

**York College of the City University of New York
Social Work Program**

SOCIAL WORK 400: GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE III

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Bulletin Description

Social Work 400: Generalist Social Work Practice III. 3 hrs., 3 cr. Prereq: Social Work 370. Not open to students with credit in Social Work 303.

Continued examination of the generalist model of social work practice with focus on intervention with formal organizations and communities. Development of professional skills in direct action, advocacy, bargaining, conflict resolution and evaluation.

Course Overview

This course provides students with the concepts and skills for working with communities and formal organizations. It emphasizes working with communities and formal organizations. It emphasizes the transactions among individuals, families, neighborhoods, formal organizations, and larger systems. Communities and organizations will be assessed, with a focus on economic, social, and political strengths. It will teach strategies and tactics for community and organization change. Group advocacy is a major focus of this course. Also, the course will examine the cultural and social diversity of neighborhoods of New York City.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate social work research skill in conducting a community assessment that integrates skill in gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, which incorporate political, social, cultural, physical, and economic understanding of the community ecosystem;
2. Use an ecosystems perspective to describe transactions that take place among the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of society;
3. Identify potential organizing issues that emerge from community concerns about social problems and, using community strengths, draft strategies for addressing conditions that lead to these concerns through organizing efforts that mobilize and empower community based groups;

4. Understand the role of political and social philosophy in the development of the values and ethics that inform community work, especially in working toward greater social and economic justice for people who are the victims of poverty, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination;
5. Describe and begin to use the basic interactional and technical skills of community work: Recruiting, engaging, developing leadership, planning, researching and evaluating, facilitating group processes, using media, providing administrative support to grass roots groups;
6. Use knowledge of human diversity in communicating and action planning with people of various ethnicity, gender, class, age, sexual orientation, and spiritual belief;
7. Describe the history of community organization practice in the United States and relate changes in practice to changes in social conditions and political beliefs;
8. Use critical thinking to analyze social issues and develop thoughtful strategies to make social change;
9. Develop a commitment to making a more humane society through active participation in the social/political life of the society, as a citizen and as a social work professional.

Course Requirements

The course will offer “hands on” experiences in organizing. The student is expected to attend class and actively participate in discussions and exercises. It is hoped that the student will share his/her experiences in the field as related to the course material and social action in general.

Task	% of Final Grade
Paper 1: Community Study	20%
Paper 2: Analysis of Community Meeting	20%
Paper 3: Designing A Social Action Campaign	25%
4 Quizzes	20%
Student Presentation	5%
Attendance and Participation	10%

Note:

Late papers will be graded down _ grade for each day late, including the day of class.

There will be no make-ups given for missed quizzes.

Required Readings

Main Text

Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. (2001). Community organizing and development. (3rd ed.)
Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Additional Readings

Alinsky, S. (1971). Rules for radicals. New York: Vintage.

Fellin, P. (2001). The community and the social worker. (3rd ed.) Itasca, IL:
Peacock Publishers, Inc.

Mizrahi, T. & Morrison, J. (Eds.). (1993). Community organization and social
administration. New York: The Haworth Press.

Rothman, J., Erlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.). (2001). Strategies of community
intervention. (6th ed.). Itasca, IL: Peacock Publishers, Inc.

Instructional Methods

Readings

Role plays

Group discussions

Lectures

Presentations

Visits to community groups and neighborhoods

Real and simulated experiences in the practice of community work

The written assignments are structured to assure that students secure some direct experience in community work: Going to community meetings, making observations about social and economic conditions, interviewing community residents, etc. From the base of direct (real) community experience, the course requires that the students use analytic skills to develop simulations. This way, hypothetical tactics and strategies that go beyond the realistic limits of the class assignments can be considered from the perspective of their likely outcomes in the real world. The faculty makes intense efforts to design assignment from which students can get “hooked” on activism for social and economic justice and the joys of helping in empowerment.

Course Outline

Unit 1 Introduction to Profession, Classmates and Course (1 hour)

1.0 Course requirements-readings, quizzes, and papers

Unit 2 Defining Communities, Neighborhoods & Organizing Role in Social Work Practice (2 hours)

2.0 Communities as places, symbols, shared heritage beliefs, and interest

2.1 Solidarity communities, social networks, communities of interest, social aspects of neighborhoods

2.2 Root causes of feelings of hopelessness, definitions or organizing & power

2.3 Reasons for understanding communities at a macro and micro social work practice level

2.4 Goals of community organizing

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapters 1 and 5
Fellin, Chapters 3 and 4 (to p. 77)

Unit 3 Dimensions of Communities Social Systems Approach to Studying Communities (3 hours)

3.0 Introduction to social system perspective

3.1 Social units comprising systems-individuals, families, institutions

3.2 Importance of voluntary associations

3.3 Physical dimensions of neighborhoods-boundaries & housing

3.4 Community economic system

3.5 Community educational system

3.6 Community political system

3.7 Community health and social welfare system

3.8 Diagnosing community strengths and weaknesses

Readings: Fellin, Chapters 4, 10, 11, 12

Unit 4 Action Research Methods Ecological Approach to Studying Communities (3 hours)

4.0 Definition of action research and tools of research

4.1 Needs assessment methods

4.2 Ethnographic studies and interviewing/observation techniques

4.3 Ecological approach and use of census data

Unit 4 (Continued)

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapter 8
Marti-Costa, S. & Serrano-Garcia, I. Needs assessment and community development: An ideological perspective. In Rothman, J., Erlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.), pp. 267-277.

Unit 5 Models, Theories & History of Community Organizing (3 hours)

- 5.0 Historical periods of social activism, ideological influences on organizing practice and development of community organizing as a social work field of practice
- 5.1 Theories of social change and power
- 5.2 Roles and traits of organizers
- 5.3 Empowerment, consciousness raising, self assertion & bootstrapping
- 5.4 Saul Alinsky and Acorn Model

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7

Unit 6 Issues in Organizing (3 hours)

- 6.0 Rules for Radicals & Alinsky's approach to issue selection
- 6.1 Differences between issues and problems
- 6.2 Social causes of community problems

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapter 2
Alinsky, pp. 98-125

Unit 7 Leadership and Membership Development (3 hours)

- 7.0 Motivation & incentives for joining social action campaigns-recruitment techniques
- 7.1 Building "high access" community organizations-structures & approaches
- 7.2 Engagement & maintenance of members-retention techniques
- 7.3 Training leadership
- 7.4 Role of organizer in process

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapters 9 and 11
Alinsky, pp. 81-97
Mondros, J., & Wilson, S. Building high access community organizations: Structures as strategy. In Mizrahi & Morrison (Eds.), pp. 69-85.

Unit 8 Meeting and Group Work Skills in Organizing (3 hours)

- 8.0 Characteristics of effective meetings-physical surroundings, agendas, timing, purpose, and preparation
- 8.1 Role of leaders and organizer
- 8.2 Briefing and debriefing of leaders
- 8.3 Principles of group work practice applicable to organizing

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapter 10
Bakalinsky, R. The small group in community organization practice. In Rothman, J., Erlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.), pp. 144-150.

Unit 9 Strategy and Tactics (3 hours)

- 9.0 Analyzing targets and sources of power
- 9.1 Strategy-overall planning, varying symbols, escalating
- 9.2 Information tactics
- 9.3 Political tactics
- 9.4 Legal tactics
- 9.5 Confrontational tactics

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapters 11 (pp. 237-238), 12 and 13
Alinsky, pp. 126-164.
Zander, A. Pressuring methods used by groups. In Rothman, J., Erlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.), pp. 177-199.

Unit 10 Building Coalitions and Forging Collaborations (3 hours)

- 10.0 Definitions of coalitions, collaborations, alliances and networks
- 10.1 Challenges & opportunities of coalition work
- 10.2 Dynamic tensions in coalitions

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapter 14
Mizrahi, T., & Rosenthal, B. Managing dynamic tensions in social change coalitions. In Mizrahi & Morrison (Eds.), pp. 11-40.

Unit 11 Negotiation and Publicity (3 hours)

- 11.0 Negotiating tactics
- 11.1 Types and purposes of publicity
- 11.2 Drafting press releases, flyers and other promotional material

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapter 14 (pp. 321-335)

Unit 12 Program Planning and Community Development (3 hours)

- 12.0 Social Production vs. Direct Action Models
- 12.1 Organizational and community development: Tools & end products of community organizing
- 12.2 Steps in program planning process
- 12.3 Goals of community development
- 12.4 Integrating organizing, program planning and development

Readings: Rubin & Rubin, Chapters 15 and 16

Unit 13 Diversity and Community Organizing (3 hours)

- 13.0 Appreciating and acknowledging our own differences and diversity; Assessing how our own uniqueness impacts on social work practice
- 13.1 Principles of building non-sexist, multicultural social action campaigns
- 13.2 Methods of developing open access community based organizations

Readings: Guitierrez, L. Working with women of color: An empowerment perspective. In Rothman, J., Erlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.), pp. 209-217.
Kaul, M. Serving oppressed communities: The self-help approach. In Rothman, J., Erlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.), pp. 278-285.

Unit 14 Ethics of Community Organizing (3 hours)

- 14.0 NASW Code of Ethics and relationship to organizing practice
- 14.1 Guidelines for making ethical decisions
- 14.2 Alinsky's Of Means & Ends

Readings: Alinsky, pp. 24-47
Swenson, C. Clinical social work's contribution to a social justice perspective. In Rothman, J., Etlich, J., & Tropman, J. (Eds.), pp. 217-229.

Unit 15 Integrating Organizing Into Generalist Practice (3 hours)

- 15.0 Case examples
- 15.1 Discussion of Final Papers
- 15.2 Learning Contracts

References

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