

In order to give you a little more information as you choose your courses for the fall, I have asked all of the faculty who teach our multi-section foundation classes to provide you with a brief description of their interests and approach to the class. A compilation of their responses is below. Our hope is that this information will help you find a good fit between your interests and learning style and those of your instructors.

SOWO 500

Prof. Jen Snider

My areas of clinical interest are children and families, child and adult mental health, developmental disability, sustainable community development, ethical social work practice, professional and paraprofessional education and organic farming. My style of teaching and training tends to be interactive and hands-on. There is some lecture every week, but classes tend to be discussion and application oriented as we build from course content to explore examples in real life. I am also committed that we have fun and build community as a class throughout the semester. This is a great course that enables us explore the stages of child development within a social context and through the theoretical and professional lens of a social worker. I will rely on you to handle assigned readings, and will reinforce your reading with some in-class lecture. My aim is that our in-class applications of course material will be rich and empower your professional work. Most of the assignments are written (as in all other sections of this course), so I also have a strong commitment to providing feedback that will enable you strengthen your writing as you move through the semester.

Dr. Danielle Swick

My areas of interest include school readiness, early academic and socio-emotional intervention strategies for children, parental involvement, research methodology and design, and statistical analysis. My approach to teaching is interactive and hands-on. I believe in drawing on students' experiences in the field in order to link the concepts we are learning in the classroom to real-life examples.

Dr. Lisa deSaxe Zerden

My areas of interest include HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, harm reduction, substance abuse, and the effects of acculturation on health outcomes and utilization. In general, my teaching style is mixed. I lecture but each class will also include other methods such as: small group work, debate, multi-media (when appropriate), and an emphasis on student participation. Students have a responsibility and opportunity to engage in class discussions and also in writing reflections for those who are less vocal in class. I organize each class by setting an agenda of what will be covered during that session, usually accompanied by an outline or slides so that students can follow along with the lecture. When teaching this course I emphasize the connection between theory and real life contexts of individuals, families, and the structures that influence their development trajectories.

SOWO 530

Dr. Amanda Sheely

In my research, I examine the effects of poverty on families, access to government programs serving the poor, as well as the relationship between devolution and service provision. This research agenda shapes my approach to this course, as I believe that policies fundamentally shape the services that social work clients can access. Thus, there is a fundamental link between policy and practice that I will highlight throughout this course. As a teacher, I believe one of my responsibilities is to help all students understand the link between policy and their work as social work practitioners. To do so, I rely on a variety of instructional methods including videos, lecture, small group activities, and discussion. My overall instructional approach is highly interactive; so, I expect students to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material for each session.

Prof. Laurie Selz-Campbell

My clinical and program development work has been with adults with severe and persistent mental illness, and with veterans with post traumatic stress disorder. My hope with SOWO 530 is that we will work together (through discussion, group work, and a variety of activities) to understand how social welfare policies are direct expressions of what a society believes and values about people who are vulnerable – and further, to understand how such policies shape our clients' experiences as they engage with social welfare systems in times of need.

Dr. Lisa de Saxe Zerden

My areas of interest include HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, harm reduction, substance abuse, and the effects of acculturation on health outcomes and utilization. In general, my teaching style is mixed. I lecture but each class will also include other methods such as: small group work, debate, multi-media (when appropriate), and an emphasis on student participation. Students have a responsibility and opportunity to engage in class discussions and also in writing reflections for those who are less vocal in class. I organize each class by setting an agenda of what will be covered during that session, usually accompanied by an outline or slides so that students can follow along with the lecture. For SoWo530, I draw upon historical themes and examples of how our welfare state has developed and changed over time but also connect material to current policies and systems influencing client's lives. My biggest goal for SoWo530 is for students to understand why and how policy impacts all areas of social work practice

SOWO 540

Dr. Michael Lambert

My research focuses on biopsychosocial adjustment in children, youth, adults, and families nationally and cross-nationally in general and with special focus on individuals and families of color. This interest also covers culturally appropriate measurement of biopsychosocial functioning within and across the above referenced groups. I am a practicing clinician with special focus on family therapy and the application of structural family therapy. My practice also includes focus on individual intervention with adults, children, and youth with a variety of behavioral and emotional difficulties including trauma-related difficulties, depression, and anxiety, as well as severe biopsychosocial difficulties. While I use cognitive behavior therapy in my practice I also have extensive training in the application of psychodynamic radical behavioral intervention. My approach to any course I teach draws on more than two decades of work as a researcher, teacher, and clinician. My teaching approach involves Socratic reasoning and extensive emphasis on student to student interaction and interaction between students and me. I see class time as a means of amplifying student's knowledge base and not a place to regurgitate reading assignments.

Dr. Joelle Powers

My area of scholarly interest is in evidence-based practice, school social work, and children's mental health. My general teaching style is a mix of lecture, discussion, small group activities, and videos. I approach this course as an opportunity for students to become oriented to social work practice with diverse clients. Real-world practice examples are used throughout each class session, and time is spent discussing multiple approaches to treatment.

Dr. Kim Strom-Gottfried

My direct practice background is in mental health (particularly emergency mental health such as crisis and suicide work). I also have expertise in group work and volunteer as a co-leader of bereavement groups for people who have lost loved ones to suicide and homicide. My research is in ethics and the variety of dilemmas that can occur when we try to apply professional standards to novel situations such as home visits, rural communities, social networking, etc. I take a very applied approach to this practice class, using role plays, cases, videos, exercises and discussions to build on the reading students have done. The assignments are generally the same for all sections, though mine include 2-4 short multiple-choice quizzes on the readings to help prepare students for the social work licensure exam.

Prof. Marty Weems

My area of interest is direct and clinical practice regarding: substance use disorders in adults, mental illness in adults, co-occurring disorders, crisis intervention. I am also particularly interested in evidence-based practices and have expertise with CBT and Motivational Interviewing. I have an engaged teaching style and encourage a cooperative academic environment that allows students to discuss and explore ideas. I try to provide a lot of diversity in teaching method. Thus I often use lectures, multimedia, interactive exercises, small group work, and my experiences outside of the classroom as a catalyst for learning. This course provides the students' first exposure to the fundamentals of direct practice social work. Each class tends to focus on one or two key concepts. These include, but are not limited to: social work values, Code of Ethics, communication skills, building empathy, assessment, group work...etc. Students are expected to use their field experiences as a tool to apply their learning.

SOWO 570

Prof. Joanne Caye

I have several areas of interest, which include disaster response, family work and child welfare, human services management, and cross cultural informal education. My teaching style uses a combination of lecture, discussion and experiential teaching. I am definitely interested in simulations and role plays, to practice what we are discussing. In SOWO 570 I focus on the reality that skills and knowledge about both direct and macro practice are essential for a social worker to be effective in whatever position he or she finds him or herself. Community practice is one of the foundations of social work as a profession; although the general public may not know what constitutes community practice, they utilize its services all the time. Discussion/ application to real world situations, and writing about experience are all part of the course.

Prof. Mat Despard

My practice interest is nonprofit management and leadership; research interest is building assets and improving livelihoods and financial capability among vulnerable populations in developing countries and the U.S. I use lecture only to introduce and explain key concepts and to offer practice-based illustrations. When I lecture, I actively engage students by asking them questions and encouraging them to draw on their own practice-related experiences. I use problem-oriented case studies, small group exercises, role plays, simulations and video clips. In SOWO 570, I want students to a) learn practical, marketable skills for helping human service organizations' improve their efforts to achieve desired outcomes for the people they serve; b) understand how to tackle community problems; and c) understand the people skills needed to be successful at a) & b). Course themes include: understanding community problems from multiple perspectives, always focusing on outcomes – quality of life improvements for people, and never doing for people what they can do for themselves (i.e. when to step up, when to step back).

Prof. Josh Hinson

My clinical/scholarly interests: International, domestic and transnational social work practice, especially with Latinos; community organizing and community development; immigration and refugee policy and practice; sustainable agriculture and appropriate technology; food systems policy and advocacy. My teaching style is mixed lecture and student-directed discussion; films and case studies to illustrate community and organizational issues; small group work to practice organizational and community engagement skills; if schedules and student interests allow, field trips to community-based organizations in North Carolina. My approach to the course: this course is designed to give students a broad foundation in topics regarding community and organizational practice. While not all students may plan to pursue a concentration in macro and community practice, the course will be relevant to all social work students, as engagement with communities and organizations is fundamental to social work values.