Instructor: John R. Sabino, LICSW
Class Time: Saturdays, 9:00am-1:00pm
Location: Social Work, HSS 177
Office hours: Before or after class or by appointment
Phone: 612-723-6185
E-mail: sabino@wisc.edu
John.r.sabino@comcast.net

I. Catalogue Description
Aging and Mental Health prepares front line social workers to address mental health needs of older adults and their family members. The course examines common mental health conditions, assessment, planning, evidence-based individual, family and group interventions, resources, cultural competence, ethical issues, and contexts for practice.

II. Course Overview
The rapid growth in the aged population expected during the next 30 - 50 years will require a significant increase in the number of social workers trained to work with elders. While all social workers should possess basic knowledge regarding the biological, psychological and social aspects of later life, effective gerontological social workers must also understand the unique challenges facing this diverse population, the mental health issues confronting them, and effective interventions to address their needs. They will need to enhance their interpersonal, counseling, and advocacy skills for assisting older adults, and their support systems. They must possess the ability to assess and intervene at multiple levels with attention to the socio-cultural-context, social justice and human rights. In addition, they must role model respect and compassion for older persons and guard against a paternalistic approach.

SW 821 is a 2-credit concentration elective in the Mental Health focus area in the Full-Time and Part-Time Programs, and the Health, Aging and Disability focus area in the Full-Time Program. It is assumed that students enter this course with basic knowledge regarding the physiological, psychological and social aspects of the later years of life. This course will focus on social work practice as it relates to mental health in later life. Various roles of the social worker are examined with particular attention given to the development of skills and techniques of one-to-one, family and group interventions in a variety of settings. The continuum of services and resources available to older adults, and the roles and functions of the mental health social worker in these settings are examined. The unique needs and experiences of diverse populations with attention to age, gender, cultural variation and sexual orientation will be integrated throughout the course with attention to mental health care disparities, social justice and human rights. Students will be encouraged to think critically about an array of situations, ethical issues and cases frequently seen by social workers in practice.
### III. Course Competencies & Practice Behaviors & Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors Addressed in Course</th>
<th>Assignment(s) that may Measure Behavior</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2: Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
<td>*Evaluate ethical dilemmas related to problems and issues in mental health and aging.</td>
<td>In-Class Assignments, Treatment Options, Book review</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.3: Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.</td>
<td>*Identify and synthesize multiple sources of knowledge to understand policy and practice issues related to mental health and aging.</td>
<td>Treatment Options; Research Brief; Compare and Contrast Treatment Approaches; Critical Review of literature; Interview with Older Adult, Book Review, Interactive Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1.4: Engage diversity and difference in practice.</td>
<td>*Demonstrate an understanding of how culture and values affect diverse conceptualization and constructions of social problems and solutions in the concentration.</td>
<td>Dimensions of Diversity, Book Review, Interactive Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.6: Engage in research informed practice.</td>
<td>*Demonstrate ability to evaluate practice in mental health and aging.</td>
<td>Treatment Options; Research Brief; Compare and Contrast Treatment Approaches; Critical Review of literature, Book Review, Interactive Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.7: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.</td>
<td>*Evaluate and apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment to choose methods of assessment, intervention, and evaluation most appropriate to addressing mental health and aging.</td>
<td>Research Brief; Compare and Contrast Treatment Approaches; Critical Review of literature, Book Review, Interactive Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.10.a Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities</td>
<td>*Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities to determine a range of potentially effective and appropriate interventions to improve practice outcomes related to mental health and aging.</td>
<td>Compare and Contrast Treatment Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.10.b Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.</td>
<td>*Demonstrate ability to intervene at different levels (with and/or on behalf of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities) to achieve the desired practice outcomes related to mental health and aging.</td>
<td>Compare and Contrast Treatment Approaches</td>
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</table>
PLEASE NOTE: Class topics and assignments are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Student suggestions and input regarding class topics may also be taken into consideration for changes to the syllabus.

IV. Course Content

Week 1: Saturday, January 23

Welcome and Introductions
Syllabus and Assignment Review
Overview of the Course

INTRODUCTION TO GERONTOGY & ASSESSMENT FOUNDATIONS
Demographic trends and late life diversity
Myths, Stereotypes and Facts of Aging
Normal processes of aging and implications for communication
Assessment topics, tools and interviewing skills
Cultural considerations
Future self-activity

- Chapter 2: Normal Processes of Aging
- Chapter 6: The Clinical Interview

- Chapter 1: The Context of Social Work Practice with Older Adults
- Chapter 4: Conducting a Biopsychosocial Assessment

Recommended Readings:

Week 2: Saturday, January 30

NOTE: Reading & Case Study Analysis and Learning Contract Due Today
(due to Learn at UW – Drop Box or email by 9:00 a.m.)

DEMENTIA - ASSESSMENT& INTERVENTION WITH LATER LIFE FAMILIES
Differential Diagnosis (The 3 Ds, Depression, Delirium and Dementia)
Assessment and treatment of dementia: Behavioral interventions, validation therapy, use of music
Family caregiving context and consequences and appropriate interventions.
Ethical issues and value dilemmas

- Chapter 3: Disorders of aging: Dementia, delirium, and other cognitive problems
- Chapter 12: Treatment of Dementia
- Chapter 13: Family Caregiving

Recommended Readings:

Week 3: Saturday, February 6

** DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND SUICIDE IN LATER LIFE **
Assessment and treatment of depression
Prevention of suicide
Cultural issues
Principles in management and treatment with older adults
Cultural considerations

- Chapter 4: Mood and anxiety disorders
- Chapter 9: Treatment of depression
- Chapter 10 Treatment of anxiety symptoms


Recommended Readings:

**Week 4: Saturday, February 13**

**TRAUMA-PTSD, POLYPHARMACY & SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE**

Trauma, Aging and PTSD  
The basics of psychopharmacology  
Alcohol and drug problems in later life  
Treatment considerations


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 5: Saturday, February 20**

**NOTE:** Minor Assignments Due Today  
(Learn at UW – Drop Box or email by 9:00 a.m.)

**PARANOIA, SCHIZOPHRENIA AND OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDERS**  
Assessment and treatment  
Understanding and treating hoarding  
Cultural considerations

- Chapter 5: Other common mental health problems in later life
- Chapter 11: Treatment of paranoid symptoms


**Recommended Readings:**

**Week 6: Saturday, February 27**

**PERSON-CENTERED AND FAMILY-CENTERED INTERVENTIONS**
Counseling Older Adults: Context and Method
Mind-Body Interventions to Alleviate Psychological Distress: Relaxation training, Mindfulness
Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Working with Elders
Life Review and Reminiscence Therapy
Cultural Considerations and Disparities in Mental Health Counseling
Family meetings and Family Conferencing: Why and How


- Chapter 8: Foundations in treatment


Recommended Readings:


Week 7: Saturday March 5

NOTE: Major Assignments Due Today
(Learn at UW – Drop Box or email by 9:00 a.m.)

GRIEF, END OF LIFE CONCERNS AND BEREAVEMENT/
Course Integration and Synthesis
Hospice and Palliative Care Social Work: Addressing Psychosocial Needs
Grief and Loss in Later Life: Normal vs Complicated grief reactions & interventions
Psychological distress near the end of life
Legal, ethical and cultural considerations
Psychotherapeutic interventions for elders near the end of life: Dignity Therapy

** (Text) McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2005). Dying, bereavement and advance directives (Ch. 11), and Spirituality and social work with elders (Ch. 10; 2009 edition – Ch. 10). In Social Work with elders: A biopsychosocial approach to assessment and intervention. New York, NY: Allyn & Bacon


Recommended Readings:

V. Texts and Reading Materials for the Course
2) McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2009). Social work with elders: A biopsychosocial approach to assessment and intervention. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon [NOTE: I requested the older version in an attempt to keep costs down; however, sufficient copies of the older edition were not available; thus the book store also ordered the more recent 3rd edition – 2009. I will list the different chapters or page numbers in the course outline for the newer edition in italics].
3) **Additional Required Readings:** See readings posted on Learn at UW

VI. Evaluation of Competencies and Practice Behaviors: Assignments, Grading and Methods
With respect for adult student’s diverse learning needs, some choice is offered in assignments. Students will review the course assignments and turn in a learning contract indicating the choice of assignments and dates for completion by the second week of class. See “Learning Contract” and description of course assignments for further information.

A. Participation in Class Discussion and Activities
Although class sessions will include a variety of learning methods, there will be an emphasis on critical discussion and class activities. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their own learning and show their progress by demonstrating mastery of the weekly readings, by raising issues and by active class participation. Students should complete the readings each week and bring 1-2 discussion questions with them to class that stem from the reading. The question(s) for discussion should be open-ended and may include different types of questions such as interpretive (i.e., that ask for interpretations of the reading), literal (i.e., that elicit factual information that may be answered directly from readings to ensure comprehension), or evaluative (i.e., that elicit positions, or opinions about the reading). Students should write down the exact page and paragraph from the required reading that stimulated the question (if relevant). Although the questions need not be turned in, they will be used to stimulate active engagement in learning. Participation credit will additionally include:
- Adherence to Class Discussion Guidelines (see Appendix A)
- Degree of the students active participations (see Appendix B)
- Active engagement in small group work on in class assignments related to course competencies and practice behavior

B. Reading & Case Study Analysis

C. Dimension of Diversity Assignment

D. Selection of One of the following Minor assignments
   1. Interview Older Adult
   2. Book Review & Brief Presentation
3. Research Brief

E. Selection of One of the following Major assignments (see attached) 45
   1. Compare and Contrast 2 Treatment Approaches
   2. Major Research paper *(not option if you choose the Research Brief)*
   3. Interactive Workshop *(on Topic from Week 5, 6, 7, or 8 only)*

Grades Points: Grades will be assigned using the following conversion table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100 Point Scale</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
<th>Criteria of Work Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding; surpasses expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88-93</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Very good; surpasses expectations in many areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-87</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good; meets expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Fair; meets expectations in some areas; below in others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Poor; below expectations in most areas; not acceptable graduate work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below expectations in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 64</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fails to meet minimal expectations in all areas; not acceptable work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VII. Course Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy
All students will be treated in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, race, national origin, disability, sexual preference, age and religion. No assignments will be due on major religious holidays. Students who are registered with the Disability Resource Center must give the instructor a copy of their VISA within the first two weeks of the semester so that accommodations can be made. The instructor will assure that there is accommodation made for the student.

Standards of Conduct
Professional responsibility, ethical behavior and integrity are central principles of the social work profession. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the standards of the School of Social Work, the University and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be disciplined according to University procedures. Please see Appendix C that outlines the *School of Social Work Plagiarism Policy* I adhere to.

Attendance Policy
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
    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. The make-up work required will depend on the content missed and will
  require the student to demonstrate that they have read the readings, talked with classmates about
  what was missed and then think critically about the content. Graded make-up work appropriate
  for the content missed will be assigned for excused and unexcused absences. This will consist of
  a 3-4 page paper responding to questions assigned by the instructor.
• 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 should contact the
  instructor prior to the start of class to be considered for an excused absence.
• 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 he/she cannot safely travel to
    reach his/her class site, the student must contact his/her instructor(s) regarding his/her plan to
    not travel. This absence will be considered excused and makeup work may be assigned.
  ~ If classes at one or both sites are cancelled by the Program Director and Co-Director, then no
    makeup assignment will be required for those respective students.

Policy on Late Assignments
Assignments are due at the Learn@UW dropbox or instructor’s email by 9:00 a.m. at the start of the
class on the designated date or the assignment will be considered late. However, sometimes
unforeseen circumstances arise and it may be necessary for students to submit work later than the
due date. If a student a) communicates with me prior to the due date, b) provides a reasonable
explanation as to why the work is late, AND c) we come to an agreement about a different deadline,
a late submission may be permitted. Otherwise, late work will result in a 3 point deduction per day
from the grade on the assignment.

Student-Instructor Communications
Course materials are posted at the course website, which uses UW Learn platform at:
https://learnuw.wisc.edu/ Course materials may also be provided to students by email if necessary.
Required and recommended readings, power point slides and handouts will be posted there.
Students are expected to visit the website regularly to check for announcements, submit
assignments and check grades. In addition, I will use email to send out course announcements and
to alert students if there are handouts that they will need to print in advance of class. Be sure to
check your email by 4:00 on the Friday prior to coming to class to check for materials.

Final Comment
I’m very much looking forward to getting to know you and exploring the course content together. I
sincerely hope you will find the course interesting and relevant. I know that most of you have
extensive life and work experience and it will be wonderful for your fellow students and for me to learn from your experiences. Please let me know if you have any questions. Best wishes.
Appendix A
Class Discussion Guidelines
From: Colleen Mahoney - UW-Madison School of Social Work

Successful class discussion depends upon people being “good citizens” by taking joint responsibility for moving the discussion forward. That means following guidelines and helping to enforce them. Listening well, making productive contributions and facilitating discussion are all important social work skills.

1. **Do the reading and come to class prepared to talk.**

2. **Listen as well as talk.**

3. **Raise questions.** Asking questions, asking for clarification from faculty or from other members of the class, is as important - and often more valuable- than making points

4. **Build on each other’s points.** Refer to each other and let people know how your point is related to the discussion.

5. **If you want to change the direction of the discussion, make it explicit.** By doing so, you allow the class to decide whether or not they want to change direction. You allow the class to finish one discussion before starting another. This also allows the class to know where you are coming from. You may know what you are talking about, but the class may not – they may still be thinking about the previous discussion, and not realize that you are changing the topic.

6. **Make your point and support your position, then allow the discussion to move on.** Do not persist in defending points. It is frustrating to others when a participant keeps bringing the conversation back to the same point and re-states it over and over again.

7. **Bring in your background.** Let others know where you are coming from. Tell the class if you are using information from personal experience or from knowledge gained outside of class. If you don’t some people may wonder where the information is from – was that in the readings?

8. **Respect diversity of opinions as well as perspective:***
   a. **Do not stereotype and never dismiss.** For example, if someone takes a feminist position one day, that does not mean that every time that person speaks everyone should roll their eyes and think, “here we go with the feminist position again!”
   b. **Do not assume.** We come from a variety of backgrounds and have a diversity of lives that you may or may not be aware of. Don’t assume that we are all the same. There are gay people in the room. There are Jewish people in the room. There are white people who have known hunger and people of color who went to prep school and grew up in the suburbs. There are people in this room who were teen parents and people who were or are consumers of many of the social services we are discussing. All of this means that you should never assume that “we” are talking about “them” – whether “them” refers to clients or certain groups of people.

9. **Make the classroom a safe place.** Things that people say in the classroom should not be repeated outside of class. Discussion and learning happen when people feel that they can experiment, openly discuss ideas, try on different concepts, be challenged and grow without being judged. No one wants to be standing in the coffee line and hear someone say, “Can you believe that she said that…!”
Appendix B

Guidelines for Evaluating Participation
From: Severa Austin, UW-Madison School of Social Work

Outstanding Contributor:

Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are always substantive and provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. The student responds to colleagues’ ideas, and assists in further development and clarification of these ideas. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly.

Good Contributor:

Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights, and sometimes direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and often persuasive. Responses to colleagues’ ideas are often useful. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the class would be diminished.

Adequate Contributor:

Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights, but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Challenges are sometimes presented, fairly well substantiated, and are sometimes persuasive. Occasionally responds to colleagues’ comments in ways that are useful. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the class would be diminished somewhat.

Non-Participant:

This person says little or nothing in class, nor does s/he clearly encourage others through active listening. Hence, there is not an adequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of the discussion would not be changed.

Unsatisfactory Contributor

Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few if any insights, and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. Comments do not acknowledge colleagues’ contributions, or worse, are disrespectful of them. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable airtime would be saved.

*NOTE: Prof. John Tyler of Brown University obtained these guidelines from Prof. Richard J. Murnane at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Prof. Murnane, in turn, learned them from someone else. Although the original attribution for the guidelines has been lost, they continue to be useful to so many.
Appendix C

UW-MADISON SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Academic Misconduct: Academic Misconduct is commonly thought of as “cheating” in the pursuit of one’s academic endeavors. Academic misconduct rules are found in UWS 14 (University of Wisconsin System Administrative Code). Information on academic misconduct rules and procedures can be found at the following website: http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct.htm

UWS 14.03 defines academic misconduct as follows: “Academic misconduct is an act in which a student: (a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation; (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise; (c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records; (d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others; (e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student’s academic performance; or (f) Assists other students in any of these acts”.

Plagiarism in Assignments: This document describes the School of Social Work’s operational definition of plagiarism, probably the most common form of academic misconduct.

Plagiarism Defined:
1. The appropriation of passages or complete works of another person and submitting them as one’s own work – in either written materials or speeches.
2. The presentation of the ideas of others as one’s own ideas without giving credit.

Forms of Plagiarism:

1. The use of direct quotes from others’ written or spoken work and presenting them as one’s own words without using proper quotation marks or offsetting.

   Direct Quote: to repeat verbatim or to copy verbatim the words of another. “Words” means passages, sentences or paragraphs. A “passage” here is defined as six or more words.

   If, in a paper, you use a direct quote from a book, article, interview, or presentation, and the quote is more than six words cited verbatim, you must put quotation marks around the quote and give credit to its author and source. For example: An author states, “The laymen’s concepts about the world of experiences may be conveniently classified into those that fulfill the function of identification and those that fulfill the function of interrelation” (Krugliani, Hamel, Maides, and Schwartz, p. 302).
   
   (1) You may use your own words in part of your sentence and the authors’ words in the remainder of the sentence. When you use six or more of the authors’ words verbatim, you must use quotation marks: e.g., Ordinary people usually classify experiences into those “that fulfill the function of identification and those that fulfill the function of interrelation” (Krugliani, Hamel, Maides, and Schwartz, p. 302).
   
   Reason for quotation marks: Six or more of the authors’ words were used verbatim.

   (2) You may directly quote six words, interrupt the sentence with your own words, and then complete the sentence with the words of the authors. If any six words are used verbatim, you must use quotation marks: e.g., “The layman’s concepts about the world of experiences,” some researchers have asserted, might be classified into ones that “fulfill the function of identification and those that fulfill the function of interrelation” (Krugliani, Hamel, Maides, and Schwartz, p. 302).
2. The other major form of plagiarism where a student (or someone else) paraphrases the ideas or research findings of another person(s), but fails to identify the sources of the ideas.

A paraphrase is a restatement of a text or passage in another form or other words. (i.e., putting into your own words the ideas of another person). Using the exemplar original statement, the following is a paraphrase:

Ordinary people usually classify their experiences into convenient categories: Those that fulfill the identification function and those that fulfill the interrelation function. (Krugliani, Hamel, Maides, and Schwartz).

Note: There is no need for quotation marks because no six words are those of the authors. However, the idea is still that of Krugliani et al., so they must be given the credit.

**Other Forms of Academic Misconduct:** The other forms of academic misconduct, cited in the Academic Misconduct Rules and Procedures referred to above, also apply to all social work students’ written work.

**Penalties:** Penalties for academic misconduct range from an oral reprimand to suspension or expulsion from the university. You will find more information at this website: [http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/misconduct.html](http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/misconduct.html)