

**SLWK 230 COMMUNICATION IN THE HELPING PROCESS
FALL 2014**

Madeline Roberts, MSW

Course meets: Tuesday & Thursday

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Where: Harris Hall 2135

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When: 9:30 – 10:45 AM

Office hours: TBA or by appointment

COURSE DISCRIPTION

SLWK 230: Communication in the Helping Process is a semester, 3 lecture hours, 3 credit course required for all social work majors. Communication in the Helping Process is the study of the knowledge, skills and values of effective human communication and interpersonal relations. It includes verbal and nonverbal communication, listening skills, cultural competency, ethics, and the relevance of all of the above to social work practice. Emphasis is place on the demonstration and practice of communication through structured exercises, role plays, and classroom discussion.

COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

Upon completion of this course, students will achieve a beginning level of skill in demonstrating the following competencies as evidenced by the related practice behaviors:

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly (EPAS 2.1.1).
 - a. Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development.
 - b. Attend to professional roles and boundaries.
 - c. Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication.
2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice (EPAS 2.1.1).
 - d. Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments (EPAS 2.1.3).
 - e. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues.

4. Engage in diversity and difference in practice (EPAS 2.1.4).
 - f. Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
 - g. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
 - h. Recognize and communicate my understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.

5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice (EPAS 2.1.5).
 - i. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.

6. Respond to contexts that shape practice (EPAS 2.1.9).
 - j. Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services

7. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities [EPAS 2.1.10(a) – (d)]
 - k. Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (a: Engage).
 - l. Use empathy and other interpersonal skills (a: Engage).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

DeVito, J.A. (2013). *The interpersonal communication book* (13th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education

Additional readings may be assigned throughout the course.

COURSE FORMAT

Classes will consist of lectures, class discussion of assigned readings, and topic related in-class activities such as role-play.

Class lectures may not cover all of the assigned readings. Nevertheless, students are responsible for all assigned material. Students are welcome to and encouraged to inquire about and prompt discussion about any of the assigned readings.

Instructor Availability

The instructor is available to students outside the classroom as well as during class sessions. Students are encouraged to speak with the instructor about any concerns they have regarding the course material or assignments. Students may schedule an appointment with the instructor by e-mail.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Course Requirements

Grade Weight

1.	Attendance and Participation	20%
2.	Journal Entries (6)	20%
3.	Mid Term Exam	20%
4.	Video Presentation and Paper	20%
5.	Final Exam	20%

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation account for 20% of the course grade. Students are expected to attend each class session, be on time, and remain for the entire class period. In addition, students are expected to be prepared to discuss the assigned readings as well as participate in class activities.

Students document attendance to class on a sign-in sheet disseminated at the beginning of class. A student will be late if arriving after the sign-in sheet has been completely passed around the class and returned to the instructor. Points will be deducted from the participation grade for late arrivals in a progressively severe fashion. That is, the more late arrivals one accumulates, the more severe the point penalty. Two points will be deducted for each of the first two late arrivals. Four points will be deducted for each of the third and fourth late arrivals. Six points will be deducted for each of the fifth and sixth late arrivals, and so on.

An absence for any reason lowers the participation grade by five points. Four absences are allowed for the course. The fifth absence, will result in a drop of one letter grade for the overall course grade. A sixth absence will result in a failing grade.

The **quality** of student participation will be assessed at mid term and at the end of the semester. All students will start the semester with 80 out of 100 possible points. All students will be expected to participate in discussion and activities to maintain their 80 points. However, additional points will be added as students make particularly thoughtful and constructive contributions to the class discussion.

As all students must participate, we want to create a class climate that supports all of us in taking the risk to contribute. We also want to maximize the probability that our class time be generative for us all. Therefore, during our first class, we will jointly develop a set of class conduct