SOW 5644 - Interventions with the Elderly and Their Families

Instructor: Denise Gammonley, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.  
Term: Spring 2005
Room: HPA I 248  
Class Days: Tuesdays
Phone: (407) 823-2215  
Class Hours: 6:30-9:20pm
Office Hours: 4:00-6:00pm TU; 4-6pm W; SA 12:30-1:30.  
Class Location: HPAI 272
E-Mail: dgammonl@mail.ucf.edu

Course Description: Study of concepts, skills, models and theories for intervening with aged; special attention is given to minority populations.

This course is designed to provide students interested in the area of aging with the specialized knowledge base necessary for intervention with aged individuals and their families. Students will learn a variety of practice concepts, skills, models and theories, from a strengths perspective to enhance their gerontological practice knowledge. Special attention focuses on intervention with older people of color, older women, and older individuals who belong to other special population groups (sexual minorities, physically or mentally handicapped, etc.).

Objectives: Upon completion of this course students will be able to:
1. Assess their own attitudes, values, and feelings about older persons and show how these factors, along with feelings about their own aging, may affect their interventions with older clients;
2. Demonstrate how an older person's race, gender, or membership in other special population groups may affect practice;
3. Demonstrate how the processes of assessment, treatment planning, intervention, and evaluation are operationalized in interventions with older clients and their families in a community based setting;
4. Demonstrate how professional values regarding a client's right to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination are related to specific practice issues when working with older people and their families;
5. Use research knowledge and therapeutic treatment models to develop specific intervention approaches with older people and their families;
6. Identify the critical components of older people's social network relations and show how those relationships affect the social functioning and well being of those individuals;
7. Demonstrate a working knowledge of local, state, and federal resources and services available to older persons;
8. Identify major intervention issues that require further research and study;
9. Demonstrate critical thinking skills when assessing and developing treatment plans for elderly clients and, evaluate several practice interventions.

Evaluation of Learning and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>B+ = 87-89</th>
<th>C+ = 77-79</th>
<th>D+ = 67-69</th>
<th>F = 59 or less</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A- 90-94</td>
<td>D = 64-66</td>
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<td>B</td>
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### Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biopsychosocial Assessment</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>February 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Analysis Exercises @10 points each</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Due Date Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence-Based Practice Exercise</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 8th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systematic Review Paper &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>April 19th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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### Required Supplementary Readings:


### Recommended Resource:

The Merck Manual of Geriatrics

### Required Assignments:

1. **Comprehensive Biopsychosocial Assessment**
   
   Write a comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment of an older adult. Additional details and an assessment format will be given in class. **Due Session 6 (Feb. 8th) 25 points.**

2. **Case Analysis Exercises—3 Exercises, each worth 10 points. Due at various times during the semester.**
Exercise 1: Brief Case Analysis—Stress, Coping, and Adaptation to Chronic Physical Illness  
Due—Session 4 (February 1st)

Prepare a 2-3 page (double-spaced, APA style, appropriately referenced) written summary of the health beliefs of an older person who is coping with a chronic physical condition. You should know this person personally or professionally in order to gather the necessary information to complete the assignment.

In your paper describe and discuss (1) how this illness creates stress for the older person, (2) how the older person has appraised the influence of the illness on their life, and (3) the specific strategies the older person is using to cope with this chronic illness.

Review the class handout “Stress, Coping, and Adaptation” and the PowerPoint presentation “Health and Illness in Later Life: Psychosocial Impacts” to help develop your case analysis.

Exercise 2: Web research exercise – Grandparent Caregiving  
Due—Session 6 (February 15th)

Review a model program designed to strengthen informal support for grandparent caregivers and evaluate the evidence supporting its utility as an intervention. Your paper should include the following components: (1) a brief review of the program, target population, and community context (2) a brief analysis and critique of the evidence from the scholarly literature to support the effectiveness of the program. Your paper (maximum 4 pages) should be supported with at least two citations beyond the list of required readings and recommended web sites.

The following web resources will be good places to start your search:

Generations United  
http://www.gu.org/

AARP Grandparent Information Center  
http://www.aarp.org/life/grandparents/

Exercise 3: Reaction Paper: Elder Rage  
Due—Session 10 (March 16th)

Review the following case study “Elder Rage”. In a 2-3 page reaction paper discuss your reaction to the difficulties inherent in working with an older adult like the one profiled in “Elder Rage”. How can professionals do a better job of meeting the needs of family members like the one profiled in the case study? What skills do you need to develop in order to serve ‘toxic’ elders and families well? What self-care techniques will help sustain you in your practice?


3. Evidence-Based Practice Exercise To help you prepare to conduct your literature search for your Systematic Review Paper you will complete an exercise designed to teach you the principles of evidence-based practice in social work. Part I of this exercise will require you to review two brief web-based tutorials about evidence-based practice and developing good clinical questions to guide your practice. After reviewing these websites you will draft your own well-built practice question about a topic
of interest related to a clinical problem affecting older adults. Answering this question will form the basis of your Systematic Review Paper. Part II of the exercise will occur in the classroom. As a group we will review and refine our respective questions to help guide our literature search strategy. We will also review and practice using specific electronic literature search techniques. We will discuss (1) how to critically appraise the quality of evidence found in the literature and (2) how to integrate evidence from social work research with concerns about social work ethics and values to determine the best clinical practice techniques to use for a specific situation. This exercise will count for 10 points of your final grade.

To complete Part I of the exercise review the following web tutorials;

  http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/rescue/ebsw.html
- Evidence-based Practice for the Helping Professions. “Posing a Well-Built COPES Question and Classifying It Into One of Five Question Types”
  http://www.evidence.brookscole.com/copse.html

4. **Systematic Review Paper and Class Presentation**

Each student will submit an 8-10 page paper covering a topic of their interest related to a clinical problem affecting older adults. The paper should reflect use of the evidence-based practice (including use of a well-built clinical question) and library search skills developed in class. At least 10 references from quality sources must be included. Implications for social workers, should be included. Students will present their paper in class beginning with Session 13. The paper will be worth 20 points; the presentation 5 points. All students must have their practice question developed and search strategy approved by the instructor no later than March 22nd. Papers will be graded on content and clarity. The paper will be worth 20 points; 10 points for discussion of the problem/need, 5 points for discussion of social work practice implications, 5 points for correct use of references. An informal presentation (no need for PowerPoint unless you want to use it) of no more than 15 minutes is appropriate.

Presentations are scheduled for April 12th and April 19th. Your paper is due April 19th.

5. **Attendance and Participation**

Since this is a small class that will be taught in a seminar format prompt, consistent, and enthusiastic attendance and participation is crucial to the learning of all members of the class. Students will be expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and to actively involve themselves in class discussions, small group exercises, and role-playing in order to develop necessary practice skills. Therefore, attendance is required. Class sessions will combine didactic, discussion and experiential components. Students must be prepared for class (e.g., complete readings and other assignments prior to class); it is also expected that students will be attentive and respectful in class (e.g., no off-task behavior, no talking among themselves). Social Work students are required to attend ALL class sessions. Professional functioning typically involves collegial sharing and peer support. By being present in class, students develop commitment to, and skill in, mutual problem solving and team work. For this reason, class attendance is mandatory. A student’s grade may be lowered for lack of participation, tardiness, and absences. Three or more consecutive absences, regardless of reason, may, at the disclosed discretion of the instructor, result in (a) course failure; (b) a letter grade reduction in the course; or (c) makeup assignments being required.

Course Policies:

**Evaluation Criteria for Written Work**

Effective written expression is essential for professional practitioners whose records often decide a client’s fate, as in court and medical cases. Thus, students are expected to always present their ideas clearly and properly. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all papers submitted. Papers are to be typed, double-spaced and conform to professional standards of writing. American Psychological Association
(5th Edition) format is to be used.

**Completion of Assignments:**
1. All examinations and case assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Students may NOT elect to skip any of the exams or assignments and accept a lower grade.
2. Students should submit assignments at the beginning of the class period on the identified due date. Late assignments will be accepted ONLY in the case of documented serious circumstances and ONLY at the discretion of the instructor and ONLY if the student has contacted the instructor to discuss the circumstances PRIOR to the start of class on the day the assignment is due. Ten (10) points will be deducted from the student's final grade for each day that an assignment is late. **No assignment will be accepted after the last day of class.**
3. The instructor reserves the right to make announced changes in course requirements, schedule and assignments. Whenever possible, such changes will include student input.

**Final grades:**
1. Final grades are available on the internet. However, grades can be mailed to those students who provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The instructor cannot provide a student with his/her final grade by phone nor can grades be posted in email message per policy of the School of Social Work and University. To ensure confidentiality of graded material, papers and exams cannot be left by the instructor for pick up by students in the School of Social Work Office.
2. If the student believes the instructor has made an error in grading or marking an assignment, such errors should be brought to the instructor’s attention within the week following the return of the graded assignment. Otherwise, the grade assigned will be considered correct and final.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students are expected to contribute to class discussion and are encouraged to voice their opinions. Alternative points of view should be offered and received with tact. As social workers, we must be able to accept diversity of ideas and differences of opinion. Students should feel free to express their personal opinions, and refer to relevant personal situations without fear of disapproval or disrespect. However, the classroom is not a place in which to indulge in personal venting or support seeking.

**Academic Integrity:** Social workers must demonstrate high standards of integrity. Students are expected to do their own work on all material submitted for a grade. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. School and University policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced. Students found to have cheated or plagiarized will receive no credit for the exam or assignment may also receive a failing grade for the course. Students who observe others violate this policy are expected to report this to the instructor. Please see your academic advisor if you have any questions or concerns about this policy.

**Incomplete Grades:** In exceptional circumstances, an incomplete grade may be given per School and University policies. Individual arrangements must be made with the instructor for the completion of the course requirements, but in no case will the date set extend beyond the end of the following semester.

**Special Accommodations:** Students registered with UCF’s Office of Student Disability Services and having special needs which require accommodation for the successful completion of this course must see the instructor no later than the end of the first week of class. Failure to do so may result in accommodation(s) not being made.

Policies for all social work classes can be found in the School of Social Work Student Handbook and The Golden Rule Book.
Course Outline and Schedule

Session 1 (January 11) & Session 2 (January 18)

Content:
1. Demographics of the elderly and their implications for intervention.
2. The Aging Network for providing community-based services for the elderly and their families.
3. Values, value clarification, and attitudes as a context for therapeutic interventions with older persons and their families.
5. The informal and formal social network relationships of older persons and their implications for intervention.

Readings:

Session 3 (January 25) & Session 4 (February 1)

DUE: February 1st—Brief Case Analysis—Stress, Coping and Adaptation

Content:
1. Multi-dimensional Assessment
2. The therapeutic process applied to older persons and their families: referral, intake, and outreach; problem identification; goal identification; contracting; assessment; intervention; evaluation of practice; and termination.
3. Overview of Medications and Common Chronic Health Conditions

Readings:

Session 5 (February 8) & Session 6 (February 15)

DUE: February 8th—Biopsychosocial Assessment
DUE: February 15th—Web Research Exercise—Grandparent Caregiving

Content:
1. Special issues and opportunities related to community-based clinical practice and institutional-based practice with older persons and their families; working with caregivers and caregiving systems; brokering social services; and case management.
2. Group work approaches designed to enhance self-sufficiency and promote the empowerment of older persons and their families.
3. Community organization and change approaches applied to work with older persons and their families; Project Example: Elder Friendly Communities
4. Group work approaches designed to enhance self-sufficiency and promote the empowerment of older persons and their families.
5. Skill building exercise: Peer Support for Relative Caregivers

Readings:
Session 7 (February 22)

Content:
1. The applied models of therapeutic treatment techniques with older persons and their families: psychosocial systems approach; cognitive approach; behavioral approach; task-centered approach; crisis intervention approaches, strengths-based approaches, and an ecological perspective
2. Differential diagnosis: Dementia, Depression, Delirium
3. Addictive Disorders and Suicide Prevention

Readings:


Session 8 (March 1)

No Class----Complete Part I of Evidence-Based Practice Exercise

SPRING BREAK (March 15)

Session 9 (March 22)

DUE EXERCISE 3 and Practice Question for Evidence Based Practice Exercise

Content:
1. Guardianship issues for social workers in community-based practice and long term care issues related to guardianship
2. Elder Abuse and Neglect
3. Working with “Toxic” Older Adults
4. Clinical Skills Practice Exercises
5. Part II—Evidence-Based Practice Exercise

Readings:


Session 10 (March 29)

Content:
1. Reminiscence therapy and Life Review techniques for use with senior clients.
2. Spirituality Issues related to end of life
3. Clinical Skills Practice Exercises
4. Family and Couple Interventions
Readings:


Session 11 (April 5th)
Content:
1. Advanced Directives
2. Death and dying issues

Readings:
NASW Standards of End of Life Care
http://www.naswdc.org/practice/bereavement/standards/default.asp

Session 12 (April 12)
Content:
1. Gerontological professional practice issues related to gender, race, or client membership in other at-risk, special population groups.
2. Achieving cultural competence.
3. Spirituality and ethical Issues related to social work practice.

NASW Standards for Cultural Competence

Session 13 (April 19th)
Content: Student paper presentations and final course evaluations.
Bibliography


Kaminsky, M. The Uses of Reminiscence: A Discussion of the Formative Literature


