

SWK-S 694 Practice with Older Adults (3 cr.)

Course Information

Semester Year: XXXXX
Section Number: XXXXX
Location: XXXXX
Day: XXXXX
Time: XXXXX

Instructor: XXXXX XXXXXXXXXX
Office: XXXX
Email: XXXX
Phone: XXXX
Office Hours: XXXX

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide health concentration students with increased depth of knowledge in the area of practice with older adults in healthcare areas, such as acute care hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, adult day care and long-term care facilities. Effective social work practice with older adults relies on knowledge and application of evidence-based theories, assessments and interventions with this population. Older adults are one of the fastest growing populations in the United States, and advances in technology have enhanced longevity. Social workers must be able to practice with older adults with increasingly complex needs in a variety of settings. This course is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to engage in competent social work practice with older adults.

Course Competencies

Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) 2015 EPAS Competencies addressed by this course.

Primary

- 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice

Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice (CSWE, 2015 EPAS, p. 8)

- 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies (CSWE, 2015 EPAS, p. 8)

Secondary

- 2: Engage diversity and difference in practice
- 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities Course Objectives
- 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities

Course Objectives

- S694-01** Evaluate one's own feelings and attitudes regarding aging and older adults, and analyze the impact of multiple layers of oppression experienced by older adults.
- S694-02** Analyze the literature around an issue pertinent to older adults and synthesize the evidence-based practice information in relation to social work practice
- S694-03** Analyze current social services and policies that relate to the needs of older adults.
- S694-04** Devise and utilize comprehensive assessments that examine the myriad domains of the lives of older adults.
- S694-05** Analyze and implement effective evidence-based practice interventions.
- S694-06** Analyze literature on caregiving and devise family-focused interventions.

Required Texts

McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2012). *Social work with older adults* (4th ed.) Indianapolis: Pearson.

Articles as assigned on Canvas.

You must purchase one book of your choice on caregiving for a group presentation:

Fitzpatrick, J. (2016). *Cruising through caregiving: Reducing the stress of caring for your loved one*. Austin: TX: Greenleaf Book Group.

Jacobs, B. (2006). *The emotional survival guide for caregivers: Looking after yourself and your family while helping an aging parent*. Guilford Press.

Loverde, J. (2009). *The Complete eldercare planner: Where to start, which questions to ask, and how to find help*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Mace, N., & Rabins, P. (2012). *The 36-hour day: A family guide to caring for people with Alzheimer Disease, other dementias, and memory loss in later life*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.

Morris, V. (2014) *How to care for aging parents: A one-stop resource for all your medical, financial*

Other books on caregiving considered per instructor approval.

Course Content

This course trains students to engage, assess and intervene with the older adult population. A big focus is looking at the impact of ageism on the healthcare needs of older adults, as well as assessment tools and the application of those to this population. Intervention for both patients and families will be discussed, as well as community resources applicable to this group.

Be mindful that academic and experiential content in social work courses may trigger an emotional response, especially in individuals who have prior trauma history. As social workers, it is our responsibility to be present for clients who have experienced trauma; therefore, it is necessary to cultivate compassionate self-awareness and address our personal histories in a timely manner for competent social work practice. If you are triggered in the classroom, your priority is self-care as well as continuing to gain knowledge for practice. You may need to seek consultation from faculty as to your readiness for practice and/or how to better prepare for social work practice.

Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to the course

Overview

- A. Introduction.
- B. Orientation to the course.
- C. Myths about Older Adults
- D. How is Working with Older Adults Different than other Populations?
- E. Working groups assigned

Assignments

Readings

1. Syllabus

Module 2: Demographics of Aging

Overview

- A. Statistical demographics
- B. Discussion of birth control

Assignments

Readings

1. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapter 1
2. Ageing Nation article from Census on Canvas

Individual Assignment

1. When I Am 90 Paper

Module 3: Ageism and Its Impact

Overview

- A. Explore the impact of ageism on physical and mental health of older adults
- B. Explore how providers have internalized ageism
- C. Bring in magazine ads, jokes or birthday cards about aging
- D. In-class simulation
- E. Resources scavenger hunt (bring your computers)

Assignments

Readings

1. Articles by Raynor, Ouchida & Lachs

Module 4: Physical and Sensory Changes for Older Adults

Overview

- A. Discussion of physical change issues
- B. Falls as a risk factor

Assignments

Readings

1. Article on Falls in Older Adults
2. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapters 2 & 3

Module 5: Mental Health Issues in Older Adults (3 Weeks)

Overview

- A. Understand depression and its manifestation in older adults, risk factors, assessment and intervention
- B. Understand cognitive impairment and its manifestations, assessment and intervention
- C. Understand delirium and its manifestations, assessment and intervention
- D. Explore the many faces of Alzheimer's disease and its stages, impact on the person and the family, explore interventions

Assignments

Week 1 Readings

1. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapters 5 & 8
2. Flood & Buckwalter Parts 1 & 2
3. Garand et al

Individual Assignment

1. Interview with an Older Adult

Week 2 Readings

1. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapters 5 & 6
2. Dementia & Delirium: Assessments in Class
3. 10 Warning Signs of Dementia: [Alzheimer's Association Website](#)
4. See: [Alzheimers.net Website](#)

Week 3 Readings

1. Delirium article and assessment tools
2. Watch Alzheimer's HBO movie

Module 6: Competency Issues

Overview

- A. Case studies
- B. Video on Older Adult living alone
- C. Self-Neglect
- D. Adult Protective Services
- E. Assessment Demonstrations Done in Class

Assignments

Readings

1. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapter 9
2. Naik Article
3. Fulmer Article

Module 7: Interventions with Older Adults

Overview

- A. Communication principles with older adults and developmental drivers
- B. Reminiscence Therapy

Assignments

Readings

1. Sahlins Article
2. Solie Article

Module 8: Caregiving – (2 Weeks)

Overview

- A. The benefits and pitfalls of being a caregiver
- B. How much do you know about your own parents in preparation for caregiving? Handout and activity.
- C. Movie on caregiving (HBO)
- D. Presentations on caregiving

Assignments

Readings

1. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapter 12
2. Caregiving book presentation to the class

Module 9: Older Adults and Sexuality

Overview

- A. Discussion of statistics in regards to older adults sexuality and ageism
- B. Discussion of common sexual issues for older adults
- C. Preservation of intimacy throughout the lifespan
- D. LGBT Older Adults
- E. Movie on couples (For Better or Worse)

Assignments

Readings

1. Three articles on Canvas

Module 10: End of Life Issues, Spirituality and Addiction

Overview

- A. Discussion of the importance of spirituality and how to discuss
- B. End of life issues and critical conversations
- C. Addiction in older adults
- D. Polypharmacy (Beers List)

Assignments

Readings

2. McInnis-Dittrich, Chapter 8 & 10
3. Nelson-Becker Article
4. Parekh Article
5. Beer List

Assignments and Grading

Assignments

1. "When I am 90" Reflection Paper
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:5%
 - b. DUE.....
2. Interview with an Older Adult
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:20%
 - b. DUE.....
3. Demonstration of Assessment Tool (Group Assignment)
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:10%
 - b. DUE.....
4. Caregiving Book Presentation
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:15%
 - b. DUE.....
5. Quizzes (4 x 5 points each)
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:20%
 - b. DUE.....
6. Digging Deeper Assignment
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:20%
 - b. DUE.....
7. Movie Reflection
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:5%
 - b. DUE.....
8. Attendance and Participation
 - a. Final Grade Percentage:5%
 - b. DUE.....

Assignments

“When I Am 90” Reflection Paper.

Should be 5-7 pages, double-spaced. Read the readings for next week first. Then, think about yourself as an older adult and what your life will be like when you are 90 years of age. Assume you will live to be ninety, even though that may not be true for you. This paper should be 5-7 pages typed, not including cover page, and include as much of the following information as possible. You may be creative and write this as a journal entry or as a letter to one of your family members or friends, or just simply as a narrative. Make sure that you hit all the topics. Understand that you cannot create your future self out of pure fantasy. You must base it on *who you are now* – your beliefs and personal habits. Write about what your life will be like in the following areas:

Physical: Assume that you will get at least one major disease that runs in your family. You may already have some beginnings of that illness or debility now. Look at the members of your family, even if you are adopted, and extrapolate what physical problems you will have as well as physical advantages. Discuss your five senses and which of them will have been impacted by aging and to what degree. Will you be able to communicate verbally or have to rely on non-verbal means of communication (i.e., due to stroke, etc...)

Social: What kind of a family and personal situation will you have when you are older? What do the statistics say for your gender at your age? Will you be married? Single? Have a significant partner? What type of living situation will you be in? Will you be living with one of your children or on your own? Will you have any hobbies (this may depend on your sensory impairment)? Where will you go when/if you go out?

Career: What has your career been like? How long did you work? Did you do many different things or mostly the same kind of work?

Financial: What will your finances be like when you are older? Extrapolate from how you handle money currently in your life. Are you a saver or a spender? Will you have retirement or just have to rely on Social Security (if it exists then).

Emotional/Mental: What kind of person will you be? It is my experience that our personalities do not change significantly as we age, but may become magnified as a result of loss, change, stress and illness. For example, if you can become irate fairly easily in traffic, what will you be like in the dining hall waiting on your food when you are 90? What will you do to entertain yourself mentally?

Spiritual: How important will this be to you? Extrapolate from how important it is to you now. How will you practice your faith or if you have none, what will be most important to you as you think of your own death?

Legacy: Since you are 90, you are thinking about what you will leave behind, both in terms of tangible items and intangible qualities. What will you be known for? What will you have left those that you cared about or society at large?

At the end of your paper, please let me know a bit about your real circumstances today (single, with partner, etc...) so that I have a sense of how much you created. Feel free to add in things that you feel

will be important to you at that age, or concerns that you will have that are not on the list. Good luck, senior citizen!

Quizzes Over Readings

Students will have 4 random quizzes during the semester over the reading. The quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. If you are not present that day, you will forfeit your quiz grade.

Interview an Older Adult

The purpose of this activity is twofold: (1) to explore diversity in the older population and to counter some of the common misperceptions about older adults, and (2) to do an assessment and evaluation on how well this person is coping with the aging process.

1. Identify one older person (preferably age 75+ and not a relative) to interview about his/her life story. The person may be living in a long-term care facility or in his or her own home. The purpose of the interview is to gather descriptive information about the main events, major crises, current status, and life philosophy of the older person and formulate an assessment of their strengths and identify any potential concerns. Interviews may last up to an hour, and can be audio-taped if the person consents. Remember your role is learner, not service provider. Assure the interviewee that the information gathered will be kept confidential. You should use a pseudonym for the paper. Do not report identifying information such as name or address. It is best to tape the interview so you do not have to be distracted with taking notes.
2. Write a descriptive report that contains as much of the following as you can obtain:
 - a. Description of the older person. Do you know them? If so, how? Include information about his/her physical appearance (looks, dress, etc), presentation of self (speaking, listening skills, ambulation, etc), and the context of the interview (where did it take place, what was happening).
 - b. Summary of important characteristics of the older adult, (age, gender, living circumstances, adequacy of financial resources, marital status, health status, number of children and grandchildren)
 - c. Major events in the person's life or accomplishments
 - d. Significant relationships/support network
 - e. Pastimes or hobbies
 - f. Daily activities – what is an average day like for them?
 - g. Health status, problems in functioning, if any
 - h. His or her view of aging and old age – Ask them what has getting older been like for them and assess if view is positive, negative or some of both.
 - i. Do they have any advice or lessons learned that they would like to share?

It is helpful to include some direct quotes from the person you interviewed. Do not worry if the person does not wish to talk about any of the above. They are doing you a favor by letting you interview them.

3. Conclude with your evaluation of the older persons you interviewed and include the following:
 - a. Strengths identified
 - b. Any perceived needs (there may not be any)

- c. What were your feelings before, during and after the interview? What was it like to conduct the interview? How did the person respond to being interviewed? If this was someone you knew, how did that impact the interview process – were there things you felt uncomfortable asking, or things they didn't talk about because of awkwardness or embarrassment?
- d. Discuss your personal learning and insights gained as a result of the interview. How does your interview with this person confirm or challenge some of your assumptions about aging?
- e. Do you see ways in which they are dealing with the issues identified by Solie: control and legacy? Any other classroom material that you would like to integrate?

Remember if you interview someone you know, you are going to have to work a bit harder to critically think about this person objectively, apart from your own image of the person.

The Life Review should be double-spaced, and logically organized with a cover page, sub-headings and numbered pages.

Caregiving Book Club Presentation

Each group should choose and read a book for this presentation (the same book). You will prepare a 15-20 minute presentation about this book for the class with the following information:

1. Give some background about the book and the story it presents.
2. Cover the essential salient points in the book about caregiving.
3. What you liked and didn't like about the book (pros and cons of the book for CGs).
4. Social work practice implications – talk about what are important points for social workers to take from this book for their daily practice. How will this book help your practice with caregivers?
5. Plan a brief activity with the class around the information in the book. Find some way to make the presentation have an interactive element, such as a brief writing exercise with a handout or a discussion. Use your creativity.

Movie Reflection

Write up a reflection about one of the movies that we watch in class this semester. Talk about what you thought were the most interesting ideas presented in the movie and how the movie either corroborated or challenged your perceptions of aging or older adults. Reflect on your learning from the movie and the implications for social work practice (2-3 pages). This should be more than a summary of the movie; it should be your reflection on the themes in the movie. No citations necessary.

Demonstrations of Assessment Tool

Each group will need to use one of the assessments that we talk about in class and demonstrate giving it to one of the group members. Examples of this are the MMSE, SLUMS, GDS, Anxiety scales, spirituality assessment or PLISSIT model for sexuality. Each group will explain the assessment tool and what it is used for, talk about how to explain it to patients so that they are not unduly anxious, how it should be administered (orally or in writing and with whom), do a role play of a patient taking the assessment, and explain the scoring and how it works. Grade will be based on understanding of the

assessment tool, quality of role play and clearness of explanation of scoring. MMSE (two different kinds), GDS, Anxiety, Caregiver, Dementia.

Digging Deeper – students may choose to do one of the three activities

Annotated Bibliography

Students will write an annotated bibliography on a topic of interest about Older Adults. You may use one of the topics below, or a different topic as approved by the instructor. You must identify a minimum of eight scholarly articles about this topic. Each reference should contain the following information: 1) citation in APA format, 2) a one-two paragraph summary of the article, including any important issues related to practice with older adults. At the end of the paper, you should write a one-two page evaluation of what you learned from reading all of the articles about best practices with this issue and the implications for working with older adults, 10-15 pages.

Possible topics for bibliography (others upon approval)

- Substance abuse and older adults and treatment strategies
- Caregivers of older adults and issues of burden, coping, and survival. Best practice strategies for coping.
- What is wrong with nursing home care and how can it be fixed? What are the best practices for design and services for this population.
- Elder abuse or neglect – risk factors and best practice solutions for prevention and treatment
- Suicide & older adults (evidence-based solutions)
- Depression in older adults (proper assessment and treatment – evidence based solutions)
- Best practices for working with persons with Alzheimer's disease or dementia
- Polypharmacy: consequences of too many medications and best practices for evaluation and treatment for social work
- Older adults with developmental disabilities or serious mental illness: best practices for intervention/treatment
- Issues for GLBT older adults

Paper on Topic of Interest about Older Adults

Could explore topics above, or another issue as approved by instructor. 7-10 pages

Creative Project

Approved by instructor that requires you to dig deeper into the literature and produce some type of project.

Attendance and Participation

Students and the instructor will evaluate the overall participation and attendance of the student in the class via a rubric. We will do many activities in class, so your participation in those activities is a part of this assessment.

Grading Standards

Papers are graded on the quality of the final product not on the effort you extended completing them. The grade of A is reserved for truly outstanding work that goes beyond basic requirements.

In the Indiana University School of Social Work MSW program, grades of B are the expected norm. Reflecting competency and proficiency, grades of B reflect good or high quality work typical of graduate students in professional schools. Indeed, professors typically evaluate students' work in such a way that B is the average grade. Grades in both the A and the C range are relatively uncommon and reflect work that is significantly superior to or significantly inferior, respectively, to the average, high quality, professional work conducted by most IU MSW students. Because of this approach to grading, students who routinely earned A grades in their undergraduate studies may conclude that a B grade reflects a decrease in their academic performance. Such is not the case. Grades of B in the IU MSW program reflect the average, highly competent, proficient quality of our students. In a sense, a B grade in graduate school is analogous to an A grade in undergraduate studies. MSW students must work extremely hard to achieve a B grade. If you are fortunate enough receive a B, prize it as evidence of the professional quality of your work.

Grades of A reflect Excellence. Excellent scholarly products and academic or professional performances are substantially superior to the "good," "the high quality," "the competent," or the "satisfactory." They are unusual, exceptional, and extraordinary. Criteria for assignments are not only met, they are exceeded by a significant margin. Excellence is a rare phenomenon. As a result, relatively few MSW students earn A grades.

Grades of B signify good or high quality scholarly products and academic or professional performance. Grades in the B range reflect work expected of a conscientious graduate student in a professional program. Criteria for assignments are met in a competent, thoughtful, and professional manner. However, the criteria are not exceeded and the quality is not substantially superior to other good quality products or performances. There is a clear distinction between the good and the excellent. We expect that most MSW students will earn grades in the B range—reflecting the good or high quality work expected of competent future helping professionals.

Grades of C and C+ signify work that is marginal in nature. The scholarly products or professional performances meet many but not all of the expected criteria. The work approaches but does not quite meet the standards of quality expected of a graduate student in a professional school. Satisfactory in many respects, its quality is not consistently so and cannot be considered of good or high quality. We anticipate that a minority of MSW students will earn C and C+ grades.

Grades of C- and lower reflect work that is unsatisfactory. The products or performances do not meet several, many, or most of the criteria. The work fails to approach the standards of quality expected of a graduate student and a future MSW-level professional. We anticipate that a small percentage of MSW students will earn unsatisfactory grades of C-, D, and F.

Grading scale

Grade minimums are as follows [Note: grades below C are Unsatisfactory in the MSW Program]:

A	93%	Excellent, Exceptional Quality
A-	90%	Superior Quality
B+	87%	Very Good, Slightly Higher Quality
B	83%	Good, High Quality (expected of most MSW students)
B-	80%	Satisfactory Quality

C+	77%	Marginal, Modestly Acceptable Quality
C	73%	Marginal, Minimally Acceptable Quality
C-	70%	Unsatisfactory Quality

Course Policies

Assignment

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time. If you need to extend a deadline you MUST speak to me in advance of the due date to get an approval and an agreement will be reached. Late submission (except by prior agreement) will be marked down 5% per day late. IU has a subscription with the Turnitin plagiarism detection service, and faculty members have the right to submit student papers to the service to check for originality. Turnitin.com service will be used for all student papers in this course.

Attendance and participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions. Students should complete readings and homework as assigned and come to class prepared for discussion and questions. Because of the nature of this course and group assignments, regular attendance is required and extremely important. Class attendance and active participation in class activities are considered essential for the satisfactory completion of the course objectives. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from other students regarding materials covered during your absence. If you are absent on the day when an assignment is due, you need to submit your assignment before the beginning of the class. Missing more than 2 of the scheduled classes will result in a letter-grade deduction for the course. Late arrivals and early departures will also lead to course point deductions. It's up to instructor's discretion to decide the deduction points. If you miss five or more classes you will fail the course.