Social Work 5105.03 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Instructor: Jane James, MSW  
Office:  
Phone: 407-823-6136  
Office Hours: by appointment  
E-Mail: mjfavors@aol.com  

Term: Fall, 2004  
Class Days: Saturday  
Class Hours: 9:30am to 12:20am  
Class Location: HPA I Room 272

Course Description
This course is one of two courses in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment curriculum area required for graduate social work majors. A major focus of Social Work 5105 is to provide students with an understanding of social work systems perspective within preventive, developmental, supportive, and residual approaches to social work practice. This course provides students with theoretical frameworks used by social work practitioners to understand an individual's behavior in interaction with the social environment and the forces which shape human behavior.

Course objectives
By the end of the semester, students should be able to:
1. Discuss the unique perspective that social work has in viewing the relationship between the individual and environment in comparison to other helping professions.
2. Understand biological, psychological, social, and cultural determinants during childhood, adolescent, early adult, middle adult, and older adult developmental stages within the context of a broader environment.
3. Be familiar with ways that ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and other forms of diversity contribute to human development, resiliency, social stress, and economic social injustice and their implications for social work practice.
4. Discuss relevant research and to identify and conceptualize additional research needs relating to human behavior and the social environment.
5. Apply information and theories related to human behavior and the social environment to life situations in a manner consistent with social work values, in particular empowerment, shared responsibility, and social justice.

Teaching methods
This course will incorporate a variety of teaching methods. These methods may include lecture, discussion, audiovisual materials, small group exercises, and guest speakers. A variety of case examples will be used to exemplify theories and developmental stages discussed. Students are expected to be active in the learning process. This implies substantive class participation, quality of participation will be judged over quantity. Not all readings will be reviewed directly in class. Students are expected to demonstrate their mastery of course content, including reading material, through class discussion, written assignments, and examinations.

Texts
2. Reserve readings where indicated on the following Course Outline and Schedule are required unless specified as optional selections. Reserve readings are available in the library.

Evaluation of Learning and Grading
1. Video: Mother (15 points). Students will view the video Mother (By: Albert Brooks, 1999) to assess how culture, family structure, and social environment affect development. Students may write this paper as a
group (no more than three students). Each student or group of students must write a six to eight-page paper discussing key points of this video such as culture, poverty, oppression, assimilation, resiliency, self-concept, and developmental theory (Freud, Erickson, etc.) as they relate to the characters. This assignment is due week #5.

2. **Personal Development Paper** (30 points). Write a portrait of your life up to the present time, emphasizing developmental aspects, including major developmental influences on you at the time. Also, include obstacles, crises, and accomplishments along the way. Review course and outside literature to incorporate developmental theories and concepts. This 10-page paper must incorporate a minimum of five references (APA style) into the body of the paper. The five minimum references must be from different sources. This assignment is due Session #7.

To receive full credit for this assignment, your paper must include:
A. A full discussion of the person’s racial/ethnic development. This discussion must include how the person views their racial/ethnicity awakening; becoming aware of their racial/ethnic groups position and the history of their group in the United States of America; and the contribution their racial/ethnic group has made in their self-development.
B. A discussion of how their educational experiences have shaped their personal and social identity. Included in this discussion must be body image, ethnicity, social economic status, intellectual abilities, and home environment.

3. **Interview Paper** (30 points). Choose someone from another country you do not know (a non-social work student, a non-family member, non-family friend, etc.) and write a portrait of their life up to the present time, emphasizing developmental aspects, including major developmental influences on the person at each life stage. Also include obstacles, crises, or accomplishments along the way. Review course and outside literature to incorporate developmental theories and concepts. This 10-page paper must incorporate a minimum of five references (APA style) into the body of the paper. The five minimum references must be from different sources. This assignment is due Session 10.

To receive full credit for this assignment, your paper must include:
A. A full discussion of the person’s racial/ethnic development. This discussion must include how the person views their racial/ethnicity awakening; becoming aware of their racial/ethnic groups position and the history of their group in the United States of America; and the contribution their racial/ethnic group has made in their self-development.
B. A discussion of how their educational experiences have shaped their personal and social identity. Included in this discussion must be body image, ethnicity, social economic status, intellectual abilities, and home environment.

4. **Group Presentation** (15 points). Groups must consist of no less than three and no more than six students. This assignment requires: (1) the selection of a life stage (for example, infancy, older adult) to report on, or (2) selection of an issue (for example, cognitive development, AIDs, low birth weight) to report on across the life span, and (3) a 20 minute presentation with all members presenting in class. Presentation dates will correspond with course schedule and life span chosen.

4. **Participation/Attendance** (10 points). Participation includes class discussion, participation in group activities, and attendance. Attendance will be taken each class meeting. Any student who is not present 30 minutes after class begins will be categorized as absent that day. Any student with more than 3 absences during the semester will have their final grade dropped by one letter grade. Any student with more than six absences will have their final grade dropped by two letter grades.

A final course grade will be based upon the total number of points accumulated by a student on written assignments, participation, and attendance. The course grading scale is noted below:
**Grad Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 or less</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Policies**

See **Social Work Student Handbook** and **The Golden Rule Handbook for UCF Students**

1. Students are expected to be punctual both in attendance and in meeting deadlines. Attendance will be taken each class meeting. Any student who is not present 30 minutes after class begins will be categorized as absent that day. Any student with more than 3 absences during the semester will have their final grade dropped by one letter grade. Any student with more than six absences will have their final grade dropped by two letter grades. Students who experience chronic medical or personal problems, which prevent them from attending class regularly, are encouraged to review policies relating to securing a leave of absence from their university studies.

2. Written assignments are due during class on the date listed in the syllabus. Any student unable to attend class on the date an assignment is due may turn their assignment in prior to the due date. Late assignments will be docked 5 points for each week that they are late. Faxed and/or electronic transmitted (e-mail) papers **will not** be accepted.

3. It is important that the social worker be able to demonstrate effectiveness and competence through the written word. For this reason, each paper will be graded for both clarity and content. Students are encouraged to visit The University Writing Center for assistance with their papers. All written work must follow the American Psychological Association (APA) format--**without exception**.

4. All written assignments must be typed (word processed) in 12 font print, doubled-spaced, and possess appropriate cites. The APA manual must be used when writing papers. Margins must be 1 inch around. That is, 1-inch top, bottom, left, and right. **Handwritten papers will not be accepted.** The cover page is not a page of text. If you decide to number this page, increase the number of assigned pages by one.

**Course Outline and Schedule**

**Unit 1 Weeks 1 & 2:**
Introduction of the Social Systems Perspective of Human Development, and the Impact of Cultural Diversity

**Readings:**
1. Longres, Chapters 1, 2 & 3, pp. 2 - 72.
2. Hutchinson, Chapters 6, & 8, pp. 157-188 & 231-264.
4. Bornman, 411-425
5. Dadkhah, Harizuka, & Mandal, 730-735.
6. Phinney, 143-152.

**Unit 2 Weeks 3, 4, & 5:**
Pregnancy, prenatal, and infancy development from the Systems Perspective

**Readings:**
1. Longres, Chapter 16, pp. 460 - 493.
2. Pillari & Newsome, Chapter 2, pp. 231-264.
3. Diller, Chapter 5, 68-87.

**Week 5** Assignment #1 is Due

**Unit 3 Weeks 6 & 7:**
Toddlerhood and Early-Middle Childhood with consideration of special issues & risks to development—September 23 & 30

**Readings:**
1. Longres, Chapter 15, pp. 424 - 459.
3. Hutchinson, Chapter 4, pp. 139-148.
5. Estes, Chapter 13, 207-224.

**Week 6** Group XX Presents

**Week 7** Assignment #2 is Due

**Group XX Presents**

**Unit 4 Weeks 8 & 9:**
Adolescence & Young Adulthood, Social Learning Theories; examination of special issues/problems

**Readings:**
1. Longres, Chapter 17, pp. 494 - 521.
2. Hutchinson, Chapter 6, pp. 196-217.
7. Cok, 409-414.

**Week 8** Group XX Presents

**Week 9** Group XX Presents

**Unit 5 Weeks 10, 11 & 12:**
Middle Adulthood focusing on development & mid-life issues, concerns & adjustments

**Readings:**
1. Longres, Chapter 18, pp. 522 - 536.
2. Weaver, pp. 203-211.

**Week 10** Paper #3 is Due

**Week 11** Group XX Presents

**Unit 6 Weeks 13, 14 & 15:**
Older Adulthood & Very Old Age.
Examining special issues/concerns such as retirement, health, illness, loss of social roles, and death
Readings:
1. Longres, Chapter 18, pp. 536 - 545.
2. Pillari & Newsome, Chapter 9, pp. 331-338.
4. Speizer, 17-34.

Bibliography


