COURSE DESCRIPTION
This seminar, placed in the final term of the honours BSW program following the final field placement, provides a framework to assist students in reviewing, analyzing and integrating their theoretical knowledge and practice experience. As indicated in its title (Honours Integrative Seminar) SOWK 4200 is about “integrating” the theory and practice of social work learned thus far in your BSW program and since the Structural Approach to Social Work is the core social work theory taught at the BSW level it is expected that students will be able to integrate the Structural Approach into their assignment for this course. Students should be able to show an understanding of social work theory and practice (especially the Structural Approach) and students should be able to identify areas of future social work learning.

SOWK 4200 differs from other courses in the BSW program in three significant ways:

- The focus of learning
- The use of action learning groups to assist students in completing projects
- The role of the instructor.

Support and guidance will be provided from the instructor but this course is designed on an adult learning model where each student directs her/his own learning within the framework and the requirements of the course.

- Students set their goals
- Decide what they are going to do to meet their goals
- Determine what they will hand in as the final assignment (portfolio)

The instructor’s role is that of consultant, rather than that of a lecturer, to individual students and to self-facilitated action learning groups. The instructor is responsible for giving feedback, grading students’ performance, based on the development of the learning goals, how well students achieved the goals they set out in the learning contract, how well they developed their self-assessment, how they participated in class and how well they contributed to their action learning groups.

OBJECTIVES:
1) To integrate knowledge and skills acquired through classroom and field instruction which help to provide an understanding for the Structural Approach to Social Work.
2) To come to a basic understanding of core principles of the Structural Approach for social work practice.

3) To learn to use small peer groups for learning and knowledge exchange.

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 orientation to social work practice.

**COURSE PROCESS**

There are no required textbooks, no group presentations, no exams, and there are no established weekly lectures offered by the course instructor. Instead, the course is designed around adult education, self-directed study and action learning and students are expected to learn and develop ideas through their research and small action-learning groups. Students are expected to present to their small groups and to the class.

Each week we will begin by convening as a class and then the class will break into smaller action learning groups. For the first 3 classes, students will develop their learning contracts in their small groups. The draft Learning Contracts will be passed in at the end of class 3 and they will be returned the following week and students will pass in their Final Learning Contract for week 5.

Throughout the term, students will take turns presenting to their small groups- their topic area for the portfolio. The groups will be responsible for establishing a presenter’s list (3 persons per week), it is expected that students will have opportunities to present 3-4 times during the term. These groups will serve as a sounding board, a source of feedback and a place to bounce ideas around as you pursue your own learning objectives. In brief, the first few classes will be devoted to reviewing and enhancing an understanding of areas of interest for developing the learning contract. And the following weekly group and larger class meetings will be dedicated to helping further the development of student portfolios.

***Depending on student interests and need the course instructor may provide a lecture or two on the Structural Approach.***

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

There are 5 requirements for this course.

1. Attendance: There is no grade for class attendance and participation but if students miss 2 or more classes 5 % of the grade will be deducted for each class missed.
2. Group and Class Participation: There is no grade for participation but students are expected to participate in their action Learning Groups and in class discussion. Students must provide evidence (in their final portfolio) of their participation in their action learning groups
3. Learning Contract (20 % of course grade)
   
   The first draft is due for class 3.
   The final contract due for class 5.

4. Final Self-reflection paper
   The self-reflection piece (4-5 pages) is actually part of the final portfolio. It is an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned during your BSW studies, areas of interest and possible future aspirations. This paper is an opportunity to reflect on your understanding of the Structural Approach and this discussion must include appropriate supportive literature. Moreover, the self-reflection paper should reflect on how you envision applying the Structural Approach in future
practice and future learning. In addition to these 2 points this self-reflection paper can include some commentary about your learning experience through this course but it should be more of a reflection about your BSW experiences from class room work to field placement.
Self-reflection = 15%

5. Portfolio
The portfolio must encompass all of the work (evidence) agreed to in the learning contract. All portfolios are due on the last class. All portfolios must include an indication of research and analysis-use of books, journal articles and or, class notes used to explore specific topic areas as well as discussion of theoretical debates. All portfolios should include a proper bibliography.
Grade for portfolio = 65%

TOTAL
Learning Contract = 20%
Grade for portfolio = 65%
Self reflection = 15%
Total = 100%

INFORMATION FOR ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION

Development of Learning Objectives and Contract

This course centers on each student working toward developing a personal approach to practice, using a consolidation of their own knowledge, a self-assessment of skills and experience and an understanding of the Structural Approach 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 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. Through this course you may learn that there are gaps in your understanding of issues, theories (including the Structural Approach) and practices but you are not being asked to address all of these gaps in this course. Being able to show a detailed understanding of the Structural Approach in the learning contract and the final portfolio is not the main intent of this course but evidence of a summary understanding of core principles is expected.

The objectives for the completion of the portfolio must be action oriented; the results must be observable and measurable; and they must be realistic within the time frame of the course. These objectives should also clearly state the results that you want to achieve but you should keep in mind that only 2 learning objectives can be completed within the time frame of the course.

Preparation of Learning Contract for the Portfolio

Each learning contract should be designed to help you reflect on your understanding of the Structural Approach to Social Work.

Each learning contract must include 2 Learning objectives. The learning objectives must be clearly stated they must reflect the objectives of the course. Students must write a descriptive paragraph or two about each objective.

Under each objective the student is to list the tasks and activities they will undertake to meet their learning objectives. The resources needed to undertake the necessary tasks and activities must also be listed. If the student has the intention of interviewing a social worker or other professional, 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 achieve.

***If the student has the intention of interviewing anyone that person must have been contacted and an appointment time must be established by the time the final contract is submitted.***

Only professionals are permitted to be interviewed and this cannot be more than 2 professionals. Because of limited time, there will be no opportunity to interview clients, recipients of services, students, faculty members as such interviews would require a review by the university ethics committee as well as the ethics committee of the agency or institution. In brief, any proposed research which would require university ethics review cannot be accepted.

**General Overall Evaluation Grading Criteria for the Course Assignments**

- A well balanced coverage of the course objectives (integration)
- Meeting the criteria from the learning contract.
- Quality of evidence submitted. (Use of resources)
- Depth of exploration/thinking/critical analysis.

**Learning Contract: Questions to Guide Development and Evaluation of Learning Contract:**

1) Are the learning objectives clear, concrete, realistic and measurable? Do they state the results that the student would like to achieve?

2) Are the tasks and activities clearly related to the learning objectives and doable? If these 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) Has the student clearly shown how their personal learning objectives will satisfy the course objectives?

**Written work evaluation criteria for the portfolio:**

**i. Research/Content:**

Through this self-directed study students are expected to submit well written and well documented research essays/ based on a solid foundation of good research and evidence. Did the student use appropriately the best books, articles, resources and key informants on the topic? Did the student choose appropriate quotes for his/her arguments? Did the student distinguish his/her voice from the voice of the authors the student used to build his or her arguments? Did the student properly present interview material with appropriate analysis?

**ii. Analysis:**

Did the student show evidence of depth/complexity in his/her analysis of the selected topic by utilizing appropriate resources for his/her investigation?

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

Students must remember that SOWK 4200 is a self-directed study course and you must immediately begin thinking about and developing ideas for your learning contracts and final portfolio as soon as the course commences. Visit the library, work on line, do what you can to develop your contracts and portfolios.

**Students often wait until the final few weeks of class to start working on their projects- this is too late and causes stress and leads to requests for extensions and changing learning objectives. Please note- no requests for extensions and changes in learning objectives will be considered once the final learning contracts have been submitted.**

To help prepare learning contracts students should begin reviewing your old course outlines, assignments, learning contracts and evaluations of your placements and review what you have done in this BSW program.

Some summary points to Guide the Development and Evaluation of the Self-Assessment:
- Evidence of self awareness.
- Evidence of understanding of the Structural Approach.
- Ability to integrate knowledge and practice into a personal approach to social work practice;
- Ability to self evaluate one’s own work thus far, (areas of strength and areas which need further development)
- Identification of future learning goals.

Academic Accommodation
You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term.

For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: [http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/](http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/)

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: [http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/](http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/)

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-
scheduled exam (if applicable) at http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/
You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/

Backup your work!
Material from portfolios can get misplaced so to avoid any hardship students must keep an extra copy of their portfolio material at all times!

If Your Assignment is late:
Handing in assignments late is unfair to other students who hand them in on time. In the event that you are unable to meet the deadline due to illness or family emergency, you must notify the course instructor prior to the due date to discuss the possibility of an extension. In such cases documentation is needed.

Work submitted after required due dates, without prior discussion and approval, will be deducted one letter grade for each day the assignment is late – for example for a B+ paper, B for the first day overdue, a B- for the second overdue day and so on. Week-ends are included.

Grading Criteria
An “A+” is assigned only for work of the highest quality. The work competently addresses complex conceptual materials significantly beyond those addressed in the course materials. In its overall design it is creative and expressive. It demonstrates a sophisticated analysis and an ability to integrate and synthesize others' ideas and your own. It is written in the active voice attributing ideas to the appropriate source, making clear which are your own ideas and is properly footnoted. Where appropriate it demonstrates links between theory and practice and incorporates your own experience, feelings, ideas and opinions. To receive a course mark of “A+” your class participation must complement your written work.

An “A” is assigned for high quality work, that with minor corrections in both format and content. The overall design of the work is solid, demonstrating an excellent comprehension and presentation of complex conceptual materials. The work is characterized by solid research and analysis beyond course materials. It demonstrates creativity and originality in its approach to the material covered in the assignment.

An “A-” is assigned for high quality work that demonstrates an engagement with complex conceptual materials and original thinking that goes beyond course materials. It may present minor editing errors.

A “B+” is assigned for good work that demonstrates a competent comprehension of materials. It shows an ability to analyze as well as describe the subject matter. It includes original ideas of your own and is well written although it may present minor editing and content errors.

A “B” grade is given for good work that in the main competently represents concepts encountered in the course. It does a good job of meeting all the criteria of the assignment. In general it is well compiled though with minor editing and content errors.

A “C+ to C- grades are assigned for work that is flawed in both content and style. The work basically ranges from marginally average to below average at an undergraduate level it is not considered acceptable for graduate level work.
PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is a serious instructional offence and is addressed in the undergraduate calendar. Plagiarism occurs when an individual uses the work of someone else without giving recognition for the other individual. This includes but is not restricted to the direct copying of another person's work. Other forms of plagiarism include the paraphrasing of components of another person's work without indicating the source of the material. Besides the direct copying of material and extensive use of paraphrasing, plagiarism also exists when an individual takes ideas from another person and presents them as one's own material without giving recognition to the original author. To avoid plagiarism, students are reminded to make sure that they indicate source material that they use to develop research papers. (For a detailed discussion concerning Carleton University’s statement on Plagiarism refer to page 62 of the Undergraduate Calendar. Section 14.3. refers to Academic Integrity Standards and Section 14.3.1 deals with plagiarism)

Important note: As indicated above, SOWK 4200 is an integrative seminar course with an emphasis on integration of the Structural Approach to Social Work and it is therefore expected that students have an understanding of the Structural Approach. You should be able to discuss some core principles of the Structural Approach and develop these principles within your groups and portfolios.

Some core readings on the Structural Approach are indicated below for your review:


Friendly Reminder: 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. In addition, the course is intended to provide an opportunity to reflect on your understanding of the Structural Approach for social work practice. Through this course you may learn that there are gaps in your understanding of issues, theories (including the Structural Approach) and practices but you are not being asked to address all of these gaps in the process of this course. Being able to show a well developed understanding of the Structural Approach in the final portfolio is not the main intent of this course but a summary understanding of core ideals is expected. (Indicated earlier)

Use of Lap top computers and cell phones.

While lap top computers are recognized as an important educational tool sometimes they can be barriers to classroom learning and dialogue therefore ground rules for the use of lap tops in the classroom and in groups need to be established. Lap tops are to be used for classroom purposes only- ie. note taking or researching materials on-line. Checking facebook, e-mails, etc. shows disrespect for the instructor and fellow students and will not be tolerated. When students need to be using their lap tops, they will only be permitted to use laptops with batteries as the use of power cords can lead to accidents- in short no power cords, batteries only. For any
misuse of cell phones the student will be given a warning after that there will be a 5% grade reduction for each offence.

**Cell phones** must be turned off and texting is not permitted. For any misuse of cell phones the student will be given a warning after that there will be a 5% grade reduction for each offence.

**September 6: CLASS 1:** Introductions, review of course outline establishing working groups and reviewing portfolios.

We will begin by convening as a class and then will break into smaller action learning groups. For future classes 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. We will begin reviewing portfolios and learning contracts as this will help students begin thinking about and starting their projects.

**September 13: CLASS 2: No Class:**

Students should meet in their small action learning groups to work on their learning contracts. **Students should have preliminary draft contracts ready to bring to class for the next class**

**September 20: CLASS 3: Developing Learning Contracts.**

Break into smaller groups and continue working on objectives for the draft learning contracts. Discuss and present learning contracts with group members. Professor will hold individual meetings with students to discuss draft contracts.

**September 27: CLASS 4: Work in small groups – continue preparing draft learning contracts** Continue working on Draft Learning contracts 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. Pass in draft contracts at the end of the class.

##Time will be set aside to discuss students’ understanding of the Structural Approach, please refer to the recommended readings. Depending on the level of understanding and student interest, future presentations will be made by the course instructor.##

*** Every effort will be made to have the draft contracts returned to students prior to the next class, this will give students an opportunity to reflect on my feedback and begin developing final contracts for next week.***

**October 4: CLASS 5: Work in small groups- finalize working contracts and submit at the end of class.**

Instructor will review components of portfolio and self evaluation.

Convene as a class and then break into working groups.

Work on finalizing learning contract small groups

Individual meetings with instructor (if necessary)

**Final learning contracts due at end of class**

**October 11: CLASS 6**

Convene as a class.

Final learning contracts returned.

Brief check-in to discuss student’s topics (preliminary reporting as to area of interest and plans for portfolio)

Meet in Action Learning Groups.

Individual meetings with instructor as required.

Begin working on portfolios.
October 18: CLASS 7: Convene in a larger group- students will present their work this far (get feedback from the larger group)

Establish list for student groups to present on their work for upcoming classes

Meet in Action Learning Groups and work on portfolios.
Individual meetings with instructor as required.
Continue working on portfolios.

October 25: CLASS 8:

Action Learning Groups Meet.
Individual meetings with instructor as required.
Continue working on portfolios
Convene as a large group once again- this will be followed by a time for students to briefly present their work to the class.

November 1: CLASS 9

Convene in a larger group. Group(s) will present their work and get feedback from the class
Continue working in small groups with visits to each group from instructor as well as individual meetings as required.
Convene as a large group once again- this will be followed by a time for students to briefly present their work to the class.

November 8: CLASS 10

Action Learning Groups Meet.
Continue to finalize the portfolios.
Individual meetings with instructor (if necessary)

November 15: CLASS 11

Convene in a larger group. Group(s) will present their work and get feedback from the class
Action Learning Groups Meet.
Continue to finalize the portfolios.
Individual meetings with instructor (if necessary)

November 22: CLASS 12

Convene in a larger group, open discussion and feedback from the class
Action Learning Groups Meet.
Continue to finalize the portfolios.
Individual meetings with instructor (if necessary)

November 29: CLASS 13: Wrap up, discussion and submission of the portfolios.