

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
MSW PROGRAMME
2007/2008**

MSW 804: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH

INSTRUCTOR:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Health and illness have many social, cultural, political and economic dimensions that go well beyond a bio-medical perspective. In addition, social position is also linked with health and includes a range of social determinants that affect health outcomes of many kinds. These social determinants include: race, class, gender, age, and political, regional, and social locations. Social workers have an important role to play in health care by articulating and illuminating the social determinants of health, the impact of socio-cultural factors on health and well being; and the interventions that support individual, family, and community capacity to adapt and respond to acute health crises or chronic health conditions. This demands that social workers integrate the socio-cultural meanings of health/illness in the local context and the diversity in the local experiences of dealing with health/illness.

On a practical level, this course will address the practice of social work in health care that reflects the health care needs of diverse populations, which range from health promotion and prevention to mental health and palliative care. The primary focus of this course will be the increasing complexity of integrating social work in health practices within the current global context. The course content will identify unique population needs, practice settings, social work interventions and practice issues. Practice models presented will include both micro and macro interventions, which incorporate competence and empowerment as central themes. This course will also examine the complex impacts of culture on health and health practices from an international perspective. Its overall objective is to enhance students' knowledge of the connection between culture and health and to improve their ability to apply this knowledge in health-related research and practice, both locally and internationally. Rather than viewing health as a single-dimensional or static entity, this course pays close attention to the intersections between culture and other social dimensions, such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, poverty, development and international inequity, in this globalized context.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To gain knowledge about the social determinants of health
- To appreciate the complexity and diversity in the understanding of and experiences with illness/health in different socio-cultural, political and economic contexts
- To develop an understanding of the impact of socioeconomic, racial, cultural, geographical, and financial factors on health service delivery and use
- To gain knowledge about the delivery of health based social work services with diverse, at-risk and hard to reach populations
- To further develop practice based skills with individuals, families and communities in a full range of health based settings
- To develop skills in assessment, intervention and evaluation of health based practices

COURSE FORMAT

- 1. Readings:** The assigned readings cover the wide range of health issues that social workers are required to consider when developing, providing and evaluating their practice. At times the readings will challenge you to think about health in the global context and what this means for you as professionals and for your clients within their local communities. The readings will also ask you that you reflect on the individual needs of your clients while also taking into considering that individuals exist within systems including families, communities, and cultures. This will require that you think critically about what social workers can offer to the health care field that is different from other health care providers. The readings also provide examples of assessment, intervention and evaluation tools that will be useful for you to meaningfully integrate into your future practice. The expectation is that by considering the guiding questions provided to you with each week of readings, that you will be able to develop meaningful ways of addressing the health needs of those that you work with now and/or in the future.
- 2. Reflective Practice:** The weekly readings include guiding questions that are meant to support your process of engaging in reflection. What this means is that you will be asked to focus on certain aspects of the readings and to consider how these readings: can be linked to your already existing knowledge and experience; can highlight areas where you want to gain more knowledge and; to draw connections between the readings and your practice. Students are encouraged to share their thoughts with fellow classmates and/or to include them in the reflective practice assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the weekly readings students are required to produce 2 reflective papers and one major paper to be handed in at the end of the course. Participation will also be graded over the course of the 3 day in class intensive seminar.

Reflective Practice Papers (2x20%)

The purpose of the reflective practice papers are to encourage you to reflect on the readings, raise issues and questions regarding the content of the readings, and to discuss areas of particular interest to you. You may want to consider writing about and expanding on some of the guiding questions that are included in the course kit and/or highlight other issues of relevance. You are asked to highlight the issues and discuss why the issue(s) is of particular interest to you and to link this issue to your personal and professional experience. Consider how your knowledge will impact your future practice.

Each reflective paper should be approximately 5 pages in length.

Class Participation (20%)

Through the 3 days of intensive training, students will be asked to participate in small and large group activities. Students will also be required to contribute to group discussions and to share with the class their reflections on the readings; reflections on past practices; and considerations for the future of social work in health care in their local contexts.

Major Paper (40%)

Social Work Practice in Health

The final paper will require that students choose a particular health issue that is of interest to them. Students are asked to write about what is currently known about that health issue and how that health issue is experienced by a particular population. This part of the paper should highlight the aspects of the health issue that would benefit from social work support. Drawing on the readings from the course kit and other available literature, students should discuss their assessment of the problem and/or concern; develop a rationale for how they would address the issue (intervention) and; consider how they would evaluate the outcome of the intervention and their overall practice. Recommendations for social work practice should also be included. This assignment will be discussed more in-depth during the 3 day training.

The final paper should be approximately 18-20 pages in length.

REQUIRED TEXT: Assigned Readings

There is no text book. The specific readings for each session are identified in the course outline. A course kit with all readings will be provided.

Social Work and Health in the African Context

Course Schedule with Readings

Module 1: Introduction: Social Work and the Social Determinants of Health

Required reading:

Hall, Nigel (2007). We Care Don't We? Social Workers, the Profession and HIV/AIDS in, *Social Work in Health Care*, 44, 1/2: 55-72.

Gilbert, L. and Soskolne, V. (2003). Self-assessed health – a case study of social differentials in Soweto, South Africa in, *Health and Place*, 9:193-205.

Suggested reading:

Dare, O., Lola. Linking Health and Development in Nigeria: The ORIADE Initiative. Submitted for Publication in the Ibadan Archives of Medicine.

Bronstein, L., Kovacs, C., and Vega, A. (2007). Goodness of Fit: Social Work Education and Practice in Health Care in, *Social Work in Health Care*, 45, 2: 59-76.

Hyder, A., Maman, S., Nyoni, S, Khasiani, A., Teoh, N, Premji, Z., and Sohani, S. (2005). The pervasive triad of food security, gender inequity and women's health: exploratory research from sub-Saharan Africa in, *African Health Sciences*, 5, 4:328-334.

Guiding Questions

1. Why is it important to give power and voice to local communities in the process of developing health programs?
2. What are the social determinants of health? How do issues such as poverty, race; gender for example, impact the health of marginalized communities?
3. What role can social workers play in developing strategies that address the social determinants of health?

Module 2: Health and Globalization

Required reading:

Airhihenbuwa, Collin, O. (2007). On Being Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable: Centering an Africanist Vision in Our Gateway to Global Health in, *Health Education and Behaviour*, 34, 1: 31-42.

Woodward, D., Drager, N., and Beaglehole, R. (2001). Globalization and Health: a framework for analysis and action in, *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 79, 9:875-881.

Suggested reading

Kerr, J. (2003). State of our Globe – Globalization and Women’s Health in, *Women and Environments*, Fall.

Guiding Questions

1. What is the value of advancing an Africanist’s vision of health issues and systems in Africa? What implications does this have on advancing health promotion at the global level?
2. What are the global health issues that most effect women in Africa?

Module 3: Assessment and Preventative Strategies

Required Reading:

Strydom, H. and Raath, H. (2005). The psychosocial needs of adolescents affected by HIV/AIDS: a South African Study in, *International Social Work*, 48, 5:569-580.

Alubo, O., Zwandor, A., Jolayemi, T., Omudu, E. (2002). Acceptance and Stigmatization of PLWA in Nigeria in, *AIDS Care*, 14, 1:117-126.

Lindgreen, T., Rankin, S., and Rankin, W., (2005). Malawi Women and HIV: Socio-Cultural Factors and Barriers to Prevention in, *Women and Health*, 41, 1:69-86.

Suggested Reading:

Boutin-Foster, C., Eustre, S., Rolon, Y., Motal, A., BeLue, R., Kline, R., and Charlson, M. (2005). Social Work Admission Assessment Tool for Identifying Patients in Need of Comprehensive Social Work Evaluation in, *Health and Social Work*, 30, 2:117-125.

Watts, C. and Shrader, E. (1998). How to do (or not to do)...The genogram: a new research tool to document patterns of decision-making, conflict and vulnerability within households in, *Health and Policy Planning*, 13, 4:459-564.

Benotsch, E., Stevenson, Y., Sitzler, C., Kelly, J., Makhaye, G., Mathey, E., Somlai, A., Brown, K., Amirkhanian, Y., Fernandez, I., and Opgenorth, K. (2004). HIV Prevention in Africa: Programs and Populations served by Non-Governmental Organizations in, *Journal of Community Health*, 29, 4:319-336.

Guiding Questions

1. What is meant by the term psychosocial needs? What are the psychosocial needs of HIV infected adolescents?
2. What are the barriers that prevent access to HIV treatment and care? What can social workers do help address these barriers?
3. What are some of the issues that social workers need to consider in the development and provision of preventative HIV/AIDS programming for women in Africa?

Module 4: Intervention Strategies with Individuals, Groups and Communities

Required reading:

Mugambi, J. (2006). The impact of HIV/AIDS on Kenyan rural women and the role of counseling in, *International Social Work*, 49, 1:87-96.

Norr, K., Norr, J., McElmurry, B. (2004). Impact of Peer Group Education on HIV Prevention Among Women in Botswana in, *Health Care for Women International*, 25:210-226.

Suggested Reading:

Hilderbrandt, E. (1994). A Model for Community Involvement in Health (CIH) Program Development in, *Social Science and Medicine*, 39, 2:247-254.

Izugbara, C. O., Etukudoh, I. W., Brown, A. S. (2004). Transethnic itineraries for ethnomedical therapies in Nigeria: Igbo women seeking Igbo cures in, *Health and Place*, 11, 1:1-14.

Davis, C. (2004). Psychosocial Needs of Women with Breast Cancer: How can Social Workers Make a Difference? *Health and Social Work*, 29, 4:330-334.

Wechsberg, W., Luseno, W., Lam, W., Parry, C., and Morojele, N., (2006). Substance Use, Sexual Risk, and Violence: HIV Prevention Intervention with Sex Workers in Pretoria in, *AIDS and Behavior*, 10, 2:131-137.

Guiding Questions

1. What role does counseling and or education play in supporting women at risk for HIV? How effective is counseling and/or peer education within the context of the local realities facing women in different parts of Africa?
2. What makes peer based interventions successful? What does the role of the social worker contribute to the provision of HIV peer based work with adolescents?

Module 5: Special Topics - Mental Health and Palliative Care

Required Reading:

Rosenberg, D. (2002). It also takes a village...Developing community mental health in, *International Social Work*, 45, 3:305-314.

Sossou, M. (2006). Mental-health services for refugee women and children in Africa in, *International Social Work*, 49, 1:9-17.

Sebuyira, Lydia Mpango (2006). Overview of :HIV/AIDS and Palliative Care in, Liz Gwyther, Anne Merriman, Lydia Mpanga Sebuyira and Schietner, Helen (Eds.) *A Clinical Guide to Supportive and Palliative Care for HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

Suggested Reading:

Peterson, I. (2000). Comprehensive integrated primary mental health care for South Africa. Pipe dream or possibility? in, *Social Science and Medicine*, 51:321-334.

Kilonzo, G.P. and Simmons, N. (1998). Development of Mental Health Services in Tanzania: A Reappraisal for the Future in, *Social Science and Medicine*, 47, 4:419-428.

Grant, E., Murray, S., Grant, A. and Brown, J. (2003). A Good Death in Rural Kenya? Listening to Meru Patients and Their Families Talk about Care Needs at the End of Life in, *Journal of Palliative Care*, 19, 3:159-167.

Guiding Questions

1. Identify the various ways that social work can become more engaged in mental health work in Africa.
2. What role can social workers in Africa play in reducing the role of stigma surrounding mental illness?

3. What is the definition of palliative care and what are the principles that guide palliative care in sub-Saharan Africa?

Module 6: Evaluation

Required Reading

McKie, L. (2003). Rhetorical Spaces: Participation and Pragmatism in the Evaluation of Community Health Work in, *Evaluation*, 9, 3:307-324.

Levy Zlotnik, J., and Galambos, C. (2004). Evidence-Based Practices in Health Care: Social Work Possibilities in, *Health and Social Work*, 29, 4:259-261.

Guiding Questions

1. What role can and should clients' play in the evaluation of social work programs?
2. What is the value of having clients (individuals, groups, and communities) involved in the evaluation process?
3. Is there ever a time when individuals, groups and communities should not be involved in the evaluation process? If yes, why? If not, why not?