Penn
Social Policy & Practice
100 years of social work education

SWRK 794: Practice with Older Adults & Families

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Fall 2021

Office Hours: *Contact by email or ZOOM video conferencing for appt.*   *School of Social Policy & Practice*
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Course Time: Thursday 3:30 - 6:00 PM
ZOOM Video-Conferencing

Course Description

This is an advanced clinical methods course that builds on the knowledge gained in Foundation Methods. It is a required course in the Penn Aging Concentration (PAC) program for the MSW. This course focuses on practice with older adults and families within a life course perspective. It examines the nature of the aging process, needs and life issues, the ways in which persons adapt to changes, and the ways in which interventions may assist with these adaptations. Students learn the following:

(a) Assessment skills, (b) case management skills, and (c) Evidence-Based Intervention skills such as Problem Solving Therapy), (d) Telehealth / TeleMental Health skills, (e) rapid assessment and diagnostic tools that are needed to work effectively with older populations and family caregivers in a

variety of hospital-based, home-based. community-based, and institutional settings (Primary Care, Psychiatry, Hospital Inpatient & Outpatient Units, Dementia, Alzheimers, Home Health Care, PACE, ALFs. The course emphasizes evidence-based practices that enhance quality of life, dignity, respect for differences, and maximum independent functioning. Students will be asked to develop a model of practice based on knowledge of this growing population, social work values, and practice concepts.

The Council on Social Work Education 2015 EPAS Competencies

The School of Social Policy & Practice's MSW program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The curriculum therefore implements the nine required social work competencies in the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) (https://cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS pages 7-9).

This course prepares students for developing the following competencies:

Educational Objectives:

1. To heighten sensitivity to human development in the later years.(Competency1,2: Demonstrate Ethical & Professional Behavior; Engage Diversity& Difference in Practice)

2. To guide the student's development ofknowledgeand clinical skillswith which to pursue a differential diagnosis and comprehensive assessment of older clients.(Competency 7: Assessment of Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, Communities)

3. To introduce the student to contributions of other disciplines to the assessment and treatment of older adults. (Competency 2, 7, 8: Engage Diversity& Difference in Practice; Assessment of Individuals, Families Groups; Intervene with Individuals, Families, & GroupsOrganizations, Communities)

4. To explore values dilemmas which affect practice with older adults.(Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical & Professional Behavior)

5. To increase the student's interviewing skillsand effectiveness with and on behalf of older persons. (Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice)

6. To help the student clarifyand acquire models of practice for working with older persons. (Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical & Professional Behavior; Competency 4: Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research -Informed Practice; Competency 7: Assessment of Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, Communities; Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with ndividuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, Communities)

7. To increase the student's ability to assess and treat mental health and social adjustment issues in older adults through the use of evidence-based practice interventions. (Competency 4: Engage inPractice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice; Competency 7: Assessment of Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, Communities; Competency 9: Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, Communities).

Social Work Domains addressed in this Course:

Social Work Practice Methods: Real-world clinical skills, advanced practice knowledge and attitudes towards older persons, "real world" cases studies, valuing a diverse world, critical thinking, and analysis.

Methods to Attain Course Objectives:

Assigned videos, readings, in-class lectures, Standardized Patient Training Lab, group activities, role-playing, group discussions, DVDs, case studies and discussions, student journaling, required written assignments, in-class presentations

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Instructor Responsibilities:

The instructor will be responsible for scheduling weekly class and CANVAS course online activities, providing mini-lectures, selection of readings and video presentations, and will be available during class, by e-mail or via ZOOM video conferencing to discuss student questions or assignments related to the course. The instructor will make every effort to return student assignments with grades and comments within a reasonable time in order to provide feedback.

Student Responsibilities:

➢ *What is Expected of MSW Clinical Practice Students:*
- Come to class prepared, having read and thought about the assigned videos and readings prior to each session
- Participate actively and relevantly in class discussions and experiential exercises/activities
- Submit written assignments on time
- Cell phones are not to be used during this class unless otherwise specified
- Familiarize yourself with CANVAS Course site online.

➢ *Class Attendance Policy:*

This is simple. Students are expected to attend all classes. If a student is unable to attend class, he/she should inform the instructor in advance of class. A message on the instructor's voice mail or e-mail is sufficient. If there is a problem, let me know and we can problem-solve. Attendance will be taken at all class sessions. If the student misses a class, the student is responsible for making up any missed work and for obtaining any other information that was disseminated in class from student colleagues. Students who miss 3 classes, for any reason, will not be eligible to receive credit for the course and will be required to withdraw from it or receive a failing grade. Please note, it is not always possible to make up missed time because of the nature of the course.

➢ *Evaluating your Work*

1) Quality of written assignments: all papers are to be of graduate level quality, well documented with proper sources and citations, using APA format, and submitted on time. If the paper is late,

    please review the late assignment policy below. Papers will be evaluated based on the assignment requirements, level of critical thought and analysis, student self-awareness and reflection, clarity of understanding and explication of the course concepts, use of the current empirical literature, use of relevant field internship case examples, and writing quality.

    Class participation: attendance, quality and quantity of participation, participation in experiential exercises, evidence of preparation for class, and peer discussion activities.

➢ *Late Paper Policy*

   Late papers are frowned upon. Rule #1: Submit assignments on time.

   A half-grade deduction will occur for each day that the assignment is late (e.g. A to A- A- B+ etc.).

   Sometimes there are extenuating circumstances. If there is an extenuating circumstance, and you have not negotiated an extension date within ten days before the actual assignment due date, a half grade point will automatically be deducted for late papers prior to grading (e.g., from A to A-). Again, please, don't let this happen. **Papers are due on their due date. Please email all assignments to the instructor (**zgellis@upenn.edu**) and a confirmation receipt will be sent to you.**

➢ *Professional Code of Conduct:* Failure to meet generally accepted social work standards of ethics and professional conduct, personal integrity or emotional stability requisite for professional practice, as well as inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward student colleagues, faculty, or staff (at school or field placement) will be the basis for academic review based on the MSW Student Policies & Procedures.

➢ *Professional Performance Standards (MSW Program):*
All students must meet required standards of ethical behavior for professional social work practice. The standards, along with related skill areas and required behaviors for each, are delineated in the SP2 Student Handbook.

➢ **Code of Academic Integrity**: Students are expected to conduct themselves consistent with the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity, which presents standards regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions, and other actions. Students are expected to be familiar with the Code, which can be found at http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html

➢ *Incompletes – A grade of Incomplete is given at the end of the semester only when a student has discussed the matter (within an appropriate timeframe (at least one week, i.e. not at the last minute) with the instructor and there are extenuating circumstances that clearly justify an extension beyond the requirements established for the other students in the class.*

➢ *Statement on Disability:*

Academic accommodations are available to students with documented disabilities. In order to access the accommodations for which you may be qualified, please register with the office of Disability Services. The staff there will verify your need for specific accommodations and provide you with a memo to inform me of your needs. Once you have received this memo, please make an appointment to see me privately to discuss your needs. Please be aware that any needed accommodations cannot be implemented retroactively; therefore timely notification of your needs is in your best interest.

Required Course Activities:

On CANVAS, follow the directions for each weekly module for class preparation.

(1) Mini-Lectures, Videos, Handouts, and websites are provided on the CANVAS course site**.
(There is no textbook for this course)**

(2) Required and supplementary (for reference only) **course articles are listed weekly for each class session.**

All articles are accessible on the CANVAS course site.

(3) Videos on Aging. A series of brief videos will be offered on current "gerontology" topics throughout the course. Discussion questions are delineated in the course syllabus and will accompany the clips. The videos can be accessed on the CANVAS course site. Group discussions and weekly activities will follow. Each video provides the number of minutes in length.

(4) JOURNALING - **Becoming a Social Worker** & **"Geriatrics Social Work" Specialist**

Weekly Course Journal Questions

a) **Journal Questions: Answer all weekly journal question.** Questions may be related to videos and/or required readings throughout the course.

b) **General Attitudes:** Self-reflect on Aging as a developmental process; assess changes in **your general attitudes toward older adults** during the course.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS and DUE DATES

Important Information for all assignments:

Please send assignments via email. **Please title the electronic document with your last name right after the course number.** So, for example: SWRK 794 your last name Journal 1.doc. I will acknowledge each emailed assignment by replying briefly. *****If you don't hear from me after a reasonable time, (e.g., a day), please re-send as follow-up.**

1. Class Participation/Engagement:	**20%**

Each student is expected to attend all class sessions and actively contribute to case studies, class and online discussions, engage in topical exercises, and demonstrate completion of course reading assignments. (**20% of the final course grade**)

2. Journaling:	2 x 20% =	**40%**

➥ **Due Dates: October 7 and November 4 by 3:00 PM (EST)**
Email assignments to instructor (zgellis@upenn.edu)

(**20% each** journal for a total of **40% of the Final course grade**)

3. Case Study Final Assignment (case study to be given by instructor)	**40%**

(**40% of Final course grade**)

➥ **December 9 by 5:00 PM (EST)**
Email assignments to instructor (zgellis@upenn.edu)

The final assignment requires students to use a case study.

Letter grades will be assigned below:

97-100: A+
94-96: A
90-93: A-
87-89: B+
84-86: B
80-83: B-
77-79: C+
74-76: C
70-73: C-
60-69: D (In MSW required classes, a D converts to an F)   Below 60: F

If a Final Assignment is not handed in to the instructor, it will result in a course failure.

Late assignments will be reduced by one-half letter grade each day after the due date. (see late paper policy)

CLASS SCHEDULE

KNOWLEDGE & ATTITUDES DOMAIN:

The field of Aging, demographic trends, context of geriatrics social work practice,

Week 1	Introduction to the Course
	Demographics and Aging in the US

Topics
- Introduction to the course, overview of the syllabus and assignments
- Demographics of Aging
- Theoretical Perspectives for practice with older adults
- Social work roles/settings with older adults and their families
- Myths and facts of aging; ageism (in-class activities)

*CLINICAL SKILLS DOMAIN***:**

Social Work Interviewing and Assessment with Older Adults & Families
Mental Health Disorders
Cognitive Impairment and Dementia

Week 2	Bio-Psychosocial Assessment and Interviewing Skills
	Clinical Self-Awareness – Older Adults

Topics
- Assessment and interviewing skills with older adults
- Building rapport; adaptations to work with older people
- Transference and counter-transference issues in Aging
- Interview Tools and Assessment Scales:
    - Folstein Mini Mental Status Exam (MMSE), ADLs, IADLs,
    - Social Netowrk
    - Penn Safety Scale (home and personal safety issues)

Week 3	Successful Aging Theme

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS Reading**: Rowe, J.W., & Kahn, R.L. (1997). Successful aging. *The Gerontologist, 37*(4), 433-451.

✓**CANVAS Reading**:   Rowe, J.W. & Kahn, R.L. (2015). Successful aging 2.0: Conceptual expansions for the 21st century. *The Journals of Gerontology*, 70(4), 593-596.

CLINICAL SKILLS DOMAIN
Home & Community Based Settings: Homecare; Adult Day, PACE, ALFs, Nursing Home, Green Homes

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Week 4	Home & Community-Based Care
	Alternative Settings, Residential & Adult Day Settings, ALFs, Nursing Homes, Green Homes

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Required Activities:

Read - Cabin, W. (2010). Lifting the home care veil from depression: OASIS-C and evidence-based practice. *Home Health Care Management & Practice, 22*(3), 171-177.

--How to Choose a Nursing Home (CMS).
--Zarit, S., Femia, E., Watson, J., Rice-Oeschger, L., & Kakos, B. (2004). Memory club: A group intervention for people with early-stage dementia and their care partners. *The Gerontologist, 44*(2), 262-269.
--NPR article on the Village Movement

Week 5	Hospice, End-of-life, and Palliative Care

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS Reading**: Talking about Serious News
✓**CANVAS Reading**: Five Wishes Booklet

✓**CANVAS Required Reading**: Gregory, C., & Gellis, Z.D. (2020). Problem solving therapy for home-hospice caregivers: A pilot study. *J of Social Work in End-of-Life & Palliative Care.* https://doi.org/10.1080/15524256.2020.1800554

Week 6	Mental Health and Older Adults Part I: Evidence-Based Depression Treatment for Older Adults

Topics

- Depression: prevalence estimates
- Suicide among older adults
- Mental health screening and assessment tools for use in clinical practice
- Key depression symptoms profile
- Geriatric risk factor assessment

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS Reading**: Gellis, Z.D., & Kenaley, B. (in press, 2020). Geriatric depression : Assessment and treatment. In L. Rapp-McCall, (Ed.) Oxford *Social Work Desk Reference*, 3rd edition, New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 7   Fall Break

Review Mental Health Treatments for Older Adults aticle

Week 8   Mental Health and Older Adults Part II: **Problem Solving Therapy for Depression**

Topics
- Problem Solving Therapy (PST): a type of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Evidence-based Problem Solving Therapy

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS**: Case Study 1 – **Evidence-Base Treatment**

✓**CANVAS Reading**:
Gellis, Z.D. & Nezu, A.T. (2011). Integrating depression treatment for homebound medically ill older adults: Using evidence-based Problem-Solving Therapy. In K. Sorocco, & S. Lauderdale (Eds.), *Implementing Cognitive Behavior Therapy with older adults.* (391-420). New York: Springer.

✓**CANVAS Reading:**
Gellis, Z. D., McGinty, J. Tierney, L., Burton, J., Jordan, C., & Misener, E. (2008). Randomized controlled trial of problem-solving therapy for minor depression in home care. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 18(6), 596-606.

Week 9	**Cognitive Functioning, Mild Cognitive Impairment, & Dementia Assessment & Treatment Issues**

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS Reading**: Gellis, Z. D., McClive, K., & Brown, E. (2009). Treatments for depression in older persons with dementia. *Annals of Long Term Care*, 17(2), 29-36.

💻 **CANVAS Reference Tool:**
   o Go to the National Institute on Aging website on CANVAS and read up on Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia
   o Review the Alzheimer's Association website

Week 10	**Aging, Physical Health, and Well-Being**

Assignment #2 DUE November 4 by 3:00 PM (EST)

Topics
   • Aging, Physical Health, and Well-Being
   • Concept of Longevity
   • Ageism – Age Discrimination

Required Student Activities:

👁 **WATCH CANVAS Video** – *TED Talk: Blue Zones: How to Live to 100*

👁 **WATCH CANVAS Video** – *Longevity and Aging*

👁 **WATCH CANVAS Video** – *Age Discrimination*

Week 11	**Working with Families / Caregivers**

Topics:
- Caregiver issues and interventions
- Family meetings
- Grandparents parenting grandchildren
- Special issues of LGBT elders

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS Required Reading**:   RAISE Family Caregiver Act article on CANVAS

✓**CANVAS Recommended Reading**:   Stein, G., Beckerman, N., & Sherman, P. (2010). Lesbian and gay elders and long term care: identifying the unique psychosocial perspectives and challenges. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 53*, 421-435.

✓**CANVAS Recommended Reading**:   Mahoney et al. (2005). African American, Chinese, and Latino family caregiver's impressions of the onset and diagnosis of dementia: Cross-cultural similarities & differences. *Gerontologist, 45*(6), 783 -792

✓**CANVAS Recommended Reading**:   Schulz, R., & Martire, L. (2004). Family caregiving of persons with dementia: Prevalence, health effects, and support strategies. *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 12*(3), 240-248

Week 12	Mental Health and Older Adults Part III: **Anxiety Disorders**

Required Activities:

✓**CANVAS Recommended Reading**:   Canuto, A., et al. (2018). Anxiety disorders in old age. Psychiatric comorbidities, quality of life, & prevalence according to age, gender, and country. *Amer J. Geria Psychiatry, 26(*2), 174-185.

✓**CANVAS Recommended Reading**:   Ayers, C., Sorrell, J.,Thorp, S., & Wetherell, J. (2007). Evidence-based psychological treatments for late-life anxiety. *Psychology of Aging, 22*(1), 8-17.

Week 13	Thanksgiving Break NO CLASS

Week 14	Medications and Older Adults

✓**CANVAS Reading**: Polypharmacy in Older Adults

Week 15: Common Medical Conditions in Older Adults

✓**Read CANVAS:** Golden, A. et al. (2010). Care management's challenges and opportunities to reduce the rapid rehospitalization of frail community-dwelling older adults, *Gerontologist, 50*, 451-458.

>   **In-Class Group Discussion**

Additional Gerontology Resources

Websites:

Advocacy

Medicare Rights Center	www.medicarerights.org
National Alliance for Caregiving	www.caregiving.org
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging	www.n4a.org
National Citizens Coalition of Nursing Home Reform	www.nccnhr.org
National Senior Citizen's Law Center	www.nsclc.org
Older Women's League	www.owl-national.org/

Aging Organizations-General

Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work	http://agesw.org/
Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral	www.Alzheimers.org
American Association of Retired Persons	www.aarp.org
American Geriatrics Society	www.americangeriatrics.org

American Society on Aging   www.asaging.org
Association for Gerontology in
      Higher Education   www.aghe.org

Gerontological Society of America   www.geron.org
Geriatric Social Work Initiative   www.gswi.org/index_new.html

International Association of Gerontology   www.sfu.ca/iag
NASW National Office   www.naswdc.org
National Association for Home Care   www.nahc.org
National Association for Professional
      Geriatric Care Managers   www.caremanager.org
National Council on Aging   www.ncoa.org

Death and Dying

Last Acts   www.lastacts.org
Midwest Bioethics   www.midbio.org
National Hospice and Palliative Care Org.   www.nhpco.org

Demographic Data/Reports/Research
Ageline   www.research.aarp.org/ageline/
American Federation for Aging Research   www.afar.org/

Healthy People 2010:Understanding and
      Improving Health   www.health.gov/healthypeople/Default.htm

Older Americans 2000: Key Indicators
      of Well Being   www.agingstats.gov
National Archives of Computerized
Data on Aging   www.icpsr.umich.edu/nacda/

Resources for Women's Health and Aging   www.agingresearch.org

US Census Bureau Data   www.census.gov/
World Health Organization   www.who.int/home-page/

Diversity Websites
National Caucus and Center
      on Black Aged   www.ncba-blackaged.org
National Indian Council on Aging   www.nicoa.org

Foundations
AARP Andrus Foundation   www.andrus.org
Archstone Foundation   www.archstone.org

John A. Hartford Foundation   www.jhartfound.org
Project on Death in America   www.soros.org/death/
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation   www.rwjf.org

Governmental Agencies
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services   www.cms.hhs.gov
National Center for Communication and
        Consumer Services   www.aoa.dhhs.gov/naic/
National Institute on Aging   www.nia.nih.gov/

Social Security Administration   www.ssa.gov
US Administration on Aging   www.aoa.gov/

Selected Journals in Gerontology/Geriatrics

Activities, Adaptation and Aging	Journal of Applied Gerontology
Aging and Mental Health	American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry
American Journal of Alzheimer's Care and Research	Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology
American Journal of Hospice Care	Journal of Gerontological Nursing
Clinical Gerontologist	Journal of Gerontological Social Work
Death Studies	Journal of Gerontology (Series A or B)
Generations	Annals of Long Term care
Geriatrics	Journal of Religion, Spirituality, & Aging
Gerontologist	Journal of Women and Aging
International Journal of Aging & Human Development	Omega: Journal of Death and Dying
Journal of Aging Studies	Psychology and Aging
Research on Aging	Journal of the American Geriatrics Society