

**The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
School of Social Work**

**Course No:** SOWO 570 (Section 001: Mondays, 2:00 – 4:50pm)  
**Course Title:** Social Work Practice with Organizations & Communities, Fall 2009  
**Instructors:** Gina Chowa, MSW, Ph.D  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 12 -2 pm ( Please make an appointment via email)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course, participants explore frameworks, values, and skills to meet individual and family needs through interventions with work groups, organizations, and communities.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Articulate and define social work roles and effective engagement, communication and use of self skills in organizations and communities working with diverse populations by age, race/ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities and immigrant/refugee status.
2. Relate social work roles in organizations and communities to the NASW Code of Ethics, particularly concerning social justice, self-determination, cultural competence and social and political action in working with disadvantaged populations.
3. Understand basic explanatory theories and perspectives that guide social work practice with work groups, organizations, human service systems and communities.
4. Demonstrate how to assess a community issue(s), including the strengths and needs of neighborhoods and various population groups - racial and ethnic minorities, older adults, children and youth, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees – or other groups who have experienced disadvantage.
5. Understand organizational structure, culture, climate, power and decision-making processes in human service organizations.
6. Articulate strategies for how human service organizations can increase cultural competency, multiculturalism and anti-oppression.
7. Articulate how to support self-advocacy efforts among consumer and population groups that have experienced disadvantage.
8. Understand various evidence-based intervention approaches to community change through social planning, social action, community organizing and community development practice models.
9. Demonstrate how to plan an organizational, human service system or community intervention aimed at measurably improving the quality of life for a group of people.

**EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will familiarize students with the basic knowledge and skills needed for social work practice with organizations and communities. An overview of the ethics and values, including social and economic justice, that characterize our profession is presented. Systems

thinking approaches along with other theoretical approaches to organization and community practice are discussed with an emphasis on their application to a variety of oppressed and disadvantaged populations and multiple levels of intervention. These models encompass professional use of self, professional roles, client system assessment, formulation of objectives or desired outcomes, development and implementation of evidence-based treatment intervention plans, and evaluation of outcomes.

Special emphasis will be given to the development of assessment and intervention skills for beginning practitioners that are relevant to empowerment, capacity building and social change with organizations and communities. The development of critical reasoning skills will be discussed including those factors that influence decision-making processes and the need for ongoing self-evaluation. Throughout the course, the transactions between organizations, communities and their environments (e.g., economic, technological, cultural, physical, and political) are presented. The role of age, race, gender, social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, and physical and mental ability in social and economic justice-focused work practice will be an integral part of this course.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS & READINGS:**

Hardcastle, D.A. & Powers, P.R. (2004). *Community practice: Theories and skills for social workers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). New York: Oxford.

Required readings, which are listed in the class schedule and reading assignments section below, will come from these assigned texts and from other sources such as academic journals. These additional readings can be accessed in the following ways:

- 1) At the URL stated in the reading list  
OR
- 2) Through an electronic academic journal accessible through UNC Libraries (<http://www.lib.unc.edu/>) marked as “UL” (for “UNC Libraries”)  
OR
- 3) Via Blackboard (<http://blackboard.unc.edu/>) “BB” (login and find SOWO 570 – Section 001 or 959, choose “Assignments” and “Course Readings” folder)

#### **RESOURCES**

All course lectures, syllabus, assignment information, and external links to useful web sites are or will be available on Blackboard, at <http://blackboard.unc.edu>

#### **ORGANIZATION OF COURSE**

The fourteen-session course will consist of lectures presented by the instructor or community practitioners, class presentations, educational videos, class exercises, classroom discussions, and individual and group projects.

This course will focus on working with diverse populations and skill-building exercises relevant to social work practice at these various levels. The course also seeks to encourage an attitude of life-long learning and professional development. In this regard, there will be a strong emphasis on effective use of self, skill building, utilizing various theories and capacity-building interventions using approaches based in social justice, advocacy, collaboration, and coalition building.

Each class will begin with 25-30 minutes of group work on community projects. During this time the instructor will provide assistance as needed by the groups. Although in class time is provided for students to work on their community projects, students are expected to meet outside class as well to work on their projects.

The next hour will be used to present materials that expand class readings and provide discussion related to the topic being discussed.

The class will take a 10 minute break and the remaining time will be dedicated to a guest lecturer, a videotape, or a skill-building activity.

## **ROLES OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS**

### **Role of Instructor**

The professor will provide a learning environment that includes information via readings, lectures, practical examples of materials and field experiences for class. The professor will hold office hours and will be available to students by appointment, by phone and email.

### **Role of Students**

Assigned readings are to be read prior to class and students should come to class prepared to discuss and apply knowledge obtained from the readings to the classroom discussions. Class discussion and attendance is highly valued in this course. Students are expected to attend all classes unless prevented by illness, urgent crisis or mishap. If you anticipate missing a class session, ***please let the instructor know in advance.*** If you are not able to let the instructor know in advance, ***please follow up with communication after the fact.*** For help in identifying and securing difficult to find articles, please consult with instructor.

Accommodations/Special Needs: Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University's Disabilities Services (<http://disabilityservices.unc.edu>) and provide documentation of their disability. Disabilities Services will notify the instructor that the students should discuss the specific accommodations they require (e.g. changes in instructional format, examination format) directly with the instructor.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

The assignments in this course will be organization based. This means that all students will be affiliated to an organization for the projects in this course. The affiliation ensures that students have easy access to a community that the organization is already working with. In addition, the student has access to the organization itself.

All papers must be written using APA style, including title and reference pages, section headings, and page numbers. All papers must be completed by the assigned dates. Papers and presentations should be grounded in class readings, class discussions and other literature as appropriate. Grammar, presentation style, clarity and conciseness will affect the final grade.

## **COMMUNITY PROJECT**

At the beginning of the semester, students are divided into community project groups. Each group will be assigned a specific project which will be implemented in the community. The projects will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

Students are expected to address the following issues in the projects:

- Identify and engage with stakeholders of a specific Research Triangle Area community

- Assess the community and the designated issue to be addressed through observation, research, and engagement with stakeholders.
- Identify models and strategies related to the given issue.
- Explore the feasibility of these models of strategies with stakeholders.
- Consider capacity and sustainability issues and recommend strategies for addressing each, given the chosen model or strategy.

Each community project has two products:

1. Community Assessment Paper
2. Community Plan Paper

### **Community Assessment Paper (Due October 12)**

Students will meet with the community organization to discuss the project and the neighborhood to be assessed. Students will conduct a three-part neighborhood assessment, in relation to the specific project identified by the organization:

- 1) Conduct a visual inventory of the neighborhood
- 2) Research published material about the neighborhood and project issue
- 3) Develop and pilot a questionnaire, which will (post-assessment) be administered to key community respondents.

**Check for detailed instruction, grading guides and examples on Blackboard in the “Assignments” folder**

### **Community Plan Paper (Due December 11)**

This paper develops a plan for addressing the project issues by enhancing community capacity. The paper should summarize the core problem in the community that your project aims to address. You should then prepare a plan for addressing the core problem (informed by the interviews you completed with your questionnaire) complete with identifying key actors, resources and a process to bring about the necessary change. Finally, the paper will consider the strengths and limitations of the process. The paper should be eight pages in length, and also include an Appendix and Abstract. **Check for detailed instruction, grading guides, and examples on Blackboard in the “Assignments” folder.**

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Organizational Assessment (Due November 9)**

Students will submit a paper (8-9 pages) analyzing their organizational setting and structure. This organization will be an agency where the student is in the field (as a practicum student or employee, or through the class Community Project assignment). This data should be gathered from different sources, including organizational documents and speaking with the employees of the organization. Reproducing organizational documents for this assignment will not be accepted. Your paper should reflect your own assessment and interpretation of the organization. **Check for detailed instruction, grading guides and examples on Blackboard in the “Assignments” folder.**

**GRADING SYSTEM:**

The School of Social Work operates on an evaluation system of Honors (H), Pass (P), Low Pass (L), and Fail (F). The numerical values of these grades are:

- H: 94-100
- P: 80-93
- L: 70-79
- F: 69 and lower

A grade of P is considered entirely satisfactory. The grade of Honors (“H”) — which only a limited number of students attain -- signifies that the work is clearly excellent in all respects.

**GRADING CRITERIA:**

Grading guides for all written work can be found on Blackboard. These guides identify grading criteria for each assignment, including the relative weight of each criterion. Therefore, students are advised to closely follow the rubrics, as they constitute the Instructor’s expectations and evaluation methodology for these assignments.

Overall, each project and assignment will contribute the following percentages to your final grade:

|                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Class Participation          | 10%                |
| Community Assessment         | 25%                |
| Community Plan               | 30%                |
| Organization Assessment      | 25%                |
| <u>Two Quizzes (5% each)</u> | <u>10%</u>         |
| <b><u>Total</u></b>          | <b><u>100%</u></b> |

**POLICY ON INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:**

**A paper is considered late if it is handed in any later than the start of class on the day it is due.** The grade for late papers will be reduced 10% per day, including weekends. Therefore, a paper that would merit a grade of 100 on Friday will receive a grade of 70 if submitted on Monday. Similarly, a paper due at 2pm on Monday handed in at 3pm will be considered 1 day late.

A grade of **Incomplete** is given only in exceptional and rare circumstances that warrant it, e.g. family crisis, serious illness. It is the student’s responsibility to request and explain the reasons for an Incomplete. The instructor has no responsibility to give an Incomplete without such a request.

**POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

It is the responsibility of every student to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing in actions involving the academic processes of this class. Students will properly attribute sources used in preparing written work and will sign a pledge on all graded coursework certifying that no unauthorized assistance has been received or given in the completion of the work. **All written assignments should contain a signed pledge from you stating that, “I have not given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work.”** Credit will not be awarded for unpledged work. Please refer to the *APA Style Guide*, *The SSW Manual*, and the *SSW Writing Guide* for information on attribution of quotes, plagiarism and appropriate use of assistance in

preparing assignments. In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action as required.

**POLICIES ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM**

Use of electronic devices for non-class related activities (e.g. checking email, surfing, IMing, blogging, playing games) is prohibited. Use of laptops is permitted as a tool for small group activities and in-class assignments or as an approved accommodation for students with disabilities.

## Details of Course Outline

### Session 1: August 31 Introduction to Social Work Macro Practice

#### Session objective questions:

1. What is Social work Macro Practice?
2. What is a community and what are the types of communities?
3. Why are community level interventions important?

#### Readings:

Chapter 1 – Community practice: An introduction  
Chapter 4 – The concept of community in social work practice

#### Exercise:

**Organize Class into community project groups**

### **NO CLASS ON MONDAY, September 7, 2009 – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**

### Session 2: September 14 Macro Practice Theories and Perspectives

#### Session objective questions:

1. What is the role of theory in Social work Macro Practice?
2. What are the three broad theoretical frameworks used in Macro Practice?
3. What are the differences between these theoretical frameworks?

#### Readings:

Chapter 2 – Theory-based, model-based community practice

#### Exercise:

**Conflict or Consensus: Fit the theory to the community situation**

### Session 3: September 21 Understanding Communities, Part 1

#### Session Objective Questions:

1. What is a community issue (problem)?
2. What is the role of social workers in addressing community issues?
3. How can social workers identify key players in the life of a community?
4. How is the claiming process affected by media and differing social realities of people affected by community conditions?

#### Readings:

Chapter 3 – The nature of social and community problems

#### Exercise:

**Virtual tour of Durham, NC: A community seen through different eyes**

## **Session 4: September 28      Understanding Communities, Part 2**

### **Session Objective Questions:**

1. What are the structure and methods of a community assessment?
2. What is the role of research in understanding communities?
3. What are the formal versus informal ways of understanding a community?
4. How does assessment provide a foundation for developing an intervention?
5. How can social workers use “negative” results to promote development in the community?

### **Readings:**

Chapter 6 – Discovering and documenting the life of a community

Castelloe, P. & Gamble D.N. (2005) Participatory methods in community Practice: Popular education and participatory rural appraisal. In Weil (Ed.), *The handbook of community practice* (pp.267-275). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. **(BB)**

### **Exercise:**

**Participatory Rural Appraisal Exercise**

## **Session 5: October 5              Engaging and Partnering with Communities**

### **Session Objective Questions:**

1. What are different types of community assessments? What are different methods of partnering with communities to conduct them?
2. To what degree does your field placement agency have relationships with local associations, individuals, economy, physical space and other agencies (Kretzmann & McKnight)?
3. How do you conduct a focus group or public forum as part of a community assessment?
4. What are different sources of existing data that can be used for a community assessment?

### **Readings:**

Chapter 7 – Using assessment in community practice

Kretzmann, J. & McKnight, J. (2005). *Discovering community power: A guide to mobilizing local assets and your organization’s capacity*. W.K. Kellogg Foundation. **(BB) (Read Section 1 Only)**

Learning Point Associates. (n.d.) Chapter 2: Conducting a community assessment. *Putting the pieces together: Comprehensive school-linked strategies for children and families*. Retrieved August 7, 2008 from <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/css/ppt/chap2.htm>

### **Exercise:**

**Photo voice & community food assessments: the life of a community through the eyes of youth in the community**  
**Community assessment simulation**

## **Session 6: October 12              Understanding Human Service Organizations**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. What are the major differences among the different types of human service organizations?
2. What are the different types of organizational theory?
3. How do the types and structures of organizations impact their operation?
4. What are the organizational ethical dilemmas and systematic resolution processes?

**Readings:**

Chapter 10 – Using your agency

Netting & O'Connor (2003). *Organization practice: A social worker's guide to understanding human services* Chapters 1 & 2. Boston: Ally and Bacon **(BB)**

**Exercise:**

**Discussion of student's organizational assessments**  
**Meet the Project Host Role Play**

**Session 7: October 19                      Working in Groups**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. How do stages of group development affect the work that gets done in organizations and communities?
2. How do you facilitate an effective meeting?
3. How do you deal with group conflict and other problems?

**Readings:**

Chapter 10 – Using work groups: committees, teams and boards

**Exercise:**

**Conflict resolution simulation**  
**Student update: OCOC Neighborhood Walk / Petition Drive**

**Session 8: October 26                      Organizational Change & innovation**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. How can social workers maintain their role as social service innovators and change agents in human service organizations?
2. How do you deal with push-back forces in organizational change processes?
3. How do you identify allies in organizational change to bring about the desired change?

**Readings:**

Jacobson, W. (2001 ) *Beyond therapy: Bringing back social work to human service reform. Social work*, 46, (1), 41-51. **(BB)**

**Exercise:**

**Force field analysis simulation  
Update on Community projects**

**Session 9: November 2      Planning Programs & Interventions: Essential Skills**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. What is a logic model and why is it important for planning and evaluating programs?
2. What are the different aspects of the logic model?
3. What process makes sense in developing a logic model? Why is that so?
4. What are the limitations of a logic model?

**Readings:**

McCawley, P.F. The logic model for program planning and evaluation. Retrieved August 10, 2009 from <http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/extension/LogicModel.pdf> **(BB)**

Helitzer, D., Willinging, C., Hathorn, G., & Benally, J. (2009). Using logic models in a community-based agricultural injury prevention project. *Public Health Reports*, 124, 63 -73  
[http://www.publichealthreports.org/userfiles/124\\_4Supp1/63-73.pdf](http://www.publichealthreports.org/userfiles/124_4Supp1/63-73.pdf) **(BB)**

**Exercise:**

**Logic Model development exercise**

**Session 10: November 9      Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 1 Community Development**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. What is community development?
2. How is community development connected to the broader area of social development?
3. Why should community development practitioners care about economic development for disenfranchised groups?

**Readings:**

Chapter 5 – Community intervention and programs: Let’s extend the clan

Johnson Butterfield, A.K., Chisanga, B. (2008). Community development. In T. Mizrahi and L.E. Davis (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Social Work (20<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Washington, DC: . National Association of Social Workers. (e-reference edition). **(UL)** (Click “Browse” and enter “Community Development”)

Sherraden, M.S. (2008). Community economic development. In T. Mizrahi and L.E. Davis (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Social Work (20<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Washington, DC: . National Association of Social Workers. (e-reference edition). **(UL)** (Click “Browse” and enter “Community Economic Development”)

**Exercise:**

**Streets of Hope Video – Dudley Street Neighborhood initiative Discussion**  
**Student update: OCOG Assembly**

**Session 11: November 16      Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 2, Resident-Led  
Community Development**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. What are some tools social workers can use to ensure participatory processes are sustainable and authentic?
2. How can ABCD methods be used for social inclusion considering that those with power may dominate such processes?
3. How can ABCD be used in Social work Direct Practice? What Direct Practice skills are essential for ABCD and other participatory methods?

**Readings:**

Kretzmann, J.P. & McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets* (Introduction, pp. 1-11). Evanston, Ill: Institute for Policy Research. Retrieved July 31, 2009 from  
<http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/abcd/GreenBookIntro.pdf> **(BB)**

Dosner, C. (2007). Implementing the Yaonunde declaration: Practical issues on participatory processes in community development. *Community Development Journal*. 43, (4), 413 – 427 **(BB)**

**Exercise:**

**Assets-Based Community Development: Guest Speaker, TBA**

**Session 12: November 23      Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 3, Community  
Organizing**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. Why is participation and ownership important in community organizing?
2. Why should community organizers build relationships?
3. What are the building blocks for successful community organizing?
4. Why should social workers pursue alternatives to contemporary forms of community practice moderated by economic globalization and neo-liberalism policies?

**Readings:**

Chapter 14 – Using organizing: Acting in concert

DeFillips, J., Fisher, R. & Bragge, E. (2007). What's left in the community? Oppositional politics in contemporary practice. *Community development journal*  
<http://cdj.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/44/1/38> (find article in this particular issue)

**Exercise:**

**Organizing simulation: ACORN, The Fifth Avenue Committee & Immigrant Workers Centers.**

**Session 13: November 30 Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 4 Social Action**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. What are ways we can help develop and support self-advocacy groups in the community?
2. When do we step up – advocate for disadvantaged groups or step back – let those groups speak for themselves?
3. What are effective advocacy strategies and tactics? How do we negotiate from a position of power?

**Readings:**

Chapter 13 – Using the advocacy spectrum

Mondros, J. (2002). Principles and practice guidelines for social action. In A. Roberts & G. Greene *Social worker's desk reference*. (pp. 534-539). New York: Oxford University Press. **(BB)**

**Exercise:**

**Alinsky's Social action video. Student discussion following.**

**Session 13: December 7 Use of Self in Community Practice. Course Review**

**Session Objective Questions:**

1. How can social workers be more assertive in our interaction with other professionals?
2. What did you learn in this course?
3. How can this course be improved in the future?
4. How did you learn about yourself as a social worker in this course?
5. What difference will your discoveries make moving into your career as a social worker?

**Readings:**

Chapter 8 – Using self in community practice: Assertiveness

**Exercise:**

**Course review and evaluation**

| <b>Class Session</b>                                 | <b>Date</b>        | <b>Topic</b>   | <b>Speakers/<br/>Exercise</b>                   | <b>Project Phase</b>                     | <b>Assignment Due</b>               |
|--|--------------------|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | August 31, 2009    | Introduction to Social Work Macro Practice                                     | Course overview, Expectations, Group assignment | Introduction                             |                                     |
| <b>September 7, 2009 NO CLASS, LABOR DAY HOLIDAY</b> |                    |  |   |  |                                     |
| 2  | September 14, 2009 | Macro Practice related Theories & Perspectives                                 | Fit theory to situation                         | Planning                                 |                                     |
| 3  | September 21, 2009 | Understanding Communities, Part 1  | Virtual tour of Durham                          | Planning/<br>Implementation              | Draft Questionnaire Due             |
| 4  | September 28, 2009 | Understanding Communities, Part 2  | Participatory Rural Appraisal exercise          | Implementation                           |                                     |
| 5  | October 5, 2009    | Engaging & Partnering with Communities   | Community Assess. simulation                    | Implementation                           |                                     |
| 6  | October 12, 2009   | Understanding Human Service Organizations                                      | Meet the host role play                         | Implementation                           | Community Assessment Paper          |
| 7  | October 19, 2009   | Working in Groups  | Conflict resolution simulation                  | Implementation                           |                                     |
| 8  | October 26, 2009   | Organizational Change & Innovation   | Force field analysis                            | Analysis                                 |                                     |
| 9  | November 2, 2009   | Planning Programs & Interventions: Essential Skills                            | Logic Model Exercise                            | Analysis                                 |                                     |
| 10   | November 9, 2009   | Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 1: Community Development              | Streets of Hope video                           | Analysis                                 | Organizational Assessment Paper     |
| 11   | November 16, 2009  | Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 2: Resident-led Community Development | ABCD Guest Speaker                              | Planning for the Paper                   |                                     |
| 12   | November 23, 2009  | Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 3: Community Organizing               | Organizing simulation                           | Informal Presentation to Class, Feedback |                                     |
| 13   | November 30, 2009  | Community Practice Models & Skills, Part 3: Social Action                      | Speaker   | Write-up                                 |                                     |
| 14   | December 7, 2009   | Use of Self in Community Practice, Course wrap-up and evaluation               | Evaluation                                      | Conclude, prepare to submit              | Community Plan Paper due this week. |

