Semester/Year: Fall 2020  
Course Title: Human Behavior and the Social Environment  
Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 5301-024  
Instructor Name: Maxine Davis, MSW, MBA, PhD  
Faculty Position: Assistant Professor  
Faculty Profile: https://mentis.uta.edu/explore/profile/maxine-davis  
Office Number: GACB 118B  
Phone Number: N/A  
Email Address: maxine.davis@uta.edu  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Day and Time of Class (if applicable): Online  
Location: Online  
Equipment: A laptop computer with webcam (including a microphone) and wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.  
Blackboard: https://elearn.uta.edu; Canvas: https://uta.instructure.com/

A. Mandatory Face Covering Policy

All students and instructional staff are required to wear facial coverings while they are on campus, inside buildings, and in classrooms. Students that fail to comply with the facial covering requirement will be asked to leave the class session. If students need masks, they may obtain them at the Central Library, the E.H. Hereford University Center's front desk, or in their department. Students who refuse to wear a facial covering in class will be asked to leave the session by the instructor, and, if the student refuses to leave, they may be reported to UTA's Office of Student Conduct.

B. Description of Course Content

Exploration of behavioral and social science knowledge of human behavior and development through the life course. Examines major systems in society: individual, group, family, and community; and the diversity of ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, and culture.

C. Student Learning Outcomes

The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs follow the CSWE Educational Policy and Standards (EPAS) comprised of nine core competencies as follows:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior  
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice  
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice  
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice  
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Specifically, while this course addresses competencies 1-9, it mainly focuses on competencies 2 and 7:

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

For the purposes of Quality Matters Certification, the following course objectives apply:

1. Explain key elements of human behavior theories with an emphasis on diversity, inequality, social, economic and environmental justice, and a global perspective in social work’s approach to human behavior.
2. Describe “personal dimensions” of the multidimensional approach: biological, psychological and spiritual.
3. Apply knowledge of human behavior to biopsychosocial-spiritual assessment of individuals throughout the lifespan.
4. Analyze how “environmental dimensions” such as culture and participation in groups, organizations and communities impacts human behavior and life outcomes.
5. Evaluate how human behavior theories should guide social work engagement, assessment, and
interventions.
6. Summarize typical physical, cognitive, socioemotional, and spiritual development throughout the lifespan.
7. Identify risk and protective factors at each stage of the lifespan.

D. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials


Other readings as assigned by the instructor.

E. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials


F. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations

Weekly Discussion Boards (40 points). Addresses competencies: 2 and 7

Students are to answer the question posted for each of the required discussion boards. Each question will require students to have read the material and to think critically about it. In addition, students must respond to at least two (2) classmates' postings. When writing your response to the weekly question, make sure to specifically answer the question. Cite the text or readings where appropriate. Be clear about the distinction between your opinions and materials or information taken from the text. It is helpful to state the person’s name when you are specifically responding to a fellow classmate. If you are citing directly from the text, you need to cite the text (using APA).

There are 10 Discussion Boards. Each is worth 4 points (2 points for your response and 2 points for your comments to your classmates). In order to earn the full points in any given session, students must meet the following criteria: 1. Respond to the assigned discussion board question AND comment on two postings from classmates. 2. Demonstrate thoughtfulness, effort and masters-level writing skills in your responses. Students are encouraged to respond to other students' postings and to participate in more than the minimum number of discussions required, as participation will generally enhance your understanding of the material as well as your overall experience in the course.

Case Study I (30 points). Addresses competencies: 2 and 7

Conduct an in depth analysis of a case involving a small group, community, or organization. (6-8 pages). A specific case will be provided. More detail is provided on the assignment sheet posted online. The basic goals of the assignment will be to: (1) Select 5-7 theories, perspectives, frameworks, or models that may explain some of the events or behaviors described in the case. Analyze your target character(s) using the text, course materials and scholarly work. (2) Describe and illustrate ways in which a small group, community, or organization promotes or blocks the achievement and maintenance of participants health and well-being.

Case Study II (30 points). Addresses competencies: 2 and 7

Write a case study about a significant or poignant set of events in your own life considering a particular life stage (child, young adult, midlife adult, or older adult). (6-8 pages). More specific detail is provided on the assignment sheet posted online. (1) Choose 3 theories and 5 concepts from the chapters in the micro text on
your target life stage. Use pertinent material from the text, supplied journal articles or other scholarly resources. (2) Discuss the theories and concepts in detail and give examples of how each applies. (3) Consider and illustrate ways in which social systems promote or block health and well-being.

Assignment Points
Discussion Boards 40
Case Study I 30
Case Study II 30
Total 100 points

G. Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or engagement online via Canvas. This data is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

Information specific to modality and meeting times for this course are provided in the section below.

Frequently engaging with peers and the materials posted will be the primary markers of attendance for this course.

H. Grading

90-100 A
80-89 B
70-79 C
60-69 D
0-59 F

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

I. Make-Up Exams

There are no exams in this course. However, weekly discussion Board posts MUST be posted by assigned date (to earn credit).

J. Course Schedule
As the instructor for this course I reserve the right to change the course schedule as needed to meet the educational needs of students.

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments turned in on Canvas are due by 11:59pm each Sunday night.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syllabus and course overview Human Behavior and Theoretical Perspectives Overview</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapters 1 and 2</td>
<td>Read syllabus and introductory chapters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Culture and Human Behavior</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapters 8</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Family</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 10</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Small Groups</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 11</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Formal Organizations</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 12</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Biological Person</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 3</td>
<td>Case Study I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Psychological Person</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 4</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Psychosocial Person</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 5</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Spiritual Person</td>
<td>Person in Environment, Chapter 6</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pregnancy through Toddlerhood</td>
<td>The Changing Life Course, Chapters 1, 2 and 3</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Early and Middle Childhood</td>
<td>The Changing Life Course, Chapters 4, 5</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Adolescence to Young Adulthood</td>
<td>The Changing Life Course, Chapters 6, 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Middle Adulthood</td>
<td>The Changing Life Course, Chapter 8</td>
<td>Discussion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Late to Very Late Adulthood</td>
<td>The Changing Life Course, Chapters 9, 10</td>
<td>Case Study II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

**K. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in
course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

L. Grade Grievances


M. Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers free tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email IDEAS@uta.edu or call (817) 272-6593.

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming oneself or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call MAVS Talk at 817-272-TALK (817-272-8255). For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

N. Librarian to Contact

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is Brooke Troutman. Her office is in the campus Central Library. She may also be contacted via E-mail: brooke.troutman@uta.edu or by phone: (817)272-5352 below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php

The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:
Library Home Page...................... http://www.uta.edu/library
Subject Guides.......................... http://libguides.uta.edu
Subject Librarians....................... http://library.uta.edu/subject-librarians
Course Reserves......................... http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do
Library Tutorials ........................ http://library.uta.edu/how-to
Connecting from Off-Campus....... http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus
Ask a Librarian......................... http://ask.uta.edu

O. Drop Policy

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student’s responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend
after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (http://wweb.uta.edu/aoa/iza/).

**P. Disability Accommodations**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364.
Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Q. Non-Discrimination Policy**

*The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.*

**R. Title IX Policy**

The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleix or contact Ms. Michelle Willbanks, Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-4585 or titleix@uta.edu

**S. Academic Integrity**

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

> I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

> I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work
submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at https://www.uta.edu/conduct/. Faculty are encouraged to discuss plagiarism and share the following library tutorials http://libguides.uta.edu/copyright/plagiarism and http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/

T. Electronic Communication

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

U. Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/

V. Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

W. Final Review Week

For semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.