COURSE DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE

This seminar, placed in the final term of the honours BSW program, following the final field placement (SOWK 4600), provides a framework to assist students in reviewing, analyzing and integrating their theoretical knowledge, practice experience and life experience. The intent is for students to begin to define their own identity as social workers and to begin to develop both an orientation towards continuous learning for practice and an ability to evaluate their own learning.

OBJECTIVES

This course is designed on an adult learning model where each student directs her/his own learning. Students set their objectives, decide what they are going to do to meet their objectives and what they will hand in, within the context of the objectives of the course.

The objectives of the course are to provide you with the opportunity to:

1. Integrate knowledge and skills acquired through classroom and field instruction;
2. Identify a conceptual framework for social work practice that allows them to articulate their own philosophy of practice;
3. Develop the ability to monitor and evaluate their own practice.

At the completion of the course it is expected that the students will have developed skills in identifying their own learning needs and in using small peer groups to facilitate their learning. They will have had the experience of using self-evaluation and exploration to develop their own philosophical and conceptual orientation to social work practice.
**SCHEDULE OF TIMES AND DATES**

This course is offered at fall term, 2015. It will be held on Wednesday from 6:00 to 9:00 pm.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

There are no required textbooks for this course.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

There are three required assignments for this course and the expectation that you attend and actively participate in all of the classes.

You are expected to attend and constructively participate in class discussion and present a progress report on the key aspects of your learning contract. An attendance sheet will be circulated each week and it is your responsibility to sign this sheet weekly. If you arrive late or leave early, please be sure that you have signed the sheet or you may be marked absent. In exceptional circumstances such as illness or family emergency, exceptions can be made if the professor is notified in advance and if a medical or other appropriate certificate is presented to the course instructor. Missing more than one class will require you to complete an extra assignment.

1. **ASSIGNMENTS**

   1) **Learning Contract (20% of course grade)**

      Draft discussion, class 3.

      Final contract due in class 5.

   2) **Portfolio (70% of course grade)**

      The portfolio must encompass all of the work (evidence) agreed to in the learning contract. **Due in class 11.**

   3) **Self-assessment of the work done in this course (10% of course grade)**

      **Due in class 11.**

**INFORMATION FOR ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION**

**Development of Learning Objectives**

This course centres on each student working toward developing a personal approach to practice, using a consolidation of their own knowledge, and a self-assessment of skills and experience to date. The learning contract is intended to be the principal means whereby this purpose is achieved. Thus the learning objectives within the contract are a crucial part of the whole process and while very individualized, must also be related to
the overall purpose of the course. The objectives make conscious and explicit the individual work toward this broader end. The action learning groups are a means for providing peer support and assistance in that work.

During the course, gaps in knowledge and skills will undoubtedly be identified. This is a result of the process of self-assessment you are asked to do and will provide new objectives for future learning after graduation. You are not being asked to address all these gaps in the process of the course. It is intended to provide a beginning for the ongoing task of monitoring your own practice, seeking out new learning and developing new skills—an important aspect of professional responsibility.

Ask yourself these questions:

1) What do I need to review and reflect on in order to be able to develop a personal approach to social work practice?
2) Where am I now with respect to social work practice? What do I know that will help me? What skills do I have that I can use to apply this knowledge?
3) How can I identify and prioritize the gaps in my knowledge and/or skills that will require learning after I graduate?
4) What objectives lend themselves best to using the help of my peer group to achieve this?

The objectives must be action oriented; the result must be observable; and they must be realistic in the time frame of the course. It may be helpful to acknowledge that you may have many possible objectives related to your role and future as a social worker. Only a very few—hopefully ones that are immediate and salient for you—can be addressed in the short span of this course.

**Preparation of Learning Contract**

Each learning contract must include approximately 2 objectives. One of the objectives must address the ethics of social work practice. These objectives must be clearly specified and they must reflect the objectives of the course. Students must write a paragraph for each objective plus an introductory paragraph demonstrating how each objective reflects the objectives of the course and how all the objectives combined cover the course objectives. These paragraphs must do more than simply assert that they do. They must demonstrate that they do.

Under each objective the student is to list what tasks and activities they will undertake to meet their learning objectives. The resources needed to undertake the necessary tasks and activities must be listed. If the student has the intention of interviewing anyone that person must have been contacted and an appointment time set up by the time the final contract is submitted. A realistic time frame for the completion of each task or activity must also accompany the list of tasks and activities.
The evidence of accomplishment to be handed in within the portfolio must be clearly specified and must meet the objective it is intended to satisfy. The format of that evidence should be clearly defined.

**PREPARATORY WORK**

For class 2, 16th September 2015, students must complete the following preparatory work for the Honours Intergrative Seminar

Mini-assignment:

i. Review all your old course outlines, assignments, learning contracts and evaluations of your placements. Review what you have done in your program.

ii. Identify an area that you would like to work/research on after graduation.

iii. Come prepared to discuss your review with others on the 16th of September 2015.

**OUTLINE OF WEEK END SESSIONS**

**Class 1. 9th of September 2015**

**Topic:** Introductions and review of course outline. We will begin by convening as a class and then will break into smaller action learning groups. These groups will serve as a sounding board, a source of feedback and a place to bounce ideas around or practice specific skills for each student as s/he pursues her/his own learning objectives. Your participation in the action learning groups is mandatory.

**Class 2. 16th of September 2015**

**Topic:** Introduction to preparation of learning contract and discussion of mini-assignment in small groups. The class will be devoted to delineating and developing the learning contract each student must design. While each student may decide (in negotiation with the instructor) on their own personal learning objectives they must cover in some way the course objectives (see above).

**Class 3. 23rd of September 2015**

**Topic:** Identify two learning objectives and continue to work on learning contracts in small groups. Move your draft from the general to the specific. Visit to the library.
Exercise: How to do a literature review on your topic? **Draft learning contract due** at the end of the class.

### Class 4. 30th of September 2015

**Topic:** Review of learning contract. We will discuss instructor’s feedback on the draft of your learning objectives. Divide in action learning groups. Individual meetings with Instructor if necessary. Continue to work on the draft of your learning contract. Present your draft learning contract to your group members. Brainstorming and blackboard exercise.

### Class 5. 7th of October 2015

**Topic:** Instructor will review requirements for portfolio and self-assessments. **Final learning contract due at the end of the class.**

### Class 6. 14th of October 2015

**Topic:** Instructor will give feedback on Final Learning Contracts. Individual meetings with the instructor.

### Class 7. 21st of October 2015

**Topic:** Meet in your ALG. Instructor will visit your action learning group. Individual meetings with Instructor if required.

### FALL BREAK 2015

### Class 8. 4th of November 2015

**Topic:** Meet in large group for check in and progress reports. Continue working in your ALG. Instructor will visit your ALG. Individual meetings with Instructor if required.

### Class 9. 11th of November 2015

**Topic:** Meet in your ALG. Instructor will visit your action learning group. Individual meetings with Instructor if required.

### Class 10. 18th of November 2015

**Topic:** Meet in large group for check in and progress reports. Continue working in your Action Learning groups. Instructor will visit your action learning group. Individual meetings with Instructor if required.
Class 11. 25th of November 2015

Learning contract portfolio and Self-evaluation due in class 11, 25th of November 2015.

Class 12. 2nd of December 2015


General Overall Grading Criteria for course assignments

When evaluating the assignments the Instructor will take into account the following:

1) balanced coverage of the course objectives;
2) had met own criteria from the learning contract and has done what was agreed to in the learning contract;
3) variety of evidence submitted;
4) depth of thinking/analysis;
5) evidence of self awareness in self assessment;
6) evidence of a beginning sense of one’s own philosophy and approach to social work.


1) Are the learning objectives clear, concrete and possible?
2) Are the tasks and activities clearly related to the learning objectives and doable? If those tasks are accomplished will the learning objective be met?
3) Is the workload appropriate for a half credit course?
4) Are necessary resources and a realistic time frame included?
5) Will the evidence to be handed in demonstrate that the learning objective has been met?
6) Are the criteria for marking clear and appropriate?
7) Has the student clearly shown how their personal learning objectives will satisfy the course objectives?

**Self-Assessment: Points to Guide the Development and Evaluation of the Self-Assessment:**

1) Evidence of self awareness;

2) Ability to integrate knowledge and practice into a personal approach to social work practice;

3) Ability to self evaluate one’s own work, its strengths and weaknesses both in this course and in the program;

4) Identification of further learning goals;

5) Awareness of goals, framework and values for one’s practice

6) Awareness of contradictions and dilemmas of practice.

**Written work evaluation criteria:**

i. **Research/Content**: Formal essay/discussion piece is based on a solid foundation of good research and evidence. Did you use appropriately the best books, articles, and/or documents on the topic? Did you choose appropriate quotes for your arguments? Did you distinguish your voice from the voice of the authors you are using to build your arguments? Did you choose the appropriate tasks and activities to gather evidence? (40%)

ii. **Argument/Thesis**: Did you introduce, defend and conclude a coherent argument or thesis throughout your portfolio? Does it make sense? Does it have internal coherence? Does it indicate depth of analysis? Is there an analytical thread running through your portfolio? (40%)

iii. **Style/Mechanics**: Includes spelling, grammar, expression, paragraphing, format, proofreading, correct and consistent notation of footnotes/endnotes and bibliography. (20 %)

**Final grades may be subject to adjustment by the Dean’s office.**

**GENERAL REMINDERS**

**Students with special needs**

If you require special accommodations as a result of a disability, please talk to me as soon as possible. You must also contact the Paul Menton Centre for Persons with Disabilities to obtain a letter of accommodation for any special arrangements. If you require special accommodations for assignments, you must contact the Paul Menton Centre at least two weeks before the due date of the assignment.
Accommodation for religious observance

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should provide me with a formal written request so that alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements can be made. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event.

Assignments on time

Papers must be submitted on time. Handing in assignments late is unfair both to other students who hand them in on time and the instructor who must submit grades on time. In exceptional circumstances (illness or family emergency) it may be difficult to meet the deadline and in such cases you must contact the instructor before the paper is due. In these cases extensions to the due date must be justified with a medical or other appropriate certificate.

Work submitted after the final date without prior discussion with the instructor will be deducted one letter grade for each day late, e.g., a paper which has been graded B+ will receive a B for the first day overdue, a B- for the second overdue day etc.

Handing in and returning papers

Please be advised to keep an extra copy of your final portfolio. Portfolios had to be in Ottawa on the 3rd of April, 2006. To facilitate the return of your portfolio please provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your final paper and it will be returned to you through the mail. Otherwise a specific time for paper pick up at the main office will be established.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- Reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original sources;
- Submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- Using another’s data or research findings;
- Failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- Handing in “substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.”
Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of “F” for the course.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Carleton University is strongly committed to providing access and accommodation for all individuals with identified and duly assessed disabilities. The University has a Senate-approved policy on Academic Accommodation that forms part of its Human Rights Policy. This policy should be consulted for further information and is available at the front of this Calendar and online at: carleton.ca/equity. The policy promotes efforts to accommodate students with disabilities so that they will have the opportunity to meet learning objectives and be fairly evaluated in their performance. In no case, however, does academic accommodation negotiate away, lower, or remove the academic standards and learning objectives of any course or program, rule, regulation, or policy at the University.

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities is the designated unit at the University for assisting the Carleton community in integrating persons with disabilities into all aspects of Carleton’s academic and community life. The Paul Menton Centre provides assessment of academic accommodation, advises students on strategies to open a dialogue with instructors and acts as consultant, facilitator, coordinator and advocate in this area for all members of the University community.

The Paul Menton Centre provides individualized support services, based on appropriate and up to date documentation, to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder (ADD), visual impairments, head injuries, physical disabilities including mobility impairments, or who have psychiatric, other medical or non-visible disabilities.

Students are responsible for applying for special services by making an appointment with the appropriate coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre. All requests will be considered on the basis of individual need. Students are advised to come to the Centre early in the term to discuss service requests.

Examination accommodations for all tests and examinations (in-class, CUTV, or formally scheduled) must be arranged by specific deadline dates. Please consult the Paul Menton Centre for a list of deadlines for all examinations. Accommodation requests not made prior to the specified deadlines will not be fulfilled.

**Accommodation for Students with Religious Obligations**

Carleton University accommodates students who, due to religious obligation, must miss an examination, test, assignment deadline, laboratory, or other compulsory event. The University has a Senate-approved policy on religious accommodation that forms part of its Human Rights Policy, available at: carleton.ca/equity.
Accommodation will be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Students should make a formal written request to the instructor(s) for alternative dates and/or means of satisfying requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of any given academic term*, or as soon as possible after a need for accommodation is known to exist, but in no case later than the penultimate week of classes in that term. Instructors will make reasonable accommodation in a way that shall avoid academic disadvantage to the student.

Students unable to reach a satisfactory arrangement with their instructor(s) should contact the Director of Equity Services. Instructors who have questions or wish to verify the nature of the religious event or practice involved should also contact this officer.