I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

This course introduces and develops social work practice skills and knowledge for work with older adults and their families. The course is founded on a strengths-based and social justice orientation to direct practice and will address the following key topics in aging: fundamental knowledge and context for practice, engagement and building therapeutic relationships, biopsychosocial assessments and care management, mental health interventions, substance abuse and suicide prevention, dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease, sexuality, elder abuse and neglect, chronic illness, caregiving, spirituality, aging in place, long-term care, and end of life. Critical attention to human diversity issues, cultural contexts for aging, and intersecting social identities will be prioritized throughout the course. Research and policies that inform and affect direct practice will also be discussed. Students are encouraged to integrate previous, current and anticipated practice experiences into class discussions and assignments.

II. MSW COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior</th>
<th>C1</th>
<th>Emphasized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage diversity and difference in practice.</td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</td>
<td>C6</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</td>
<td>C8</td>
<td>Reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>Emphasized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. BROWN SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Integrity: If a faculty member or student suspects that academic or professional integrity has been violated, they are required to submit an Academic Integrity or Professional Integrity Violation form found on Inside Brown for review by the Assistant Dean of the program. The Assistant Dean or designated representative will aid in the investigation of the violation, which includes but is not limited to gathering relevant evidence; conversations with the instructor, student(s) involved, witnesses, and others as necessary. Depending on the seriousness of the case, the Assistant Dean may choose to refer the matter directly to the University Student Conduct Board. This referral procedure will generally be followed if it is believed that the penalty is likely to involve suspension or expulsion from the University. The Assistant Dean for the program or designated representative will offer to meet privately with the student(s) against whom the complaint has been made. It is the student’s responsibility to familiarize themselves with the behaviors that constitute an academic integrity violation requiring referral.

Student Handbook 2019

Accommodations: If you have a learning, sensory, or physical disability or any other diagnosis that requires accommodations and/or assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please work with the Disability Resource Center, a University-wide resource that provides academic accommodations support and referrals. After requesting academic accommodations by providing appropriate documentation, students approved for accommodations will provide an Accommodation Letter to the instructor and are encouraged to work directly with the instructor to discuss specific course needs. The student’s Academic Advisor and/or the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs can support a student through this process.

Pronouns: The Brown School embraces and promotes gender expansiveness as reflective of the lived experiences of many students, staff, faculty and members of our expanded community. The correct use of an individual’s pronouns is a critical part of an individual's identity and of building an inclusive community. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to use pronouns during introductions, are expected to use expressed pronouns of all Brown School community members, and are encouraged to apologize when mistakes are made. Educational resources are available at: https://campuslife.wustl.edu/lgbtqia/lgbt-resources/gender-pronouns/

English Language Proficiency: If your English language proficiency is such that you may need special assistance in lectures, reading, written assignments, and/or exam taking, please communicate these needs to your instructor who may refer you to the Brown Communications Lab. If you would like help seeking additional English language resources, please visit the Global Programs Suite in Brown 309. You may also find the Academic Assistance resources available through the Office for International Students and Scholars to be helpful.

Professional Use of Electronic Devices in the Classroom: Computers or other electronic devices, including “smart pens” (devices with an embedded computer and digital audio recorder that records the classroom lecture/discussion and links that recording to the notes taken by the student), may be used by students at the discretion of the faculty member to support the learning
activities in the classroom. These activities include taking notes and accessing course readings under discussion. If a student wishes to use a smart-pen or other electronic device to audio record lectures or class discussions, they must notify the instructor in advance of doing so. Permission to use recording devices is at the discretion of the instructor, unless this use is an accommodation approved by Disability Resources.

Nonacademic use of laptops and other devices and use of laptops or other devices for other coursework is distracting and seriously disrupts the learning process for other people in the classroom. Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the classroom during class for nonacademic reasons or for work on other coursework. Nonacademic use includes emailing, texting, social networking, playing games, instant messaging, and use of the Internet. Work on other coursework may include, but is not limited to, use of the Internet, writing papers, using statistical software, analyzing data, and working on quizzes or exams. The nonacademic use of cell phones during class time is prohibited, and they should be set on silent before class begins. In the case of an emergency, please step out of the room to take the call. The instructor has the right to hold students accountable for meeting these expectations, and failure to do so may result in a loss of participation or attendance points, a loss of the privilege of device use in the classroom, or being asked to leave the classroom.

**Religious Holidays:** The Brown School recognizes the individual student’s choice in observing religious holidays that occur during periods when classes are scheduled. Students are encouraged to arrange with their instructors to make up work missed as a result of religious observance, and instructors are asked to make every reasonable effort to accommodate such requests.

**IV. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC SUPPORT POLICIES**

**Accommodations based upon relationship or sexual violence, including sexual harassment and stalking:** The University is committed to offering reasonable accommodations to students who are victims of relationship or sexual violence. Students are eligible for accommodations regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such accommodations may include but are not limited to implementation of a no-contact order, emergency housing, course/classroom assignment changes, assignment extensions and other academic support services. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your requests to rsvpcenter@wustl.edu or call directly to 314-935-3445.

There are four licensed RSVP counselors who serve as confidential resources. However, to implement requests for accommodations, limited information will be shared with the appropriate university administrator and/or faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX Director. If you would like to speak with directly Ms. Kennedy directly, she can be reached
at (314) 935-3118, jwkennedy@wustl.edu, or by visiting the Title IX office in Umrath Hall. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555 or your local law enforcement agency. See: Title IX

You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling (314) 935-3445 for an appointment or visiting the 4th floor of Seigle Hall. See: RSVP Center

Bias Reporting: The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: brss.wustl.edu.

Mental Health: Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See Mental Health Resources.

Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI): The Center of Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) supports and advocates for undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students from underrepresented and/or marginalized populations, creates collaborative partnerships with campus and community partners, and promotes dialogue and social change. One of the CDI's strategic priorities is to cultivate and foster a supportive campus climate for students of all backgrounds, cultures and identities. See: diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/

Additional Issues or Concerns: If you feel that you need additional supports in order to be successful in your time at Brown, beyond the mentioned accommodations, please contact your Academic Advisor or Danielle Bristow, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. They can assist you in navigating a myriad of concerns.

V. READINGS


Both of these books are available for purchase through online means and will be on reserve at the library. All other course readings will be provided through the Canvas site.

VI. ORGANIZATION OF COURSE

This course will meet weekly for 3 hours. Class time will consist mainly of lecture, discussion, small group work, and the use of audiovisual media (e.g. documentaries and clinical training
videos) for skill development. Several guest speakers have been invited to class (both in person and via Skype) to share first-hand knowledge of direct practice with older adults and to provide professional mentorship to students.

VII. ROLE OF FACULTY AND STUDENT

Class Participation: Class meetings will involve lecture, discussion, and experiential exercises; thus, attendance is crucial to your learning. Grades for participation will be based on the following considerations: 1) attendance (e.g., on-time arrival, returning promptly from breaks, attending the entire class); 2) thoughtful contribution to discussions (e.g., quality of contributions rather than quantity, listening and responding constructively to others’ comments, making positive contributions to the learning environment of the class); and 3) demonstrated attention to and reflection on the course readings. Please e-mail me and let me know if you need to miss a class for health, emergency, or other reasons.

Course Assignments: Late assignments are discouraged for numerous reasons, including the sequential nature of assignments, the importance of managing time effectively to complete written tasks in both academic and practice settings, and the importance of completing the semester in a timely manner to allow you to practice self-care during your break. In the event of a highly extenuating circumstance, please contact me at least 2 days prior to the due date to discuss an extension. In order to receive full credit for assignments, the assignments need to be turned in on time. For each day that an assignment is late, I will deduct 2 points off the possible points for that assignment.

E-mail: Please check your e-mail (via Canvas) regularly. This is the primary way I will communicate with you outside of class.

Student feedback: This is a small class and one benefit is that we can be flexible in terms of class time. If there is a topic that is not covered on the syllabus, or you would like to raise a discussion issue with the class, please let me know. Formal course evaluations will be completed at mid-semester and at the end of the semester.

VIII. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Skill Practice</td>
<td>Weeks 5-8</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Assessment Tool Critique</td>
<td>Schedule TBA</td>
<td>15 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and Aging: Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Sunday, October 13, by 5pm (E-mail to me)</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and Aging: Final Paper</td>
<td>Sunday, November 17 by 5pm (E-mail to me)</td>
<td>25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading criteria for written papers will include the extent to which:
  1) each aspect of the assignment is addressed;
2) thoughtful analysis is presented;
3) ideas are well-organized and communicated clearly;
4) relevant literature is used and documented (if appropriate to the assignment); and
5) appropriate grammar, spelling, and APA formatting of citations and references are used in all written materials.

**Grades:** Given the total possible value of class participation and each of the assignments described above, final grades will follow the scale below:

- 94 and above  A
- 90-93         A-
- 87-89         B+
- 84-86         B
- 80-83         B-
- 77-79         C+
- 74-76         C
- 70-73         C-
- 69 and below  F

**In-Class Skill Practice**

For the four scheduled skill practices, students will have the opportunity to engage in a mock clinical interaction or observation, and to write up a case note. The week following the class exercise, each student will turn in a half page (single spaced) case note documenting the initial assessment of the mock client, including preliminary clinical hypotheses and goals relative to the topic of emphasis in that skills practice. Please e-mail these case notes directly to me before class. These combined lab assignments (participation in class + case notes) will be worth 20 points of the final grade. I will go over this assignment more on the first day of class.

**In-Class Assessment Tool Critique**

In a seminar format, each student will present (once) an assessment tool for use with older adults and their families. Ideally this will be agency-based, or from your own field work (past or present). This brief presentation should include: 1) a description of the assessment tool (and a copy for your classmates, or a visual that we can reference (i.e. online or via Powerpoint, etc.); 2) your opinion of the tool’s strengths and weaknesses; 3) a discussion of the cultural sensitivity of the assessment; and 4) recommendations for improving the assessment tool. This presentation will be worth 15 points of the final grade.

Schedule for these short presentations will be determined in the first few weeks of class.

**Diversity and Aging: Evidence for Practice**

**Part I: Diversity Issue and Practice Topic**

The goal of this assignment is for students to develop skills and confidence in seeking out,
evaluating and integrating evidence into their social work practice with diverse older adults.

First, select a broad diversity issue in gerontology that interests you (e.g., immigration and aging, LGBTQ aging, communities of color and aging, HIV and aging, older women, developmental disabilities and aging, etc.) and then identify a practice related topic within this issue (e.g., supporting Latinx older adults, substance use and older lesbians, health promotion for African American elders, caregiver support and HIV, widowhood for older women, developmental disabilities and long-term care, etc.). Ideally, this will be a topic that you hope to engage with through direct practice.

Submit your issue and topic to me (by e-mail) by Sunday, September 15, by 5pm. This will not be graded. I will give feedback about the feasibility of the topic and suggestions for your literature search and paper before you get started on the bibliography. You are also welcome to e-mail me with questions before this date.

Part II: Annotated Bibliography (20 points possible)

Look for and gather sources on conceptual/theoretical perspectives on your topic (these can be articles, books, or book chapters), research papers (articles or reports with findings that shed light on the nature of the issue or an intervention), and practice or intervention guides. If you have questions about whether something is a good source, feel free to e-mail me for feedback.

Provide a reference list of 10 resources in APA format.

Under each reference please provide a short annotation that addresses the following questions:

1) What is the main argument, finding, theory, or intervention in this source?
2) How do you think it will help you understand the nature of your issue and topic better?
3) How do you think it might be used to inform your practice in this area?

[NOTE: This is not a standard APA format annotated bibliography.]

Part III: Final Paper (25 points possible)

Synthesize and critique the literature in this area from your perspective as a social work student. You may use additional resources beyond the 10 in your annotated bibliography, but it is not required. The paper should be approximately 12 pages long.

Please provide:

A) A synthesis of the literature. Summarize the literature you found in this area and discuss the main concepts, research findings, and practice discussions (if any) that stand out to you.

B) A critique of the literature and reflection on your use of evidence for practice (see below).

You do not necessarily have to organize your paper into two sections. You may integrate the
synthesis and critique components in many ways. Organize the paper however you feel best reflects the state of the literature and the way you are making sense of it. But, be sure to write a clear introduction and conclusion and use headings and sub-headings to indicate your organization. Creativity is encouraged, as each field will have different kinds of resources and gaps.

The “critique” aspect of this assignment is your opportunity to be more explicit and critical about the state of the literature in this area. To guide this discussion, please address the following questions to some degree (though not necessarily in this order):

1. Was it easy or difficult to find literature relevant to your topic?
2. What surprised you about the state of knowledge in this area---what did not surprise you? Why?
3. If there is a dominant approach, theoretical modality, or philosophy in this literature, is it “new” or is this a longstanding trend in the literature?
4. Overall, does the literature offer you, as an emerging practitioner in the field, a solid foundation for your work around this issue/problem area/intervention? Why/why not? Give examples to make your case.
6. What is the role of research evidence in general at your current practicum? If you are not currently in the field, reflect on past contexts that are relevant to social work practice. In these settings, how is scholarship and research used to inform practice and policy?
7. Provide some reflection on your own biases toward or against the use of research evidence in practice and anything you’ve learned in the process of preparing this annotated bibliography and paper.

Part IV: Informal Presentation

Informal class presentation: The last component of this assignment is a brief and informal presentation to the class (5 minutes) about the topic for your final paper. These presentations will take place on the last day of class and will count towards your class participation grade.

IX. COMPETENCY ALIGNMENT TO ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Assignments</th>
<th>Competency/ies</th>
<th>Dimension/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Skill Practice</td>
<td>C4, C6, C7</td>
<td>Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Assessment Tool Critique</td>
<td>C7, C9</td>
<td>Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity &amp; Aging: Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>C2, C4, C6, C7</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity &amp; Aging: Final Paper</td>
<td>C2, C4</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>C1, C4</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes, Values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C2, C4, C6, C7</th>
<th>Knowledge, Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class lectures on health and aging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class discussions on direct practice skills</td>
<td>C1, C2, C4, C6, C7</td>
<td>Knowledge, Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes, Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness activities</td>
<td>C1, C2</td>
<td>Cognitive and Affective Processes, Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical case video trainings and in-person mock assessment</td>
<td>C8</td>
<td>Skills, Cognitive and Affective Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentary viewings about diverse older adults and aging experiences</td>
<td>C2, C3</td>
<td>Knowledge, Values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## X. COURSE OUTLINE

### Week 1 (August 28): Introduction and Course Overview

Readings:


- Spend some time exploring this website and come to class prepared to discuss your impressions of this practice resource


### Week 2 (September 4): Foundational Knowledge and Context for Practice

Readings:


- Chapters 1, 2 & 3 [RESERVE](#)


- Chapter 1 [RESERVE](#)

Week 3 (September 11): Engagement and Building Therapeutic Relationships

Guest Lecture via Skype: Chrissie James, LCSW

Readings:

  ➢ Chapter 3 [RESERVE](#)


Week 4 (September 18): Biopsychosocial Assessments and Care Management

Special Off-Site Mock Assessment Experience with Beverly Sporleder
Meet at 1:30pm at 721 Radcliff, University City, MO 63130

Readings:

  ➢ Chapter 4 [RESERVE](#)

  ➢ Chapter 5 [RESERVE](#)


Week 5 (September 25): Mental Health Interventions, Part I

*Skills Lab A: Using narrative and biography in early assessment*

Readings:

Chapter 5 (pages 110-118 & 128-138) and Chapter 6 (pages 142-147)


Chapter 4 RESERVE


**Week 6 (October 2): Mental Health Interventions, Part II**

**Due: Lab A Case Notes (by e-mail)**

**Guest Lecture via Skype: Chrissie James, LCSW**

**Skills Lab B: Assessing health status and physical functioning**

Readings:


Chapter 6 (pages 148-170) & Chapter 7 RESERVE


Chapter 6 and 10 RESERVE


**Week 7 (October 9): Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention**

**Due: Lab B Case Notes (by e-mail)**

**Guest Lecture: Ryan Lindsay, LCSW**

**Skills Lab C: Assessing mental health and suicide risk**

Readings:


Chapter 8 RESERVE


**Week 8 (October 16): Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease**

**Due: Lab C Case Notes (by e-mail)**

*Skills Lab D: Assessing cognitive status*

**Readings:**

  - Chapter 5 (pages 119-128) **RESERVE**

  - Chapter 8 **RESERVE**


**Week 9 (October 23): Sexuality and LGBTQ Aging**

**Due: Lab D Case Notes (by e-mail)**

**Readings:**


**Week 10 (October 30): Elder Abuse and Neglect**

**Guest Lecture: Stephanie Skees, MSW**

Chapter 9 RESERVE


Week 11 (November 6): Psychotherapeutic Support for Managing Chronic Illness

Guest Lecture: Katie Virant, JD, MSW

Readings:


Week 12: NO CLASS MEETING (Gerontological Society of America Conference)

Class hours this week should be used to prepare your Diversity & Aging Final Paper. I will be available by e-mail and phone for consultation as you work on this assignment.

Week 13 (November 20): Caregiving and Spirituality

Guest Lecture: Marna Ghiglieri, MA, OTR/L

Readings:


**Week 14: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Holiday)**

**Week 15 (December 4): Aging in Place, Long-Term Care, and End of Life**

Guest Lecture: Joyce Wilton, MSW

Student Presentations of Final Papers

Readings:


**Week 16 (December 11): Course Wrap-Up**

[To be determined]