**\*Sample syllabus for online course that uses synchronous instruction\***

**SOW XXX: Introduction to Social Work**

**University**

# Course Instructor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Office Number/Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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# Office Hours \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Text** Sherr, M. E., & Jones, J. M (2019). *Introduction to Competence-Based Social Work: The profession of caring, knowing, and serving* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford Press.

**Course Statement**

This course is intended for students taking their first course in social work. A primary theme of the course focuses on helping students interested in the profession to begin developing their professional identities as social workers. Students considering other fields will also find the course useful. Regardless of academic or professional interests, students will probably interact with social workers at some point in their lives. This course gives students an overview of what they can expect from competently-trained social workers.

## Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students will demonstrate the following competencies:

1) Begin to develop the personal self-awareness needed for the professional use-of-self.

2) Begin to identify as a professional social worker.

3) Articulate and begin applying social work values and ethical principles that guide professional practice.

4) Begin to apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

5) Recognize and begin incorporating the importance of diversity and difference in practice.

6) Articulate and begin advancing human rights and social and economic justice.

7) Initial understanding of the social work helping process.

## Instructional Strategies

Case-Based Learning (CBL) serves as the primary instructional method for the course. The CBL method used in this course will blend online synchronous and asynchronous instruction methods. Online synchronous methods involve students working online at the same designated time together with other students and the instructor. Online asynchronous methods involve students working online with other students and the instructor without a designated set time. The instructor will use the following methods in the course.

Instructional Methods

1. Online Discussion Boards—The instructor will facilitate a synchronous online discussion board session for 90 minutes each week of the semester.
2. Weekly Blogs— Students will create a blog each week summarizing their responses to the discussion questions as part of part of the asynchronous instruction. Students will then be required to read the blogs of classmates and post at least one comment for each blog. The instructor will monitor the comments.
3. Group Chat Room Case Reviews—The instructor will create group chat rooms with five students in each chat room. Students will use chat rooms to engage in an ongoing asynchronous case review each week. The instructor will contribute to the discussion in each of the groups.

**Core Course Assignments**

* Case Reviews and Group Chat Room: Case reviews are a primary instructional method used to introduce students to the field of social work. Students will have the opportunity to explore the foundations of the profession by applying concepts through case vignettes. Students will then participate in online group chat room sessions to discuss the cases with other students and the instructor.
* Personal Reflection Logs and Blog: For each unit, students will complete a brief reflection log in response to the discussion questions provided with the readings. Students will keep their reflection logs and turn them in periodically throughout the semester for review. Students will also post a blog summarizing their responses to the questions. They will then read the blogs of classmates and post at least one comment for each blog.

**Additional/Alternative Assignments**

* Social Work Interview. Each student will interview a BSW or MSW practitioner who is currently employed in social work or social welfare. The instructor will assist in identifying potential interviewees. The paper is to be between 3–5 typewritten pages and it must follow APA Guidelines. Content about the social worker should include the following: (a) educational and practice background; (b) description of current position/duties; (c) what brought the individual to social work; (d) what does the social worker find most exciting and frustrating about his/her work; (e) what advice does the social worker give for new social workers. You may also include other information you feel is important.
* Service Learning/Volunteer Experience and Reflection Paper **–** Each student is required to volunteer for 30 hours of service learning this semester. The objective is to observe and participate as much as is allowed in activities which are relevant to social work within the particular agency or practice setting. Give deliberate attention to interactions with clients and staff, the kinds of activities or services provided, and the effectiveness of the services from a micro and macro perspective.

Reflection Paper–

Students will write a brief reflection paper (between 1000—1500 words) to examine their volunteer/service learning experience. Please use the following Subheadings for the paper:

* Reflections about the clients and staff
* Reflections about the volunteer/service activities
* Reflections about the effectiveness of the services from a micro and macro perspective

**Course Outline**

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| WEEK | TOPIC | READINGS | ASSIGNMENTS |
| 1 | Introduction and Review Syllabus  Review uses of technology for the course | Chapter 1 |  |
| 2 | What is Social Work? | Chapters 2  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 3 | What is competence-based social work? | Chapter 3  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 4 | What do competent social workers do? | Chapter 4  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 5 | Self-Awareness and Social Work  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 5  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 6 | Developing Personal Identity  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 6  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 7 | Historical Emergence of Social Work  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 7  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 8 | Ethical Social Work Practice  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 8  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 9 | Human Rights and Justice  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 9  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 10 | Diversity in Practice  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 10  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 11 | Dimensions in Diversity  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 11  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 12 | Critical Thinking in Social Work  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 12  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 13 | The Generalist Method of Practice  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 13  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 14 | Fields and Settings of Social Work Practice  *Online Discussion Board* | Chapter 14  Mini-podcast lecture | Discussion questions  Weekly Blog  Group Chat Room Case Review |
| 15 | Exploring Students Interests in Social Work and Potential Fields of Practice  *Face-to-Face* |  |  |