HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT T660B CORE COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE)

The course adopts a developmental life course perspective (Elder, 1988) that situates the aging process within a socio-historical context. Individuals develop and age within a series of relationships that evolve across time both shaping and being shaped by the individual. This network of relationships is itself situated at a historical time and cultural location that have a reciprocal influence on the individual. This two-semester course provides the foundation knowledge for self reflective practice with individuals, families and groups in their interactions with environmental factors and social systems. The purpose of the course is to engage the student's "sociological imagination" about human behavior, deepening students' understanding of the impact of the environment on the individual generally and at various stages of the human life span. Within this context, individual level biological and social developmental tasks and processes are examined.

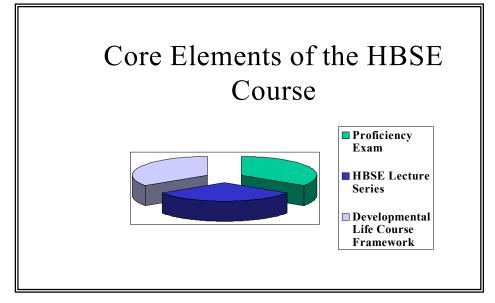
This course is conceived as an essential foundation for social work practice as it embodies the person in environment perspective. Although social work practice issues are not directly discussed in this course, students will be asked to examine assumptions about human development in order to understand better typical and atypical social participation. To this end, broad concepts such as race and ethnicity are examined as are concepts of clienthood, diagnosis, and the political process.

The course is conceived as a single unit, divided by semesters. In both semesters attention is devoted to a critical analysis of concepts that underlie assumptions of normality, deviance, and the activities of citizenship. Similarly, in both semesters, there will be analysis of theories of human behavior and development. Semester I will cover the life stages of childhood and adolescence offering an examination of these stages as socio-historical and cultural phenomena and the individual level developmental processes. Semester II will begin with an examination of concepts and theories. Specific attention is paid to the experience of immigration and acculturation as life course processes. Students will examine the life stages of adulthood and aging as social, historical, and cultural constructs in addition to addressing micro level processes that shape these age periods.

In addition to course assignments, all students are required to pass a mandatory examination on key concepts and theories relevant to human development. This examination ensures basic competency across all students with regards to vocabulary and theories. Students are permitted to take the examination as many times as required to pass as it's purpose is to ensure that all students have mastered basic content rather than on evaluating performance. Finally, all students will be required to attend a total of 2 lectures outside of the classroom to be arranged by the instructor. The lectures will be given by social work practitioners whose work illustrates the application of classroom material to social work practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES By the end of the year long course, students will:

 To demonstrate their knowledge of traditional theories of human development by discussing the tenets of these theories and applying relevant theories to a client case (to be



- evaluated by the passing the proficiency exam)
- To analyze the ways the social, political, historical, cultural, biological, and economic factors shape and influence human behavior and developmental trajectories. (to be evaluated through completion of the weekly reading assignments in their varied forms)
- To demonstrate critical thinking by integrating course material and current research with material pertaining to a case or contemporary social problem (to be evaluated through the case/social problem analysis paper)
- To identify similarities and differences between the social environments of the U.S. and other countries and discuss their implications (to be evaluated through the hbse lecture assignment and completion of the weekly reading assignment)
- To illustrate their knowledge of a range issues impacting the developmental trajectories by discussing research findings relevant to the topic (to be evaluated through the research assignment typically assigned in B)

COURSE THEMES

Developmental Life Course

The Developmental Life Course perspective provides an important organizing framework for this course. With this perspective, individual lifespan development is situated in the social, political, and historical context within which it occurs. Emphasis is placed on the timing of events and aspects of human agency. It is the essential starting point from which we will begin to examine notions of human development.

Analysis of concepts underlying human development (e.g., nature versus nurture, childhood, work)

The year-long sequence in Human Behavior and the Social Environment is designed to challenge students to hone their skills in creative and critical thinking. Toward this end, students will be required to examine critically current and provocative literature in ways that are deeper and nuanced, and that reflect sensitive awareness and serious thought in entertaining, and even struggling with, multiple and perhaps conflicting perspectives. In class discussion and written assignments, it will not be sufficient to state simply that

you do not agree with an author's perspective. Rather, students will be expected to articulate why a different perspective is more compelling, and then to identify weaknesses or limitations even in their own perspective. Moreover, students should endeavor to think creatively and critically about applying knowledge from this course in their work with clients and to other areas of the curriculum, including courses in direct practice, policy, and advocacy. Conversely, students should also endeavor to integrate material from field placement and other areas of the curriculum into this course. Class discussions will provide a forum for students to stimulate and respectfully challenge each other in broadening and sharpening their thinking, in tolerating ambiguity and respecting diverse views, and in processing intuitions and emotional reactions, which are not always easy to articulate.

The impact of inequality across the life course: The course will critically exam the issue of inequality across the life cycle. A historical analysis will be offered that will bring into focus the causes and effects of inequality in the economic, social and the international political arena. The consequences of inequality at various stages of the life cycle from early childhood through later stages of adulthood will be connected to discussions of risks and resilience, health and mental illness.

Risk and resilience across the life course:

Issues of risk and resilience and the protective factors that serve to mitigate factors of risk are multifaceted and influenced by both natural and nurturant factors. Occurring throughout the life course, resilience implies the active process of grappling with conditions of risk in order to achieve a new sense of equilibrium and continue along developmental life trajectories. It is important to develop critical awareness of the themes in people's lives that make them particularly vulnerable to risk and, conversely, the biopsychosocial supports that enable individuals to successfully navigate personal or societal challenges.

The impact of immigration across the life course

The migration and adaptation process is a profound process across the life course. It affects individual and family development. Immigrants are disproportionately represented among the economically disadvantaged, have smaller support networks, and face a myriad of tasks related to adjustment to a new environment. The political, cultural, economic, and/or social conditions that compel or force an individual across national borders are an important beginning place to understanding the migration process. Examining issues of labor, human rights, and citizenship are critical to understanding the immigrant experience.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The course will rely primarily on recent scholarly articles and book chapters. Students may wish to purchase a graduate level Human Behavior and the Social Environment textbook for their own professional library. Although the classes will not use a textbook, they are useful resources.

For T660A, all students are required to read 2 texts:

Austrian, S. G. (Ed.) (2002). Developmental theories through the life cycle. New York, NY: Columbia University Press. (This text is the foundation of the proficiency exam)

Fadiman, A. (1997). The spirit catches you and you fall down: a Hmong child, her American doctors, and the collision of two cultures New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux (This text will be the foundation of a series of discussions within the first semester of the class)

For T660B, all students area required to read:

LeBlanc, A. N. (2004). Random family: Love, drugs, trouble and coming of age in the Bronx. New York: Simon & Schuster. (This text will be the foundation of a series of discussions within the first semester of the class.)

THE PROFICIENCY EXAM

All students are required to pass a proficiency exam addressing core concepts of human development and of the context within which it occurs. A set of study questions are available to students to help to prepare. The exam will focus on definitions of concepts, fundamental elements of structural theories and theories of the individual that have bearing on human development. The set of 10 versions of the proficiency exam will be available online. Each will consist of 40 questions. Students must score 90% or higher on any version of the exam to pass. Students may take the exam as many times as necessary. The exam may be taken at any locations of the students choosing once the student has filed an agreement to the conditions of the exam. There is no penalty for taking the exam multiple times. All students must pass the exam by the end of the semester in which the exam is taken. It is the assumption of the instructors that students will take responsibility for learning this material on their own. No class time will be devoted to covering material on the test although individual appointments with the instructor and/or class facilitators may be made.

There are 4 types of large assignments that are utilized in this year long course: (a) weekly reading assignments, (b) an assignment related to each of the HBSE lectures, (c) an assignment requiring the application of the developmental life course perspective to a real or fictitious client situation or analysis of a social problem, (d) an assignment that requires the student to demonstrate mastery with the scholarly literature related to an issue of human development. Instructors may use additional assignments to facilitate integration of material from the Fadiman's The Spirit Catches You.

All instructors will "incentivize" the reading assignments. Some of us will do this by awarding some portion of the grade to the readings by

- a. Using weekly reading comments
- b. Using weekly reading logs
- c. Asking students to keep some sort of documentation of their reading to be handed in 2 times during the semester

Others of us will do this by not assigning a portion of the grade but by using social expectations for performance.

There are 2 other 'mandatory' assignments.

- o In semester 1, the instructor must have 1 assignment related to the HBSE lecture and one assignment related to a case/social problem analysis (see below).
- O In semester 2, the instructor must have 1 assignment related to the 2nd HBSE lecture and a research based assignment (e.g., a literature review, annotated bibliography)

O By keeping the case analysis assignment in semester 1 and the research assignment in semester 2, instructors avoid duplicating the "big" assignment across semesters. Also, students who switch sections mid year will not replicate assignments

READING ASSIGNMENTS

To ensure that this course upholds the standards of academic rigor expected of CUSSW courses, it is expected that all students will complete the weekly assigned readings prior to class. To this end, all instructors will provide an incentive (e.g., a grade or social incentive) to ensure that this reading is done.

OPTION 1 Weekly Comment on Readings

You are to generate 3 questions/comments re: each week's readings that demonstrate a serious grappling with the material. Ideally, you will raise these questions and comments in class discussions to deepen your own and others' understanding of the concepts covered. Questions/comments must be typed and will be collected at the end of each class.

OPTION 2 Weekly Reading logs

Every week, each student will hand in a summary and critical response to all assigned readings. The summary should be about 2 pages in length. I will not accept the summary if it contains a quote or I judge it to be a "close" paraphrase. Do not comment on the author's style or methodological aspects of the research. Focus on substantive content. In your own words, describe what the article addresses.

You must include a critical response to the article. In this critical response you should bring in additional information which can include information about the developmental tasks of this age group and/or social policies that affect this age group and/or other research that is relevant. The response should address what about the information is useful and WHY. Simply stating that something is interesting is not acceptable. For each article, make sure you include the APA-style reference. When grading I will be considering (a) APA-style reference, (b) does the summary clearly and accurately present core content, (d) does the critical response demonstrate insight into the applicability of the information, (e) was the summary handed in on time.

I am grading the quality of substantive content, contribution of critical thinking, APA references, and overall writing quality. If your grades over the last semester were often reduced because of writing, please consider using the writing center at CUSSW or making an arrangement with a friend with editorial skills to read over your paper before handing it in.

OPTION 3 Logs (Completed weekly, handed in midterm)

Each student will select a topic of interest no later than <u>DATE</u> and will submit a four page paper on <u>DATE</u>. The goal of this paper is to analyze the multiplicity of factors that affect child development for a specific population utilizing research, theory and other resources. The log provides a format in which you can integrate your weekly reading assignments and HBSE classroom learning with your observations and personal experiences/field placement/job. In addition, you will use it to gather information and reflect on the topic you select for your midterm paper. Logs must also include newspaper clippings and may include photographs, fiction and nonfiction, literature related to the content and anything else you consider relevant to the integration of your social work scholarship

and practice. The connection between the assigned readings, classroom learning, and your TOPIC should be clearly articulated within the log. Remember, these are not summaries of the readings but rather an opportunity to critically reflect and analyze what you are learning. Before each entry in the log, cite the source in APA format. You will submit the log with your midterm and will not need to use formal citations in the paper. The log may be written in an informal style, but the paper must be a formal, professional document in which you distill the knowledge you have accrued.

OPTION 4: Small group (3-4) discussions that require students to participate in a meaningful way

ASSIGNMENT RELATED TO LECTURE SERIES
TO BE DEVELOPED BY INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTORS

RESEARCH BASED ASSIGNMENT:

OPTION 1: Literature Review: Scholarly Articles Social Workers Should Read

Social work professionals read professional, scholarly, and clinical literature that provide fresh and timely insights, conceptualizations, and knowledge about human behavior in the social environment. This assignment provides students with the opportunity to begin their exploration of this rich professional literature. The objectives are to (a) learn and reflect upon the material, (b) present substantive content concisely, and (c) develop a more complex understanding human behavior in the social environment.

Guidelines:

Students may select 6 scholarly articles that address and/or relate to a developmental period between adolescence and adulthood. Attention should be given to addressing a developmental period we are studying in this semester of HBSE (i.e. adolescence to older adulthood). Three of the articles must discuss micro aspects of human behavior in the social environment, and the remaining 3 articles must discuss macro aspects. The articles must be from current sources (1990+) and may include those from the Core Course Bibliography.

For each article, write a summary. In your own words write 2 or 3 paragraphs that summarize the key points of the article. What is/are the research question(s) or thesis? What are the substantive issues and/or findings, and implications? You must be concise and specific.

For each article, write a critical review. Discuss in no more than a page the importance of the article for understanding human behavior in the social environment. (If an empirical research study, do not describe the strengths and weaknesses of the research). How does this reading apply to specific forms of human behavior? Does the author write from a particular theoretical perspective? Does it allow you to apply a particular theoretical perspective? How can you apply this information to social work and human development?

The written requirements for this assignment are two-fold:

You may not exceed two pages per article. The written product should be 5-6 pages in length (APA format). All papers must be typewritten, double-spaced, use 11 or 12 point font, have one-inch margins, and be free of typographical errors.

Based upon the longer review, prepare an abridged version (no longer than 2 pages) that will be handed out to your colleagues during class. The purpose of the abridged article review is to let your colleagues know succinctly, clearly, and persuasively about "articles social workers should be reading". Be creative - you may use pictures or any other effects that will promote your articles.

OPTION 2: Annotated Bibliography

The purpose of this assignment is to deepen your knowledge of an area of human development that is of interest to you. You will pick an area or stage of development and create an annotated bibliography related to this topic. You will identify a minimum of 20 scholarly articles and/or book chapters nested in approximately 8-10 sub-headings. Bibliographies should include a range of headings that may include:

- 1. Biological Developments
- 2. Macro Structures and their Impact
- 3. The impact of inequality
- 4. Health considerations
- 5. International perspectives
- 6. Micro Processes (identity, relationships, impact of gender, diagnostic considerations)
- 7. Cultural considerations
- 8. Role of Family
- 9. Role of Work
- 10. Impact of Peer Group
- 11. Impact of Sexual Orientation
- 12. Impact of Drug/Alcohol use
- 13. Parenting Considerations
- 14. Issues of Temporary Assistance/Entitlement Programs/Social Services
- 15. Role of Poverty
- 16. Social Construction of Concepts

What to include:

- The Bibilography should be titled
- a table of contents of Headings with nested APA style references
- Within the contents, include the entire reference and your 1/2-1 page summary of the content. Describe substantive content only. Do not include editorial comments
- A two page summary that describes the overall substantive content of the bibliography and a critical analysis
- An abstract of the key findings you are presenting
- Include a copy (photocopy is fine) of the original abstract by the author(s)

Weekly Outline

At the beginning of this half of the course, students should have

- a. SUCCESSFULLY TAKEN THE PROFICIENCY EXAM.
- b. FINISHED READING LeBlanc, A. N. (2004). Random family: Love, drugs, trouble and coming of age in the Bronx. New York: Simon & Schuster

All films will be shown outside of class time. The HBSE area will arrange screenings of mandatory films for all HBSE sections between 12pm-1pm on the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of the week of the corresponding topic

Topic 1: Spirituality

Armatowski, J. (2004). Attitudes toward death and dying among persons in the fourth quarter of life. In D. O. Moberg (Ed.) Aging and spirituality: Spiritual dimensions of aging theory, research, practice, and polity (pp. 71-84). Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press E-Reserve

Garces-Foley, K. (2003). Buddhism, hospice, and the American way of dying. Review of Religious Research, 44(4), 341-353 E-Reserve

Marks, L. (2004). Sacred practices in highly religious families: Christian, Jewish, Mormon, and Muslim perspectives. Family Process, 43(2), 217-231.

Moberg, D. O. (2004). Spirituality in gerontological theories. In D. O. Moberg (Ed.) Aging and spirituality: Spiritual dimensions of aging theory, research, practice, and polity (pp. 33-51). Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press E-Reserve

Possamai, A. (2003). Alternative Spiritualities and the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. Culture and Religion, 4(1), 31-45. E-Reserve

Praibanti, R. (1999). Islam and the west: Common cause or clash? The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 1999, 16, 1, spring, 1-39 E-Reserve

Schement, J. R., & Stephenson, H. C. (1996). Religion and the information society. In D. A. Stout & J. M. Buddenbaum (Eds.), Religion and mass media: Audiences and adaptation (pp 261-289). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage E-Reserve

Stevens, W. D. (2004). Spreading the work: Religious beliefs and the evolution of immigrant congregations. Sociology of Religion, 65(2), 121-138.

Topic 2 Work in the lives of adults FILM: LOS TRABAJADORES

Ekerdt, D. J. (2004). Born to retire: The foreshortened life course. The Gerontologist, 44(1), 3-9.

Holzer, H. J., Raphael, S., & Stoll, M.A. (2003). Employment dimensions of reentry: Understanding the nexus between prisoner reentry and work. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute. E-Reserve

Milkie, M. A., & Peltola, P. (1999). Playing all the roles: Gender and the work-family balancing act. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61(2), 476-490.

Nelson, M. K. (2002). The challenge of self-sufficiency. Women on welfare redefining independence. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 31(5), 582-614.

Ngai, P. (2002), Am I the Only Survivor? Global Capital, Local Gaze, and Social Trauma in China. Public Culture 14(2), 341-347.

Topic 3 The Social Construction of Adulthood

Arnett, J. J. (1998). Learning to stand alone. The contemporary American transition to adulthood in cultural and historical context. Human Development, 41(5/6), 295-315.

Gibson, D. (1996). Broken down by age and gender: "the problem of old women" redefined. Gender and Society, 10 (4), 433-448.

Shanahan. M. J. (2000). Pathways to adulthood in changing societies: Variability and mechanisms in life course perspective. Annual Review of Sociology, 26, 667-692.

Topic 4 Essentialism and Emotional Wellness

Brett, C. (2002). Psychotic mystical states of being: Connections and distinctions. Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology, 9(4), 322-341.

Caracci, G., Mezzich, J. E. (2001). Culture and urban mental health. Cultural Psychiatry: International Perspectives, 24(3), 581-593. E-Reserve

Gilbert, J. (1999). Responding to mental distress in the Third World: Cultural imperialism or the struggle for synthesis? Development in Practice, 9(3), 287-295.

Zachar, P. (2000). Psychiatric disorders are not natural kinds. Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology, 7(3),167-182.

Topic 5 Sexualities

Babb, F. E. (2004). Out in public: Gay and lesbian activism in Nicaragua. NACLA Report on the Americas, 37(6), 27-30.

Wekker, G. (1999). "What's identity got to do with it? "Rethinking identity in light of the Mati work in Suriname. In E. Blackwood & S. Wieringa. (Eds.) Female desires: Samesex relations and transgender practices across cultures (pp-119-138). New York: Columbia University Press. E-Reserve

Cahill, S. & South, K. (2002). Policy issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in retirement. Generations, 26(2), 49-54.

Goddard, K. (2004). A Fair Representation: GALZ and the History of the Gay Movement in Zimbabwe. Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services, 16(1), 75-98 E-Reserve

Lewin, S., & Meyer I. H. (2001). Torture, ill-treatment, and sexual identity. The Lancet, 358(9296), 1899-1900.

Offord, B., & Cantrell, L. (2001). Homosexual Rights as Human Rights in Indonesia and Australia. Journal of Homosexuality, 2001, 40, 3-4, 233-252 E-Reserve

Roen, K. (2002). "Either/or" and "both/neither": Discursive tension in transgender politics. Signs, 27(2), 501-522.

Seidman, S. (2001). From identity to gueer politics: Shifts in normative heterosexuality and the meaning of citizenship. Citizenship Studies, 5(3), 321-328.

Stychin, C. F. (2001). Sexual citizenship in the European Union. Citizenship Studies, 5(3), 285-301

Topic 6 Risk and Resilience in the lives of adults

Blieszner, R., Mancini, J. A., & Marek, L. I. (1996). Looking back and looking ahead: Life-course unfolding of parenthood. In C. D. Ruff and M. M. Seltzer (Eds.), The parental experience in midlife (pp 607-637), Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, E-Reserve

Jack.G. (2000). Ecological influences on parenting and child development. British Journal of Social Work, 30(6), 703-720.

Shields, C. G., & Wynne, L. C. (1997). The strength-vulnerability model of mental health and illness in the elderly. In T. D. Hargrave & S.M. Hanna (Eds.) The aging family (pp. 131-159). New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel. E-Reserve

Surrat, H.L., Inciardi, J. A., Kurtz, S. P., & Kiley, M. C. (2004). Sex work and drug use in a subculture of violence. Crime & Delinguency, 50(1), 43-59.

Weis, L., Fine, M., & Morton-Christmas, R. (1999). "I was going up for assistant manager [at McDonalds], but I had to quit because I didn't have a babysitter and welfare wouldn't pay for one": African-American women, crossing borders. Educational Foundations, 1999, 13(2), 5-26 E-Reserve

Topic 7 Diversity in the Immigrant Experience

FILMS: THE NEW AMERICANS. A SERIES RE: IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES: ASK STUDENTS TO VISIT USCIS WEBSITE

Akyeampong, E. (2000). Africans in the diaspora: The diaspora and Africa. African Affairs, 99(395), 183-215.

Blank, S., & Torrecilha, R. S. (1998). Understanding the living arrangements of Latino immigrants: A life course approach. The International Migration Review, 32(1), 3-19.

Gordon, A. (1998). The new diaspora-African immigration to the United States, Journal of Third World Studies, 15(1), 79-103.

Hagan, J., & Ebaugh, H. R. (2003). Calling upon the sacred: Migrants (A146) use of religion in the migration process. The International Migration Review, 37(4), 1145-1162.

Hagan, J., Rodriguez, N., Capps, R., & Kabiri, N. (2003), The effects of recent welfare and immigration reforms on immigrants{A146} access to health care. The International Migration Review, 37(2), 444-463

Kwak, K. (2003). Adolescents and their parents: A review of intergenerational family relations for immigrant and non-immigrant families. Human Development, 46(2-3), 115-136.

Levitt, P. (2002). The ties that change: Relations to the ancestral home over the life cycle. In P. Levitt & M. C. Waters (Eds.) The changing face of home: The transnational lives of the second generation (pp 123-144). New York, NY: Russell Sage. E-Reserve

Topic 8 Issues of socioeconomics and political process

Political Process

Brenner, J. (2003), Transnational feminism and the struggle for global justice, New Politics, 9(2), 78

Clark, B. (2002). The indigenous environment movement in the United States. Organization & Environment, 15(4), 410-443.

Navarro, V. (2003). Policy without politics: The limits of social engineering. American Journal of Public Health, 93 (1), 64-67.

Socioeconomics

Dannefer, D. (2003). Cumulative advantage/disadvantage and the life course: Cross fertilizing age and social science theory. The Journals of Gerontology, 58B(6), S327-S337.

Haggerty, M., & Johnson, C. (1996). The social construction of the distribution of income and health. Journal of Economic Issues, 30(2), 525-53.

UN Development Program's Human Development Report (2003). Overview: Millennium Development Goals: A compact among nations to end human poverty.

Topic 9 Globalization and Adults

Beaglehole, R. & Yach, D. (2003). Globalisation and the prevention and control of noncommunicable disease: The neglected chronic diseases of adults. The Lancet, 362(9387); 903-908.

McMichael, A.J., & Beaglehole, R. (2000). The changing global context of public health. The Lancet, 356(9228), 495-499.

Salt, B., Cervero, R.M., & Herod, A. (2000). Workers{A146} education and neo-liberal globalization: An adequate response to transnational corporations. Adult Education Quarterly, 51(1), 9-31. . Washington: Nov 2000. Vol. 51, Iss. 1; p. 9 (23 pages)

von Struensee, V. (2000). Law As It Stands: Sex Trafficking: A Plea for Action. European Law Journal, 6(4), 379-407.