Course No: SOWO 570 – Section 001  
Time: Mondays 2:00-4:50pm  
Location: Room 135  
Course Title: Social Work Practice with Organizations & Communities, Fall 2018  
Instructor: Mat Despard, PhD, MSW  
despard@unc.edu  mdespard@wustl.edu  (919) 358-7162  
Office Hours: Mondays 12pm – 1:45 pm (office location TBA)  
(Students are encouraged to request appointments during these hours)

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 transgender 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 description
This course focuses on developing knowledge and skills in three core competency areas: engagement, assessment, and intervention. Students will identify and explore a social problem that impacts the community in which their field placement is situated, develop a plan for engaging key stakeholders, complete a comprehensive community and organizational assessment, and draft strategies for intervention. Although this is considered a macro course, all students, regardless of their specialization, should be able to conceptualize a social problem and potential intervention strategies at all levels of the client system.

The key assumptions of this course are:

1. Micro-level social workers primarily intervene at the individual and family levels and macro-level social workers primarily intervene at community, organizational, and policy levels.
2. Regardless of a social worker’s primary orientation toward macro or micro social work, all social workers will engage in episodes of change from the individual to the macro-level.

3. Macro-level social work requires authenticity and strong interpersonal skills that foster relationships and build trust with communities.

4. Macro social workers acknowledge that the stakeholders are experts, particularly those most affected by the social problem.

5. Macro social workers should develop an array of tools and strategies that can target both incremental and transformative change.

6. Addressing complex social problems requires inter-organizational networks and cross-system collaboration and social workers should understand how organizational environments, including culture and climate, impact change efforts.

7. Social workers must be aware of the historical and current context of a given community and organizational condition – particularly the ways in which systems of oppression create and perpetuate social problems – to engage, assess, and intervene for macro-level change.

8. No single intervention will solve a social problem; rather, multi-level and multi-system strategies and interventions are required to address a social problem.

Resources

All course lectures, syllabus, assignment information, and external links to web sites will be available on Sakai, at http://sakai.unc.edu

Required texts and readings

There is one required text for this course:


Additional required readings are available on the Sakai course site, unless otherwise noted. Approximately 50 pages of reading will be assigned each week. In some instances, there may be multiple readings listed but only a certain range of pages assigned. Students should note the assigned pages.

Teaching methods

Each student will be assigned to a group to discuss and answer questions about readings and engage in learning exercises throughout the semester. In their groups, students will also participate in a series of check points in which students share their assignment ideas and progress and obtain feedback and guidance from peers. Students are expected to engage with the full class for simulations, videos, interactive presentations, and group discussion. This is a course that depends on a high level of engagement and critical thinking by students. Lecture will be used to introduce a topic, present key concepts, offer practice examples, and/or review research findings.

Class assignments

Student performance will be evaluated based on the following assignments, which are briefly described below (full, detailed assignment instructions and grading guides are available on Sakai):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement Plan and Problem Identification</td>
<td>Class 6 – 10/08/18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Organizational Assessment</td>
<td>Class 11 – 11/12/18</td>
<td>30</td>
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All written assignments should be submitted electronically on Sakai via Dropbox by the start of class time on the due date.

**Class attendance (10 points).** I take attendance at the start of each class. Students are expected to attend class, arrive on time, and stay until the end of class. Points will be deducted from your attendance grade if you miss more than one class and/or have a pattern of being late or leaving early.

**Class participation (10 points).** Participation points are awarded based on preparation for class (e.g., completing the readings), active and thoughtful contributions to class discussions and learning activities, completion of and participation in assignment checkpoints (see below), and contributions to a positive and constructive team learning environment and experience. My assessment of students' class participation will be based in part on peer feedback; other students in your assigned learning group will be asked to anonymously rate your participation based on the above criteria.

**Engagement Plan (30 points).** Engaging stakeholders is an essential step in a change episode. The purpose of this assignment is for students to develop skills in engaging with clients, communities, and key stakeholders and using data and theoretical frameworks to identify and describe the population group and problem. Students will also engage in self-reflection regarding the problem and population group. See assignment document for full description.

**Community and Organizational Assessment (30 points).** Students will select and describe a community problem for which they will conduct abbreviated community and organizational assessments. Students will pay particular attention to identifying assets and resources within the community and organizational context. Students will demonstrate the ability to use secondary data and research findings and conduct key informant interviews to understand the problem. See assignment document for full description.

**Theory of Change and Macro Intervention Options (20 points).** Students will incorporate what was learned from the engagement and assessment assignments to develop a theory of change and articulate potential macro-level change strategies. Students will illustrate the theory of change using the framework discussed in class, describe existing macro-level change strategies, and develop two three additional strategies for macro-level change. See assignment document for full description.

**Assignment checkpoints:** Assignment checkpoints are designed to help students prepare and stay on track for each of the three major assignments. Students are expected to prepare for each checkpoint and come to class ready to discuss their ideas with members of their learning group, which is part of students' class participation grade.

**How course assignments relate to the generalist curriculum**
This course is part of a generalist year sequence focused on building skills and knowledge to engage and assess the client system (individual, family, group, organization, and community) and consider options for intervention. In this course, students are asked to select a social problem, develop a plan for stakeholder engagement, conduct a comprehensive needs and assets assessment, and develop ideas for intervention. Later in the Fall, students will select a specialization in either direct practice/micro social work or community, management, and policy practice (CMPP). Students selecting the CMPP concentration will enroll in SOWO 770 in the Spring and will build upon their work in SOWO 570 by further developing their macro-level interventions and considering factors impacting intervention implementation factors. In addition, assignments in SOWO 570 will also help prepare students for SOWO 510: Evidence-Based
Practice and Program Evaluation. In SOWO 510, students will learn how to evaluate the interventions they designed during SOWO 570.

**Grading System and Philosophy**

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 guides are included with detailed instructions for each assignment. Criteria that reflect the learning objectives for each assignment are described and used as the basis for awarding points. Different ranges of points are awarded for each criterion to reflect “excellent”, “good”, and “fair” work. Most students are expected to receive most of their assignment criteria points in the “good” range, which will result in an assignment score in the P range. “Good” criteria reflect standard assignment requirements. “Excellent” criteria reflect work above and beyond standard requirements, both in the amount and quality of work. Students must receive most if not all of their points in the “excellent” category to receive an assignment score in the H range. “Fair” criteria reflect below standard requirements. Scores that fall mostly in this range will result in an assignment score in the L range, while criteria scores that do not achieve the “fair” standard will result in an assignment score in the F range.

The purpose of this system of grading system reflects a simple contract between you, the student, and I, the instructor. I will:

1. Provide detailed instructions for each assignment.
2. Make my grading standards as clear as possible.
3. Spend time in class answering questions students have about the assignment.
4. Assign readings and facilitate classroom learning exercises that prepare students to complete each assignment.

In return, I ask that each student carefully review assignment instructions and grading guides, ask for clarification if needed, and exert an effort on assignments that reflects their goal for achieving an H or P in the course.

**Expectations for Written Assignments**

Students are expected to use good academic English; grades will be lowered for poor grammar, syntax, or spelling. The School of Social Work faculty has adopted APA style as the preferred format for papers and publications. **All written assignments for this course should be submitted in APA style**, unless assignment instructions indicate otherwise. Information concerning APA style and writing resources are listed below:


**Writing Support**

Clear, cogent writing is an essential skill for social work professionals. Writing support is available to all students through the School’s Writing Support Team; they can help you strengthen your writing skills by sharing strategies for organizing information, presenting a cohesive argument, ensuring clear communication, and mastering APA style. Writing Support offers a learning opportunity for students but does not merely copy edit student papers. Writing support is available in-person, by e-mail, or by phone. E-mail a requested appointment day and time to SOSWwritingsupport@gmail.com.
Policy on late submissions
An assignment is considered late if it is submitted any later than the start of class on the day it is due. The grade for late assignments will be reduced 10% per day, including weekends. That is, if an assignment is turned in any later than the start of class, the grade will be reduced by 10% if turned in within the next 24 hours, 20% if turned in within 48 hours, 30% if turned in within 72 hours, etc. 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.

Likewise, extensions on assignments are only granted in rare circumstances. However, to help manage challenges related to family obligations and emergencies, student illness, and workload challenges, students will have an optional 1-week extension that they can use on any assignment EXCEPT the Theory of Change assignment. For example, if a student has not been able to finish their Community Assessment on time due to a family emergency, they can use their one-week extension. This extension can only be used one time so students should consider the best use of this extension.

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 include the following pledge on the first page of all written assignments: “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.

Accessibility and Resource Services
The School of Social Work aims to create an educational environment that supports the learning needs of all students. The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities. The Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) Office at UNC has been established to coordinate all accommodations. If you might need accommodations at any point during the semester, please contact ARS prior to the beginning of the semester or as early in the semester as possible so that they can assist you; this process takes time. You can visit their website at http://accessibility.unc.edu, and contact ARS by email: accessibility@unc.edu or phone at 919-962-8300. The accommodations process starts with ARS and helps instruct Faculty at the School of Social Work on how best to proceed. As a School, we are committed to working with ARS and students to implement needed accommodations for all of our students. In addition to seeking ARS supports, please also reach out to your instructor to communicate how best your needs can be met once you have begun the ARS process.

Electronic Devices
Although use of electronic devices is permitted for learning purposes such as taking notes and looking up information relevant to a discussion or small group activity, electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, laptops, tablets) should not be used during class for social purposes or other activities irrelevant to the course content. Alerts and notifications on devices should be silenced during class. Emails/phone calls/ text messages should be answered during the 15 minute break. Students violating this policy will be asked to refrain from use and may see a reduction in participation grade.
## Class Schedule & Reading Assignments

### Unit 1: Foundation for macro social work in communities and organizations

Describe the macro concentration at UNC SSW and illustrate the similarities and differences in macro and micro practice. Ensure that students understand the focus of macro social work and the relevant theories and frameworks that guide our practice in communities and organizations.

**August 27**  
Class 1 – Defining macro social work

**Objectives:**
- Establish expectations for our classroom culture
- Understand course learning objectives, content, assignments and format
- Define macro practice and understand how macro and micro practice differ and are similar
- Understand how the macro practice specialization maps through the curriculum

**Required Readings**
   - Chapter 1: An Introduction to Macro Practice in Social Work: pgs. 1-19

**Recommended Readings**

**Other assignments:** None.

**September 3**  
Labor Day – NO CLASS

**September 10**  
Class 2 – Theoretical and historical roots of macro practice – communities

**Objectives:**
- Understand historical roots of macro social work
- Define community and the importance and key characteristics of social work practice within communities
- Understand the theories that inform macro social work in communities and think critically about their limitations

**Required Readings**
   - Chapter 2: Historical and Contemporary Influences on Macro Practice: pgs. 29-40
   - Chapter 5: Understanding Communities: pgs. 116-147
2. Assign one article to each person in your group. Each person will summarize their article for their group and debrief during class.
Understand critical theories and anti-oppressive approaches to social work in communities


Other assignments: None.

September 17
Class 3 – Theoretical and historical roots of macro practice – organizations

Objectives:
- Define organizations and the importance and key characteristics of social work practice within organizations
- Understand the theories that inform macro social work in organizations and think critically about their limitations
- Understand critical theories and anti-oppressive approaches to social work in organizations

Required Readings
   a. Chapter 7: Understanding Organizations: pgs. 188-223
   a. Read from thematic analysis section until the end (2317-2324)
   b. Skim beginning of article

Recommended Readings
Other assignments: Checkpoint 1 - Community or organizational problems and issues seen through your field placement.

Note: Combined class with Section 002 – Robin Sansing. Mat to Zoom in for first half of class from St. Louis. Students will join Section 002 in second half of class for a guest panel of macro social workers.

## Unit 2: Engaging organizations and communities

Ensure that students understand how social conditions become social problems and the ways in which social workers identify and engage stakeholders.

### September 24

**Class 4 – Understanding the problem and identifying stakeholders**

**Objectives:**
- Explain how community issues are identified and understood to be problems
- Understand the importance of community engagement
- Understand how core competencies of engagement, assessment, and intervention apply to macro practice and the role of macro social work

**Required Readings**
   a. Chapter 3: Engaging with Diverse Populations: pgs. 59-85
   b. Chapter 4: Assessing Community and Organizational Problems: pgs. 87-113

**Recommended Readings**

**Other assignments:** None.

### October 1

**Class 5 – Developing a plan for stakeholder engagement**

**Objectives:**
- Identify stakeholders and their interest and/or relationship to this problem
- Identify strategies and best practices for engagement
- Consider and select strategies to engage stakeholders

**Required Readings**
- Seek feedback from peers regarding stakeholder engagement ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Ground Work USA: Community Engagement Best Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Live Well Colorado: Strategies for Meaningful Community Engagement</td>
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**Other assignments:** Checkpoint 2 - Problem/issue, key stakeholders, population group engagement.

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<tr>
<th>Unit 3: Conducting needs, resources, and asset assessments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that students learn frameworks for organizational and community assessments and practice using these frameworks within the context of their selected topic.</td>
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**October 8**

**Class 6: Framework for community assessments**

**Objectives:**
- Describe the purpose of and methods for conducting community needs and asset assessments.
- Understand the framework for community assessments
- Consider multiple methods for assessment
- Develop and test interview questions for key informants

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<th>Required Readings</th>
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  a. Chapter 6: Assessing Communities, 153-184 |
| 2. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (n.d.). *Section 4: Key informant interviews*. |

**Recommended Readings:** None.

**Other assignments:** Paper 1 due - Engagement Plan and Problem Identification

**October 15**

**Class 7: Locating available data**

**Objectives:**
- Understand the different types of need and the limitation of solely focusing on one type
- Locate sources of information and relevant data for the assessment

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<tr>
<th>Required Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Assign one article to each person in your group. Each person will summarize their article for their group (e.g., Who was involved? What did they aim to do? What</td>
</tr>
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</table>
- Use critical thinking skills and multiple data collection methods to understand the social problem.

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<tr>
<th>Methods did they use? What were the results? Etc.) Groups will discuss and debrief during class.</th>
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3. Browse resources:
   - a. Policy Map: [https://www.policymap.com/](https://www.policymap.com/)
   - b. Social Explorer: [https://www.socialexplorer.com/](https://www.socialexplorer.com/)
   - c. OnTheMap: [https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/](https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/)

**Recommended Readings**

1. [Chicago Community Trust: LGBT Needs Assessment](https://www.chicagocommunitytrust.org)
2. [ABCD Institute: Community Building Principles and Actions Steps](https://www.abcdinstitute.org)
3. The Community Tool Box. (2018). Chapter 3: Assessing community needs and resources. Read the following sections:
   - Section 2: Understanding and describing the community.
   - Section 4: Collecting information about the problem.
   - Section 5: Analyzing community problems.
   - Section 6: Conducting focus groups.
   - Section 8: Identifying community assets and resources.
### October 22
**Class 8: Understanding organizations**

**Objectives:**
- Explore underlying assumptions, values and norms in organizations
- Think critically about establishing anti-oppressive practices within organization

**Required Readings**

**Recommended Readings**

**Other assignments:** None.

*Note: Combined class with Section 002 – Robin Sansing who will lead students through an organization simulation exercise. Mat will be in St. Louis.*

### October 29
**Class 9: Assessing organizations**

**Objectives:**
- Understand the framework for organizational assessment
- Understand the task environment for an organization
- Assess inter-organizational relationships
- Describe factors associated with the successful implementation of evidence-based practices.
- Understand how organizational social context (culture and climate) affect the experiences of human service organization employees, interns, volunteers, and participants and human service organization performance.

**Required Readings**
   a. Chapter 8: Assessing Human Service Organizations: pgs. 226-261

**Recommended Readings**
- Understand the impact of climate and culture on the development and implementation of interventions and programs.


**Other assignments**: None.

### November 5

**Class 10: Ethical practice and the impact of identify and culture on assessment and engagement strategies**

#### Objectives:
- Consider cultural and multicultural context in which engagement, assessment, intervention occurs
- Examine the policy and political context of the social problem and the implications for social, economic and/or environmental justice.
- Understand guidelines for professional and ethical behavior within macro practice.
- Practice self-awareness of personal identity and bias and their impact on macro practice.
- Engage with your peer group and provide relevant feedback.

#### Required Readings


2. Political typology – take the quiz and then read the article [http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/](http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/)


#### Recommended Readings


**Other assignments**: Checkpoint 4 – Community and organizational assessment.

### Unit 4: Identifying theory of change, leverage points and opportunities for intervention

Ensure that students learn to develop a theory of change that builds off of their findings from engagement and assessments as well as core theoretical perspectives. Ensure that students can identify at least one potential intervention within the CMPP pathways.

### November 12

**Class 11: Moving from the problem theory to the theory of change**

#### Objectives:  

#### Required Readings
• Articulate your theory of change for your intervention – a coherent, evidence-based explanation of how program or intervention activities will result in desired outcomes.
• Explain how community needs and assets assessments guide community interventions.
• Understand how to use the best available evidence to support your theory of change and develop goals for intervention.


**Recommended Readings**
1. The Community Tool Box. (2016). Chapter 19: Choosing and adapting community interventions. Read the following sections:
   - Section 1: Criteria for choosing and adapting community interventions.
   - Section 2: Understanding risk and protective factors: Their use in selecting potential targets and promising strategies for intervention.
   - Section 3: Identifying strategies and tactics for reducing risks.
   - Section 4: Adapting community interventions for different cultures and communities.
   - Section 5: Ethical issues in community interventions.
   - Section 6: Promoting the adoption and use of best practices.
2. The Community Tool Box (2016). Chapter 2: Other Models for Promoting Community Health and Development
   - Section 1: Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change

**Other assignments:** Paper 2 due - Community and Organizational Assessment

### November 19

**Class 12: Community organizing and community development interventions**

**Objectives:**
• Examine inter-organizational collaboration as an intervention to address a community problem.
• Understand, compare, and contrast different types of community interventions.
• Explain the differences between conflict- and consensus-based community organizing and when

**Required Readings**
one approach is better indicated to solve a community problem.


4. Skim Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative website: https://www.dsni.org

**Recommended Readings**


**Other assignments:** None.

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**November 26**

**Class 13: Administration, management, and inter-organizational networks**

**Objectives:**
- Learn about organizational interventions.
- Learn about the role of social innovation and social entrepreneurship in macro social work.

**Required Readings**

- Understand the function of logic models in program development
- Learn how to create Logic models.

2. The Community Tool Box (2016). Chapter 2: Other Models for Promoting Community Health and Development
   Section 1: Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change


**Recommended Readings**


4. Pitt-Catsouphes, M., diZengotita, L., & Berzin, S. (2012). Leading the way: Social innovation in Massachusetts. Retrieved from the Center for Social Innovation at the Boston College School of Social Work website: [http://b.3cdn.net/pcouncil/43225de545795d4abd_i9m6bk01o.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/pcouncil/43225de545795d4abd_i9m6bk01o.pdf) (Read pp. 1-23)


**December 3
Class 14: Leadership and change management**

**Objectives:**
- Understanding leadership dimensions and reflect on leadership style
- Obtain feedback from peers regarding theory of change, leverage points, and ideas for macro interventions

**Required Readings**


### Recommended Readings


### Other assignments

Paper 3 due: Theory of Change and Macro Intervention Options