I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is one in a sequence of three required social work practice courses offered in the foundation curriculum of the MSW program. This course introduces students to social work practice with groups. Students will study a basic typology of group purposes, composition, and methodologies utilized in social work practice. Group practice will be distinguished from micro and macro practice formats with a particular emphasis on how the three areas of practice are interdependent. The basics of assessing the need for a group will be presented, along with the guidelines for establishing the logistical parameters of the group. An overview of research on best practices in group work will be provided, and methods for evaluating group work will be introduced. Students will also gain an understanding of how to use interpersonal helping skills in leading group members toward established goals by building on existing strengths. Students will explore the various ways that diversity (age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation) play in the dynamics of group process. A framework for critically analyzing ethical dilemmas will be presented, along with discussions on how to promote social and economic justice through group work.

II. RELATIONSHIP TO THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

This course builds on the content from the other two social work practice courses offered in the foundation year of the MSW curriculum by offering students an initial overview into social work practice with groups. Students learn the unique role that group work plays in the continuum of social work practice methodologies. The themes of practicing from a person-in-environment and a strengths based perspective are continued in this course. Students study how practice with groups can directly and indirectly promote social and economic justice. Particular emphasis is placed on selecting interventions that have been shown, through empirical evidence, to be effective. Students also gain an understanding of how to provide culturally sensitive practice and critically analyze ethical dilemmas that arise in social work practice with groups

III. COMPETENCIES/PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

Course Competency	Associated Assignments for Competencies
EP 2.1.1 – Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly: • Attend to professional roles and boundaries • Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication appropriate to the relationship and setting • Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development	Group Facilitation and Participation Professionalism

EP 2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice: • Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice • Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics • Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper
EP 2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments: • Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues • Identify and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper
EP 2.1.4 – Engage diversity and difference in practice: • Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power • Recognize and communicate an understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences • Gain self-awareness of how personal values and biases influence one's work with diverse groups	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper
EP 2.1.5 – Advance human rights and social and economic justice: • Articulate how Christian thought and practice values human life and advances social and economic justice • Articulate the potentially challenging and/or oppressive effects of economic, social, cultural, and global factors on client systems • Advocate for the inclusion, participation, and voice of diverse people, communities and organizations affected by oppressive conditions	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper
EP 2.1.6 – Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research: • Use evidence-based research to identify effective interventions for particular populations, problems, and settings • Use practice experience to inform research	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper
EP 2.1.7. – Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment: • Identify how biopsychosocial, cultural, and spiritual contexts facilitate or inhibit individual, organizational and/or social change • Critique and apply HBSE theories to understand the person in environment	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions

	Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper
EP 2.1.8 – Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services: • Recognize the reciprocal relationships of clients and practice with both public and organizational policy • Collaboration with colleagues and clients for effective policy action that promotes social and economic justice	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper
EP 2.1.9 – Respond to contexts that shape practice: • Demonstrate flexibility and creativity in the context of change in advance practice with groups • Provide leadership to clients that promotes sustainable change for practice with individuals and groups	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions Exams Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper

EP 2.1.10 – Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities:
  a. Engagement
    • Develop relationships with clients that are professional, purposeful, culturally appropriate, and characterized by clear boundaries
    • Encourage clients to be equal partners in the collaboration of treatment goals
    • Attend to the interpersonal dynamics and contextual factors that strengthen and potentially threaten the therapeutic alliance
  b. Assessment
    • Assess client's readiness for change
    • Assess client strengths and limitations
  c. Intervention
    • Select appropriate intervention strategies
    • Implement interventions that enhance client capacities
    • Help clients within group settings resolve problems
  d. Evaluation
    • Contribute to the theoretical knowledge base of the social work profession through practice-based research
    • Evaluate client system(s) progress and intervention effectiveness through group members self-assessment and collateral reports
	Group Leadership and Facilitation
	Class Discussions
	Exams
	Experiential Group
	Paper
	Leadership Paper
	Multicultural/
	Diversity Paper

EP 2.1.11 Appreciate the context of Christian higher education for social work education: • Understand how personal and religious/spiritual beliefs can be resource or	Group Leadership and Facilitation Class Discussions

impediment in the therapeutic alliance between the social worker and client • Recognize how the Christian mandate comports with the NASW Code of Ethics to treat all persons with dignity, do justice, and practice compassion.	Experiential Group Paper Leadership Paper Multicultural/ Diversity Paper

IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A lecture-discussion and group interactive format will be utilized in this class. Student preparation and participation are integral parts of the learning process. Contributions from students about their experiences from the field are encouraged. Videos, lecture and group exercises will be used to accomplish the learning objectives.

V. TEXTS AND READINGS

Required Texts:

- Jacobs, E.E, Schimmel, C.J, Masson, R.L., Harvill, R.L. (2016). Group Counseling Strategies and Skills(8th ed). Cengage

Suggested Text/Reading:

- Zastrow, C. H. (2012). *Social work with groups: A comprehensive workbook* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Corey, G., Corey, M. S., Callanan, P., & Russell, J. M. (2004). *Group techniques* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2014). *Groups: Process and practice* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole

For additional optional readings, consult the Suggested Readings and Resources.

VI. THE COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Session	Readings Due	Topic

Wk. 1 2/6/17	**Chapter one; Introduction** Available; Lietz, C. A. (2007). Strengths-based group practice: Three case studies. *Social Work with Groups, 30(2)*, 73-87. doi:10.1300/Joo9v30n02_07	Review of Syllabus Introduction & Assignment to Groups Power point 1 presentation from Jacobs and Schimmel History and theoretical underpinnings of social work practice with groups; Key principles with leading a group.
Wk. 2 2/13/17	**Chapter 2; Stages of Groups;** supplemental information from Corey and Corey	Ethical Issues in Group; stages of groups Groups to plan.
Wk. 3 2/20/17	**Chapter 3 and 4: Purpose of groups and Planning**	**Experiential Group Session One**
Wk. 4 2/27/17	**Chapter 5: Beginning stage** Available reading; Kurland, R. (2007). Debunking the "blood theory" of social work with groups: Group workers are made not born. *Social Work with Groups, 30(1)*, 11-24. doi:10.1300/J009v30n01_03	**Experiential Group Session Two** **Group Leadership paper due!**
Wk. 5 3/6/17	**Chapter 6: Basic skills for leading** Available reading: Pollio, D. E. (2003). The evidence-based group worker. *Social Work with Groups*, 25(4), 57-70. doi:10.1300/J009v25n04_05	**Experiential Group Session Three**
Wk. 6 3/13/17	**Chapter 7 and 8; Focus and Cutting Off and Drawing Out** Available reading; Blakley, T. L., & Mehr, N. (2008). Common ground: The development of a support group for survivors of homicide loss in a rural community. *Social Work with Groups*, 31(3), 239-254. doi:10.1080/01609510801980971	**Experiential Group Session Four**
Wk. 7 3/20/17	**Chapter 9 and 10 Rounds, Dyads, Exercises in groups.**	**Experiential Group Session Five**
Wk. 8 3/27/17	**Chapter 11; Exercises; objective lessons to do with groups Chapter 12 Middle Stage of Groups**	**Experiential Group Session Six** **Multicultural Diversity paper due!**
Wk. 9 4/3/17	**Mid Term Exam**	**Experiential Group Session Seven**

Wk. 10 4/10/17	SPRING BREAK	
Wk. 11 4/17/17	**Chapter 13; Counseling Theories** Available reading; Salloum, A. (2008). Group therapy for children after homicide and violence: A pilot study. *Research on Social Work Practice, 18(3),* 198-211. doi:10.1177/1049731507307808	**Experiential Group Session Eight**
Wk. 12 4/24/16	**Chapter 14; Counseling and Therapy in Groups; Chapter 15 Closing a session** Available reading: Malekoff, A. (2009). Gatekeepers, gatecrashers, and gateways in group work with kids: A mystery story. *Social Work with Groups, 32*(3), 193-208. doi:10.1080/016095108027119121-12	**Review of Group Experience**
Wk. 13 5/1/16	**Chapter 16: Dealing with Problem Situations**	**Experiential Group paper due!** Role Plays
Wk. 14 5/8/17	**Chapter 17: Working with specific populations**	**Class examples/role plays**
Wk 15 5/15/17	**Final Exam**	**Final Exam**

VII.   METHODS OF EVALUATION

Assignment	Due Date(s)	Point Value	Course Competencies
Group Leadership Paper	2/27/17	20	2.1.1-2.1.11
Multicultural/Diversity Perspective	3/27/17	20	2.1.1-2.1.11
Mid-term Exam	4/3/17	10	2.1.1-2.1.10
Experiential Group Paper	5/1/17	30	2.1.1-2.1.11
Final Exam	5/15/17	15	2.1.1-2.1.10
Class Participation/Professionalism	Throughout course	5	2.1.1-2.1.10
TOTAL		**100**	

VIII.   DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

A. Group Leadership Paper **(20%).** Group leadership is critical to the group process. The textbook addresses leadership in chapter 1 and 6. Outside references will be required to support each section of the paper. This paper is to address: 1.The key skills needed in leading a group; 2.The various leadership styles; 3. Traits that make an effective leader. 4. The ethical standards for leading groups. The paper will be at least five pgs., double-spaced, Time New Roman, 12 font, APA style with at least five references (past 5/10 years). Please utilize headings for clarity (this applies to all papers in the course).

B. *Midterm Exam* **(10%).** Exam on readings, lecture notes and classroom discussions

C. *Multicultural/Diversity Perspective paper* **(20%).** This assignment will highlight the importance of maintaining a multicultural perspective as a group leader. The textbook notes some aspects of it on pages 453-459. Your paper should address the following: 1. Specific steps the group leader can take to manage diversity in a group; 2. Research studies that have shown the best methods to manage diversity; 3. How your own cultural background, values, and belief systems affect your leadership ability. 4. Describe any multicultural/diversity training you have received or would like to receive in the future. 5. Research one specific population/culture you know nothing about and share some facts about them and note 3 key ways a group leader needs to know to manage a group member from this population/culture. This paper will be at least five pgs., double-spaced, Time New Roman, 12 font, APA style with at least five references (past 5/10 years).

D. *Experiential Group/Paper* **(30%).** An important aspect of this course is participation in small group settings. A summary/research paper will describe your personal experience in the group and will include (1) Pre-group planning: how the group came to a consensus on the purpose and type of group; (2) a discussion of group skills and techniques (listening, linking, etc…) used by the group facilitators in creating an atmosphere conducive to the development of group trust and cohesiveness; (3) the progress of your group through the specific developmental stages; (4) a discussion of the issue of establishing trust within the group; (5) a discussion of leadership styles exhibited by group facilitators; (6) a discussion of the establishment of group rules, along with implicit and explicit group norms; (7) focus, time management, and significance in facilitation; and (8) ethical and diversity considerations. (9) management of potential conflict or difficult members. This paper is an analytical overview and description of each group's development with emphasis on and reference to the various theories, practices, and processes as defined and explained in the text and class lectures. Please give specific and concrete examples from your group experience to support and substantiate your statements.

The paper should clearly indicate your knowledge, understanding, and synthesis of course materials and information. **It is highly recommended that you keep a log of your perceptions of your group experience each group session.** This paper will be a minimum of 10 pgs., double-spaced, APA style, Time New Roman, 12 font, with a reference list of at least 8 professional literature references related to your group experience and process. **Please remember that the experiential component is critical to your overall experience in the course. Adhere to your professional Code of Ethics regarding confidentiality.**

E. *Final Exam* **(15%).** The final exam will cover readings, lecture notes, and classroom discussions.

F. *Class Participation/Professionalism* **(5%)** (Please see the rubric on page 13/15 of this syllabus).

IX. MSW PROGRAM GRADING POLICY

Course assignments may include a combination of papers, examinations, and/or presentations. All course assignments are designed to enable students the opportunity to demonstrate a mastery of required course content.

Grading Scale:

A	B	C	D
100-94	93-80	79-70	<69.9

Papers are graded with special attention to:
- The organization of the papers with emphasis on clarity and following directions
- The use of literature (sources, citations and breadth of readings)
- Accurate application of APA style (*American Psychological Association*) for citation
- The quality and depth of the written work
- The quality of practice analysis
- Creativity
- Grammar, punctuation, sentence structure

Cheating/Plagiarism **Students who cheat/plagiarize on a paper, test, etc., shall be given an "F" grade for the particular incident and/or course." Cheating is defined as the attempt, successful or not, to give or obtain aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any class requirement. Cheating includes plagiarism or use of other's ideas, etc. without proper acknowledgments.**

X. COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty is a violation of the social work program's values and ethics and may result in:
- A grade of zero for the work
- A grade of "F" in the course
- And/or dismissal from the social work program

The policy as explained in the student handbook will be enforced.

Attendance: All students are expected to attend class. Because this class is accelerated, and contingent on your full admission to the MSW program, it is expected that students will make every attempt to come to every class. If it is necessary to be absent, please contact the instructor and a classmate so that you may later receive any information that you missed. Because of the limited number of classes, even one absence will jeopardize a student's ability to successfully complete this course. Excessive absences (more than 2) will result in points discounted from the final grade. Two or more absences in this class will also raise serious questions regarding whether a student may satisfactorily complete this course and continue in the program.

Excessive tardiness will also result in a loss of points.

Cell Phones: Out of respect for the value of the learning environment and the concentration of your peers – as well as your own, students are asked to turn off, put them on vibrate, or otherwise keep your cell phones quiet in the classroom. In cases of urgency related to family or job responsibilities, calls may be taken at the discretion of the professor. Please remove the conversation from the classroom, library, and/or computer lab. *Texting is not permitted in the classroom* (2010-2011 MSW Student Handbook, p. 15).

Changes to Course Syllabus/Outline: The professor reserves the right to change the course syllabus or course outline if necessary. Students will be informed of any changes in a timely manner.

Disabilities*:* Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is encouraged to speak with the course instructor during the first two weeks of class regarding their needs. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities must contact Mr. Jonathan Abernathy, Director of Disability Services, to register for accommodations. No accommodations can be given without first registering with Mr. Abernathy. Stated differently, activation cannot be retroactive and would affect only accommodations from the point of activation (registration and confirmation of the disability with Mr. Abernathy) and forward. Because faculty receive official letters of accommodation from the Registrar shortly after the last day to add a class, the student in encouraged to contact the course instructor in person prior to that time (approximately two weeks after the start of class). Finally, student who choose to activate accommodations (e.g. extended time on tests) must notify the course instructor two weeks before the exam so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Laptop Computers/Ipads: Taking notes in class is encouraged, but unrelated on-line searches, emailing, shopping, etc. is disapproved.

Participation: Students are also expected to come to class prepared to interact in discussion and activities in the classroom. Class participation is preparation for professional work and the student will be assessed by the level of their responsible engagement in the learning processes offered in the course

Shared Client and Agency Information*:* In the classroom, students and professors will occasionally discuss clients and agencies. In these discussions, it is expected that information about clients and agencies should be disguised or eliminated, if clients could be identified, and that this information is to be held in confidence, within the bounds of the Code of Ethics. You must disguise the identity of clients in written assignments including changing the name of the client.

Social and Economic Justice*:* The faculty of the Department of Social Work believes we all share a responsibility for championing social and economic justice for all members of society. Guided by the Code of Ethics and the Social Work Department's Core Performance Standards, social workers should strive to:

o   Eliminate personal and institutional discrimination;

o   Ensure access to needed resources and opportunities for all persons;

o   Expand options and opportunities for everyone, but especially for persons who are

       disadvantaged or disenfranchised;

o   Respect cultural diversity in society;

o   Advocate changes that improve social conditions and promote social justice;

o   Encourage participation in the democratic process; and

o   Encourage people to develop their own voice.

There will be times during this course when societal "isms" or prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practices are examined. Because of our commitment to social and economic justice, we are open to hearing all views and all perspectives will be carefully examined. Students are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others while at the same time striving to attain the ideals of social justice.

Textbooks: All students are required to have textbook(s) for this course. Without it, students are unable to keep up with the assignments.

XI. UNION UNIVERSITY MSW PROGRAM

MSW Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The mission of the Union University Graduate Social Work Program is to prepare competent and effective professionals for leadership in advanced generalist practice. In a context of Christian higher education, the program fosters compassionate service, promotes social and economic justice, and equips students for excellence in social work practice.

Program Goals

1. To equip students with knowledge, values, and skills for excellence in social work practice within the context of Christian higher education;

2. To foster compassionate service and promote social and economic justice;

3. To prepare social workers to be leaders in communities at state, national and international levels;

4. To increase the availability of competent master-level prepared social work professional leadership in the surrounding region; and

5. To prepare students to pursue advanced scholarship in education post-MSW education.

XII.   ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Anderson-Butcher, D., Khairallah, A. O., & Race-Bigelow, J. (2004). Mutual support groups for long-term recipients of TANF. *Social Work*, *49*(1), pp. 131-140. doi:10.1093/sw/49.13

Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups. Retrieved from http://www.aaswg.org/

Berman-Rossi, T., & Kelly, T. B. (2004). Using groups to teach the connection between private troubles and public issues. In C. J. Carson, A. S. Fritz, E. Lewis, J. H. Ramey & D. T. Sugiuchi (Eds.), *Growth and development through group work* (pp.105-124). New York, NY: Haworth Press.

Blakely, T. L., & Mehr, N. (2008). Common ground: The development of a support group for survivors of homicide loss in a rural community. *Social Work with Groups*, *31*(3), 239-254. doi:10.1080/01609510801980971

Corey, M. S., Corey, G., & Corey, C. (2014). *Groups: Process and practice* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks Cole.

Corey, G., Corey, M. S., Callanan, P., & Russell, J. M. (2004). *Group techniques* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Garvin, C. D., Galinsky, M. J., & Gutierrez, L. M. (Eds.) (2004) *Handbook of social work with groups.* New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Greif, G. L., & Ephross, P. H. (2005). *Group work with populations at risk* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Haight, B. K. & Gibson, F. (Eds.) (2005). *Working with older adults: Group process and technique.* Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Kurland, R. (2007). Debunking the "blood theory" of social work with groups: Group workers are made not born. *Social Work with Groups, 30*(1), 11-24. doi:10.1300/J009v30n01_03

Lietz, C. A. (2007). Strengths-based group practice: Three case studies. *Social Work with Groups, 30*(2), 73-87. doi:10.1300/Joo9v30n02_07

Malekoff, A. (2004). *Group work with adolescents: Principles and practice* (2nd ed). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Malekoff, A. (2009). Gatekeepers, gatecrashers, and gateways in group work with kids. A mystery story. *Social Work with Groups, 32*(3), 193-208. doi:10.1080/01609510802711912

Phillips, J. (2006). *Group work in social care: Planning and setting up groups.* London, England: Jessica Kingsley.

Salloum, A. (2008). Group therapy for children after homicide and violence: A pilot study. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *18*(3), 198-211. doi:10.1177/1049731507307808

Schulman, L. (2007). *The skills of helping individuals, families, groups and communities* (7th ed). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Steinberg, D. M. (2004). *The mutual aid approach to working with groups: Helping people help one another* (2nd ed). Binghamton, NY: Hayworth Press.

Toseland, R. W. W. & Rivas, R. F. (2012). *An introduction to group work practice* (7th ed). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Webb, N. B. (2004). *Social work practice with children* (3rd ed). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Zastrow, C. (2012). *Social work with groups: A comprehensive workbook* (8th ed). Belmont, CA: Brooks Cole Cengage Learning.

Rubric/Group Experiential Paper

APA Style	1	.05	0	Total
Title page in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Paper has running head in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Font settings in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Headings are in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Citations are in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Direct Quotes follow APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
References in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Paragraph settings in APA style	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
			Total	

Content	2	1	0	
Body of paper is 10 pages (APA)	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student demonstrates adequate preparation for the group	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student demonstrates professionalism	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student demonstrates respect for difference in culture & context	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student demonstrates advanced social work skills of engagement	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student demonstrates appropriate skills and techniques	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student addresses developmental stages of the group	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Student demonstrates understanding of ethical concerns re: groups	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Includes 8 professional references to paper content.	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
	1	**.05**	**0**	
Introduction to paper	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
Conclusion to paper	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Poor	
			Total	

Writing Skills	1	.05	0	
Spelling	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Punctuation	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Vocabulary	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
Clarity of thought (clear & concise)	☐ Few errors	☐ Occasional errors	☐ Many errors	
			Total	

Other

Stapled hard copy	☐ **Yes**		☐ **No**	
		Minus 10 points for each day late		
			GRADE	

Student Professionalism

Part of the development of professionalism for social workers is the skill of effective communication with others. Professionalism plays a significant role in our ability to effectively communicate with clients and others. Due to this, your professors will base 10% of your final grade on verbal and nonverbal communications within and outside of the class.

Maintaining professionalism directly impacts your credibility as a professional social worker in the field. The critical role of maintaining a professional stance will be highlighted in the following sections on being prepared, engagement, meetings (class), questions, and methods of communication. This rubric will serve as a framework for MSW student expectations related to professionalism and will address both face-to-face and online interactions and behaviors.

Being Prepared:

Preparation for class is an expectation for both students and professors. Each professor should clearly state verbally and in written format what they expect of students in each class. Likewise, competencies, for each class, should be clearly defined and reviewed at the beginning of the class.

Students need to adequately prepare for each class and related assignments. This includes assigned readings, research, and preparation for exams. Outlines for assignments should be stated clearly in each syllabus, whether in-class or online. Late submissions for assignments will affect your performance in class as would late work affect your performance evaluations in the workplace. Professionalism in class links to real-world practice.

Engagement:

Engagement involves the interactions between individuals and is a dynamic process. This reciprocal process includes interactions between students and also between students and the professor. It is an expectation that each student will actively engage in class and group activities. It is also the responsibility of students to communicate with professors regarding any questions they have concerning the course, assignments, or competencies. Relevant feedback is always welcome.

Attentiveness in class is one way professors gauge student engagement. Students are encouraged to acknowledge classmates and/or the professor with appropriate and informed insights. Talking for the sake of calling attention to oneself is not an expectation. It is also important to remain open to different ideas and concepts. Attempts to dominate or sidetrack discussions are not acceptable.

Meetings:

The word "meeting" is used to denote the link between professional behaviors in class and real-world practice. Meetings may be specific scheduled class periods and/or scheduled meetings with the professor as requested or needed. It is an expectation that students are present for all meetings as one would be present for agency meetings in the workplace. Students should come to class on time, with textbook, and prepared to take notes. It is not acceptable to miss meetings without informing the professor ahead of time, regardless of the reason or whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Please notify the professor ahead of time if you are unable to attend.

Technology:

The use of any form of technology unrelated to class is not acceptable and will be reflected in your professional evaluation. Laptops, ipads, and notebooks may only be used in relation to the class. Texting, tweeting, or facebooking are not considered as part of professional behavior and may be distracting for fellow students and professors.

Questions:

Questions are always welcome, however, the timing of questions relates to professionalism. Questions are welcome at the beginning and end of the class is time permits or as relevant to the discussion. Unrelated questions demonstrate a lack of focus and interrupt the flow of the class. How you focus in the classroom may be related to your ability to focus in the workplace. Any questions regarding grades, assignments, or related feedback should be submitted by email or by setting up a meeting that allows for appropriate privacy and time.

Formal communications should be through your Union email account to ensure that your professor receives your questions or feedback. Personal emails may be filtered out and not received. Please start your subject line with the course prefix (ex: SW540: Question). This alerts the professor of the class as well as the topic. ALL communication should be written in complete sentences and free of grammatical and spelling errors. Make sure that communications/questions are clear and succinct. If a specific response is required, please state the timeframe in which you need the response. This relates to professional communication and documentation in the workplace. It is also critical that you check your UU account on a regular basis as class plans may change.

PROFESSIONALISM RUBRIC

	Competent (1 pt.)	Not Yet Competent (.5 pts.)	Unacceptable (0)
Being Prepared/ Meetings	Usually arrives on time	Often arrives late	Consistently arrives late
	Always brings required materials & completed assignments	Often does not bring required materials & completed assignments	Consistently does not bring required materials & completed assignments
	Informs instructor in advance of excused & unexcused absences via email	Inconsistent in informing instructor (in advance) of excused & unexcused absences via email	Never informs instructor in advance of excused & unexcused absences via email
Engagement	Is actively engaged verbally or nonverbally	Sometimes disengages	Often disengages
	Actively listens well to what others say as evidenced by nonverbal feedback	Does not regularly listen well as indicated by nonverbal cues	Frequently fails to listen or attend to the discussion as indicated by nonverbal cues and off-task activities
	Insights, opinions & examples are relevant & often reveal knowledge gained through readings & assignments	Contributions are often based solely on opinion or unclear views & not even when relevant do not demonstrate knowledge gained through readings & assignments	Comments are frequently illogical or without substantiation & reveal student has not completed readings or assignments
	Shows verbal and nonverbal respect for instructor	Shows little verbal and/or nonverbal respect for instructor	Shows a lack of verbal and/or nonverbal respect for instructor
	Does not dominate discussion	Sometimes dominates discussion	Often dominates discussion
	Competent (.5 pts.)	**Not Yet Competent (.25 pts.)**	**Unacceptable (0)**
Technology	Technology use is related to class	Technology is sometimes related to class	Technology use is rarely or never related to class
	Emails are free of spelling & grammatical errors, formatted appropriately, & written in complete sentences	Messages commonly contain one or more spelling errors, grammatical errors, or incorrect formatting	Messages are written without attention to formatting, spelling, or grammar
Questions	Asks content related questions during class, saving general questions for before or after class	Makes general inquiries during class not related to class content	Often makes general inquiries during class not related to class content
	Messages include the required subject line	Messages often do not contain required subject line	Messages rarely/do not contain the required subject line

Content taken from Ashley Fitch Blair 2011