COURSE OUTLINE
SWRK2006 SOCIAL WORK THEORY AND PRACTICE

Course Co-ordinator: Sue Spartels
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Semester Semester 2 – 2009
Unit Weighting 10
Teaching Methods Self Directed Learning
Workshops

Brief Course Description
SWRK2006 examines some essential knowledge for Social Work. A number of social work theories are covered including their practice implications. Three of the social work methods, groupwork, community work and research are worked with in detail. The course also includes an in-depth focus on critical thinking and a number of current social issues.

Contact Hours
Workshop for 2 Hours per Week for six weeks
Workshop for 3 Hours per Week for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts
Details on references and resources will be provided at workshops. Students are also expected to do their own research to locate relevant literature.

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 2 - 2009
CTS Download Date: 15th July, 2009
Course Objectives
The overarching theme in second year is the locus and process of change in which social workers are involved: interpersonal, community, organisational and societal; and the social work roles entailed. There are a number of interconnected learning goals for the two learning units that cover social work values, self awareness, communication skills, ethical and professional practice, assessment and intervention, working with others/teamwork, rural/remote practice, research and inquiry skills, policy analysis and critical thinking. These objectives are provided in more detail in the Mental Health Learning Unit at the end of this Course Outline.

Course Content
SWRK2006 examines some essential knowledge for Social Work. A number of social work theories are covered including their practice implications. Three of the social work methods groupwork, community work and research are worked with in detail. The course also includes an in-depth focus on critical thinking and a number of current social issues.

Assessment Items

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<th>Essay / Written Assignments</th>
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<td>Projects</td>
<td>Projects/Group Tasks - There are ungraded assessment tasks in this course (satisfactory/unsatisfactory). Students must successfully complete these assessment tasks to pass the course.</td>
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Assumed Knowledge
SOCA1010, SOCA1020, PSYC1010, PSYC1020 and SWRK1001 and SWRK1002 or SWRK1010A and SWRK1010B, SWRK2001, SWRK2003 and concurrent completion of SWRK2007.

Callaghan Campus Timetable
SWRK2006
SOCIAL WORK THEORY & PRACTICE 2
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 2 - 2009
Workshop Wednesday 9:00 - 12:00 [MCLG42] Venue 301A
and Workshop Thursday 13:00 - 15:00 [MCLG16B, W202, W203, W218, W219, W326A] Wks 1-6 only

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University. These principles are at the core of all academic endeavour in teaching, learning and research. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise the integrity of research and devalue the quality of learning. To preserve the quality of learning for the individual and others, the University may impose severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity. There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

**Academic fraud** is a form of academic dishonesty that involves making a false representation to gain an unjust advantage. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it can include:

a) falsification of data;
b) using a substitute person to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment item;
c) reusing one's own work, or part thereof, that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission);
d) making contact or colluding with another person, contrary to instructions, during an examination or other assessment item;
e) bringing material or device(s) into an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item; and

f) making use of computer software or other material and device(s) during an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item.

g) contract cheating or having another writer compete for tender to produce an essay or assignment and then submitting the work as one's own.

**Plagiarism** is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one's own. University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- a) copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- b) using another person's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- c) collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

**Turnitin** is an electronic text matching system. During assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a text matching service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**RE-MARKS AND MODERATIONS**

Students can access the University's policy at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html)

**MARKS AND GRADES RELEASED DURING TERM**

All marks and grades released during term are indicative only until formally approved by the Head of School.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

*Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations* items must be submitted by the due date in the Course Outline unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension. Unapproved late submissions will be penalised in line with the University policy.

Requests for Extensions of Time must be lodged no later than the due date of the item. This applies to students:

- applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
- whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment.

Students must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, as outlined in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure at: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html)

**Note:** different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.
Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- Special Consideration Requests must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.
- Rescheduling Exam requests must be received no later than 10 working days prior the first date of the examination period.

*Late applications may not be accepted.* Students who cannot meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak firstly to their Program Officer or their Program Executive if studying in Singapore.

**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS**

University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au. As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information on confidentiality and documentation visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

**CHANGING YOUR ENROLMENT**

Students enrolled after the census dates listed in the link below are liable for the full cost of their student contribution or fees for that term.


Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of term. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of term will result in a fail grade.

**Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of term,** except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of term must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs or with your Program Executive at PSB if you are a Singapore student.

To check or change your enrolment online go to myHub: [https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au](https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au)

**STUDENT INFORMATION & CONTACTS**

Various services are offered by the Student Support Unit: www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentsupport/

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students studying in Australia. Student Hubs are located at:

**Callaghan Campus**
Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Building
Hunter Hub: Level 2, Student Services Centre

**City Precinct**
City Hub & Information Common, University House

**Central Coast Campus (Ourimbah)**
Student Hub: Opposite the Main Cafeteria
OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Faculty Websites
www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/

Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards
www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html

General enquiries
Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email:
EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

The Dean of Students
Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)
Phone: 02 4921 5806;
Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email:
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

This course outline will not be altered after the second week of the term except under extenuating circumstances with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of the change.

Mandatory Program Component

This course is a Mandatory Program Component. All 2000 Level SWRK courses must be completed in one calendar year, and SWRK2001 and SWRK2003 in Semester 1 must be successfully completed to progress to Semester 2 courses – SWRK2006 and SWRK2007.

Essential Criteria in Assessment

This course contains compulsory components or assessment items that must be satisfactorily completed in order for a student to receive a pass mark or better for the course. These essential elements are described in the CTS and in greater detail later in this Course Outline.

In order to satisfactorily complete assessment items students are required to attend all classes. Attendance records will be kept for all classes. Feedback regarding class participation will be provided verbally by staff to students throughout the Semester and in writing as part of feedback on written assignments and group projects. If students are unable to attend a class they should contact the Course Coordinator. The Course Coordinator will consult throughout the semester with students who have a poor attendance and participation record. In most cases this will result in additional assessment requirements being established. Where it becomes apparent that a student is unable to complete (ungraded) group projects at a satisfactory level, due to their poor class attendance and participation, they will be required to undertake additional assessment task(s). Additional make-up assessment tasks will be designed to ensure students demonstrate knowledge and skills equivalent to the original task(s).

Group Work, Peer and Self-Assessment

Both individual assignments and group tasks are designed to be authentic representations of social work practice. Much of social work involves working collaboratively with others, being open to having your practice evaluated by others and having a capacity to evaluate your own practice. Each group task will therefore include assessment criteria that reflect these practice realities.

The purpose of group tasks is to assist students to achieve the course learning goal of developing a capacity to work and actively participate in teams. This includes the negotiation of differences of opinion within the group and taking a range of group task and maintenance roles.
Group tasks are graded as **satisfactory or unsatisfactory**. The specific criteria for determining the grade on each task will be discussed in class and provided in written form as part of the task. All group members will obtain the same result, unless a case is made to the course coordinator to exclude one or more group members from the final result. Such cases will be reviewed by the course coordinator in consultation with the Social Work Discipline Convenor. Groups or individuals with an unsatisfactory grade will be required to submit additional work to a satisfactory standard.

Groups are expected to work cooperatively in deciding how to approach the task and how work will be distributed and managed between group members. Some time will be spent in the first group meeting discussing group expectations and negotiating a group contract. Group members are to take responsibility for developing strategies for managing group processes and addressing any conflict that may arise in the group. The teaching staff will be available to assist groups during the group meetings scheduled in class times and also during consultation times (as listed above) to discuss any concerns in relation to the content or processes entailed in the group task.

A number of different methods will be used to form groups. For some tasks students will be allocated to groups by the Course Coordinator. This occurs as a way of replicating the realities of practice situations when social workers do not get to choose the people with whom they are required to work. For other tasks group formations will be negotiated taking into account student preferences.

Although staff will not always be providing feedback to individual students regarding their performance on group tasks, students will be required to engage in processes of self evaluation and feedback to peers. Staff will provide feedback on group performance.

**Studentmail and Blackboard**

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

**Important Additional Information**

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site.

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
- Student Representatives
- Student Communication
- Essential Online Information for Students
Classes for SWRK2006 will be held on Wednesday 9-12 and Thursday 1-3. The mental health learning unit runs from Week 1 – 7

THEMES

Social work practice in mental health including biopsychosocial assessments, ecological systems theory, rights-based practice, ethical decision-making, psychiatric approaches to mental health, groupwork and health promotion, awareness of legislation, consumer and family perspectives and policy analysis.

LEARNING GOALS

Social work values
1. Demonstrate recognition, respect and valuing of persons with a mental illness and their families.
2. Demonstrate depth of understanding of social work values as outlined in the AASW Code of Ethics in relation to people with a mental illness.
3. Demonstrate a commitment to social justice for people with mental health problems, based on their human rights.

Self-awareness
4. Examine your own values and beliefs about mental health.

Communication skills
5. Demonstrate a capacity to explore and validate the experiences of people using mental health services, their family and friends.

Ethical and professional practice
6. Demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the social work code of ethics, and develop an awareness of ethical debates in relation to mental health, especially in relation to issues of assessment (diagnosis).
7. Demonstrate professional behaviour including reliable attendance, punctuality, observing confidentiality, and meeting task deadlines.

Theories about assessment, intervention, and problem solving
8. Develop an appreciation of how different health professions understand mental health problems and their approach to resolving these problems.
9. Develop an understanding of the dominant medical (disease, biological, biomedical, psychiatric) model of practice and develop understanding of the purpose and implementation of the psychiatric diagnostic framework.

10. Integrate previous learning about addictions and child protection and develop an understanding of the influence of problematic use of alcohol and/or drugs on mental health and the care and protection of children.

11. Assess the likelihood of client self-harm and harm to others, and develop skills in responding appropriately.

12. Learn about the social work biopsychosocial models of practice in the field of mental health and gain knowledge of what should be covered in a social work assessment.

13. Gain knowledge of contemporary approaches to mental health care provided by local mental health services, both government and non-government, and become aware of referral pathways to these services.

14. Gain an understanding of the impact of stigma, social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination on the experiences of people with a mental illness and their families.

15. Explore the role of theory and its relationship to practice. Particularly demonstrate an ability to apply strengths and ecological systems perspectives.

16. Articulate a critical perspective about the impact of dominant ideologies and discourses on mental health practice.

**Working with others/ teamwork**

17. Gain an understanding of the various social work roles within mental health services.

**Rural/ remote practice**

18. Demonstrate an understanding of current issues associated with the provision of mental health and support services to rural and remote communities.

**Inquiry skills**

19. Further develop critical thinking skills, particularly clarifying ideas through writing and through dialogue with others.

20. Further develop skills in seeking out research relevant to social work practice with people with mental health problems.

**Policy analysis**


22. Develop a basic understanding of national and state mental health legislation and policy relevant to social work practice.

23. Develop an understanding of historical and contemporary conceptions of mental health problems and societal responses and gain an understanding of the de-institutionalization / community care debate.
INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT 1

Group work programs for mental health consumers

The attached narratives detail the lives of people living with a mental health diagnosis. As a social worker working in a mental health setting in NSW you have been asked to facilitate a group work programme to assist one of the above mental health consumers (and others with a similar diagnosis) to develop resilience, knowledge, skills and strategies to deal with the fallout of life experiences such as unemployment, inability to continue studies, relationship breakdown or inability to follow a life dream.

Write a report in which you:

1. Give a brief profile of the mental health consumer group you have chosen with reference to at least three source documents. (Government report, mental health publications by government or non-government agencies, journal articles) In what ways does the narrative you have chosen reflect this particular mental health consumer group?

2. Provide a rationale for the group work programme you have chosen for your mental health consumer group making reference to research literature. N.B You are not being asked to design this programme but to use a programme that already exists.

3. Provide an explanation as to how you will recruit/and or engage your participants and how you plan to facilitate the group.

4. What outcomes would you anticipate for the participants in this programme? Why?

5. How would you evaluate the group work programme? Make a case for your decision to use the evaluation method/s you have chosen.

Criteria for Assessment

Your report should demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of mental health consumers in relation to their lived experiences in the Australian mental health system.

2. Identification and use of a range of relevant, reliable and current sources of evidence.

3. Knowledge and critical analysis of the research literature.

4. An understanding of group work as an intervention with demonstrated knowledge of process, practice and evaluation.

5. Professional writing style, with a structure appropriate to a report, and accurate referencing techniques.

Due Date: 5.00pm, 26 August 2009
Length of report: 2,500 words
Grading: 50%
Consumer Narratives

Narelle is 31 years old, a single mother with two sons aged 8 and 10. She was diagnosed with bipolar disorder when she was 28 years old. However, she has struggled with depression since she was a teenager and on more than one occasion she was suicidal. After she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder she spent the next two years in denial of her illness, sometimes taking medication and sometimes not. Narelle suffers bouts of anger and can lose interest in her kids, her friends and everything going on around her. She has some good days and she has a lot of bad days. She often feels like running away from everything but her kids keep her focused. Narelle is currently linked up with a support worker and is beginning to accept her illness.

Kath is a 20 year old first year university student studying teaching who also suffers from panic attacks. She has had panic attacks off and on since she was a teenager but has always managed to get through them. However, now that she is living on campus away from her parents, the attacks seem to be occurring more frequently. The attacks always come on suddenly and she feels as if she is in danger and needs to escape. In the past she has suffered from shortness of breath, dizziness and hot flushes. More recently she has had such severe chest pain that she thought she was having a heart attack. She has also experienced a lack of control and a feeling of “going crazy”. She loves the idea of being a teacher and hopes to work in a primary school near her home town but lately she is thinking she will have to give up her course and go home.

Ian is 45 years old and has battled depression for the last six years. He is not sure why he became depressed. However, he had been working overtime trying to earn extra money to take his family, wife of 15 years and their three children on a holiday. All he can remember is feeling a deep sadness that overwhelmed him and he begun to blame his feelings of sadness on his job, his marriage and his family responsibilities. After a serious attempt to take his life last year he was taken to a hospital psychiatric unit where he was able to be assessed. Ian believes that his diagnosis of clinical depression and the right medication have turned his life around. He is now feeling optimistic about his future. However, as a result of his long path to recovery, Ian lost his job and the stress on Ian and his wife has recently led to them separating. The children, all in their teens live with their mother and see their father occasionally.

Sarah is 30 years old and receives a disability pension. She was diagnosed with schizophrenia thirteen years ago, just after she left her “very dysfunctional and extremely unhappy family”. Accessing help or support from her parents was never an option and Sarah, a very sociable person, has relied on some very good friends for support. Sarah has responded well to her medication but she regularly battles with the voices that fill her head and torment her. Even when she is well she always has lingering doubts that maybe the “voices” are right and she is as evil as they say and doesn’t deserve the kindness from her friends; that she should kill herself. Sarah understands her illness; she takes her medication regularly and knows that she must have enough sleep each night and a minimum of stress every day so that she doesn’t become unwell. But Sarah would like more to her life.
GROUP TASK

Mental Health Week is part of a national mental health promotion campaign held in early October each year (In 2009 this will be held 4 to 10 October). Its main aim is to promote social and emotional wellbeing to the NSW population, encouraging people to maximise their health potential, enhancing the coping capacity of communities, families and individuals, and increasing mental health literacy.

The theme of Mental Health Week (MHW) NSW 2009 is “sign up, link in, get involved” (http://www.mentalhealth.asn.au/campaigns/index.htm). 2009 is the second stage in the Mental Health Association’s “Building Resilience” campaign.

In 2009 the focus of the Mental Health Association NSW Inc. is to promote the importance of getting involved and interacting with other members of the community, as well as local clubs, organisations and services. Creating and strengthening these links, the association believes, can be a useful resource to draw on during both good and tough times.

Your group will be designing, implementing and evaluating a health promotion activity or event that is consistent with the aim of Mental Health Week 2009. You will be doing this under the auspice of Student Support Services at the University of Newcastle and running your event on the 23 of September on campus. (We will be in second semester recess during mental health week) NB. Your group will be presenting in a venue organised by the group in a time slot that will be staggered throughout the day. Each of the six groups in the class will approach this task from a different focus and will be oriented toward a particular target group within the student population. (To be generated in class)

Your aims are to engage your “community” prior to the event/health promotion and to ensure the event/health promotion is run in accordance with the appropriate policies and protocols of the University of Newcastle.

You must submit a brief plan of your activity (approximately 500 - 1000 words) by Wednesday 13 August. The plan should include a brief description of the event/health promotion activity, with details of your project objectives, venue required, approvals needed, budget required, evaluation mechanisms and a risk assessment of your event. You can find University policy and guidelines for conducting a risk assessment at the following links:

Health & Safety Risk Assessment template

Supporting information, instructions, etc

You must submit a brief group report (approximately 1000 – 1,500 words) after your event by 5pm on Monday 28 September. The report should include:

- A demonstrated understanding of theories, methods and approaches of health promotion in relation to mental health
- A critical analysis of the project
- The outcomes (evaluation results) of your event/health promotion
Due dates:  
Project plan – 5pm, 13 August  
Project report – 5pm, 25 September

Criteria for assessment

- ability to work as a team to stage an event / health promotion
- demonstrated research, knowledge and critical thinking about mental health
- ability to plan and evaluate
- demonstrated understanding of the theories, methods and approaches of health promotion in relation to mental health

Grading: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory