Standardized Measures in Assmt.

- Lecture and In-class activity: Finding and understanding standardized tools.
 - Each group will learn a standardized measure (measure is given by teacher; each group will receive a copy of the measure and description; each group finds an article online and then presents purpose of the study, why they used this tool and the psychometrics- instructions given on a handout. This is NOT graded.
- Required reading:
Jordan & Franklin-Chapter 3
- **Assignment Due: Self-Assessment Report**

ORGANIZING AND INTERPRETING MEANING OF DATA

Week 5 Thursday, February 16: Assessment with Families

- Lecture: Multi-Dimensional Assessment with families. The importance of culture in assessment.
- In-class activity-get into groups of 4-5 and create a case vignette of family. 4 different ethnic backgrounds to choose from. Each group creates a background, why family was referred to therapy and fills in various dimensions of the family life (i.e. biological factors, social factors). We will distribute instructions.
- Required reading:
Jordan & Franklin-Chapter 10, 8
- Recommended reading:
Jordan & Franklin-Chapter 9

Week 6 Thursday, February 23 –Assessment with Families Groups continue to discuss the vignettes

Watch Video: "Drinking Apart". This is the video you will use to do your family assessment assignment.

Readings: continue with same J&F readings from week 5

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

- Week 7 Thursday, March 1 – The Art & Skill of Questioning in Assessment**
- Lecture: Problem definition-Using 4 P's; The importance of How you ask the question
 - Required Readings:
Ragg Chapter 6- "Questioning Skills". Posted on Blackboard
- Week 8 Thursday, March 8: Assessment in Medical Settings**
- Guest speaker
 - **Assignment Due: Family Assessment Paper**
- Week 9 Thursday, March 15 No class, Spring Break**
- Week 10 Thursday, March 22: Assessment in Macro Settings**
- Lecture: Community/Organizational Assessment Focus; Considerations, methods in macro assessment
 - In class activity- community needs assessment activity
 - Required Readings:
Hepworth et al. – Chapter 11
Toseland & Rivas – Chapters 4 (104-127), 7, and 8

APPLICATION OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- Week 11 Thursday, March 29: Assessment in Macro Settings**
- In-class activity: Conducting a SWOT Analysis using Suffolk county case study

- Week 12 Thursday, April 5: Mental Health Assessment**
- Lecture and Class activity: DSM
 - Guest Lecture: Mental health 1st Aid training
 - Discuss the next in-class Rapid Assessment
- Week 13 Thursday, April 12—Biopsychosocial Assessment**
- Discuss the biopsychosocial assessment assignment
 - In-class activity: conduct a rapid biopsychosocial assessment
 - **Assignment due: Community Report**
 - Readings: to be determined and will be announced before April 12
- Week 14 Thursday, April 19—Risk Assessment**
- Lecture: Suicide Assessment
 - Guest Lecture: Risk Assessment in Child Welfare Settings
- Week 15 Thursday, April 26: Evaluation of Assessment**
- Lecture: Evaluation of Assessment; Methods discussion
 - Required reading:
Jordan & Franklin-Chapter 11
 - **Assignment due: Biopsychosocial assessment due by May 9**

*****The instructor reserves the right (and flexibility) to alter the Course Outline or schedule in order to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints. Student flexibility and tolerance for any necessary agenda shifts may be required.*****

XI. Bibliography

Collins, D., Jordan, C., & Coleman, H. (2007). *An introduction to family social work*. (2nd Ed.).

Itasca, IL: Peacock Publishers.

Corey, M. and Corey, G. (2006). *Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA:

Brooks/Cole.

Dillon, C. (2003). *Learning from mistakes in clinical practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Helton, L., & Jackson, M. (1997). *Social work practice with families: A diversity model*. Boston:

Allyn & Bacon.

Hepworth, D. H., Rooney, R. H., Rooney, G. D., Strom-Gottfried, K., & Larsen, J. (2006). *Direct*

social work practice: Theory and skills (7th ed). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Jordan, C. & Franklin, C. (2003). *Clinical assessment for social workers: Qualitative and qualitative methods* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Lyceum.

Mattaini, M. A. (1997). *Clinical practice with individuals*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

McGoldrick, M. , Gerson, R., & Shellenberger, S. (1999). *Genograms: Assessment and*

Intervention (2nd Ed.). New York: W. W. Norton.

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Pearce, J. (Eds.). (1996). *Ethnicity and family therapy* (2nd ed.).

New York: Guilford Press.

Murphy, B. C. & Dillon, C. (2003). *Interviewing in action: Relationship, process, and change*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Netting, E., Kettner, P., & McMurtry, S. (2007). *Social work macro practice* (4th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

Saleebey, D. (2006). *The strengths perspective in social work practice* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

Toseland, R. W., & Rivas, R. F. (2001). *An introduction to group work practice* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.