

SYLLABUS

FIELD/FOCUS OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE (AGING) - OL SWRK 4200/4300

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENT SPECIALIST:

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Judie Davies (2010) Faculty of Social Work The University of Manitoba Judie Davies has been a sessional lecturer in the Faculty of Social Work since 2003 at both the graduate and undergraduate level and distance education instructor since 2006. Her area of policy, practice and research is in gerontology. Her expansive work experience as well as her focus in the Masters and Ph.D. programs concerned social policy, housing, programs and services for older adults and their families, with a special focus on dementia care. Judie is currently in a post-doctoral position with the Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba.

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SYLLABUS

Welcome to Field Focus of Social Work Practice: Aging. This course provides a focus on promoting the well-being of older adults by strengthening opportunities, resources and capacities of elders in their environments and by creating services to correct conditions that limit human rights and the quality of life. The course is designed to expose students to issues affecting older adults both locally and globally. The information presented in the course will examine policy, programs and services in community and institutional settings, as well as clinical practice with older adults or elders, their families and groups.

CONTACTING YOUR INSTRUCTOR

For information on contacting your instructor as well as other important information from your instructor see the Instructor Letter in your course website.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar* describes this course as follows: A seminar for the critical examination of social work theory, values, policy and skills in the context of a field of focus of practice.

The course integrates policy and practice at micro, meso and macro levels. Course seminar topics may vary from year to year and are organized to cover various fields of practice. This course recognizes that working with older adults requires an integration of knowledge and critical thinking skills about who they are, from a life course perspective. This perspective views aging and developmental change as continuous processes that are experienced throughout life. It acknowledges the importance of gender, race, ethnicity, class and earlier life experiences, on how people age. An emphasis will be placed on social work practice with knowledge and skills of critical issues related to social justice and oppression of older people. Major arenas for social work practice and policy to be explored are; age-friendly communities, biopsychosocial and spiritual assessment and intervention, physical and mental impairment, substance abuse, end-of-life care, elder abuse, cultural diversity caregiving, home health and community care, hospital and long term care, and retirement and income security.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify opportunities and challenges of creating age-friendly communities.
2. Apply knowledge of the bio-psycho-social-spiritual-cultural assessment to determine services that are aimed at supporting, restoring, or replacing levels of functioning.
3. Demonstrate the ability to integrate critical issues in social work with older people within an inclusive life course perspective.
4. Discuss policies that promote, protect and ensure the rights of older persons.
5. Describe aging delivery systems for practice with older adults or elders and their family with an analysis of the social work role(s) and ethical responsibilities within that delivery system.
6. Integrate the role of advocate and educator to raise awareness of current practice, policy and research in the field of gerontology related to vulnerable clients and populations at risk.

COURSE MATERIALS

REQUIRED

Bookstore

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

Textbooks

McInnis-Dittrich, Kathleen (2014). *Social Work with Older Adults: A Biopsychosocial Approach to Assessment and Intervention*. (4th ed.). Toronto: Pearson Education Inc.

Ray, M., Bernard, M., & Phillips, J. (2009). *Critical Issues in Social Work with Older People*. London: Palgrave MacMillan

Required hardware and software

You require the following items for your computer for this course:

- Headset with attached microphone

DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION (DE) STUDENT RESOURCES

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is intended to provide a solid knowledge base about aging as a process, to reflect on critical issues in social work with older people and to introduce social work students to a wide range of assessment and intervention techniques. Aging in humans refers to a multidimensional process of physical, psychological and social change. Some dimensions of ageing grow and expand over time, while others decline. As society grows older and a greater portion of adults experience chronic illnesses and conditions, our expectations of later life will change dramatically with respect to employment, housing, social relationships, independent functioning, and quality of life. The course focuses on assessment from a biopsychosocial perspective. This view focuses on the individual in the context of person-in-environment and recognizes the importance of family and intergenerational social relationships in later life. Areas of discussion will reflect emerging trends and interrelated critical issues in the field of aging. The intent is for you to learn new social work knowledge and skills to address these emerging trends effectively and suggest promising policy and practice directions reflective of your field placement.

The course material is divided into 2 semesters of twelve weeks each, and 3 Unit Topics. Each week will have a specific focus and learning objective related to the Unit Topic. The course is divided into 6 assignments, 3 assignments for each semester due on the 4th, 8th, and 12th week of each semester. Each assignment will be submitted online. Detailed instructions on completing the assignment can be found within the assignment.

Instructional Content will be provided each week that highlights the major concepts students will be expected to comprehend. Embedded into this Instructional Content will be a number of audio files which discuss important concepts related to each week's objective, as well as PowerPoint presentations. Along with the Instructional Content will be textbook sections specific for each week as well as selected journal articles and /or web based documents.

There will be four mandatory web conferencing sessions as part of the course requirements. These are virtual classrooms that you access from your computer where we meet at a specific time and have live discussions using voice, text and PowerPoint presentations. In addition to your instructor, we will also have guest speakers.

It is mandatory that students attend these sessions as part of the course requirements.

UNIT TOPICS

Unit topics to be covered in **Semester 1** include the following:

1. Understanding Aging (Week 1-4)

This topic looks at the demographics of aging and ageism, global and local age-friendly community initiatives, from an inclusive life course perspective, and concepts of the aging process from biological changes to psychological changes and social theories of aging.

2. Social Work Assessment and Intervention (Week 5-8)

This topic covers the context for social work practice with older adults, conducting a comprehensive biopsychosocial assessment as well as a differential assessment and diagnosis of cognitive and emotional problems of older adults (depression, dementia, delirium). We will examine social work interventions in the socioemotional and cognitive problems of older adults or elders.

3. Critical Issues in Social Work with Older People (Week 9-12)

This topic is related to vulnerable populations of older adults and populations at risk. We will examine the growing concern of substance abuse and suicide, elder abuse and neglect, end-of-life care generally, and specifically the related roles, responsibilities and ethical dilemmas for social work practice with these populations. Finally, we will review the key concepts related to the three Unit Topics.

Unit topics to be covered in **Semester 2** include the following:

1. Aging Public Policy, Diversity and Disability (Week 1-4)

This topic is an overview of aging public policy, family relationships and transitions. We will examine the

current challenge to sustain security during life transitions in difficult economic times. We will examine aging with a disability, caregiving, work, retirement and income security, and aging and diversity.

2. Aging Delivery Systems (Week 5-8)

This topic sets the context of social work practice with older adults, by discussing the delivery systems for geriatric practice. We will focus on long term care, home health and community care, and geriatric hospital work and coping with chronic disease.

3. Communication and Information Technology (Week 9-12)

In this topic we will be discussing current issues in aging research such as communication technology in the "information age", sexuality, and spirituality and social work research in aging.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

This course will be topic based course. The learning activities will include:

- reading the instructional content;
- readings from the text;
- reading assigned journal articles;
- online discussions;
- reviewing of various websites; and
- web conference sessions

EVALUATION AND GRADING

The assignments have a variety of exercises.

DISTRIBUTION OF MARKS

Evaluation	Percentage
Assignment 1	15%
Assignment 2a - Online Discussion	5%
Assignment 2b - Paper	10%
Assignment 3	20%
Assignment 4 - Online Discussion	10%
Assignment 5	20%
Assignment 6	20%
Total	100%

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	> 93	Exceptional
A	86 - <93	Excellent
B+	79 - <86	Very good
B	72 - <79	Good
C+	65 - <72	Satisfactory
C	58 - <65	Adequate
D	50 - <58	Unacceptable
F	less than 50	Failure

Note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, AND EXAMINATION IMPERSONATION

You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

ASSIGNMENTS

All of your assignments will be submitted online using the assignment drop-box in the course website.

Assignment 1- Understanding Aging

Assignment 1 includes a maximum 2,250 word essay styled paper based on a personal age-friendly community assessment. The assessment includes using the checklist specific to the eight domains published by the World Health Organization (2007) to identify the age-friendliness of the community you live in.

Assignment 2 – Social Work Assessment and Intervention

Part A. Online Discussion

Discussion question 1 includes submission of a post of the role of depression, dementia and delirium in the case study of Mrs. Smith online. Check the course Calendar for posting dates.

Part B. Paper

The paper for assignment 2 includes a maximum 2,250 word essay on the bio-psychosocial-spiritual assessment of the case study of Mrs. Smith to determine services aimed at supporting, restoring, or replacing levels of functioning

Assignment 3 – Critical Issues in Social Work with Older People

Assignment 3 includes a maximum 3,000 word essay styled paper on a critical issue (s) in social work practice with older people relevant to your field placement.

Assignment 4 – Policy (Online Discussion)

Assignment 4 includes an online discussion policy from your field placement that promotes, protects and ensures the rights of older persons. It includes a 350 word post and three responses of 250 words to three other students.

Assignment 5 – Aging Delivery System

Assignment 5 includes a maximum 3,000 word essay styled paper that describes an aging delivery system for practice with older adults or elders and their family. Also included is an analysis of the services related to the social work role(s) and ethical responsibilities within the delivery system.

Assignment 6 – Communication

Assignment 6 includes developing a workshop to raise awareness related to a specific group of vulnerable clients and populations at risk. You will take the role of advocate and educator to develop a 90 minute workshop reflecting current social work practice, policy, and research in the field of gerontology based on your topic.

Note: Detailed instructions about the assignments are found in the course website.

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

Consult your course Calendar for the assignment due dates.

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