



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

School of Social Work

**Semester/Year:** Fall 2016

**Course Title:** Human Behavior and the Social Environment

**Course Prefix/Number/Section:** SOCW 5301-013

**Instructor Name:** Ling Xu, PhD

**Faculty Position:** Assistant Professor

**Faculty Profile:** <https://www.uta.edu/profiles/ling-xu>

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**Email Address:** [lingxu@uta.edu](mailto:lingxu@uta.edu)

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Day and Time of Class (if applicable):** Online

**Location:** Online

Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.  
Blackboard: <https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/>

**A. Description of Course Content**

Exploration of behavioral and social science knowledge of human behavior and development through the life course. It examines major systems in society: individual, group, family, and community; and the diversity of ethnicity, race, class, sexual orientation, and culture.

**B. Student Learning Outcomes**

**This course meets the follow education policy, practice behaviors and accreditation policies of the Council on Social Work Accreditation:**

**Educational Policy 2.1.1—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.**

[Social workers serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values. They know the profession's history. Social workers commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth. Social workers:]

1. Engage in career-long learning.

**Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.** [Social

workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:]

1. Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.
2. Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics<sup>2</sup> and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of

Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles.

3. Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and
4. Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

**Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.** [Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers:]

1. Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
2. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
3. Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.

**Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.** [Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:]

1. Use research evidence to inform practice. [Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:]

**Educational Policy 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.**

1. Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation.
2. Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

**Educational Policy 2.1.9—Respond to contexts that shape practice.** [Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers:]

1. Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate comprehension of the major organizational scheme of social work: reciprocal relationships between human behavior and the social environment.
- Students will examine theories, concepts, and empirically-based knowledge related to individuals as they live in various systems in their environment: families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Students will examine theoretical frameworks for understanding the interactions between and among the various systems such as individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems.
- Students will examine, apply, and illustrate theories, concepts, and empirically-based knowledge related to individuals as they live in various systems in their environment: families, groups, organizations, and communities.

- Students will examine, apply, and illustrate the development of persons through the life span based on theories and empirical knowledge of biological sociological, cultural, psychological, and spiritual aspects of development.
- Students will examine, apply, and illustrate ways in which social systems promote or block the achievement and maintenance of health and well being.
- Students will distinguish among individuals in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, social class, religion, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, and how a particular person is related or not to each area.
- Students will describe in their own words what their views are of persons of different races, ethnicity, national origin, social class, religion, physical or mental ability, and sexual orientation.
- Students will distinguish among the codes and values in the NASW Code of Ethics which ones relate directly to human diversity and regard for worth and dignity of all persons. They will assess and discuss what they think about these requirements for all social workers and how they plan to apply them in their social work practice to persons who are different from them.
- Students will describe their plan for further knowledge development about human behavior and the social environment and the life span.

### C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials

Hutchison, E.D. (2015). Dimensions of human behavior: The changing life course (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN:9781483303901

Hutchison, Elizabeth D. (2015). Dimensions of human behavior: Person in environment life course (5th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 9781483303918

Selected Articles.

### D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials

N/A

### E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations

**NOTE: Please refer to our Blackboard course for session readings, course material, discussion topics, and quiz and assignment dates.**

#### Assignments:

**Discussion Board (10 points each).** You must **answer at least one of the discussion board questions** (if there are many) posted for each session. In addition, you must post responses to **at least two postings of your classmates**. You may earn up to 10 points each session by participating in the discussion board. There will be 15 Discussion Boards, corresponding with the 15 Course Sessions of the semester. In order to earn the full 10 points in any given session, you must meet the following criteria: (1). Respond to at least one new discussion board question (if there are many) and comment on at least two postings from your classmates. (2). Demonstrate thoughtfulness and effort in your response. Note: Discussions will **end on Sundays at 11:59 pm**, and new discussions will begin on Mondays at 6 am. I encourage you to respond to other students' postings and to participate in more than the minimum number of discussions required, as participation will generally enhance your understanding of the material as well as your overall experience in the course.

**Quizzes (10 points each).** There will be 10 short timed quizzes administered during the semester. The quizzes will be open-book, and you may access your notes as well as other resources to complete the quizzes. Each quiz will be worth a total of 10 points. On the weeks that a quiz will be required, it will be available from 6 am Monday morning **until 11:59 pm Sunday night**.

**Diversity & SW Values and Ethics (50 points).** *This assignment assesses course outcomes # 8 and 9.*

Includes designated skill(s) or behavior (s) from: Educational Policy 2.1.2(a-d); Educational Policy 2.1.4(a-c);

**NOTE: You must use the template provided to complete this assignment. See Session 4 Course Materials.**

- Discuss your experiences of working with or interaction with persons of a different race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or ability than yourself. Discuss at least 2 experiences. What was the experience like for you? Example: Discuss your experience with working or interacting with a gay man if you are a straight woman and discuss your experiences working/interacting with a person who has a physical challenge if you have no physical challenges.
- How did these experiences impact your view of persons different from yourself? What did you learn?
- Include specific entries in the NASW Code of Ethics that relate to human diversity with regard to the worth and dignity of all persons.
- Cite at least two academic journal articles that relate to your experiences in working with persons different than yourself.

**Case Study (100 points).** *This assignment assesses outcomes #1-7.* Includes designated skill(s) or behavior (s) from: Educational Policy 2.1.1(a); Educational Policy 2.1.7(a-b); Educational Policy 2.1.4(a-c).

Write a case study on a small group, community, or organization (maximum 6 pages for the main text). (1) Apply 3 theories and 5 concepts from text material on the selected target. Analyze your target using the text and course materials. (2) Describe and illustrate ways in which the small group, community, or organization promotes or blocks the achievement and maintenance of health and well-being of participants.

**OR**

Write a case study on a child, young adult, midlife adult, or older adult (maximum 6 pages for the main text). (1) Choose 3 theories and 5 concepts from the chapters in the micro text on your target life stage. Also use pertinent material from lecture notes. (2) Discuss the theories and concepts in detail and give examples of how the client demonstrates each theory, concept, and race, ethnicity, national origin, social class, religion, physical and mental ability, and sexual orientation. (3) Describe and illustrate ways in which social systems promote or block the achievement and maintenance of health and well-being for the target person (s). For more detailed information, please refer to the rubric of this assignment.

**Exams (100 points each).** There will be both a Midterm and a Final Exam in this course. You will **choose one from the two options below** and complete: 1) a quantitative exam, which will include various types of questions such as multiple choice, true/false, and short answer; or 2) a qualitative exam, which will include short essay questions. Both will be administered online and will be worth 100 points. Providing two different types of exams of equivalent value allows you as a student to make a choice about what type of assessment you prefer.

**F. Grading**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

150 points--15 Discussion Boards at 10 points each

100 points--10 Quizzes at 10 points each

200 points--2 Exams at 100 points each

50 points--1 Diversity & Ethics Assignment at 50 points

100 points--1 Case Study at 100 points

Total points possible=600 points

540-600 points=A

480-539 points=B

420-479 points=C

360-419 points=D

359 or below=F

**Note:** Grades will be posted to the campus MyMav system or Blackboard at course completion and made available on the University. Schedule for posting of grades. Grades cannot be given by email or individually by the instructor, per University Policy.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

### G. Make-Up Exams

Please note: I **do not** accept late papers nor do I extend deadlines for missed assignments, tests, quizzes, or discussion boards.

### H. Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients. As the instructor of this section,

This online course requires weekly participation assessed through discussion boards and quizzes. The expectation is that you would spend at least 5-10 hours each week reading the text, watching online videos and reading online posts, and participating in assessment activities.

### I. Course Schedule

Session #	Topic	Dates Covered	Graded Assignments
1	Human Behavior and Theoretical Perspectives	8/25-9/04	DB 1; Quiz 1
2	Culture and Human Behavior	9/05-9/11	DB 2; Quiz 2
3	The Family	9/12-9/18	DB 3; Quiz 3
4	Small Groups	9/19-9/25	DB 4; Diversity & Ethics Assignment Due

5	Formal Organizations	9/26-10/02	DB 5; Quiz 4
6	Communities	10/03-10/09	DB 6; Quiz 5
7	The Biological Person	10/10-10/16	DB 7; Quiz 6
8	The Psychological Person	10/17-10/23	DB 8; Midterm Exam
9	The Psychosocial Person	10/24-10/30	DB 9; Quiz 7
10	The Spiritual Person	10/31-11/06	DB 10; Quiz 8
11	Pregnancy, Birth, Newborn, Infancy	11/07-11/13	DB 11; Quiz 9
12	Early and Middle Childhood	11/14-11/20	DB 12; Case Study Due
13	Adolescence	11/21-11/27	DB 13; Quiz 10
14	Young and Middle Adulthood	11/28-12/04	DB 14
15	Late Adulthood & Very Late Adulthood	12/05-12/11	DB 15; Final Exam
Note: DB means Discussion Board in Blackboard			

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

### **J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

### **K. Grade Grievances**

See BSW Program Manual at: [https://www.uta.edu/ssw/\\_documents/bsw/bsw-program-manual.pdf](https://www.uta.edu/ssw/_documents/bsw/bsw-program-manual.pdf)  
 Or MSW Program Manual at: [http://www.uta.edu/ssw/\\_documents/msw/msw-program-manual.pdf](http://www.uta.edu/ssw/_documents/msw/msw-program-manual.pdf)

### **L. Student Support Services**

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#), [major-based learning centers](#), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](#), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

The IDEAS Center (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Central Library) offers **free** tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email [IDEAS@uta.edu](mailto:IDEAS@uta.edu) or call (817) 272-6593.

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming oneself or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call MAVS Talk at 817-272-TALK (817-272-8255). For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit <http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php>) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit <https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php>) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

### **M. Librarian to Contact**

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is in the campus Central Library. He may also be contacted via E-mail: [dillard@uta.edu](mailto:dillard@uta.edu) or by Cell phone: **(817) 675-8962**, below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: <http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php>

The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:

- Library Home Page..... <http://www.uta.edu/library>
- Subject Guides..... <http://libguides.uta.edu>
- Subject Librarians..... <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php>
- Course Reserves..... <http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do>
- Library Tutorials ..... <http://www.uta.edu/library/help/tutorials.php>
- Connecting from Off- Campus..... <http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus>
- Ask a Librarian..... <http://ask.uta.edu>

### **N. Drop Policy**

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/ao/fao/>).

### **O. Disability Accommodations**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.

Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

#### **P. Non-Discrimination Policy**

*The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos).*

#### **Q. Title IX Policy**

The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).*

#### **R. Academic Integrity**

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

#### **S. Electronic Communication**

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

#### **T. Campus Carry**

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes



as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

#### **U. Student Feedback Survey**

At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

#### **V. Final Review Week**

for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.