

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

SOWK 712: HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT I

FALL, 2006

Professor:

I. Purpose/Rationale

This course is designed to introduce students to the knowledge, perspectives, and theories about human development and behavior in the social environment that are a necessary foundation for learning effective social work practice. The purpose of this course is to enhance students' understanding of human behavior and problems by examining how individuals and families are affected by, and affect, larger social systems. The course supports the concept that one must go beyond the individual and family levels to understand human problems within relevant sociological and cultural contexts.

II. Content of the Course

The course considers various theories about human behavior in the social environment. The focus of this course is the reciprocal interactions between larger social systems--society, communities, institutions, and organizations--and families or individuals. The course introduces eight perspectives, and various theories derived from them, that are useful in understanding large social systems and guides students in applying them to social institutions, social structure, and social settings. It explores how these social systems obstruct or support the health and well-being of individuals and families. Issues and current trends for each topic are presented. The course stresses the importance of attending to the interrelatedness of all contextual factors in the study of human behavior.

III. Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate an ability to:

1. Evaluate, critically analyze, and apply perspectives and theories related to social institutions, social structure, and social settings to human behavior in the social environment;
2. Recognize and respect the strengths and cultural values of diverse populations;
3. Identify and analyze the dynamics of oppression and consequences for populations at risk;
4. Assess factors beyond individual and family systems when working with client populations including considerations of how health and well-being are supported or obstructed.

IV. Linkages to other Courses

This foundation year course builds upon the liberal arts perspective, particularly a background in sociology, that students have acquired during their baccalaureate education. It provides a knowledge base which supports the two concurrent practice courses, SOWK 722 and SOWK 732, and the field practicum, SOWK 781. It also provides a foundation for advanced practice courses. The critical evaluation of theory supports the beginning research course, SOWK 791. An examination of social institutions contributes to understanding U.S. social welfare policy as presented in SOWK 741.

V. Methods of Instruction

This course will be taught through use of lectures, large and small group discussions, audiovisual presentations, experiential exercises, and class presentations.

VI. Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend all class sessions, participate in class discussion, and complete all assigned readings. Absence from class, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a lowered course grade or, in extreme instances, in the awarding of a grade of "F" for the course.

Students should be familiar with the USC Carolinian Creed and Student Rights and Freedoms within the Academic Community, available on the USC website. Students can expect COSW course instructors to be available for all class sessions, from beginning to end as scheduled, in accordance with the course syllabus and the USC academic calendar unless special circumstances arise.

Three graded exercises constitute minimum expectations for the awarding of the course grade. At least one assignment will help students in the application of professional literature and in the development of the skills necessary for effective written communication. Use of APA style and format in writing and use of non-sexist and person-first language in class discussion and written assignments is required.

VII. Academic Responsibility and Student Conduct

On November 15, 2004 the USC College of Social Work faculty adopted the requirement that every syllabus for every course taught at the College of Social Work include the following statement:

Students in the College of Social Work are bound by the Carolinian Creed, by the NASW Code of Ethics and by the policies of the Carolina Community. Plagiarism in any form, which includes but is not limited to cheating on tests, using another's work without attribution or permission, or allowing someone to use your work, whether on an exam or a paper, will not be tolerated in the College of Social Work. There is a detailed explanation as to what entails plagiarism below and on the USC website cited below. It

is the student's responsibility to be fully informed as to what constitutes plagiarism and to refrain from all activities that constitute plagiarism. If you have questions as to behaviors that constitute plagiarism and other forms of misconduct, please consult with your instructors.

The Carolinian Creed is available at www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity and states, in part, that "I will practice personal and academic integrity." The Creed states that this commitment should eliminate the practice of plagiarism or borrowing another student's work, lying, deceit, and excuse making. The NASW Code of Ethics is available at www.naswdc.org/. The Code of Ethics states "Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud or deception." One of the values on which the Code of Ethics is based is that of integrity and one of the ethical principles derived from this value is "Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner."

The Carolina Community, available online at www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/ states that "It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this rule or who knowingly assists another to violate this rule shall be subject to discipline."

"This Rule is intended to prohibit all forms of academic dishonesty and should be interpreted broadly to carry out that purpose. The following examples illustrate conduct that violates this Rule, but this list is not intended to be an exhaustive compilation of conduct prohibited by the Rule.

1. Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance, or attempting to give or receive such assistance, in connection with the performance of any academic work.
2. Unauthorized use of materials or information of any type or the unauthorized use of any electronic or mechanical device in connection with the completion of any academic work.
3. Access to the contents of any test or examination or the purchase, sale, or theft of any test or examination prior to its administration.
4. Unauthorized use of another person's work without proper acknowledgment of source.
5. Intentional misrepresentation by word or action of any situation of fact, or intentional omission of material fact, so as to mislead any person in connection with any academic work (including, without limitation, the scheduling, completion, performance, or submission of any such work).
6. Offering or giving any favor or thing of value for the purpose of influencing improperly a grade or other evaluation of a student in an academic program.
7. Conduct intended to interfere with an instructor's ability to evaluate accurately a student's competency or performance in an academic program."

Additional information about Academic Responsibility, Academic Freedom and the Student Code of Conduct relevant to classroom performance and behavior is available at www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/ under Housing and Judicial Affairs.

VIII. Required Textbook

Johnson, M. M., & Rhodes, R. (2005). *Human behavior and the larger social environment: A new synthesis*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

A “course reader” should be purchased from Universal Copies, 1120 College Street. The telephone number is (803) 254-8931.

IX. Course Outline

A. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

1. Theories and perspectives in understanding human behavior
2. Selected macro perspectives
 - a. systems
 - b. ecosystems
 - c. structural functionalism
 - d. conflict
 - e. rational choice/social exchange
 - f. social constructivism
3. Social Work Perspectives: Diversity and Strengths
4. Evaluating theories

B. SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

1. Political economy
 - a. Economic System
 - b. Political System
 - c. Political Economy
2. Government-Related Social Institutions
 - a. Social Welfare
 - b. Education
 - c. Criminal Justice
3. Non-Government-Related Social Institutions
 - a. Medicine and Health Care
 - b. Religion
 - c. Mass Media

C. SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

1. Social Stratification
2. Cultural Diversity
3. Other Social Status Groups
 - a. Gender
 - b. Sexual Orientation
 - c. Disability

- D. SOCIAL SETTINGS
 - 1. Locational Communities
 - 2. Organizations
 - 3. Residential Institutions

IX. Required Readings

A. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 1

B. SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- 1. Political economy
 - a. Economic System
 - b. Political System
 - c. Political Economy

Johnson & Rhodes, Introduction, Part II

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 2

Anderson, S., & Cavanaugh, J. (2004). *Executive excess 2004:*

Campaign contributions, outsourcing, unexpensed stock options and rising CEO pay. (11th annual CEO compensation survey).

(Key findings, pp. 1-2). Available from Institute for Policy Studies, Washington D. C.: Website www.ips-dc.org

Korten, D. C. (1995). Good Living. In D. C. Korten, *When corporations rule the world* (pp. 277-291). West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.

Daly, H. E. (2006). Globalization and its discontents. In K. Finsterbusch (Ed.), *Taking sides: Clashing views on controversial social issues* (13th Ed., pp. 352-357). Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill.

Quindlen, A. (2004, August 9). Leap into the possible. *Newsweek*, 60.

- 2. Government-Related Social Institutions
 - a. Social Welfare
 - b. Education
 - c. Criminal Justice

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 3

Parish, R. (1988, May 23). Messages from a welfare mom. *Newsweek*, p. 10.

Mutari, E., & Lakew, M. (2004). Class conflict: The rising costs of college. In J. H. Skolnick & E. Currie (Eds.), *Crisis in American institutions* (pp. 351-357). Boston: Pearson.

Smith, R. A. (2004). Saving Black boys. *The American Prospect*, 15. Retrieved June 6, 2006 from

<http://www.prospect.org/print/V15/2/smith-ro.html>

Cose, E. (2004, May 17). A dream deferred. *Newsweek*, 53-59.

Dyer, J. (2000). The Crime Gap. In J. Dyer, *The perpetual prisoner machine* (pp. 27-52). Boulder, CO: Westview.

3. Non-Government-Related Social Institutions

- a Medicine and Health Care
- b Religion
- c Mass Media

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 4

Cohen, S. L. (2003, June 23). Fighting the battle of the bulging eardrums. *Newsweek*, 18.

Lewis, M. (1996, July 21) God is in the packaging. *New York Times Magazine*, 14, 16.

Dyer, J. (2000). Violence for profit. In J. Dyer, *The perpetual prisoner machine* (pp. 53-81). Boulder, CO: Westview.

C. SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

1. Social Stratification

Johnson & Rhodes, Introduction, Part III

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 5

Cassidy, J. (2006). Relatively deprived. Retrieved on June 9, 2006 from http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/060403fa_fact#top

Jencks, C. (2006). Does inequality matter? In K. Finsterbusch (Ed.), *Taking sides: Clashing views on controversial social issues* (13th ed., pp. 130-137). Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill.

2. Cultural Diversity

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 6

Gates, H. L. (1994). Preface. In H. L. Gates, *Colored people: A memoir* (pp. xi-xvi). New York: Alfred Knopf.

Williams, P. (2001). Of race and risk. In M. L. Andersen and P. H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class, and gender*, (4th ed., pp. 106-108). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2001). *Domestica: Immigrant workers cleaning and caring in the shadows of affluence* (pp. 29-37; 196-198). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Minatoya, L. (1993). "Transformation" from talking to high monks in the snow: An Asian American odyssey. In M. Hong (Ed.), *Growing up Asian American: An anthology* (pp. 109-113). New York: William Morrow.

3. Other Social Status Groups

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 7

Orenstein, P. (1994). Learning silence: Scenes from the class struggle. In *School girls: Young women, self-esteem, and the confidence gap* (pp.3-26). New York: Doubleday.

Lukes, C. A., & Land, H. (1990). Biculturalism and homosexuality. *Social Work*, 35, 155-161.

Mairs, N. (1997). Carnal acts. In K. Fries (Ed.), *Staring back: The disability experience from the inside out* (pp. 51-61). New York: Plume.

D. SOCIAL SETTINGS

1. Locational Communities

Johnson & Rhodes, Introduction to Part IV

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 8

Bullard, R. D. (2004). Environmental racism. In J. H. Skolnick & E. Currie (Eds.), *Crisis in American institutions* (pp. 237-244). Boston: Pearson.

Egan, C. V. (2006, April 24). Sidewalks can make a town a neighborhood. *Newsweek*, 21.

Voelker, R. (2005) Katrina's impact on mental health likely to last for years. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 294, 1599-1600.

2. Organizations

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 9

Cox, T. (1993). Cultural differences. In *Cultural diversity in organizations* (pp. 105-129). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Gibbs, J. A. (2001). Maintaining front-line workers in child protection: A case for refocusing supervision. *Child Abuse Review*, 10, 323-335.

Women face 'glass cliff' effect. Retrieved from

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/BUSINESS/09/08/women.glasscliff/index.html>

on September 30, 2004

3. Residential Institutions

Johnson & Rhodes, Chapter 10

Murphy, M (1998). The power of negative. *Family Therapy Networker*, 22 (3), 46-56.

Rosenhan, D. L. (1973). On being sane in insane places. *Science*, 179, 250-258.

Seaver, A. M. (1994, June 27). My world now: Life in a nursing home, from the inside. *Newsweek*, 11.

Kalb, C., & Juarez, V (2005, August 1). Small is beautiful. *Newsweek*, 46-47.

X. World Wide Webb Resources

A. SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

1. Center for Responsive Politics
www.opensecrets.org

B. PRIVILEGE, PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, AND OPPRESSION

1. National Coalition for the Homeless
www.nationalhomeless.org
2. Environmental Justice in Waste Programs
www.epa.gov/oswer/ej/index.html
3. The Joint Center for Poverty Research
<http://www.jcpr.org/>

C. SOCIAL STATUS GROUPS: WOMEN, GBLT, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

1. American Association of People with Disabilities
www.aapd.com
2. LGBT Research Guide
<http://gateway.library.uiuc.edu/library/circ/lgbt/stats.htm>
3. Institute for Women's Policy Research
<http://www.iwpr.org/>

D. COMMUNITIES

1. Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA)
www.acosa.org
1. Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
www.acorn.org
3. National Community Action Foundation (NCAF)
www.ncaf.org
4. National People's Action (NPA)
www.npa-us.org

E. STATISTICAL DATA

1. U. S. Census Bureau Official Statistics
<http://www.census.gov>
2. Social Statistics Briefing Room
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/fsbr/ssbr.html>
3. University of Michigan: Statistical Resources on the Web
<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html>

F. RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL WORK

1. World Wide Web Resources for Social Workers
<http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/ip/>
2. Social Work Search: A Directory of Social Work Related Links
<http://www.socialworksearch.com/>
3. Social Work Access Network
<http://www.sc.edu/swan/>

G. WRITING RESOURCES

1. Help Guide for Electronic Indexes
<http://www.sc.edu/library/eihelp.html>
2. APA style
<http://www.apastyle.org/eleceref.html>
3. The Internet Public Library – Electronic resources
<http://www.ipl.org/div/farq/netciteFARQ.html>
4. Psych Web APA Resources
<http://www.psychwww.com/resource/apacrib.htm>
5. Purdue OWL – Documenting Electronic Resources
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_doelectric.html