I. COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course provides an intensive examination of practice issues related to strengths based, empowerment-oriented social work practice with older adults and their families in complex, urban and multicultural environments. Given the phenomenal growth of the older adult population in the U.S., the social work practitioner is likely to encounter clients who are dealing with the challenges of their own aging and/or that of family members. Clinical competence in gerontological social work requires a keen understanding of developmental issues of adulthood and late life, as well as the application of empirically-supported assessment and interventions in real life situations. Students gain an increased understanding of the needs, strengths and sociocultural diversity of older adults and their caregivers. This understanding serves as a basis for the application of practice concepts and critical thinking skills gained in previous semesters to the development of purposive interventions responsive to the particular issues facing diverse older adults and their caregivers. Attention is given to empowerment and evidenced-based interventions at individual and programmatic levels for older populations with mental health and chronic care conditions.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

Values and Ethics
1. Critically evaluate the value conflicts and ethical dilemmas represented by personal, professional and societal values and their application to social work practice in complex, urban, multicultural environments.
Assessment
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the biopsychosocial and life span development of individuals in later adulthood.

3. Critically discuss the application of evidence-based, multidisciplinary assessments and diagnostic tools to older adults.

Intervention
4. Critically evaluate strengths-based, empowerment-oriented, evidenced-based practice with older adults and their caregivers.

5. Critically evaluate practice theories and perspectives that address diversity, populations-at-risk, and social and economic justice.

Research
6. Demonstrate understanding of the role that research plays in generating, supporting, and revising knowledge and the relative gap of empirical evidence across theories and populations.


Professional Development
8. Develop the facility for oral and written expression and analytic thinking necessary for professional social work practice.

III. COURSE FORMAT
The class format will consist of two modes of instruction: (1) didactic instruction with large and small group discussions of the material; and (2) seminar format in which each student takes an active and facilitative role in the presentation and discussion of material. As needed, case vignettes, videos, guest speakers, experiential exercises, computer and interactive modalities, and/or other learning aids will complement the course instruction.

The online teaching and learning environment provided by the University’s Blackboard Academic Suite™ System (https://blackboard.usc.edu/) will support access to course-related materials and communication.

IV. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING
All students are expected to regularly attend class and be on time. A student with more than two unexcused absences during the course of this class may receive a no credit. A student who is tardy three or more times to class may receive a grade of no credit. If a student receives a no credit grade in this seminar, they will be required to repeat this class.
Grades pertaining to the assignments and course grades will be based on the following rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation of the student’s academic performance in the course will be determined as follows:

- **10%** Class participation: Ongoing.
- **40%** Midterm—written take-home assignment with brief in-class presentation (due March 11, 2010).
- **50%** Final Assignment (oral portion is scheduled for last two class sessions; written portion is due on May 6, 2010)

**Assignments**

Detailed hand-outs describing the assignments and expectations will be distributed in class with ample time to complete the assignments. Assignments are due on the day and time specified. Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances, and is left to the discretion of the course instructor. If the assignment is late without permission, the grade will be affected accordingly. A final grade of “Incomplete” can only be given under extreme circumstances.

Assignments must adhere to the citation and referencing standards put forth in the 2010 *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Ed.).

**Class Participation**

Class participation is an important component of the student’s grade and socialization into professional social work practice. Participation is more than class attendance. It involves coming to class prepared to participate actively in the class discussions. Class participation involves meaningful discussion based on having read the required readings for the week. Participation may involve such activities as raising meaningful questions for clarification, but more importantly, offering critical thinking regarding issues under discussion or extending the discussion to related material from other social work courses. Failure to meet these expectations may result in reduction in grades.
V. ATTENDANCE POLICY
Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the session. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by telephone or email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class, without penalty, for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students’ observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

VI. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES
Students are expected to attend class sessions, complete all reading assignments, participate in class discussions and activities, submit work on the date and time specified by the instructor, and contribute to an atmosphere of mutual respect and civil discourse. Students will be expected to regularly access their E-mail accounts and/or Blackboard accounts for posted messages, documents, etc., and any other avenue of communication requested by the class instructor.

VII. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS
There is no required textbook for this course. Below is a list of books recommended by the instructor. All required readings outlined below will be available on-line.

Recommended textbooks:


VIII. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to
the instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

IX. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION
To receive information, call main number (213)740-2711, press #2. “For recorded announcements, events, emergency communications or critical incident information.”

To leave a message, call (213) 740-8311
For additional university information, please call (213) 740-9233
Or visit university website; http://emergency.usc.edu

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, please go to the following locations carefully and using stairwells only. Never use elevators in an emergency evacuation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Park Campus</th>
<th>City Center</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MRF – Lot B</td>
<td>Front of the building (12th &amp; Olive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWC – Lot B</td>
<td>Orange County Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPH – McCarthy Quad</td>
<td>Faculty Parking Lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VKC – McCarthy Quad</td>
<td>Skirball Campus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Front of building

Do not re-enter the building until given the “all clear” by emergency personnel.

X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Students at the School of Social Work are expected to follow the standards of academic integrity as set forth by the University. Please refer to the Student Handbook (SCampus) and University Catalogue regarding academic integrity standards.
CLINICAL PRACTICE WITH OLDER ADULTS (SOWK 616)  
SPRING 2009

Course Outline and Assignments

NOTE: Readings published before 2000 have been carefully scrutinized and are included in the syllabus because they provide key or seminal information for the overall course content. Some readings have been grouped together to facilitate comprehension of concepts, to offer examples, etc. Additional required and recommended readings may be assigned by the instructor throughout the course.

PART I. EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF STRENGTHS-BASED, EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORKS

SESSION 1: January 14
Welcome and introductions
Introduction to the theoretical frameworks of the course
Overview of the learning contract/syllabus
The demographics of an aging and global society
Course objectives: 1-8

Recommended Readings
For review of aging lifespan content:


Other recommended readings:


**SESSION 2: January 21**

Values and ethics in clinical social work practice with older adults:

- Ageism, stigma, and social justice
- Empowerment and strengths-based frameworks: Theoretical and practice formulations

*Course objectives: 1,2,4,5,6,8*

**Required Readings**


http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp


**SESSION 3: January 28**

Evidence-based practice with older adults: Rationale, process, implications.

Screening for elder abuse and dementia.

*Course objectives: 1,3,4,6,8*
Required Readings

Group A


Group B


Group C


Recommended Readings


Also, see web links of AoA Grants Program- Community Awards mentioned in the PDF listed above: [http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=32](http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=32)


**NOTE:**  **FEBRUARY 4: “ALL SCHOOL DAY”—NO CLASS SESSION.**

**SESSION 4: February 11**

Evidence-based practice with older adults: How to search for the best available evidence. Depression as a case example.

Instructor-led computer demonstration session

*Course objectives: 3,4,5,6,7,8*

**Required Readings**

*Group A*


**Group B**


**Recommended Readings**


**SESSION 5: February 18**
Evidence-based practice with older adults:
Student-led computer session
Instructor-student consultations
*Course objectives: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8*

**Required Readings**

**SESSION 6: February 25**
Examples of the role of social work in providing empirically supported interventions: PST; Care management

*Course objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8*

**Required Readings**


Review web link regarding IMPACT Evidence-Based Depression Care: [http://impact-uw.org/](http://impact-uw.org/). Focus your reading on the information under “Tools”

**Recommended Readings**
SESSION 7: March 4
A look at prevention of frailty: Chronic disease management; physical activity programs for older adults

*Course objectives: 1,2,4,5,6,7,8*

**Required Readings**

Review web links regarding exercise programs:
National Council on Aging

National Institute of Health:

Replication Report: Healthy Moves for Aging Well (Partners in Care, Burbank)
[http://www.picf.org/articles/1181.html](http://www.picf.org/articles/1181.html)

SESSION 8: March 11
Brief presentations by students of their midterm papers.

*Course objectives: 1-8*

**MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT DUE**

NOTE: MARCH 15-20, 2009--SPRING RECESS (NO CLASS SESSION)

PART II. SOCIOCULTURAL AND EMPOWERMENT PRACTICE

SESSION 9: March 25
Sociocultural and Empowerment Adaptations:
Theoretical formulations and applications

*Course objectives: 1-8*

**Required Readings**
Group A


Group B


Recommended Readings


SESSION 10: April 1
Explanatory Models and Illness Beliefs

*Course objectives: 1,4,5,6,7,8*

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**SESSION 11: April 8**

Psychosocial Resources—Coping, Spirituality, and Social Support

*Course objectives: 1,2,3,5,6,8*

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Harris, W.S. et al. (1999). A randomized, controlled trial of the effects of remote, intercessory prayer on outcomes in patients admitted to the coronary care unit. *Archives of Internal Medicine, 159*, 2273-2278.


**Recommended Readings**


**SESSION 12: April 15**

Sociocultural and Empowerment Adaptations: Programmatic considerations.

*Course objectives: 1,2,3,5,6,8*

**Required Readings**


for low-literacy populations. *The American Journal of Managed Care, 10*(2), 853-860.


Refer to web link on Gay Lesbian Elder Housing in Los Angeles:
http://www.gleh.org/

**SESSION 14: April 22**
Student Presentations

*Course objectives: 1-8*

**SESSION 14: April 29**
Student presentations (cont.)
Course review and wrap-up

*Course objectives: 1-8*

**FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE: MAY 6, 2010**

**This syllabus serves as a guideline and could be subject to change, depending on circumstances as the semester progresses.**