The University of Kansas
School of Social Welfare

SW 455 Social Work Practice with Latinos

Master Syllabus

I. COURSE RATIONALE

The social work profession has a strong commitment to developing human service approaches that support human diversity and alleviate or eliminate social oppression and injustice. Many practice settings serve diverse clients, involving issues pertaining to gender, ethnicity, culture, race, sexual orientation, religious and spiritual beliefs, ability, social class, and age. In keeping with the mission and themes of the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare, this course promotes an approach to social work practice that challenges dominant norms and worldviews that work to marginalize persons who present with these diverse attributes. This course is organized around understanding diversity and the application of that understanding to Latinos as a specific cultural group that has been marginalized and oppressed. Students who complete this course will be able to apply a framework of knowledge, values, and practice methodologies needed to provide culturally competent services to this population.

Using a generalist practice perspective, this course teaches students knowledge, values, and skills relevant to practice with Latinos. The course identifies challenges that surface in social work practice settings with Spanish-speaking clients and client systems from diverse cultures. Students are also expected to become aware of how their cultural backgrounds, values, traditions, and filters influence their worldviews and the quality of their practice with Latinos. This awareness, and the ability to monitor and address potentially negative effects on their practice, are a prerequisite for understanding the cultural values, traditions, strengths, and social justice concerns of Latino clients and colleagues. As these knowledge and awareness areas are taught in this course, they provide a basis for students’ understanding and application of culturally competent assessment, intervention, and evaluation skills in their practice with Latinos. Understandably, these skills are targeted toward significant personal, interpersonal, and environmental strengths and barriers in these clients’ life circumstances, with an emphasis on addressing social justice barriers and enhancing clients’ empowerment.

II. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Describe and reflect critically upon the implications of human diversity, and of Latino cultural diversity in particular, for social work theory, research, policy, practice, and ethics/values (BSW Objective 5).
2. Discuss Latino traditions and values and the role of these cultural factors as supports and barriers to clients’ life options and functioning (BSW Objectives 1 and 9).

3. Analyze Latino within-group differences and how such differences affect clients’ help seeking patterns, presenting problems, the services provided, and their responses to those services (i.e., gender, location, social class, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, and age) (BSW Objective 5).

4. Explain the intersection of various influences on Latinos and on practice with such clients, including their cultural backgrounds, oppression and dominant worldviews, social and organizational policies, theoretical perspectives, and practitioners’ cultural backgrounds and filters (BSW Objective 5).

5. Evaluate themselves, their practice, and their agency setting with regard to culturally competent practice with Latinos and other diverse populations, including the need to address social justice issues through systems changes (BSW Objectives 5 and 7).

6. Learn basic Spanish vocabulary to assist with the completion of forms and tasks in social work settings (BSW Objective 9).

III. CURRICULUM THEMES

This course is taught in a manner that is consistent with the School of Social Welfare’s commitment to vulnerable populations, and it reflects the School’s four curriculum themes as well. Students are expected to:

1. Analyze the inherent cultural resources and other strengths of Latino clients as individuals, and within the contexts of their cultural group, kinship networks, cultural organizations, and communities.

2. Use a critical perspective and thought to identify and deconstruct traditional Eurocentric theories, assumptions, concepts, and approaches in social work and other helping fields that pathologize, stereotype, marginalize and oppress Latinos.

3. Understand concepts of multiculturalism, human diversity, and biculturalism, and how they enhance our understanding/valuing of Latinos from different locations, social classes, genders, sexual orientations, age groups, and physical or mental disabilities.

4. Explore how social, economic, and political justice issues uniquely influence the life experiences and opportunities of Latinos, and social workers’ roles in addressing those issues at micro, mezzo, and macro systems levels.

IV. THE LIBERAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE
Building upon the liberal arts perspective, students in this course will be able to: 1) think and write clearly and effectively about Latino cultures, values, and traditions; 2) use knowledge of the social, biological, and behavioral sciences in understanding Latino clients’ strengths and problem situations; 3) use knowledge of history in understanding the impact of a history of oppression on Latinos’ individual and collective functioning; and 4) understand differences in worker-client-service setting values and their effects on the generalist social work helping process through knowledge of Latino clients’ culture, values, and traditions.

V. PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE WITH THE LATINO POPULATION

In keeping the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare’s mission and diversity theme, this course promotes an approach to social work practice that challenges dominant norms and world views that help to marginalize Latinos. In this course students will be introduced to the immigration history of the Latino population, the challenges Latinos experience before and after they immigrate to the United States, their values, beliefs, customs, and traditions. Issues of social injustice and oppression are explored including immigration and social welfare policies. This course also provides an integrated program of instructional materials focusing on learning generic Spanish designed to request personal information of a limited nature in social work practice settings.

VI. MAIN TOPICS

**Unit I: Latino immigration: a historical prospective**

Strangers Among Us by Roberto Suro – Chapters 1 to 5

**Unit II: Challenges Latinos experience before and after they immigrate to the United States.**

Stranger Among Us by Roberto Suro - Chapters 6-10

Working with Latino Youth: Culture, development and context

**Unit III: Understanding the Values, Beliefs, Traditions, Customs of Latinos**

Latino Families In The Perinatal Period: Cultural issues in Dealing with the Health Care Systems by Dr. Martin Maldonado

**Unit IV- Immigration Laws, Policies and accessibility to services**

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status for Children Under Juvenile Court Jurisdiction

WA VA Immigration Laws
**Unit V: Command Spanish Schedule** (this information will be integrated throughout the course)

- Spanish Pronunciation
- Spanish Alphabet
- Greetings and Goodbyes
- Etiquette & Social Niceties
- Signs
- Spanish Surname System
- Initial Contact
- Communication Strategies
- Possible Answers
- Numbers
- Dates
- Documentation
- Documents
- Paper Work
- Initial Interview Statements
- Personal Information
- Family Members and Other Relationships
- Employment History
- Housing Information
- Legal Information
- Medical Information
- Counties and Nationalities

**VII. REQUIRED READINGS**


**VIII. SAMPLE COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

This course includes the following examples:

Three (three-page) papers will be required.
In-class oral quizzes on vocabulary.

IX. COURSE EVALUATION

Criteria for Evaluating Written and Oral Assignments for the Course

In general, the following criteria are used by the instructor for evaluating written assignments:

1. Organization and clarity of ideas presented, including the use of introductory and conclusion sections in the paper.

2. Accuracy of responses to all of the instructions in assignments in both topic and task areas (i.e., topic: similarities and differences in worker and client values; task: compare and identify the effects of these similarities and differences on the intervention used).

3. The use of supportive data for students’ ideas from the literature with appropriate citations (in a footnote and reference style format such as APA), and from practice experiences (specific case examples). Note that all assignments must include a list of references and footnotes when the latter are appropriate.

4. Creativity: innovative and unusual ways of responding to the instructions beyond the requirements.

5. Non-sexist and non-racist language as well as correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Please proof read all written assignments thoroughly prior to turning them in to prevent point reductions on assignments.

Incompletes are temporary grades assigned to students who, for compelling reasons beyond their control, were unable to complete the required work. This grade is granted only after prior arrangements with the instructor.

XI. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

If any member of the class feels he or she has a disability, please advise the instructor of such disability and desired accommodation as soon as you have written documentation. The instructor will work with you and the Services for Students with Disabilities Office to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have a fair opportunity to perform in class.

Students requiring time to participate in special religious or cultural holidays should inform the instructor.
XII. **INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY**

Instructor contact information, office hours, and other availability information should be listed both here and at the top of the syllabus for easy reference.

XIII. **INCELEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

In the event of inclement weather students should call the University (913-864-SNOW) to determine if classes are cancelled. If the University is operating, the instructor is expected to hold class, however, accommodation will be made for students who are unable to attend. Students should contact the instructor if weather or driving conditions make it impossible for them to get to class.