



University of Central Florida  
School of Social Work

**SOW 5106.0001 – Human Behavior in the Social Environment II**

**Instructor:** Iradly Roche MSW  
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**Term:** Spring 2009  
**Class Day:** Monday  
**Class Time:** 6:30 pm-9:20 pm  
**Location:** HPA1 Rm. 207

**Description of Course:** Study of the patterns and dynamics of families, groups, organizations, and communities from a social work and a systems perspective.

Theoretical perspectives on social behavior are analyzed critically in relation to strengths, prevention, and empowerment at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The course also explores the unique social work framework, values, and theories as it pertains to human behavior in the context of human systems.

**Course Learning Objectives:** By the conclusion of SOW 5106, master students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Use systems concepts in professional assessments of families, small groups, organizations, and communities.
2. Apply a generalist perspective to problem solving procedures in systematic problems, and strengths identification and data collection to human system assessments.
3. Analyze the transaction between people in families, groups, organizations, and communities and the contextual environment within a systemic conceptual framework in preparation of students for community based clinical social work practice.
4. Identify and understand interactions between personal, political, and socio-cultural influences on families, group, organizational, and community behavior.
5. Assess the impact of discrimination and oppression on human behavior at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
6. Identify implications of human behavior theories for utilization of strengths and resources of families, groups, organizations, and communities to promote well-being, social justice and prevention in accordance with social work values and ethics.
7. Critically analyze family, group, organizational, and community behavior, including consideration of the themes of client strengths, oppression and justice, critical reflection, and relevance to community based social work practice.
8. Understand, compare, and critically evaluate various theoretical perspectives on human functioning, change, and development in families, groups, organizations, and communities.
9. Analyze and assess specific families, groups, organizations and communities in terms of their structure, functions, socialization and social control activities, adaptive capacity to change, and responsiveness to diverse populations.
10. Determine the practice implications of micro, mezzo and macro theories for ethical, professional social work practice.

**Required Texts:**

1. Van Wormer, K., Besthorn, F.H., & Keefe, T. (2007). *Human behavior and the social environment*. New York: Oxford University Press.
2. Thomlison, B. (2007). *Family assessment handbook*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

**Recommended Text:**

Strunk, W. Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *Elements of style* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Longman. ISBN: 020580902X  
This text is available from varied retailers (e.g., Barnes & Noble), and on-line (Amazon.com), in hardback, paperback, and used texts copy.

## 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.

## 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.

### 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 coherently and to adhere to accepted standards of English writing. All written assignments must adhere to APA style. For this class specifically, papers **must** be typed in 12-point font (either Times New Roman, Courier, or Arial); all margins must be one inch. The Cover page and Reference page of a paper are not considered pages of text. Work not conforming to these standards or demonstrating serious deficiencies in common English usage may be returned without a grade.

*Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are to be correct in all written materials submitted and will be considered in grading written assignments.* All written papers will be evaluated on substantive, scholarly content, correct use of English grammar and style as set forth in the recommended text for this course, Strunk & White's *Elements of Style* (4<sup>th</sup> edition). While purchasing this text is an option for students, students are expected to know and apply the writing and grammar outlined within this resource, as well as that contained within the APA Manual (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Students are encouraged to use the University Writing Center (UWC) for assistance in preparing written assignments. The UWC is located in Bldg. 140, Room 102. UWC staff may be reached at (386) 506-4025 or <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu/>

Assignments will emphasize the integration of assessment, group facilitation, verbal, conceptual, and writing skills in practice. All assignments will be evaluated and graded on the following criteria:

1. Appropriate use of the written English language and APA writing style.
2. Adequate number of references cited (if requested).
3. Organization and clarity of ideas presented.
4. Ability to integrate theory and practice appropriately.
5. Ability to use analytical skills throughout the assignment.
6. Creative ways of responding to the instructions beyond the requirements, based on classification of assignment.

### **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.* No assignments will be accepted by fax or email unless the instructor has given explicit prior approval. *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 under 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](http://www.turnitin.com)), an online system that 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. In keeping with those accommodations, this syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center, phone (386) 506-4024, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor. Students needing course accommodations must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations, as accommodations are provided following a student request.

### **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 on the Main Campus, or Ms. Dee Bozeman on the Daytona Beach Regional Campus.

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 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. On the Main Campus, Mr. Hal Mendelsohn is considered our primary resource for Social Work materials, articles, or other resources; on the Daytona Beach campus, Ms. Dee Bozeman is available for assistance.

**ASSIGNMENT AND POINTS**

Achievement of learning objectives will be measured as described below:

1. Family system analysis: worth **15** points, due **February 16<sup>th</sup>**
2. Examination #1: worth **20** points, due **February 23**
3. Organizational system analysis: worth **15** points, due **March 30<sup>th</sup>**
4. Modules (6): worth **30** points (5 points each) due on: **1/19, 2/2, 2/16, 3/2, 3/16, 4/13**
5. Examination #2: worth **20** points, **Final Exam Week (4/27/09)**
6. Students final grade may be altered due to attendance issues. Grades are subject to being lowered for assignments submitted late. See course policies below.

**GRADING SCALE**

A = 95-100 (4.0)	B- = 80-83 (2.75)	D+ = 67-69 (1.25)
A- = 90- 94 (3.75)	C+ = 77-79 (2.25)	D = 64-66 (1.00)
B+ = 87-89 (3.25)	C = 74-76 (2.00)	D- = 60-63 (0.75)
B = 84-86 (3.00)	C- = 70-73 (1.75)	F = 59 or less (0.00)

**Learning Methods:** This course will incorporate a variety of teaching methods. These methods may consist of 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.** As 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.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE**

**All assignments will be submitted no later than the beginning of class hour (6:30 p.m.). Late or incomplete submissions will be penalized (see Late Assignments, above).**

**January 12 & 19 (M), 2009**

**Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>—Martin Luther King Holiday**

**Introduction to Strengths Perspective, Empowerment Approach, Ecological Approach, Systems Theory Content:**

1. Define Macro Social Environment
2. Identify Areas of Environmental Influence
3. Discuss Relationship between Human Behavior and Macro Social Systems

**Textbook Readings:**

Chapter 1, van Wormer et al. text

**Assignment due 1/19.**

**January 26, Feb 2 & 9**

**Assessing Family Systems with Emphasis Upon Family Diversity**

**Content:**

1. Defining the Family
2. Define and Discuss Family Diversity
3. Identify and Discuss Personal and Interpersonal Barriers to Cultural Diversity
4. Discuss Cultural Relationship Rules
5. Apply Concepts to a Real Family
6. Discuss Problem Identification

7. Discuss Typical Family Needs and Wants
8. Problem and Strength Identification According to Family or Worker

**Textbook Readings:**

1. Entire Thomlison text.
2. Chapter 4, van Wormer et al. text

**In-Class Video**

**Assignment due 2/2.**

**February 16 & 23, & March 2**

**Assessing Groups as Systems**

**Family system analysis due February 16**

**Content:**

1. Define Macro Groups
2. Identify Macro Groups Purpose and Goals
3. Discuss Four Group Functions and Structure
4. Discuss Natural versus Secondary Groups
5. Identify Social Workers Roles

**Textbook Readings:**

Chapter 2, van Wormer et al.

Chapter 3, van Wormer et al.

**Assignments due: 2/16 (analysis) and 3/2.**

**Exam #1 (Mid-term) on February 23**

**March 9-14 UCF Spring Break – No Class March 9**

**March 9 (Spring Break), 16 & 23 - Assessing Organizational Systems**

**Content:**

1. Define Organizational Systems
2. Identify, Discuss, and Apply Organizational Systems Theories to Social Service Agencies
3. Define Primary and Secondary Organizations
4. Discuss Organizational Goals
5. Discuss the Impact of Various Organizational Structures on Communication
6. Identify and Discuss Organizational Leadership Styles and Client Well-Being

**Textbook Reading:**

Chapter 7, Van Wormer et al. text

**Assignment due: 3/16. (No assignment 3/9—Spring Break.)**

**March 30, April 6, 13, 20 - Assessing Community Systems**

**Organizational system analysis due March 30**

**Content:**

1. Define Community
2. Discuss Community Power Structures
3. Discuss Functions of Neighborhoods
4. Discuss Purpose of Community Health
5. Identify Characteristics of Healthy Communities
6. Discuss Community Change Process
7. Identify Eleven Elements of Community Development
8. Discuss Reasons for and ways to Overcome Community Resistance to Change

**Textbook Readings:**

Chapters 5, 6, & 8, Van Wormer et al. text

**Assignments due 3/30 (analysis) and 4/13.**

**Final Exam Date: April 27 (Date and Time to be confirmed prior to exam week.)**

### Bibliography

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- Boleman, L., & Deal, T. (1991). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
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- Reid, K. E. (1997). *Social work practice with groups: A clinical perspective*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
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Ryan, W. (1976). *Blaming the victim*. New York: Vintage Books.

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### **Family Systems**

Carlson, J., & Englar, A. (1999). A conversation with Stephanie Coontz. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 7(1), 77-82.

Crethar, H. C., Snow, K. & Carlson, J. (2004). It's all in the family: Family counseling for depressed children. *The family journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 12(3), 222-229.

Fredrikson, K. (1999). Family caregiving responsibilities among lesbians and gay men. *Social Work*, 44(2) 142-155.

Longres, J. (2000). *Human behavior in the social environment*. Itasca, IL: Peacock. 267-294.

Nicholson, B., & Kay, D. (1999). Group treatment of traumatized Cambodian women: A culture-specific approach. *Social Work*, 44(5), 470-479.

Queralt, M. (1996). *The social environment and human behavior: A diversity perspective*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon. 344-420.

Scannapieco, M., & Jackson, S. (1996). Kinship care: The African American response to family preservation. *Social Work*, 41(2) 190-195.

### **Group Systems**

Berman-Rossi, T. & Gitterman, A. (1999). A group for relatives and friends of institutionalized aged. In C. W. LeCroy (Ed.), *Case studies in social work practice* (pp. 212-221). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Jacobs, E., Masson, R., & Harvill, R. (1998). *Group counseling: Strategies and skills* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

### **Organizational Systems**

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## **Community Systems**

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