School of Social Work  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  

SW 929: Social Work and Substance Abuse  
Spring 2017

Instructor: Alan Irgang, MSW, LCSW  
Class Time: Saturdays, Mar. 25 – May 6, 9am-1pm  
Location: 3150 Med Sci Ctr  
Office hours: By appointment  
Phone: 608-203-8115  
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I. Catalogue Description
History, current understanding, assessment, and treatment of problematic substance use. Provides knowledge and social work skills to conceptualize, screen, assess, and treat substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders (i.e., mental illness and substance use disorders). A biopsychosocial perspective is emphasized.

II. Course Overview
This course in social work and substance use disorders aims to convey a knowledge base and orientation to the assessment, treatment and prevention of substance use disorders that will facilitate advanced social work practice. Its focus is on persons with substance use disorders or persons at risk. Primary emphases will be placed on the assessment and treatment of substance use disorders, familiarity with what is known and not known about etiology, and understanding of the impact of substance abuse in special populations. This is an advanced practice course within the mental health concentration.

III. Course Competencies & Practice Behaviors & Assignments
Successful completion of this course implies that students will have progressed towards achieving the core social work competencies by demonstrating the following behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Assignments Measuring Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.</td>
<td>▪ Applying knowledge of social services, policies, and programs relevant to substance abuse treatment practice, to advocate with and/or on behalf of clients for access to services.</td>
<td>Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play &amp; Self-Assessment, classroom participation</td>
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<td>2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
<td>▪ Evaluate ethical dilemmas related to problems and issues in substance abuse treatment.</td>
<td>Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play &amp; Self-Assessment</td>
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| 2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. | ▪ Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy and practice issues related to the treatment of substance abuse.  
▪ Identify and evaluate models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation that are related to the treatment of substance abuse. | Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play & Self-Assessment, Classroom participation |
| 2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice. | ▪ Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualizations and constructions of problems and solutions related to substance use. | Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play & Self-Assessment |
| 2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research. | ▪ Critically evaluate and utilize theoretical and empirical research relevant to understanding and treating substance abuse problems. | Oral Presentation, Role-Play & Self-Assessment |
| 2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. | ▪ Evaluate and apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment to choose methods of assessment, intervention, and evaluation most appropriate to the treatment of substance abuse problems. | Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play & Self-Assessment, Classroom participation |
| 2.1.10a Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. | ▪ Employ diverse strategies to engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities related to the treatment of substance abuse problems. | Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play & Self-Assessment |
| 2.1.10b Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. | ▪ Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to determine a range of potentially effective and appropriate interventions to improve practice outcomes related to the treatment of substance abuse problems. | Short Paper, Oral Presentation, Role-Play & Self-Assessment, Classroom participation |
| 2.1.10c Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. | ▪ Demonstrate ability to intervene at different levels (with and/or on behavior of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities) to achieve the desired practice outcome related to substance abuse problems. | Oral Presentation, Role-play & Self-Assessment, classroom participation |
IV. Course Schedule

Week 1 (March 25): Introduction to substance use disorders and addiction treatment

Topics
1. Course overview
2. Ethical considerations and critical thinking
3. Epidemiology of problematic substance use

**Guest speaker: Brian Biwer, Dane County Deputy Sheriff**

Required Reading
- Chapter 1 (pp. 1-9), “Why treat addiction?”
- Chapter 2 (pp. 10-28), “What is addiction?”


Suggested Reading

Week 2 (April 1): Theories of neurobiological and genetic vulnerability/Motivational interviewing basics

►Short Paper Due

Topics
1. “Go” and “stop” systems
2. Neurotransmitters relevant to addiction and addiction medicine
3. The (indirect) influences of genes on neurobiology and addictive behavior

Clinical skill building
1. Basic principles of motivational interviewing
2. Overcoming roadblocks to effective reflective listening

Required Reading
- Chapter 3 (pp. 29-46), “How do drugs work?”

- Chapter 2 (pp. 7-29), “Foundations of motivational interviewing”
- Chapter 3 (pp. 30-57), “The use of OARS: Reflective listening”

**Suggested Reading/Listening**

*Unbroken brain explains why tough treatment doesn’t help drug addicts* (www.npr.org)

**Week 3 (April 8): Motivational and cognitive theories/Motivational interviewing**

**Topics**

1. Reinforcement, self-determination, and cognitive theories of addiction
2. Providing culturally competent care for LGBTQ clients

**Clinical skill building**

1. Open-ended questions, affirmations, and summaries

**Required Reading**


  - Chapter 4 (pp. 58-87), “The use of OARS: Open-ended questions, affirmations, and summaries”

**Week 4 (April 15): Screening and assessing substance use disorders/Motivational interviewing**

**Topics**

1. Screening, assessment, and acute care

**Clinical skill building**

1. Change talk
2. Providing information and advice

**Required Reading**

• Chapter 5 (pp. 65-83), “Screening, Evaluation, and Diagnosis”
• Chapter 6 (pp. 84-105), “Detoxification and Health Care Needs”

• Chapter 5 (pp. 88-136), “Recognizing, reinforcing, and eliciting change talk”
• Chapter 9 (pp. 221-253), “Information sharing, offering a concern, and giving advice”

Week 5 (April 22): Treatment planning and case management

Topics
1. Treatment planning and meeting complex psychosocial needs
2. Using mutual help as an adjunct to treatment

Clinical skill building
1. Responding to resistance

Required Reading
• Chapter 7 (pp. 106-130), “Matching: Individualizing treatment plans”
• Chapter 8 (pp. 131-144), “Case management”
• Chapter 14 (pp. 223-240), “Mutual help groups”

• Chapter 6 (137-167), “Managing resistance”

Week 6 (April 29): Cognitive-behavioral treatment interventions

Topics
1. Cognitive-behavioral skills for coping and managing cravings

Clinical skill building
1. Finding focus in addiction treatment
2. Working with ambivalence
3. Solidifying commitment to change

Required Reading
• Chapter 12 (pp. 185-197), “Strengthening coping skills”

• Skim the format of all CBT sessions (pp. 39-95)

• Chapter 7 (pp. 168-196), “Opening a session or topic”
• Chapter 8 (pp. 197-220), “Working with ambivalence”
• Chapter 10 (pp. 254-280), “The key question”

Week 7 (May 6): Pharmacological interventions, group-based treatment, and harm reduction strategies

► Role play recording due, Self-assessment paper due May 11

Topics
1. Medications to treat addiction
2. Group-based treatment
3. Harm reduction in communities and social work practice

Required Reading
• Chapter 15 (pp. 241-256), “Pharmacological adjuncts”
• Chapter 20 (pp. 313-332), “Working with groups”


Recommended additional self-study topics:
1. Involving the family in treatment
2. Nonadherence and drop-out: causes and interventions
3. Comorbidity
4. LGBTQ treatment considerations

• Chapter 13 (pp. 198-222), “Involving and working with the family”
• Chapter 17 (pp. 269-280), “Enhancing adherence”
• Chapter 18 (pp. 281-300), “Treating co-occurring disorders”


V. Textbooks and Reading Materials for the Course


The assigned readings from other books and journals are posted on Learn@UW.

VI. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods

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<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>AB</td>
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<tr>
<td>82-87</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>76-81</td>
<td>BC</td>
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<td>70-75</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>63/lower</td>
<td>F</td>
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<table>
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<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. Short paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>2. Oral presentation</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>3. Role-play recording (20 pts) and self-assessment paper (15 pts)</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Professionalism (Attendance, participation)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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1. Short paper (due April 1)
In this paper you will critically evaluate your own beliefs that inform how you think about and work with clients who have substance abuse problems. *Papers are to be three pages, double-spaced, Times Roman 12 pt font.*
2. **Oral presentation**
   You will give an oral presentation in groups of two to three to the class about a topic of particular interest to you. Presentations must be on a topic listed in the syllabus between the third and last weeks of class and included on the sign-up sheet. Some topics will not be available due to scheduled class activities. Presentations should be 60-75 minutes, including time for questions and class discussion, which you will facilitate. You will demonstrate proficiency in all relevant course material (lectures and readings) and external literature that you identify that pertains to your chosen topic.

3. **Role-play recording (due May 6) and self-assessment paper (due May 11)**
   You will submit a video recording of a role-play demonstrating Motivational Interviewing skills learned in the course. For the self-assessment, you will evaluate your performance as the worker in the role-play, noting both what you did well and opportunities for continued practice. *The self-assessment paper is to be three pages, double-spaced, Times Roman 12 pt font.*

4. **Professionalism**
   Professionalism means being present *both* physically and mentally, and actively working with the instructor to create a respectful and stimulating environment for learning. It means coming to class on time, having read and thought about all of the assigned reading material. Professionalism includes bringing questions, concerns, and direct practice experiences to aid in understanding applications of course material. Sharing of direct practice experiences must be done in a way that is respectful to the client and protects clients’ rights to confidentiality. As professionals, during class you are expected to use electronic devices *only* for relevant class activity.

   *Note: Detailed assignment instructions and grading criteria will be provided in separate documents.*

**VII. Course Policies**

**Attendance**
Due to the accelerated nature of courses in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Part-Time MSW Program, students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to arrive on time.

**Promptness**
Prompt arrival to all courses is required.
- Instructors may take actions they deem appropriate if a student is consistently tardy
- Instructors may also consider a significantly late arrival or early departure as an absence

**Absence**
To ensure a quality educational experience, students must attend and participate in classes.
- Attendance will be taken at each class and students’ level of participation noted
- Excused & Unexcused Absences:
  - The first unexcused absence will result in a student’s grade being dropped one full grade
  - The second unexcused absence will place the student at risk for failing the course
  - On a case by case basis, it is left to the instructor’s discretion as to what is defined as an excused absence as well as to determine appropriate follow up plans
• Additional graded make-up work appropriate for the content missed may be assigned for excused and unexcused absences.
• Students are responsible for completing any class requirements for the day missed, and for obtaining from a fellow classmate any assignments, materials, and communications missed due to absence, late arrival, or early departure.
• Students who must be absent due to inclement weather or other emergencies must contact the instructor prior to the start of class to be considered for an excused absence. It is up to the instructor to determine whether an absence will be excused.
• Inclement Weather Policy
  ~ If there is inclement weather across the Program area, students will be expected to check their email prior to leaving for class to confirm whether classes are cancelled.
  ~ If classes are not cancelled but an individual student concludes they cannot safely travel to reach their class site, the student must contact the instructor regarding their plan to not travel. This absence will be considered excused and makeup work may be assigned.
  ~ If classes are cancelled, the instructor will notify students by e-mail of make-up activity required.

**Student Behavior Policy**
In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different than ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together in this course, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students’ opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind. Finally, remember to keep confidential all issues of a personal or professional nature discussed in class.

**Learn@ UW**
All students are required to access Learn@UW for course content and assignments. Students are advised that Learn@UW can provide the instructor with information regarding students’ use of the course website.

**Late assignment policy**
Any requests for extensions on assignments must be made and approved by the instructor in advance. Unapproved late assignments will be marked down 10% of the total points for that assignment for each day the assignment is late.

**Plagiarism & academic integrity**
Plagiarism involves presenting someone else’s work or ideas as your own without appropriate citation and acknowledgment, and is an extremely serious form of academic misconduct that may result in suspension from the University. Please review the information found at: [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html)

**Accommodations**
If a student has a disability that may require accommodation to complete the course expectations, please discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible. Students registered with the McBurney Disability Resource Center must give the instructor a copy of their VISA within the first two weeks of class.
Additional Information

- Attendance will be taken at every class. Be sure to sign in. If you are late, it is your responsibility to sign the attendance roster.
- Cell phones must be turned off or silenced during class. It is assumed that students who use a laptop computer or other electronic devices to take notes or for other course related purposes are using their computer for this and only this purpose. **Internet surfing, instant messaging, phone text messaging, and other distracting activities are unacceptable.**
- Some of our class discussions may be about cases from your field placements. As always, please respect the confidentiality of your clients and do not use identifying information.
- Class lectures will not cover all of the assigned required reading material. Assignments may include material not covered in class. Therefore, it is important to keep up with the weekly assigned readings.
- I greatly appreciate student input regarding reactions to, suggestions, and/or concerns about the course. In person or written (anonymous or identified) comments are always welcome. There will also be opportunities to provide formal course and instructor feedback.