I. Description of Course

Preparing students for social work management practice and community intervention, this course builds on students’ first-year introduction to social policy and macro practice. The course begins with an examination of the community, policy, and organizational contexts of social welfare agencies. It explores the major theoretical frameworks for understanding organizational behavior, organization development, and management, and presents models for assessing social service organizations and service systems. Students review the knowledge, values, and skills required of social work managers in leading organizations and programs. They learn the principles of organizational and community planning.

Three themes are threaded throughout the content:

• **Accountability and service effectiveness.** From understanding the fiduciary responsibility of an administrator or board, to examining the relationship between a social welfare agency and its multiple constituencies, students are asked to assess themselves and the agencies in which they may practice against rigorous standards of accountability and service effectiveness.

• **Adherence to the values and overarching goals of the profession.** The course encourages students to ask and answer the hard questions in this era when government’s role in responding to social welfare problems is shrinking though the problems are not, when the workforce is on its way to unprecedented levels of diversity, and when all kinds of service organizations are struggling to “reinvent” themselves. The goals of social and economic justice and self-determination and the values of the profession must be the touchstones for students as they learn management practice and decide what kind of organizations they intend to help build. The applications of empowerment theory to management and community practice are explored.

• **An ecological perspective.** It is not enough for social work administrators to manage well all that lies within their organizations’ boundaries. Decisions must be made in context of the often competing needs and requirements of clients, funders, staff, policy makers, regulators, advocates, volunteers, donors, neighbors, and other service providers. Domain and social exchange theories provide frameworks for analysis. Students are challenged to develop their awareness of and ability to use the complex web of relationships and transactions in social service networks in the interest of their client systems.

II. Objectives of Course

The student, through examinations and assignments, will demonstrate:

1) Knowledge of the range and major characteristics of public and private social welfare organizations including differences in accountability, measures of success, governance, and constituencies—and their implications for the management of human and community service organizations.

2) Knowledge of the principles of organizational and community planning, and ability to design a simple community planning process.

3) Beginning ability to critically analyze social service agencies and networks.

4) Understanding of how human and community services are financed in the public and private sectors, and beginning ability to develop a line-item budget and to read and understand financial reports.
5) Understanding of policy practice (policy analysis, influencing legislation, litigation, and community action) and its relevance to administrative practice in human and community services.

6) Knowledge of major schools of thought in management and organization development, and beginning understanding of the roles and tasks of management and of the knowledge and skills social work administrators need.

7) Understanding of how the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, and class enter into the development and administration of human and community services.

III. Units and Contents

Session 1. Social work practice with organizations and communities.
- Review and connection with the foundation year.
  ◦ The social work process: engagement, assessment, intervention, evaluation.
  ◦ The social work problem solving model.
  ◦ Diversity, oppression, and empowerment.
  ◦ Social work research.
  ◦ Social policy.
- Intervening as an agent of change in organizations and communities.

Session 2. The universe of social welfare organizations.
- Differentiating the public, nonprofit, and proprietary sectors.
  ◦ Accountability: for what and to whom?
  ◦ Governance.
  ◦ Funding.
- Service effectiveness and organizational success.

Readings:

Session 3 Two models of community intervention.
- Distinguishing between service delivery and community intervention.
- Understanding Tropman’s original typology and his multimodal addition to it.
- Looking at the real-world integration of direct service and community intervention.

Readings:


Session 4. Organizational and community planning.
- What we mean by organizational and community planning: A simple reflexive model.
- Process and content considerations in planning.
- Articulating the connections between planning and evaluation.

Readings


Sessions 5. Using networks and networking.
- Defining networks among social agencies and people.
- Political economy theory and domain theory.
- Networks as mediating structures.

Readings:


- Figueira-McDonough’s typology of policy practice: affecting policy through legislative advocacy, litigation, analysis, and social action.
- Policy practice from the perspective of the social welfare agency—and from the perspective of vulnerable populations.

Readings:


Session 7. Ethics and empowerment in management and community practice.
- The moral and ethical imperative compelling social workers to make social institutions more humane and more just.
- From lip service to action: What ought we to be doing? What principles should guide us?

Readings:


Sessions 8. Examination.

Sessions 9. Using work groups.
- A quick refresher on group development.
◊ Task and process dimensions.
◊ Stages of development.
• Making meetings work: what to do before, during, after.
• The special role of staffing committees and task groups.

Readings

Session 10. Using information technology.
• Get thee behind us, technophobia: self-assessment.
• The most important uses of information technology in management and community practice.
• Information glut and knowledge scarcity: evaluating information sources on the web.

Readings

Session 11 Seeking funding.
• Quick review of the most common funding strategies for community agencies.
◊ Contracts.
◊ Grants.
◊ Annual and major gift campaigns.
◊ Capital campaigns.
• The principle of diversification of funds.
• “Grant Seeking and Proposal Writing 101.”
• Resources for fund raisers.

Readings

Session 12. Reading the numbers.
[Second paper due at the beginning of the class session.]
• The basics of financial reporting
◊ Statements of revenue and expenditures.
◊ Balance sheets.
• The basics of budgets.
◊ The two purposes of budgets.
◊ The discipline of informed guessing.
◊ Some approaches to budgets and budgeting: line-item, functional, zero-based.

Readings


Session 13: **Management and organization development theories.**
- A brief history of the modern complex organization—and an assessment of its place in contemporary society.
- Major categories of theories about organizations and their management.
  ◊ Theories of bureaucracy.
  ◊ Human relations theories.
  ◊ Contingency theories.
  ◊ Open systems theories.
- Implications for successful change efforts in organizations.

**Readings:**

Session 14. **The roles and tasks of those who run things.**
- A sneak preview of the competing values framework for management in the human services, the organizing construct for MCP Methods II.

Session 15. **Review of learnings.**

[Take-home examination due at the beginning of the class session.]
- Written anonymous evaluation by students of course and professor.
- Reflection on the usefulness and applications of students’ learnings.
- Making the transition to the next methods course.

**IV. Methods of Instruction**
Lecture, class discussion, structured experiences, critique of written submissions, and presentations to the class by students of problems for analysis and consultation.

**V. Textbooks**
The course does not have a textbook. The readings listed above in the section on units and contents are required of students. Students should come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings, and students should draw on relevant concepts from those readings as they prepare the written assignments for the course.

**VI. Method of Evaluation**
1) A paper, due at the beginning of session 4, will account for 25% of the course grade. (See assignment handout.)
2) A short in-class examination, in session 8, will account for 25% of the course grade. The examination will be short essay and short answer.
3) A paper on a project of the student’s choice, linking observations and experiences in the project with theories and skills that have been the subject of class discussion and reading, will account for 25% of the course grade. (See assignment handout.)
4) A final take-home examination, testing application of knowledge to a case scenario, due at the beginning of session 15, will account for 25% of the course grade.

5) Attendance and class participation: Students are expected to prepare for and attend each class session and to participate in class discussion and activities in order to promote shared adult learning. “Learning in a graduate professional program is based in large part on the interaction that occurs between instructor and students in the classroom. Regular [and timely] attendance at class is an expected professional responsibility of the student. Absences of greater than 20% of the total class time can constitute grounds for course failure.” (Social Work Master’s Program policy.)

Grading standards

The first examination will be graded on a 100-point scale, with designated numbers of points assigned to each correct answer or partial answer. The take-home examination and the two papers will also be graded on a 100-point scale, and each has a specific set of grading standards with designated numbers of points assigned to specific criteria. The four grades will be averaged for a course grade.

Numerical grading scale:

- A= 92–100
- B= 82–91
- C= 72–81
- F= Below 72

Honor Code

All students in the School of Social Work are expected to adhere to the UALR code of student conduct and to the NASW Code of Ethics. An essential feature of these codes is a commitment to maintaining intellectual integrity and academic honesty. This commitment insures that a student of the School of Social Work will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thereby affirming personal honor and integrity.

Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to accommodate students with disabilities pursuant to the requirements of federal and state law. Any disabled student who needs accommodation, for example, in seating placement or in arrangements for examinations, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. The director of the School of Social Work is also available to assist with accommodation. Disabled students are also encouraged to contact Disability Support Services, Donaghey Student Center, Rm. 103, telephone 569-3143, voice and TDD.