



Syllabus for Social Work Seminar (SWHS-42)

Course Information

Spring 2023

Day/Time of required meetings: Occupational Work Experience counts as class attendance

Location: Social Service program of your choice in the community (all sites must meet SWHS Dept criteria)

Instructor Information

Professor: Nathalie Dierkx

Email address: Nathalie-Dierkx@redwoods.edu

Course Information

Required Materials

Grobman, L. M., & Wehrmann, K. C. (2019). *Days in the Lives of Social Workers: 62 Professionals Tell "Real-Life" Stories from Social Work Practice (1)* (5th ed.). The New Social Worker Press.

All other additional materials on canvas.

Prerequisites/co-requisites/ recommended preparation

Prerequisite: SWHS-1: Introduction to Social Work

Co-Requisite: SWHS- 2: Field Seminar in Social Work

Catalog Description

A supervised work experience at a local community or campus social service agency providing the opportunity for the integration of social work theory, developing hands-on skills, understanding agency organization, and creating a knowledge base regarding community social need and problems. This course will primarily be an independent learning opportunity apart from two person-to-person (Zoom or telephone) meetings. The first of these meetings is at the beginning of the semester, with the student and instructor, to develop the placement plan. The second is with the student, instructor, and field placement/site supervisor. This meeting will allow for a check in on around student's Learning Agreement, hours, performance and goals, as well as any feedback to/from the agency or College of the Redwoods.

Note: Field trips are required. These are in the form of transportation to the location that you will obtain your field work hours. The college does not provide transportation. **The student, with assistance from the instructor, is responsible for locating and arranging for the contracts with the agency to complete the 120 hours of unpaid or 150 hours of paid internship hours.**

Course Student Learning Outcomes *(from course outline of record)*

Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Communicate effectively with and support clients from a variety of diverse backgrounds using current theoretical perspectives that maintain ethical principles stated in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) [Code of Ethics](#).
2. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively and cooperatively in an agency setting in a professional manner.
3. Identify personal strengths and weaknesses related to the student's ability to work in the human services and social work field.
4. Write objective reports based on observation of clients.
5. Demonstrate professional boundaries while establishing effective relationships with clients.
6. Integrate social work theory into a real-life case.
7. Apply the basic theoretical principles, competencies, skills, and attitudes of social work and human services professionals.
8. Engage diversity and difference from a perspective of cultural humility in the performance of client advocacy.
9. Demonstrate comprehension of the various ethical issues that arise in the context of social welfare service delivery and how to appropriately respond to them.
10. Outline current institutional structures and policy initiatives as they relate to the social work field in the United States using a historical lens.

Course Concepts

Students will understand and be conversant with the following terms and ideas as they demonstrate course outcomes:

1. Worker / Client Relationships
2. Professional and Ethical Conduct
3. NASW Code of Ethics
4. Confidentiality: Understand the importance of it in social work practice and demonstrate an ability to maintain it in and out of your placement.
5. Understand the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and demonstrate an ability to follow it in and out of your placement.
6. Identifying worker/client biases, understand transference and work to engage in active self-reflection so that your work own lived experiences do not negatively impact the lives of those you work with.
7. Cultural Competence: Understand and actively work on achieving this in your practice
8. Engage in direct service, understanding the differences between voluntary and involuntary services

9. Students will begin to understand the basic components of Case Management in the role of social work practice.
10. Students will begin to understand the role of Psychosocial Assessments in social work practice and how these are facilitated in the lives of those we work with.
11. Information and Referral: Students will come to understand the importance of providing clear, detailed information that is not misleading, while providing productive referrals to those we work with.
12. Crisis Theory and Crisis Intervention: Students will understand Crisis Theory and methods of crisis intervention in the field of Social Work.

Course Themes and Issues

The following motifs are threaded throughout the course as the primary tensions or problems inherent in the subject matter that students will engage with:

1. Ethical and legal conflicts within social work practice.
2. Diversity issues and their impact on the social work professional and the client.
3. Confronting client / worker biases.
4. Engaging resistance in clients.
5. The role of the social work professional.
6. Client empowerment; being a change agent and advocate for clients.
7. Awareness of self in social work practice: attitudes, biases, strengths.
8. Knowledge of fundamental legal guidelines, privacy and information management related to the standards of professional practice.
9. Maintenance of confidentiality & legal boundaries
10. Finding answers and engaging in solutions

Student Skills

Students will utilize the following skills to demonstrate course outcomes:

1. Keep accurate and concise notes.
2. Objectively observe clients and report those observations.
3. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries while establishing effective relationships with clients.
4. Communicate with people from a variety of socioeconomic, racial and cultural backgrounds.
5. Communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.
6. Communicate professionally with clients, colleagues and field supervisors.

Course Format

This course is an online course that will be completed one week at a time. There will not be any required live sessions for this course.

Office Hours

I will be available on zoom and in person for discussions. This can be for formal course questions, to talk about your future in Social Work, or just to chat! When seeking a meeting time, please know that it may take a few days to find a time when we are both available. If your matter is *urgent*, please be sure to explain that to me with your meeting request.

Before Asking for Help From Your Instructor... 😊

Be sure to check your syllabus and canvas for the information that you are seeking. In the field of Social Work, professionals are often asked to find answers to complex laws, policies, and regulations. Often, we are working in agencies that are fast paced and require us to be on the move. This can mean that we are on our own to find the answers that our clients need. Your ability to find and interpret those answers on your own is key to your success. This course is a great opportunity to hone your skills.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Format

All submissions for this course are to be single-spaced, using Times New Roman in a font of 12. All assignments must be submitted in MS Word or PDF format.

Course Assignments

*****ALL Assignments MUST be completed for students to pass this course*****

FIELD PLACEMENT: SWHS-42 is a course that is taken with SWHS-2. For clarification, the SWHS-42 course represents the field experience (also known as “occupational work experience”) hours. The SWHS-2 course is a space for students to develop a deeper understanding of social work practice, while also processing their direct field experiences from the SWHS-42 course.

Students are responsible for locating and securing a field placement at a social service agency, which has been approved by the instructor prior to beginning the placement. In addition, each student will need to identify a field site supervisor to complete/engage in the following with the student: orientation & safety checklist, development of a learning agreement, certification of all field hours, virtual or in-person site visit from the instructor, and student evaluation toward the learning objectives.

Note: Students will be required to complete all required field placement hours by the end of the semester. No hours can be earned passed the date that final hours are due for this course. Students who fail to obtain their required hours for SWHS-42 will be unable to receive the points necessary to pass both the SWHS-2 and SWHS-42 courses.

NOTE: All assignments below are related to the student's engagement with their field placement site. **The student is responsible to secure a field placement location for themselves to gain on-the-ground social work experience for this course.** The instructor is available to discuss possibilities, talk through options and answer any questions you may have regarding the expectations of this course.

1. AGENCY ORIENTATION/SAFETY CHECKLIST - (10 pts)

The Student Orientation Checklist is a required document that will provide a framework for monitoring and completing the agency orientation process. It will also allow you and your field placement to talk through any precautions, protocols, or situations that you should be aware of when volunteering/working there.

Due on Canvas: February 7th by 5pm

2. STUDENT LEARNING AGREEMENT - (10 pts)

The student learning agreement provides students with the opportunity to participate in the planning of their field experience. Each student is responsible for the actual writing of their learning agreement but is strongly encouraged to collaborate with their field supervisor in developing the agreement.

Due on canvas: February 7th by 5pm

3. CERTIFICATION OF HOURS – (7 pts each/21 pts total)

Students must record all field placement hours (which will be uploaded to Canvas Week 7, Week 11 and Week 13). Credit will not be given for prior volunteer and/or paid employment prior to the beginning of this semester. Each Log of Hours will be completed & signed by the student, then approved by the student's site supervisor.

NOTE: Hours can only be gained DURING the semester that the student is enrolled in SWHS-42. No hours gained before (or after) the official semester timeline are allowed.

Due on Canvas: (1st) February 28th, (2nd) March 27th, (3rd) April 17th by 5pm

4. SIGNED & APPROVED CONFIRMATION OF COMPLETION – (40 pts)

Once completing the required number of field placement hours (120 for volunteers, or 150 for paid employment), students must get the Confirmation of Completion document signed by themselves and their field placement supervisor. These then must be uploaded into Canvas. Only once all required signatures and approvals have been completed, and the document is in Canvas, can the grades for this assignment be entered into the Canvas gradebook. This will be a very large part of your grade for SWHS- 42.

Due on Canvas: May 5th by 5pm

5. STUDENT EVALUATION – (10 pts)

At the completion of the field placement hours, the student will be required to submit the SWHS Department's Student Performance Evaluation that is to be *completed by the student's field and supervisor*, then discussed with the student (in an effort to highlight strengths and areas of growth). Once this is done, it is to be signed off by both the student and site supervisor.

Due on Canvas: May 5th by 5pm

6. SITE OVERVIEW & EVALUATION - (9 pts)

In an effort to help the Social Work & Human Services department build and refine our Field Experience aspect of our program, students are asked to contribute feedback about the experiences that they had at their particular field site and their field site supervisor. This document will provide you the space to talk about the aspects you enjoyed, the aspects that were more difficult, the types of opportunities you had and any suggestions that you have for future students interning at that location. This is a confidential document that will only be seen by the student and the instructor. This document will NOT be shared with the field site or future students. It is used by the Department to help grow the program, increase opportunities for students and improve relationships with the social service community.

Due on Canvas: May 5th by 5pm

TOTAL CLASS POINTS AVAILABLE FOR THE SEMESTER 100

Due Dates and Late Assignments

****A note about due dates: MANY assignments are due Week 15, I highly recommend making a calendar for yourself at the beginning of the semester to spread these assignments out. You also have multiple assignments for SWHS-2 due at that same time. You cannot complete them all during Week 15! Let me know if you want to talk about tips and tricks for this****

With all assignments known in advance, students must work to create a schedule of completion on their own that meets the timeline for this course. Each student is expected to create a buffer for yourself, accounting for any unexpected events (personal and academic) that may occur near the due dates. When submitting assignments to Canvas, technical issues can arise. Be sure that you are allowing time to seek assistance from the Canvas Support folks, should something prevent you from submitting the assignment. If you know ahead of time of challenges with the schedule of assignments, please set a time for us to meet and we can work on a schedule together. If an emergency arises, please email me to let me know as soon as you can and we can come up with a plan from there.

Attendance Policy and Grading Standards

The Department of Social Work of Human Resources recognizes the relationship between values, skills, and knowledge gained in the classroom and our professional accountability to the communities we serve. Further, attendance and punctuality demonstrate professional behavior and respect for peers and the learning environment.

Students are expected to communicate with instructors regarding any absence and are encouraged to communicate with faculty about any circumstances that may interfere with their academic progress. If an unexpected event comes up for you, be sure to reach out to your instructor so that we can work together and ensure that you meet all of the course requirements to pass this class on time.

Social Work and Human Services Department Grading Standards

The following grading standards are for course assignments and course grades. Some grading categories are not used by the college for course grades – but may be used for assignments. The department has worked to establish this grading scale for all courses based on academic and practice standards of excellence. These standards may be different from other courses at CR; however, you will find the same standard used for all social work courses. This standard is used to help you achieve your own level of mastery of the material and demonstrate competency in the practice behaviors that are the hallmark of professional social work.

- A (94-100%)** - Excellent work which meets a level of professional competence and expertise that is worthy of publication and/or public presentation.
- A- (90-94%)** – Admirable work which meets a level of professional competence that with minimal changes would be worthy of publication and/or presentation.
- B+ (87-89%)** – Great work which meets a level of professional competence that with some changes could be worthy of publication and/or presentation.
- B (84-86%)** – Very Good work which meets a level of professional competence that with additional changes could be worthy of publication and/or presentation.
- (80-83%)** - Good work which meets a level of professional competence that with considerable changes could be worthy of publication and/or presentation.
- C+ (77-79%)** - Above Average work which minimally meets professional standards of competence, that through addressing the challenges may at some point be worthy of publication and/or presentation.
- C (70-76%)** – Average work which minimally meets professional standards of competence and with considerable revision, may be worthy of publication or presentation.
- .D (64-69%)** – Barely adequate work that does not meet minimum professional standards of competence and is not worthy of publication and/or presentation.
- F (63% or below)** – Unacceptable work that does not meet minimum course expectations.

Student Resources

Admissions Deadlines and Enrollment Policies

You can find a run-down of important dates regarding the beginning of classes, add/drop deadlines, breaks, finals and more, by clicking [this link](#). This includes **the deadline to add/drop/withdraw from courses**. Be sure that you are familiar with these dates and how they impact your individual situation.

Student Support Services at College of the Redwoods

Information on any of the following campus programs, can be found through this link:
<https://www.redwoods.edu/services>

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| ♣ Academic Support | ♣ Multicultural and Diversity Center |
| ♣ Admissions and Records | ♣ Online Course Support |
| ♣ Adult Education, Advising | ♣ Parking and Transportation |
| ♣ CalWorks | ♣ Student Health Center and Mental Health Counseling |
| ♣ Career Center | ♣ The G.R.O.V.E. (Food Pantry and Rapid Re- housing) |
| ♣ Business Center | ♣ Farm Shares |
| ♣ Child Development Center | ♣ Veterans Resource Center or Workforce and Community Education |
| ♣ Counseling Services | ♣ Trio |
| ♣ Disability Services and Programs for Student (DSPS) | ♣ Upward Bound |
| ♣ EOPS | ♣ Residence Halls/Housing |
| ♣ Financial Aid | |
| ♣ Library/Learning Resources Center | |

Accessibility

College of the Redwoods is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related services and accommodations, please contact your instructor or [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#) (DSPS). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

- Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1st floor
- Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near library
- Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

If you are taking online classes DSPS will email approved accommodations for distance education classes to your instructor. In the case of face-to-face instruction, please present your written accommodation request to your instructor at least one week before the needed accommodation so that necessary arrangements can be made. Last minute arrangements or post-test adjustments usually cannot be accommodated.

Canvas Issues and Technology Help

It is crucial to seek help when you can't access Canvas, or you have difficulty with your computer settings or browser. If you run in to issues with technology throughout the semester, contact the Student Tech Support office at 707-476-4288 or via email at tech-helpline@redwoods.edu

Free Microsoft Word

Office 365 Education is available for free to students who are currently attending CR. The service includes Office Online (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote), 1TB of OneDrive storage, Yammer, and SharePoint sites. You can access that through these links:

<https://products.office.com/en-US/student/office-in-education#FAQS>
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office/default.aspx>

Academic Dishonesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, the determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [Course Catalogue](#) and on the College of the Redwoods [website](#).

Disruptive Behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to the instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [Course Catalogue](#) and on the College of the Redwoods [website](#).

Course Expectations and Community Agreements

Inclusion and Open-Mindedness

Students in this class are encouraged to speak up and participate in class. Each of us must show respect for each other because our class represents a diversity of beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences. I believe that this is what will enrich all of our experiences together. I recognize that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. In this class, people of all ethnicities, genders and gender identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. You will have the opportunity to let our classroom community know your name and gender pronoun and anything else you would like to share. If you feel our classroom community isolates you in any because of your differences or if you have a specific need, please speak with me early in the semester so that we can work together to help you feel welcome to be an active and engaged member of our class and community.

Learning During an Ongoing Pandemic

A sense of humor, patience, and honesty are going to be key as we work through a semester filled with potential unknowns related to this pandemic. The main thing that I ask is that we all come to this class with the best intentions to learn, share and grow in our understanding of Social Work and Human Services. I imagine that there will be times when we face technical difficulties and unexpected interruptions (i.e. kids, pets, knocks at the door, multiple household members online at once). That is okay. We are *all* juggling something. So long as we give each other space for these incidents, do our best to create an environment where we can learn from one another and allow for the flexibility as needed, *we are going to be successful!*

Expectations of Students

- Come to class prepared with ***readings and assignments completed by the first class each week.***
- Expect to spend about 2-4 hours per week working on this course.
- Find ways to ***engage in class*** so that you can demonstrate & deepen your understanding.
- Work to ***maintain a sense of flexibility and humor*** as we work our way through this semester. With the ever-shifting sands of life during a global pandemic, there will be situations that we cannot anticipate. In those moments, a sense of humor will be helpful.
- ***Engage in timely communication with the instructor*** if unexpected events occur which require your attention and make it difficult to complete assignments on time. Talk to me about issues right away, do not wait until afterwards (when it is too late to develop a plan for success).
- ***Take the time to learn about campus services.*** Then take steps to utilize them as needed.
- ***Create the opportunities for self-care*** that you need to maintain your mental health and overall success in this course.

Expectations of the Instructor

- I will *come to class prepared*, with *course materials that are current*.
- I will be *available to answer questions or issues that may arise for you* during this course, be it in class, during my office hours, or at another time that is more convenient.
- I will *return emails within a 24-48-hour turnaround* time. If something is URGENT, please indicate that in the subject line.
- I will *prepare you* for the quizzes and other assessments in this course to the best of my ability.
- I will utilize *fair and honest evaluation* techniques for each assignment required for this course.
- To the best of my ability, make this a *valid and worthwhile learning experience*.
- I will do my best to *address the needs of a diverse range of learning styles* in this course.
- I will *only* share your student information per FERPA guidelines.
- I will *remain flexible regarding unexpected events impacting all of us* over the semester. Examples of these are rolling power shutoffs, internet disruptions, road closures and fires. If any of these occur, deadlines will move to ensure there is adequate time for students to complete the assignment.

Course Outline, Readings and Due Dates Subject to Change at Instructors Discretion