



University of Central Florida
School of Social Work

Spring 2009

SOW 6938-0M01 Special Topics: Interventions with Older Adults and Families
Mixed-Mode Combining Web-based and Face-to-Face Instruction 3 credit hours

Instructor: Denise Gammonley, PhD, LCSW
Phone: 407-823-2215

Term: Spring, 2009
Face-to Face Class Days: January 13, 27; Feb. 10, 24;
March 3, 24; April 14, 21
Web-based Instruction: January 20; Feb. 3, 17;
March 17, 31; April 7, 28

Office Hours: Tu/Wed 4:30-6:30pm
E-Mail: dgammonl@mail.ucf.edu

Class Hours: 6:30-9:20pm
Class Location: HPA I Room 272

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 practice, including legal issues of decisional capacity, when working with older people and their families;
5. Utilize evidence-based knowledge of 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 in community settings and in institutional care;
7. Demonstrate a working knowledge of local, state, and federal resources and services available and barriers to accessing resources for older persons;
8. Differentiate normal social, behavioral, and physiological processes of aging from physical illness and mental health disorders while considering how issues of diversity (including ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, geography) influence problem identification, diagnosis, treatment planning, intervention, and evaluation.
9. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in comprehensive geriatric assessment, treatment planning, and implementing psychosocial interventions for older adult clients and their families;
10. Recognize signs and symptoms of common psychosocial disorders in later life (including adaptation to chronic physical illness, acute or post-traumatic stress, anxiety, cognitive impairment, depression, grief reactions, elder abuse and neglect, addiction); identify appropriate micro, mezzo, and macro community-based interventions to reduce functional impairment resulting from these disorders.

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.

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.

POLICES

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.

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.

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.* 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.

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. 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.

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.

Evaluation of Learning and Grading

Grades	B+ = 87-89 (3.25)	C+ = 77-79 (2.25)	D+ = 67-69 (1.25)	F = 59 or less (0.00)
A = 95-100 (4.0)	B = 84-86 (3.00)	C = 74-76 (2.00)	D = 64-66 (1.00)	
A- = 90-94 (3.75)	B- = 80-83 (2.75)	C- = 70-73 (1.75)	D- = 60-63 (.75)	

Assignments:

Comprehensive Geriatric Biopsychosocial Assessment	20 points
Case Analysis/Reaction/Exercises @10 points each	30 points
Facilitated Class Discussion: Decisional Capacity	10 points
Evidence-based Intervention Review paper & Presentation	25 points
Final Examination	15 points

Required Assignments:**1. Comprehensive Geriatric Biopsychosocial Assessment**

Write a comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment of an older adult and/or a family caregiver from your field practicum or place of employment. Your assessment must include: (1) a standardized assessment tool such as the Mini-Mental State Examination, Geriatric Depression Scale, or other biopsychosocial assessment

instrument relevant to the needs of the older adult and/or family; and (2) a multi-axial DSM-IV diagnosis, if appropriate to the case; (3) assessment of physical health and functional abilities including ADL and IADL capacity, and (4) incorporation of a strengths perspective in the assessment and treatment plan. Be prepared to demonstrate use of one formal assessment tool you used to gather your data during our in-class session on February 24th.

Due Session 6 (Feb. 24th) 20 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 3rd)
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Prepare a 2-page (single-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: Reaction Paper: Elder Rage Due---Session 10 (March 17th)

Review the following case study “Elder Rage” and then the assigned chapters from “Working with Toxic Older Adults”. In a 3-4 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’ Older Adults and families well? What self-care techniques will help sustain you in your practice?

Marcell, J. (2003) Elder Rage. The Virtual Health Care Team. School of Health Professions and School of Medicine. University of Missouri-Columbia. Available on-line: <http://www.vhct.org/case2400/index.shtml>

Exercise 3: Web Tutorial Exercise: Alcohol Abuse in Older Adults Due---(March 17th)
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To prepare for the written assignment: Review the PowerPoint background material provided about substance abuse in older adults. Next, review the two video segments from the SAMHSA “**Brief Alcohol Interventions for Older Adults**”. One video segment features a leading researcher on the topic providing an overview of the brief treatment approach. **Alcohol and Other Drug Problems Among Older Adults**

The other video is a demonstration of a brief intervention with an older adult. **Video: Brief Alcohol Interventions for Older Adults**

The video segments are found here: http://preventionpathways.samhsa.gov/res_videos.htm

Written Assignment: Review one of the two case studies (Sal or Catherine) and answer each of the listed questions. Your answers may be brief (one or two sentences). Upload your document to the Assignments tab in Webcourses.

3. In Class Assignment: Facilitated Class Discussion: Decisional Capacity

To prepare to facilitate the 30 minute class discussion each student should review the following web tutorials about decisional capacity and principles of bioethics.

http://www.consultgerirn.org/topics/treatment_decision_making/want_to_know_more
<http://depts.washington.edu/bioethx/tools/princpl.html>

Choose one of the following options for this assignment. In our face-to-face class session on **April 14th** students will co-facilitate the class discussion based on their selection of Option A or Option B. In both cases facilitators will share their critical reflections and analyses of the assigned readings and questions with careful attention to identify key issues while raising additional ethical and practice implications. Merely summarizing what was reported in each of the readings is not adequate facilitation.

Option A: *Case Study:* Identify one older adult from your field placement, place of employment, or personal experience for whom you have had a concern about decisional capacity. After reading the articles listed below prepare a set of questions and issues for further consultation with your colleagues during the class facilitation exercise.

Healy T.C. Ethical decision making: pressure and uncertainty as complicating factors. *Health & Social Work*, 28(4) Nov. 2003, 293-301

Linzer N. An ethical dilemma in home care. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* 37(2) 2002, 23-34

Option B: *Cross cultural analysis:*

After reading the following article and web site lead a class discussion comparing and contrasting the approach of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to the British system of assessing decisional capacity based on the new 2005 Mental Capacity Act in England. What seems to be different about the British vs. Florida approach to determining decisional capacity? How does each approach seek to balance the self-determination rights of the elder with the societal desire to protect vulnerable and impaired Older Adults? How are the bioethical principles of beneficence vs. autonomy applied similarly or differently in the case of Britain vs. Florida? Do we in Florida have anything to learn from the British approach? Might the British learn something from our approach? Are there significant differences between the legal systems and cultural values between Britain and the US that warrant the different approaches?

Florida Department of Children and Families: Adult Services Procedures for Protective Investigations
<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/as/protection.shtml>

Johns R. Who decides now? Protecting and empowering vulnerable adults who lose the capacity to make decisions for themselves. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 37(3) Apr 2007, 557-564.

3. **Evidence-Based Intervention Review Paper** Each student will submit a 8-10 page paper reviewing the clinical evidence to support a particular community-based intervention for older adults related to one of the following common psychosocial disorders in later life (adaptation to chronic physical illness, acute or post-traumatic stress, cognitive impairment, anxiety, depression, grief reactions, elder abuse and neglect, addiction). The paper should reflect library research and use of established techniques for reviewing the quality of clinical practice evidence (these will be further described in class). At least 10 references from quality sources must be included. Internet research (non-peer reviewed journal web-sites) should be limited to no more than two of these 10 references. A final section, Implications for social workers, should be included.. All students must have their topic approved by the instructor no later than March 3rd. Papers will be graded on content and clarity. The paper is worth 25 points. An informal presentation (no need for PowerPoint) of no more than 15

minutes is appropriate. It should focus on a succinct review of the "state of the evidence" regarding the problem/population of interest and recommendations for treatment strategies for clinical social workers.

Presentations are scheduled for April 21st. Your paper is due April 21st.

Final Examination:

The final examination will consist of multiple choice and essay questions derived from content in the textbook, assigned readings, and class lectures. Students will be expected to apply theoretical and practice technique concepts to specific case studies demonstrating ability to identify biopsychosocial concerns of older adults and families, appropriate assessment, treatment planning, and intervention strategies for each of the common psychosocial issues and disorders in later life.

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 format is to be used.

Required Texts:

McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009). *Social Work with Older Adults: A Biopsychosocial Approach to Assessment and Intervention*, 3rd Edition, Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Levkoff, S. Chen, H., Fisher, J., & McIntyre, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Evidence-based behavioral health practices for older adults*. New York: Springer Publishing.

Required Supplementary Readings and Related Web-sites:

Florida Department of Children and Families: Adult Services Procedures for Protective Investigations

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/as/protection.shtml>

Healy, T.C. (2003) Ethical decision making: pressure and uncertainty as complicating factors. *Health & Social Work*, 28(4), 293-301

Johns, R. (2007). Who decides now? Protecting and empowering vulnerable adults who lose the capacity to make decisions for themselves. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 37(3), 557-564.

Linzer, N. (2002). An ethical dilemma in home care. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* 37(2), 23-34.

Molinari, V., McCullough, L.B., Coverdale, J.H., & Workman, R. (2006). Principles and practice of geriatric assent. *Aging & Mental Health*, 10(1), 48-54.

O'Shaughnessy, C.V. (2008). The Aging Services Network: Broad Mandate and Increasing Responsibilities. *Public Policy and Aging Report*, 18(3), 1-18.

U.S. Public Health Service. (1999). Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General (Chapter 5: Older Adults and Mental Health, pp. 336-401). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/chapter5/sec1.html>

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: *Suicide Facts. Older Adults*. [Retrieved January 6, 2009].

<http://www.mentalhealth.org/suicideprevention/fivews.asp>

Course Outline and Schedule

Face to Face Session 1 (January 13) & Web-based Session 2 (January 20)

Content:

1. Aging in the Twenty-First Century
2. The Demography of Aging
3. The Importance of Birth Cohort
4. Settings for Gerontological Social Work
5. Developing Areas for Direct Practice
6. Personal and Professional Issues in Work with Older Adults
7. Macro Settings for Gerontological Social Workers
8. Biological Changes and the Physical Well-Being of Older Adults
9. Introduction to Evidence-based Social Work Practice with Older Adults

Readings:

1. McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Chapter 1, 2
2. Levkoff, et al. (2006) *Evidence-based Behavioral Health Practices for Older Adults*. Chapter 1, 2

Face to Face Session 3 (January 27) & Web Session 4 (February 3)

Content:

1. Psychological Changes That Accompany Aging
2. Social Theories of Aging
3. "Successful" Psychosocial Aging
4. Implications of Psychosocial Changes for Social Work Practice with Older Adults
5. Conducting a Biopsychosocial Assessment
6. What is the Purpose of a Biopsychosocial Assessment?
7. Special Considerations in Assessing Older Adults
8. Components of a Comprehensive Assessment
9. Conditions for Conducting an Assessment

Readings:

1. McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Chapters 3 & 4

Face to Face Session 5 (February 10) & Web Session 6 (February 17)

Content:

1. Differential Assessment and Diagnosis; Impacts of Race/Ethnicity on Diagnosis
2. Depression in Older Adults
3. Dementia
4. Schizophrenia
5. Delirium
6. Differentiating between Depression, Dementia and Delirium
7. Anxiety Disorders, Differential Diagnosis of Anxiety

Readings:

1. McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Chapter 5
2. Levkoff, et al. (2006) *Evidence-based Behavioral Health Practices*. Chapters 5, 6

U.S. Public Health Service. (1999). Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General (Chapter 5: Older Adults and Mental Health, pp. 336-401). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/chapter5/sec1.html>

Face to Face Session 7 (February 24) & Face to Face Session 8 (March 3)

Content:

1. The Intervention Process
2. Obstacles of Intervention and Treatment in Older Adults
3. Developing a Relationship with an Older Adults
4. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
5. Advantages of the Group Work Approach
6. Validation Therapy
7. Life Review
8. Alternative Interventions in the Socioemotional Problems of Older Adults
9. Culturally Grounding Evidence-Based Practice
10. Quality Management in Evidence-Based Service Programs
11. Best Practice Models: Healthy Ideas Intervention & Interventions in Long-Term Care Settings

Readings:

1. McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Ch 6, 7
2. Levkoff, et al. (2006) *Evidence-based Behavioral Health Practices*. Chapters 3, 4

Web Session 9 (March 17) & Face to Face Session 10 (March 24)

Content:

1. Alcohol Use and Abuse by Older Adults
2. Treatment of Alcohol Problems in Older Adults
3. Drug Misuse and Dependency
4. Suicide among Older Adults
5. The Incidence of Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults
6. What Constitutes Abuse or Neglect of Older Adults?
7. Risk Factors Associated with Abuse or Neglect of Older Adults
8. Understanding the Causes of Maltreatment of Older Adults
9. Assessment of Abuse, Neglect or Self-Neglect
10. Designing Interventions to Prevent Abuse or Neglect
11. Abuse and Neglect in Nursing Homes
12. When an Older Adult Refuses Protective Services

Readings:

McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Chapters 8, 9

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: *Suicide Facts. Older Adults*. [Retrieved January 6, 2009].
<http://www.mentalhealth.org/suicideprevention/fivevs.asp>

Web Session 11 (March 31) and Web Session 12 (April 7)

Content:

1. Spirituality and Social Work with Older Adults
2. Incorporating Spirituality into Social Work Practice with Older Adults
3. End-of-Life Care for Older Adults
4. The Role of the Social Worker in the Dying Process
5. Bereavement and Grief
6. Hospice Care
7. Ethical Dilemmas in Death and Dying
8. Advance Directives

Readings:

McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Ch 10, 11

Face to Face Session 13 (April 14)

Content:

Productive Aging

1. "Aging in Place": Income Programs, Health Insurance and Support Services for Older Adults
2. The Future of Professional Practice in Gerontological Social Work

Readings:

1. McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009) *Social Work with Older Adults*. Chapter 13
2. Levkoff, et al. (2006) *Evidence-based Behavioral Health Practices for Older Adults*. Chapter 9

Face to Face Session 14 (April 21)

Content:

1. The Future of Professional Practice in Gerontological Social Work
2. Student Paper Presentations

Reading:

1. O'Shaughnessy, C.V. (2008). The Aging Services Network:
2. Broad Mandate and Increasing Responsibilities. *Public Policy and Aging Report*, 18(3), 1-18.

Web Session 15 (April 28)

Content: Final Examination and Course Evaluation

Bibliography

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- Davenport, G.M. (1999) *Working With Toxic Older Adults*. New York: Springer Publishing.
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- Grossman, A.H. (1995). At risk, infected, and invisible: Older gay men and HIV/AIDS. *JANAC*, Nov.-Dec.,6 (6), 13-19.
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