UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

SW/SOC 422: The Social Problems of Aging and Old Age
FALL 2012
LOCATION: School of Human Ecology, Room 4235 – New Building
TIME: 1:15 – 3:20, Thursdays

Instructor: Suzanna Waters Castillo, PhD, MSSW
Office: Room 7314, 21 N. Park Street
Email: scastillo@dcs.wisc.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Overview:
The purpose of this course is to give students an understanding of the nature of social problems of older adults and their families in the U.S. and to acquaint students with some of the programs and services that have been developed for older adults. This is a course that draws on knowledge from the social sciences as they help shed light on the origins, scope, and dynamics of the social issues of older adults.

Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors:
Successful completion of this course implies that students have progressed towards achieving some of the core social work competencies, as follows:

2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice.
- Articulate an historical understanding of societal views of older adults and the aging process, including the forms and mechanisms of ageism in society.
  - Articulate an understanding of how older adults are impacted by intersecting oppressions, including age, race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, disability, and other marginalized statuses.

2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of life-cycle changes and losses that may occur with age.
- Identify ways in which the socio-historical context and personal life experiences shape the perspectives of older adults.
- Understand the impact of difference on the ways older adults experience the process and challenges of aging.
2.1.9 Respond to contexts that shape practice.

- Acknowledge personal experiences and social influences that may impact attitudes toward older adults
- Articulate an understanding of at least three contemporary social problems impacting older adults.
- Identify the ways in which changing social demographics, emerging social trends, and scientific and technological advancements impact the development of social policies and services for older adults.
- Demonstrate knowledge of local, state, and national policies and programs serving older adults.

Assignments, Exams and Grading

Course Assignments and Examinations

Class Participation (6 points)

In order for you and your fellow classmates to benefit from this course, attendance and active participation are required. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. The instructor will note your level of participation and you can earn up to 6 points for attending and actively participating in class discussions and activities.

For information on the class attendance policy and how non-attendance will impact your grade, please refer to Attendance Policy in the Course Policies section of this syllabus.

Reading Response Paper (12 points)

You are required to write a reading response paper from one of the articles identified in the first 6 classes of this course. Use your text and articles found on Learn@UW or additional academic sources if you wish. In this paper, you should formally and critically evaluate (not summarize) what you have read and respond by discussing the following in your paper (points for grading included after each item):

- What important points arise based on this reading? (2 pt.)
- Can these important points be generalized to individuals of diverse backgrounds with respect to gender, ethnicity, culture, spirituality, or sexual orientation? If so, how? If not, why not? (3 pts.)
- What questions do you feel the reading should have addressed, but did not? (3 pts.)
- Overall, what do you, not the author(s), believe are the implications of this reading for social work practice with older adults?
- What are the implications of this reading for other professionals who work with older adults? Be specific. (3 pts.)
Community Resources Paper & Presentation (14 points)

Understanding community resources and knowing how to make an appropriate referral is an essential component of providing effective services to older adults. Although each community’s resources are unique, there are often similarities in services among communities across the nation. By gaining an understanding of the aging resources available in Dane County, WI, you will be better prepared to provide services to older adults in any community in which you may eventually work. For this assignment, you are required to write an overview of a service provided to older adults in Dane County, WI, such as those listed in the Dane County Lifestyles Caregivers and Resource Guide, which can be located at the following web address: http://danelifestyles.com/index.html

Gather information on this service from multiple sources: the internet, written materials, news articles, and by making a phone call directly to the organization providing this service. In your paper, you must include:

1. A description of the service, including how older adults and families access this service,
2. A description of the social problem this service addresses and why the service is important for older adults (provide evidence, statistics/other data),
3. Eligibility qualifications to receive the service (age, income level, disability, etc.),
4. How this service is funded, and
5. How the service provides culturally competent assistance to clients and families.

This paper and associated class presentation is worth 14 points and will be graded as follows:

- Description of service, including how older adults and their families access this service. (2 pts.)
- Social problem this service addresses and why the service is important for older adults (2 pts.)
- Eligibility qualifications to receive this service. (1 pt.)
- How this service is funded. (2 pts.)
- How this service provides culturally competent services to clients and their families. (2 pts.)
- Use of grammar and spelling (1 pt.)

Please submit your paper to me at the end of Class 6.
Organization and effectiveness of class presentation (4 pts.)

This paper is to be not less than two and not more than three pages in length (2-3 pp., title and reference pages not included in page length). Please see the Written Assignment Policy for details on formatting this paper. Please submit this paper to me in class at the end of Class 10. In addition to the paper, you are required to give a 5-7 minute presentation describing this service to the class. Presentations will be given on Class 10 with remainder on Class 11.

Self-Reflection Paper (18 points)

This course is a foundation social work course that provides you with information about problems faced by older adults within the context of American society. Each of us is socialized within our families, schools, peers, the media, etc. and so develops a unique set of values and beliefs regarding elders and the social problems they face.

To assist you in developing a better understanding of your personal values and beliefs and how they may influence your assessment of older adults and the social problems they encounter, you are required to write a self-reflection paper that includes thoughts and ideas on the following: (1) the values and beliefs you hold as a result of your socialization, (2) how you feel these values and beliefs may impact your assessment of elders and the potential social problems they may face, and (3) the ethical dilemmas you might face as a result of value and belief differences (e.g., your ability to work with elders or your assessment of their social problems). Please submit this paper to me in class on the last day of class which is Class 14.

The self-reflection paper is worth 18 points, and will be graded as follows:

- Values and beliefs you hold (4 pts.)
- Impact of values and beliefs (4 pts.)
- Resulting ethical dilemmas (4 pts.)
- Depth of reflection (4 pts.)
- Use of grammar and spelling (2 pts.)

This paper is to be not less than four and not more than five full pages in length, double spaced (4-5 pp., title and reference pages not included in page length). Please see the Written Assignment Policy for details on formatting this paper.
Examinations (50 points)

There will be two exams during the course of the semester, a midterm and a final exam. Each will total 25 points and will contain multiple-choice, true-false, and short answer questions. The midterm exam will cover course content from Classes 1-7. The final exam will be given during on: and will cover course content from Classes 9 – 15.

Course Grading

Student evaluation and grading is based on a number of assignments and examinations, totaling 100 possible points. Final course grades are determined as follows:

Assignment Total Possible Points
1. Class Participation 6
2. Reading Response Paper 12
3. Community Resource Paper & Presentation 14
4. Self-Reflection Paper 18
5. Midterm Exam 25
6. Final Exam 25

Points Grade Criteria
94-100 A Outstanding; surpasses requirements in all areas
88-93 A/B Surpasses requirements in many areas
82-87 B Meets requirements in all areas
76-81 B/C Meets requirements in some areas, but is below in others
70-75 C Below requirements in most areas
64-69 D Below requirements in all areas
<=63 F Fails to meet minimal requirements in all areas

Learn at UW
You will use Learn@UW for:
- The course schedule which is listed by Class 1 etc.
- Course syllabus and content
- Required reading articles and videos
- Your textbook which is a pdf and therefore printable

Textbook
Good news, you do not need to purchase textbook. We are using the online Textbook: An Introduction to Gerontology. You may read it online or download chapters. This text is found at Learn@UW for this course and is indicated in Class 1.
Required Reading for Class
All of your course readings (including the textbook) are found on SW 422 site on Learn@UW. These readings are all required and will be part of each class discussion. Reading requirements are listed with associated links for each class on Learn@UW.

Lectures
Each class will contain a lecture based upon the particular topic(s) to augment required readings. Power point slides will be posted the following day of class on Learn@UW.

Student Responsibilities
- Arrive on time
- Active participation is required
- Remain in class until class is over
- E mail instructor before class if can not attend
- Attentive consideration of each speaker
- No laptop or cell phone use in class
- Class confidentiality when someone speaks on a personal level
- No late assignments unless discussed with instruction one week prior
- Please do not eat in class, beverages o.k.
- THANKYOU

Plagiarism, cheating, obstructing another’s work etc.
I take any aspects of the above behaviors which are unacceptable in this class and will be reported to University of Wisconsin authorities.

Religious Holidays
Per University of Wisconsin – Madison policy, religious holidays will be respected. Student will meet with the instructor regarding missed days of class to assist them with timely access to class instruction and exchange.

Course Schedule

Class #1
- Welcome and Overview of SW 422
- Introductions
- Discussion of how we will use text
- Group Activity
- Video and Discussion

Class #2
- Views on Aging
- Population Trends
Class #3
- Biology of Aging
- Theories of Aging

Class #4
- Resilience and Good Health

Class #5
- Chronic Illness
- Co morbidities of Aging

Class #6
READING RESPONSE PAPER DUE TODAY
- Social Care of Older Adults
- Informal Care and Caregivers

Class #7
MIDTERM EXAM IN SECOND HALF OF CLASS
- Cognitive Processes of Aging

CLASS #8
- Cognitive Process continued
- Psychology of Atypical Aging

CLASS #9
- Atypical Aging Continued
- Screening and Treatment for Geriatric Mental Illness

CLASS #10
RESOURCE PAPER IS DUE TODAY
PRESENTATIONS IN SECOND HALF OF CLASS
- Policies on Aging
- Long Term Care/Institutional Care

CLASS #11
FINISH RESOURCE PAPER PRESENTATIONS
- Community Based Care Options/Models (Wisconsin and the Nation)
- Policies

CLASS # 12
- Cross Cultural Aging/Ethnogerontology
- Health Disparities in Minority Older Adults
CLASS #13
• Palliative Care in Older Adults
• Managing Pain
• Advance Directives

CLASS #14
• Aging well, a Holistic View

SELF REFLECTION PAPER IS DUE TODAY!