



University of Central Florida  
School of Social Work

SOW 3111.0002

Assessing II – Human Systems

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Term: Spring 2009  
Class Day: Tuesday  
Meeting Time: 6:30 – 9:20 pm  
Class Location: HEC 103  
Credit Hours: 3

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

To provide and enhance the student's knowledge and assessment skills specific to families, groups, organizations and communities with special interest to the interactions of these human systems and its impact on increased social support and improved functioning within the micro, mezzo and macro systems.

### **THE UCF CREED**

Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

- Integrity:** I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.  
**Scholarship:** I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.  
**Community:** I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.  
**Creativity:** I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.  
**Excellence:** I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the term, the student will be able to:

1. Use a systems model employing critical thinking to assess families, small groups, organizations, and communities.
2. Demonstrate the ability to analyze the interconnections between social systems, i.e. families, small groups, organizations, and communities.
3. Identify and understand the interactions between personal, political, and socio-cultural influences on micro, mezzo, and macro systems.
4. Apply problem-solving procedures of systematic problem identification and data collection to social systems assessments.
5. Discuss how social system conditions impact behavior from micro, mezzo, and macro entities based on ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability, and other forms of diversity.
6. Demonstrate professionalism, including accountability, self-awareness, and self-discipline in the assessment of social systems.
7. Identify and work toward the elimination of the effects of social inequalities such as racism, ageism, and sexism on social systems.

### **POLICIES**

In addition to the information below, the student should become familiar with School of Social Work Student Handbook and The Golden Rule Handbook for UCF Students. All policies included in these handbooks apply to this class.

### **LEARNING METHODS**

This course will incorporate a variety of learning and teaching methods. These methods may consist of lecture, discussion, audiovisual materials, and small group exercises. 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.

### **Modification of Syllabus**

This syllabus may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Changes will be discussed with students in class and/or via email. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the student's email address is current in eCommunity.

### **Cell phones, pagers and recorders**

- Students are asked to turn off cell phones and beepers during class sessions.
- Permission to audiotape a class meeting(s) must be obtained from the instructor in advance.
- While the use of laptops is convenient for students to take class notes, it is expected that students **WILL NOT** engage in other laptop activities during class time that may include: internet activities, reading and responding to email, balancing a checkbook, etc. If this should occur, the instructor reserves the right to request that the student not use a laptop during class.

### **Classroom Decorum**

- Side conversations are discouraged because they distract the class.
- The instructor expects students to respect the culture, values, beliefs and rights of their classmates. During class sessions, alternate points of view are encouraged and should be received by others with respect. Students should feel free to express their opinions and to refer to relevant personal situations without fear of disapproval or disrespect; however, the classroom is not the place where students should indulge in personal venting or support seeking.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Student attendance and participation are integral parts of this course. Students are expected to attend each class, arrive on time, and remain for the duration of the class. Students are also expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and to actively involve themselves in class discussions and exercises. Students must be prepared for class (i.e., complete readings and other assignments *prior* to class). Make-up exams are not given **ONLY** in extreme circumstances. These circumstances include exceptional health EMERGENCIES (that require that the student bring in medical documentation), and the make up exam will be an essay exam. Out-of-town vacations, trips, mild illness (such as a cold), and other similar circumstances do not qualify as extreme. The instructor reserves the option to provide a make up exam in hers or his absence.

Students who miss three (3) or more absences regardless of the reason may have their final grade lowered by one letter grade. The only exception to this is if the student has a **documented** extraordinary circumstance (student hospitalization; severe illness; death in the family; car accident) preventing the student from coming to class. In that case, the student must present written documentation to the instructor.

**Attendance during Finals Week:** It is University policy that all classes **MUST** meet during the scheduled final exam session.

### **Written Assignments**

Effective written communication skills are essential to professional social work practice. Thus, students are expected to present their ideas clearly and properly and to adhere to accepted standards of writing. *Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all written materials submitted and will be considered in grading written assignments.*

All written assignments must be typed in a 12-font print, and all margins must be one inch. The cover page of a paper is not considered a page of text. Work not conforming to these standards or demonstrating serious deficiencies in common English usage may be returned with out a grade. When references are required, they must be in the APA documentation style.

Students are encouraged to use the University Writing Center (UWC) for assistance in preparing written assignments. The UWC is located in MOD 608 (near the Communications Building). UWC staff may be reached at (407) 823-2197 or <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu/>.

### **Late Assignments**

All assignments must be turned in to the instructor at the beginning of the class period or delivered to the instructor's mailbox *before class starts on the due date*. It is the student's responsibility to see to it that her or his assignment is stamped with the date by the social work staff member who then places the assignment in the instructor's mailbox. Late assignments will lose a full letter grade for each day that they are late unless the student gained prior approval from the instructor. No assignment will be accepted after the last day of class. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the instructor regarding late assignments.

### **Incomplete Grades**

An "Incomplete" is only recorded in exceptional circumstances and in keeping with the 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 due date extend beyond the end of the following semester. Students who experience chronic medical or personal problems that prevent them from attending class regularly are encouraged to review policies relating to securing a leave of absence from their university studies.

### **Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment may result in an "F" for that assignment and may also lead to an "F" for the entire course and referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. (See the UCF Golden Rule for further information.) It is assumed that students will adhere to the academic creed of the University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Please do not ask for your grade to be changed without just cause or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

### **Turnitin.com**

The instructor reserves the option to use (turnitin.com); an online system which can determine if work has been copied from another source. You will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. For a more detailed look at this process, please visit: <http://www.turnitin.com>.

### **Disability Access Statement**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the instructor. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the instructor to request them.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. Kirst-Ashman, K. K. (2008). *Human behavior, communities, organizations, and groups in the macro social environment*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.
2. Sanchez, Reymundo (2000). *My Bloody Life: The Making of a Latin King*. Chicago, Illinois: Chicago Review Press, Incorporated.

### **Special note for "My Bloody Life – The making of a Latin King":**

The instructor's goal for incorporating this book into the classroom is to provide students with a real life example of youth and issues related to their experiences. Recently, the Orlando area has been experiencing an increase in gang activity. You as a future social worker will come into contact with street gang culture. The objective is to provide you with macro level skills in community assessment and learning of the development of urban culture as related to street gangs. The instructor will take a portion of each lecture and devote it to issues related to the book. Each

week will be devoted to a specific theme. You will play the role of a social worker in the life of this youth. Intervention and community assessment will be the focus of this component. It is imperative that you keep up with the short readings of this book.

## LIBRARY RESOURCES

The UCF Libraries has a full array of paper and electronic resources available for students and their research needs.

**Students will be expected to utilize UCF library resources to search library databases for required readings.**

The following web sites which can help students find information, navigate through databases and learn how to use the library:

1. Library Instruction sessions - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction>
2. Library Research Tutorials - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Instruction/LIToursTutorials.asp>
3. Streaming videos - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>
4. Research Guides - <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>
5. Ask a Librarian service - <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>
6. Consult with the librarian familiar with Social Work—Mr. Hal Mendolsohn

In addition to paper copies of books and journals, UCF students have the ability to access a vast selection of journals and books in electronic format while on or off campus. The web address to the library's catalog is <http://library.ucf.edu/>. The Ask A Librarian service provides students the ability to contact a library professional either by phone, on-line chat or email, and ask for assistance on "how to" locate, research, and obtain library materials. The web address for Ask A Librarian is <http://library.ucf.edu/Ask/>. A series of streaming videos, showing students how to search for a book or journal article, has been developed and are available at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Videos/Default.asp>. Research Guides for different majors, that list books, journals, databases, and web sites have been developed and are available in electronic format at <http://library.ucf.edu/Reference/Guides/>. Another service to help students conduct library research is called Research Consultation. After a student has conducted his/her research and is in need of additional information, s/he can work with a librarian to locate material with the help of his/her expert searching capabilities. To set-up a Research Consultation, students can either come into the library and sign-up at the Reference Desk or call the library Reference Office at 407-823-5880. Finally, students are always encouraged to visit the library and ask a Reference Librarian how best to conduct one's research. If a student has a simple question on how to locate either a book or journal title, the UCF Reference Libraries are happy to provide this type of service too.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

Assignment guidelines and other course handouts are available through [www.webct.ucf.edu](http://www.webct.ucf.edu).

## ASSIGNMENTS AND POINTS

1. Family Interview and Genogram (25 points of semester grade): Students will complete a family interview/assessment and complete a Genogram with a minimum of three (3) generations identified and depicted with drawing. **Due: February 17. Instructor will provide detailed instructions for assignment.**
2. Community Assessment/Family Assessment/Analysis (30 points of semester grade) Students will complete a community assessment/analysis based upon the characters and systems portrayed in *My Bloody Life: The Making of a Latin King (Sanchez, 2000)* **Due: March 24. Instructor will provide detailed instructions for the assessment/analysis.**
3. Organizational/Community Meeting and Paper (25 points of semester grade): Student will attend a community based meeting addressing a specific need, concern or issue impacting persons with the community; Meetings might include, but not limited to, a school board meeting, meeting on gang activity/crime, city council meeting, meeting on homelessness, etc. Students will prepare a 4-6 page summary of the meeting and its' purpose/focus/content. **Due: April 21. Instructor will provide detailed instructions for assignment.**

4. Oral Presentation of Community Meeting (10 points of semester grade): Students will present in class a summary of their Organizational/Community Meeting. **Presentations will be on April 21 and April 28 (if needed) Grading Matrix provided and fellow students will grade each other; 50% of final grade for this assignment will be determined by peers based upon presentation content and style.**
5. Attendance/Participation/Professional Behavior (10pts of semester grade): Participation includes class discussion, participation in group activities, attendance, and professional behavior. 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 three 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.

### GRADING SCALE

A	94 - 100	B-	80 - 83	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 93	C+	77 - 79	D	64 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	74 - 76	D-	60 - 63
B	84 - 86	C-	70 - 73	F	59 or less

### COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE (WEDNESDAY CLASS)

Week#	Date	Topics & Assigned Readings
1	1/13	<b>Introduction to Course Syllabi/Assignments/Expectations</b>
2	1/20	<p><b>Introduction to Strengths Perspective, Empowerment Approach, Ecological Approach, Systems Theory</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Macro Social Environment and Generalist Practice within the Macro Environment</li> <li>2. Identify Areas Human Diversity, Culture, Cultural Competency, Oppression in the macro social environment</li> <li>3. Identify Ecosystems Theory and its derivation from systems theories and ecological perspectives</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b> Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 1. <b>Sanchez</b>, pg. 1 - 31</p>
3	1/27	<p><b>Communities in the Social Environment: Theories and Concepts</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Community</li> <li>2. Explore Theoretical Perspectives on Communities including Structural, Human Ecology, Functionalist, Social-Psychological, and Social Systems</li> <li>3. Define geographical and non-geographical contexts of communities</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b> Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 2. <b>Sanchez</b>, pgs. 32 - 60</p>

4	2/3	<p><b>Assessing Family Systems with Emphasis on Family Diversity</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Family</li> <li>2. Define and Discuss Family Diversity</li> <li>3. Identify and Discuss Cultural Relationship Rules</li> <li>4. Apply Concepts to Students' own Families/Sub-systems</li> <li>5. Use of Genogram as a Family Assessment Tool</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b>  <b>Handout</b>  <b>Sanchez, pg. 61 – 90</b></p>
5	2/10	<p><b>Assessing Family Systems with use of Genograms</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will select one classmate to begin practice interviewing and fact gathering</li> <li>2. Needs identification/strength identification/generational history of medical, mental health, substance usage, and other experiences affecting current family system</li> <li>3. Dealing with resistant families and/or members</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b>  <b>Handout provided by instructor</b>  <b>Sanchez, 91 - 122</b></p>
6	2/17	<p><b>Assessing Community Systems</b>  <b>** Genogram assignment due **</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Communities</li> <li>2. Discuss Community Power Structures, Social Networks, and Alliances and Cooperation</li> <li>3. Empowerment: Social and Personal Empowerment</li> <li>4. Community/Organizational Community Meeting Assignments. Handout provided to details of assignment</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 3  Sanchez, pgs. 123 - 155</p>
7	2/24	<p><b>Assessing Community Systems (Continued)</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss Functions of Neighborhoods</li> <li>2. Discuss Purpose of Community Health and Well-Being</li> <li>3. Identify Healthy Characteristics of Healthy Communities</li> <li>4. Settlement Houses vs. Neighborhood Centers Today</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 4.  Sanchez, pgs. 156 - 188</p>

8	3/3	<p><b>Assessing Organizational Systems</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Organizational Systems</li> <li>2. Identify, Discuss, and Apply Organizational Systems Theories to Social Service Agencies</li> <li>3. Empowerment in Macro Environments for Diverse Populations</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b> Kirst-Ashman, Chapters 5 and 12 Sanchez, pgs. 189 - 225</p>
-	3/10	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
9	3/17	<p><b>Assessing Organization Systems (continued)</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define Primary and Secondary Organizations</li> <li>2. Discuss Organizational Goals and Resource</li> <li>3. Discuss the impact of various Organizational Structures in relations to communication, power, and lines of authority</li> <li>4. Identify and Discuss Organizational Leadership Styles and Client Well-Being</li> <li>5. Define types of behavior patterns in bureaucratic systems</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b> Kirst-Ashman, Chapters 6 and 7 Sanchez, pgs. 226 - 261</p>
10	3/24	<p><b>Week 11- March 21 Assessing Groups as Systems</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <p>****<b>Community Assessment/Family Assessment/Analysis, <i>My Bloody Life: Making of a Latin King, Due</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify Types of Groups in Macro Environments</li> <li>2. Treatment vs. Tasks Groups</li> <li>3. Social Action Groups and Empowerment</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b> Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 10 Sanchez, pgs. 262 - 299</p>
-	3/31	<b>LOBBY DAY – Tallahassee, FL</b>
12	4/7	<p><b>Week 12 – March 28 Assessing Groups as Systems (continued)</b></p> <p><b>Content:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss Four Group Functions and Structures</li> <li>2. Discuss 5 Stages of Task Group Development</li> <li>3. Social Worker Roles within Group Setting</li> </ol> <p><b>Readings:</b> Kirst-Ashman, Chapter 11</p>

13	4/14	<b>Groups and Involving Larger Systems in Social Work/Service Delivery Setting</b> <b>Content:</b> 1. What different groups/systems are critical in collaborative care for you as a social worker and your client? 2. What steps and measures need to be addressed with client to ensure all systems/groups are involved?
14	4/21	<b>Oral Presentations of Community Meetings</b>  **** <b>Community/Organizations Meeting Assessment Due****</b>  <b>Content:</b> 1. Begin brief 5-7 minute Oral Presentation on your attendance at meeting and key issues presented during observations: 2. What did you notice about hierarchy and organization structure/group dynamics?
15	4/28	Exam Week  <b>Oral Presentations of Community Meetings (If needed)</b>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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