Atlas of a Social Worker’s Brain

I can fix this.
I can fix this!

Where do I begin with this?

They didn’t cover this in school...

I could write a book...

Will this day ever end?

Oh my, I can’t help this one

This is one screwed up life...

Just when I think I’ve heard it all...
COURSE DESCRIPTION
This seminar course is offered in conjunction with Social Work 480 Practicum (SOCW 480). The content will focus on an analysis and integration of practice theories; an understanding and application of reflective practice and professionalism; ethical practice; and life-long learning within the context of social work practice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of the course participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and application of social work theories and skills to practice.
2. Interpret, apply and integrate the BCASW and CASW code of ethics into practice.
3. Be able to critically understand and reflect on ethical issues that emerge personally and professionally in practice.
4. Critically reflect on the use of self in social work practice. Have an understanding of one’s own social location in the context of practice.
5. Demonstrate ability to participate in and articulate all aspects and skills of the helping process.
6. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and relativity in practice and an understanding of diversity of experience.
7. Understand and demonstrate power works within the context of social work practice, and how social workers can become agents of change at an individual, group, community and organizational level.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will identify and apply social work knowledge and skills as highlighted in the learning outcomes within the field practicum course book. These areas include but are not limited to: generalist practice; reflective practice, competence with diversity; social policy and social justice; and professional social work identity.

2. Students will critically assess social work practice experiences through peer review, constructive feedback and consultation within their practicum setting.

3. Students will actively participate in discussions in the seminar in relation to professional issues, practice situations and ethical considerations.

4. Students will examine, critically reflect upon, and discuss the applications of theory in practice as well as the appropriateness and suitability of various practice methods.

5. Students will participate collectively and collaboratively in furthering their learning and promoting professional development.

**COURSE TEXT**

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings for the course will be provided by the instructor and will be available on the D2L site. Due to the nature of this course, students are expected to build on all previous social work course readings and to seek out current academic literature relevant to their practicum settings and learning objectives.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course will be centered around the student’s placement experiences and the integration of learning to their developing professional practice. Some of the learning will be ‘traditional’ and the rest will be seminar groups. A description and outline of all the assignments including the seminars will be provided on the D2L course site.

**HANDLING OF STUDENT WORK**

1. Students are responsible for retaining a copy of all submitted work.

2. All assignments must be submitted to the instructor on D2L in the appropriate Dropbox.
3. Every effort will be made to return assignments to students within two weeks.

4. Students can make an appointment with their instructor to review and discuss their exams, assignments or course grade.

5. Unclaimed assignments will be kept for one month after the grade submission deadline.

6. Final grades will be posted on D2L.

7. The **penalties for the submission of late work** is:
   - A deduction of 2% from the assigned mark per day up to 7 days (for example; if a paper is handed in with a mark of 75% and is 2 days late, the mark will be 71%).
   - Any assignment submitted more than 7 calendar days will not be accepted

**STUDENT SUPPORTS**

VIU Learning Matters: [http://learningmatters.viu.ca](http://learningmatters.viu.ca)
VIU University Calendar: [http://www.viu.ca/calendar/](http://www.viu.ca/calendar/)
VIU Writing Center: [http://sites.viu.ca/writingcentre/](http://sites.viu.ca/writingcentre/)
VIU Student Support Services Department: [http://www.viu.ca/studentservices/](http://www.viu.ca/studentservices/)
APA style referencing site:
  - [http://www.viu.ca/education/students/current/Writing_in_APA_Style_v2012.pdf](http://www.viu.ca/education/students/current/Writing_in_APA_Style_v2012.pdf)
  - [http://libguides.viu.ca/content.php?pid=46982&sid=613599](http://libguides.viu.ca/content.php?pid=46982&sid=613599)
  - [www.viu.ca/writingcentre/files/.../FIVE-MINUTES-ON-APA-Style.pptx](http://www.viu.ca/writingcentre/files/.../FIVE-MINUTES-ON-APA-Style.pptx)

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

Please read these policies regarding assignments, attendance and participation in this course. It will give you a strong understanding of the expectations for the course. Think of this as a contract between students and myself that leads to student success in the course.

1. **Attendance and participation in this class is mandatory.** Students are expected to follow the online course on a weekly basis and keep up with the work. The instructor will follow up with students who appear to be falling behind to ensure that they will successfully complete the class content and assignments. Marks will be assigned for participation and professionalism as it relates to SOCW 400B and SOCW 480 as noted above in the Evaluation section. A more specific rubric for all assignments will be provided to students on the course D2L site.

2. **Submitting papers** that are at an unacceptable level in terms of writing and organization are the student’s responsibility. If in the past, assistance was required with writing, it is strongly recommended that you be proactive early on to access assistance for this
course. I have provided links to the Writing Centre at VIU who are really helpful and who do online meetings. For research purposes, linking to the librarian at VIU can be very helpful.

3. **All assignments must be submitted to the assigned Dropbox** on the date specified, and all tests are to be written on the date specified. The only time an assignment can be handed in late is if there is a medical or family emergency and it must be communicated to the instructor as soon as possible. *A doctor’s note will be required for illness.* A student is responsible for communicating any late submissions to the instructor, regardless of the reason. If a student hands in an assignment late, a late deduction of 2% per day will occur up to 7 days. Papers will not be accepted after 7 days.

4. **There are no rewrites** and therefore, no rewrite will be granted for papers with a low mark or failing grade. It is the student’s responsibility to understand the content and expectations of the assignments that are due. There are written outlines and rubrics, video explanations and overviews, and online meetings where students will be informed about and able to inquire about the assignments. Meetings with the instructor are recommended if a student is struggling with the content.

5. **Requests for “make-up assignments”, “additional work” or “alternate assignments” for the purposes of increasing grades will not be granted.** It is the student’s responsibility to monitor their progress and access assistance/resources early on in the event of low marks or if it appears there may be a risk of not achieving the necessary C requirement.

6. **Plagiarism** on papers is considered a breach of academic conduct and will be dealt with accordingly. A link to the VIU *Academic Code of Conduct* is included in the course outline. Please read it. If students have additional concerns or questions that come up for them throughout the duration of the course, they are encouraged to consult the instructor for clarification. Students will use APA referencing and formatting for all their academic papers. A link is provided on the course site for resources in this area.

7. **Extension requests** for assignments will only be considered under *exceptional circumstances*. These include: death of a family member, prolonged illness, hospitalization or what would be deemed an emergency situation. Extension requests need to be submitted at least 24 hours ahead of time. For illness or hospitalization, the student will be required to produce a doctor’s note.

8. **Disability Accommodations** should be communicated to me before the course begins. I will then set up a meeting with the student to ensure there is a mutual understanding of the student’s needs and expectations.

9. Students are expected to keep a copy of their work. Therefore, **losing assignments** as a result of not having saved a paper will not be accepted as a reason for an extension. Computers/laptops crashing or breaking down as well as theft of computers from
vehicles or homes will no longer be considered valid reasons for an extension request. It is suggested that students e-mail themselves drafts of their work at regular intervals or save draft copies of assignments on a disc or memory stick.

10. **Students will exhibit professionalism and respect in their communication with both the instructor and their classmates.** The online setting is one that is easily misinterpreted, so be aware of how you write emails, post discussions and interact with one another. Please see the link to Netiquette for further information on this. Constructive feedback should not be taken personally, and if you are feeling upset by something said or done, please contact the instructor to discuss it further.

11. **Academic integrity is to be maintained at all times.** There are five values that underpin academic integrity (these are also consistent with professional standards): honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Please read through the Student Academic Code of Conduct policy ([www.viu.ca/policies](http://www.viu.ca/policies)) to ensure that you are familiar with our university’s expectations. Any violations of the academic code of conduct will be taken seriously and acted upon according to this policy.

**INSTRUCTOR ROLE**

It is my job to help student’s move through the learning and to provide support to ensure successful completion of the course content and expectations. This can be a challenging course and this is an area that I have expertise in – so it is important (and beneficial) for you to access my help and assistance when you need it.

1. **I am available to students online throughout the week** and am happy to set up times to meet individually with students should they want support, clarification or feedback. I will attempt to respond to your emails within 24 hours. Remember that sometimes there are glitches with technology – so if you do not hear from me, email again! We can set up to meet via phone, skype or face to face in my office. While I am very accessible during the week, I am not available on the weekends and you may not hear from me until Monday mornings, so plan accordingly! I will be having an online meeting to go over assignments for the course. When scheduled, please ensure that you have are prepared for our meeting with questions and an understanding of what you need for these assignments.

2. **I will be monitoring student progress through the D2L site.** I can see who is responding to and reading discussion posts or whether you have engaged with the work for that week. If I see that a student is falling behind, I will contact them to arrange a meeting to go over challenges and devise a plan for future success. If I do not hear from the student, I will send out an academic alert.
3. **Assignments will all be submitted to the appropriate Dropbox unless otherwise advised.** Please ensure you have a copy of all your work stored somewhere safe. I will have most small assignments marked within a week, larger assignments will take up to two weeks. Feedback is provided both on the written assignment but also in the comment box when I return the assignment. I am happy and willing to meet with students to review their marks and assignments once they have received them back and read what I have written.

4. **I have provided a variety of different resources for you** to access and use in this course that will help you with the assignments and the learning. Please take advantage of them and if you have any that may help your fellow students, let me know about them.

5. **All grades will be posted to the D2L site** and are accessible for students to see. It is each student’s responsibility to monitor their progress in the course as it relates to their assignments, due dates and marks.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY**

Please see Handling of Student Work above and #3 of student expectations for the Late Assignment Policy.

**VIU GRADING SCALE**

Grades will be assigned according to the Vancouver Island University GRADE SCALE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Grade Value</th>
<th>GRADE SCALE TABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>76-79</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>72-75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>68-71</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>64-67</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-63</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Failing work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Course passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requirements completed, but not calculated in GPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If course requirements are not completed after 90 days from the course end date, the “INC” grade will automatically become an “F” grade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Continuing Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In good standing. Course is delivered over 2 terms, separated by a break. Final mark to be issued at end of 2nd term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUD</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INP</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>In Progress</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In good standing. Student must re-enrol within one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>No Grade Submitted yet; neither Pass nor Fail.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EVALUATION**

More specific and detailed outlines and marking rubrics for these assignments are available to students online at the D2L site. Please read and review prior to the due dates for the assignments.

1. **Professionalism (throughout)** 10%
   Students will be evaluated on their participation and professionalism as it relates to their placements. This includes communicating with their Practicum Supervisors and their Faculty Liaisons, having the appropriate paperwork done in a timely manner (learning contracts and evaluations), and setting up and facilitating meetings.
   - **Coordination of Evaluation Meetings** 5%
• timeliness and extent to which a student coordinates and communicates between their Practicum Field Instructors and their Faculty Liaisons for meetings and evaluations.
• Preparation for meetings including scheduling and technology as required
• Timely coordination, preparation for, and performance during mid-term and final evaluations
• Scheduling
• Completed evaluation forms submitted in a timely manner (at least 2 days before the mid-term and final evaluations)

➢ Learning Contract (5%)
  • Timely completion and submission of learning contract (within the first 2 weeks of the practicum)
  • Content of learning contract appropriate and covers all the required content

2. Participation (Throughout) 10%
   Students will be marked on their participation in two areas of the class learning. This will be a combination of their reflection and assessment and the instructors.
   ➢ Small Group Interactions (5%)
   ➢ In-class discussions and learning (5%)

3. Seminar Group Work 25%
   In the middle of the semester, students will participate weekly in online Blackboard Collaborate seminars. For this assignment, they will lead a seminar based on their practicum experiences and interests for the other students and the instructor. These seminars will be based on a specific article and will be interactive and engaging for the students.

4. Analysis of Practice (Week 9) 25%
   Students will critically examine their practice (in their practicum settings) through the use of a case study (from their practicums) that illustrates the work that they have done and will integrate the readings and learning throughout it. A focus will be on the use of theory, skills, and ethical practice.

5. Professional Practice Framework (End of course) 30%
   Students will provide an overview of their learning experiences throughout their BSW. The outcome is meant to be a ‘framework’ for entering into social work practice and will encompass values, previous experiences, theory, and skills. This assignment can be done in a written format (10-12 pages in length) or through visual formats that will be such as blogs or websites. Examples will be provided.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week One</td>
<td>Thinking &amp; Reflecting Critically in Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Two</td>
<td>Professionalism: Boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Three</td>
<td>Professionalism: Emotional intelligence &amp; Mindfulness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Four</td>
<td>Professionalism: Leadership &amp; Supervision</td>
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<td>Week Five</td>
<td>Professionalism: Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Six</td>
<td>Theory to Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Seven</td>
<td>Seminar Group Work</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Eight</td>
<td>Seminar Group Work</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Nine</td>
<td>Seminar Group Work</td>
<td>Analysis of Practice: Case Review Assignment Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Ten</td>
<td>Seminar Group Work</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Eleven</td>
<td>Seminar Group Work</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Twelve</td>
<td>Transitioning to Professional Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Thirteen</td>
<td>Reflecting on the Past &amp; Moving to the Future</td>
<td>Participation Reflection &amp; Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Practice Framework (April 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
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