

**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON**

**School of Social Work**

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| **Semester/Year: Spring, 2015**  **Course Title: Personal Relationships**  **Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 6320-003**  **Instructor Name: Bruce L. Bower, MSW, LCSW, Assistant Professor in Practice**  **Office Number: SWCA 201A**  **Email Address:** [**bower@uta.edu**](mailto:bower@uta.edu)  **Office Hours: Tues. from 2:00 to 5:00 PM; and Weds. from 9:00 AM to noon**  **Day and Time (if applicable): Wednesdays, from 4:00 PM to 6:50 PM**  **Location (Building/Classroom Number): SWCA 316**  **Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.**  **Blackboard:** [**https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/**](https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/) |

**A. Catalog Course Description/Special Requirements (Prerequisites/Out of Class Meetings):**

Explores theoretical and empirical data on diverse personal relationships at the following stages of relationship: initiation, maintenance, and termination. Identifies areas for intervention. Prerequisite: SOCW 5301 and SOCW 5317.

**B. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes - CORE/Advanced Practice Behaviors:**

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

1. Advanced social workers in children and families practice active self-reflection and continue to address personal bias and stereotypes to build knowledge and dispel myths regarding diverse family structures, families with complex family dynamics and families with multiple challenges and issues.
2. They develop an action plan for continued growth including use of continuing education, supervision, and consultation.

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

1. Advanced social workers in children & families implement an effective decision-making strategy for deciphering ethical dilemmas specific to the multiple and diverse needs of families and children.

**Educational Policy 2.1.3**—**Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.**

1. Advanced social workers in children and families evaluate, select, and implement appropriate assessment intervention and evaluation tools for use with diverse groups of families and children.

**Educational Policy 2.1.4**—**Engage diversity and difference in practice.**

1. Advanced social workers in children and families understand and can apply the relevant cultural, class, gender, race, age, disability, and other diversity issues to enhance the well-being of children and families from a strengths perspective.

**Educational Policy 2.1.5**—**Advance human rights and social and economic justice.**

1. Advanced social workers in children and families recognize the stigma and shame associated with “family dysfunction.”
2. They recognize disparities in the distribution of resources across families.
3. They advocate at multiple levels for services to families that increase effective family functioning.

**Educational Policy 2.1.6**—**Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**

1. Advanced social workers in children & families use advanced strategies to search, appraise, and select for application the most up to date evidence and evolving practice guidelines in the assessment and interventions with children and families.
2. They develop effective models, programs, policies and interventions and assess their effectiveness. They use valid and reliable assessments for identifying family problems, risks and protective factors, vulnerability and resilience factors and consequences for different family groups and family members.

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

1. Advanced social workers in children and families will be able to compare the various etiology and interventions relevant to children and families.
2. Advanced social workers in children and families understand the relevant organizational world-views and culture that influence how families function. They can relate social work perspectives, the evidence base, and related theories to practice with the multiple and complex issues that face families.
3. They understand increased risk and protective factors related to bio-psycho-social-spiritual domains and incorporate them in their assessment and intervention with families and children.

**Educational Policy 2.1.8—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.**

1. Advanced social workers in Children and Families communicate to stakeholders the implication of policies and policy change in the lives of children and families.
2. Advanced social workers in Children and Families advocate for policies that advance the social and economic well-being of children and families.

**Educational Policy 2.1.9**—**Respond to contexts that shape practice.**

1. Advanced social workers in children and families assess the quality of family member’s interactions within their social contexts.
2. They develop intervention plans to accomplish systemic change that is sustainable.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)–(d)**—**Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.**

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)**—**Engagement**

Social workers substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities; use empathy and other interpersonal skills; and develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes.

1. Advanced social workers effectively use interpersonal skills to engage children and families in a collaborative therapeutic relationship.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(b)**—**Assessment**

Social workers collect, organize, and interpret client data; assess client strengths and limitations; develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives; and select appropriate intervention strategies.

1. Advanced social workers in Children and Families use multidimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment tools.

2. They assess clients’ readiness for change and coping strategies.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(c)**—**Intervention**

1. Students will be able to describe causes (empirically validated and theoretical), advanced assessment methods, and the most effective interventions treatments for a variety of problems that effect children and families.
2. They recognize the impact of stressful life events (losses, stressors, changes, and transitions) throughout the individual’s and family’s life course.
3. They demonstrate the use of appropriate clinical techniques for a range of presenting concerns identified in the assessment, including crisis intervention strategies as needed.

**Educational Policy 2.1.10(d)**—**Evaluation**

Social workers critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions.

1. Advanced social workers in children and families contribute to the theoretical knowledge base in the area of children and families through practice-based research, and use evaluation of the process and/or outcomes to develop best practices with children and families.

**C. *Required* Text(s) and Other Course Materials:**

Knapp, M. L., & Vangelisti, A. L. (2013). *Interpersonal communication and human relationships* (7th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

**D. Additional *Recommended* Text(s) and Other Course Materials:**

As assigned in class.

**E. Major Course Assignments & Examinations:**

**I. Ethics Paper written on the specific aspects of the NASW Code of Ethics and your views of them as they relate to and operate within your personal, professional (peer-to-peer), and worker-client relationships.** [EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2] Length is to be no more than five (5) pages.

**II. Comparison Paper/Assignment in which you explain relationship similarities and differences of couples from differing backgrounds**. [EPAS 2.1.2; 2.1.4; 2.1.7; 2.1.9] This could be a comparison of gay/lesbian couples, and/or couples from different parts of the world. Use outside resources: journal articles or book chapters that are *not* your text. The length is to be five (5) pages.

**III. Case Study in which you detail an interaction you have with someone outside of this class.** [EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.7; 2.1.9] The case study should use applications of the concepts and theories from the text. Give examples of how the interaction demonstrates the concepts and theories. Use the following outline for organizing your paper and use this to develop subtitles for each section of the paper. The length should be between 15 and 20 pages.

Please use the following outline:

(1) Using the interaction stages presented in the text, describe the development of the relationship.

a. State specific interaction sequences exemplify the processes of each stage you went through.

(2) After your first meeting, what were your impressions of the other person?

a. What characteristics about the setting, individual, and conversations helped you form these impressions?

b. How did these impressions influence the next few meetings?

c. How did these impressions change through the semester? Why?

(3) What specific interaction sequences provided evidence that you and the other person developed a larger and more diverse repertoire of communication behaviors as the relationship progressed?

a. Provide examples for at least 4 communicative dimensions that changed.

b. Under what circumstances did you and the other person not manifest higher levels on some dimensions? Why?

(4) What communication norms developed in your relationship? Use at least 2 theories as a framework for explaining how and why these norms developed (e.g. social exchange theory, dialectic theory, social comparison theory, Schultz’s theory of interpersonal needs).

(5) Describe 3 situations that were most difficult for you and the other person to deal with.

a. What specific communication strategies did you and the other person use in trying to solve these problems?

b. Which of the strategies were successful? Why?

c. Which of the strategies were unsuccessful? Why?

(6) What needs are being met in the relationship that make it worthwhile?

(7) In what ways is the dialogue intimate? Did self-disclosure move in a systematic way?

(8) Was there conflict in the relationship? What specific communication patterns lead to conflict or could lead to conflict? How can you deal with conflict effectively?

**IV. Write your plan for developing further knowledge development about friendships and romances.** [EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.7; 2.1.9] Minimum of 1 page, and no more than three.

***All Assignments must be submitted through SafeAssign within Blackboard. Students are to respond completely, not cursorily to these assignments. Clarity, organization, and substance of response will be assessed. \*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*: All assignments are due by midnight for the dates given (please note that because of a Blackboard anomaly, the actual time is 11:58 PM). NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Papers submitted after the published due date will be given a grade of zero for that paper, extenuating circumstances excepted.***

***All papers are to be original work, which includes making sure you do not submit material you have previously submitted for another course; for the purposes of this class, this will be considered plagiarism. Group projects are not allowed.***

***NOTE: All papers are to be double-spaced, with 1” (one inch) margins on all sides, and in font sizes no larger than 12-point. Deviation from this requirement will result in a reduced grade.***

**F. Grading Policy:**

All papers must be grammatically correct using APA style. Papers with many grammatical errors and misspellings will not receive a satisfactory grade.

**Final Grade Calculation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ethics Paper | 50 |  | A= | 193-215 Points |
| Comparison Paper | 50 |  | B= | 172 – 192 Points |
| Case Study | 105 |  | C= | 150 – 171 Points |
| Life Long Learning | 10 |  | D= | 129 – 170 Points |
| **Total Points** | **215** |  | F= | 128 or Less |

Grading Rubric for Ethics Paper, Comparison Study and Case Study

(Note points different for last category in Case Study)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preliminary Assessment** | | Matches assignment:  Yes\_\_ No\_\_ | | First page is comprehensible:  Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ | | |
| **Rest of Assessment:** | | | **Rarely or not evident** | | **Moderately** | **Extensively** |
| **Clear:** | Content is expressed with clarity and coherence | | 0  *Case Study*  *0* | | 5  *Case Study*  *7* | 10  *Case study*  *15* |
| **Application** | Elaborated, detailed, substantive applications from required text | | 0  *Case Study*  *0* | | 10  *Case Study*  *15* | 20  *Case Study*  *30* |
| **Depth** | Answers to questions, or applications are intricate; reflect depth versus superficiality; reflect comprehensiveness or pervasive detail. | | 0  *Case Study*  *0* | | 10  *Case Study*  *30* | 20  *Case Study*  *60* |

Rubric for Lifelong Learning Paper/Assignment

Must be clearly written and contain a plan for lifelong learning.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| High Substance | Moderate Substance | Low Substance | No Substance |
| 10 | 7 | 4 | 0 |

***NO INCOMPLETE GRADES WILL BE GIVEN IN THIS CLASS.***

**G. Make-Up Exam or Assignment Policy**:

***As noted above, late papers will NOT be accepted, except in extreme circumstances and these will be judged by the instructor on a case-by-case basis. Late papers will be given an automatic grade of zero (0) for that assignment.***

**H. Attendance Policy:**

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, 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. For this course, here is the attendance policy:

I expect you to attend all classes and participate in discussions. Missing any classes creates a significant gap in the overall course. In addition to decreasing grades when more than three class sessions are missed, I will not provide make-up material for missed classes.

Disruptions in the class learning environment and of other class participants will not be tolerated and will result in the disrupting student being required to leave the classroom and not return. No further scores will be entered on that student’s record, which will result in a failing grade for that student. Please be aware of and adhere to the following: Students are expected to be on time, attend all classes, and stay until the completion of the class session.

Students are to complete all reading assignments *prior* to the class in which that material is being covered, and be prepared to participate in class discussions (a significant part of this class). All written assignments are due at the time and date specified elsewhere in this syllabus. Assignments turned in after the due date will not be accepted. Assignments are to be complete at the time of submission. No papers or assignments may be resubmitted once a grade is given. All graduate students in the UTA School of Social Work are expected to know and ascribe to the NASW Code of Ethics upon admission to the School, and are responsible for adhering to standards of professional conduct with colleagues and faculty, as well as others in the SSW graduate program.

All electronic devices, such as laptop computers, cell phones, and music players are to be turned off as a courtesy to the instructor and fellow students. The one exception is the use of laptop computers and hand-held recorders for the purpose of taking notes. To preserve academic integrity, ***USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMAILING, NET-SURFING, GAME-PLAYING, OR ANY OTHER USE DURING CLASS TIME IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.***

**I. Course Schedule:**

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. Should technical problems arise with course delivery, alternate but equivalent assignments may be given so long as the overall learning objectives, general time frame and grading structure for the course are sustained.

**Date Topic Readings**

January 21 Introductions None

-The instructor

-Students

-The course

[EPAS 2.1.1]

January 28 The components of a healthy relationship TBA

Intimacy

-Defined

-Levels of intimacy

-Why we fear intimacy

[EPAS 2.1.7]

February 04 Communication in developing relationships Knapp & Vangelisti, -Assumptions/misconceptions ch.1

-Dimensions

-Perceptions

[EPAS 2.1.3; 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

February 11 **[Ethics Paper Due –EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2]**

Coming together and coming apart Knapp & Vangelisti,

-Types of relationships ch.2

-interactions in relationships

-Movement in relationships

[EPAS 2.1.3; 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

February 18 Factors affecting communication Knapp & Vangelisti, -Interpersonal needs ch.3

-Stages of development

-Gender

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

February 25 Effects of environment on communication Knapp & Vangelisti. -Messages ch.4

-Attitudes

-Culture

-Relationship/attachment styles

-Perception

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

March 04 Coming together in relationships Knapp & Vangelisti, -Impulses ch.5

-Conditions affecting coming together

-Attraction

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

***[March 11 – SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES]***

March 18 Interaction rituals Knapp & Vangelisti, -Rules ch.6

-Rhetoric

-Addressing/opening

-Small talk

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

March 25 Intimate dialogue Knapp & Vangelisti, -Types of love ch.7

-Intimacy revisited

-Self-fulfillment *vs.* self-giving

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

April 01 **[Comparison Paper Due - EPAS 2.1.2; 2.1.4; 2.1.7; 2.1.9]**

Relationship maintenance Knapp & Vangelisti,

-Self-disclosure and trust ch.8

-Lying

-Conflict

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

April 08 Commitment Knapp & Vangelisti,

-Personal idioms ch.9

-Persuasion

-Intimacy again

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

April 15 Coming apart Knapp & Vangelisti,

-Terminating relationships ch.10

-Distancing

-disassociation

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

April 22 Destructive patterns of communication Knapp & Vangelisti,

-Helpful-critical ch.11

-Active-passive

-Aggressive-evasive

-Dominating-submissive

-Certain-provisional

[EPAS 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7]

April 29 **[Case Study Paper Due – EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.7; 2.1.9]**

Effective communication Knapp & Vangelisti,

-Evaluating ch.12

-Becoming

Application/Wrap-up

[EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.3; 2.1.4; 2.1.6; 2.1.7

May 06 [**Life Long Learning Paper EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.7; 2.1.9]**

Application to professional relationships No readings

[EPAS 2.1.1; 2.1.2; 2.1.3; 2.1.4; 2.1.5]

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

**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 four 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 Grievance Policy**:

See BSW/MSW Program Manual.

**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 or contact Ms. Jennifer Malone, Coordinator of the Office of Student Success and Academic Advising located on the third floor of Building A of the School of Social Work Complex. Dr. Chris Kilgore serves as a writing coach and resource as well and has posted an online writing clinic. Also, the Maverick Resource Hotline may be contacted at 817-272-6107, or send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**M. Librarian to Contact:**

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is in the SWCA, #301C from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Mondays and Tuesdays, and the campus Central Library, room 410, Monday to Friday from10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. He may also be contacted via E-mail: [dillard@uta.edu](mailto:dillard@uta.edu)**. B**elow 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-test.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php>

Database List <http://www-test.uta.edu/library/databases/index.php>

Course Reserves <http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do>

Library Catalog <http://discover.uta.edu/>

E-Journals <http://utalink.uta.edu:9003/UTAlink/az>

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. Emergency Exit Procedures:**

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exits, which are the stairwells located at either end of the adjacent hallway. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**O. 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; for this semester, the last day to drop classes is April 03. 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://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**P. Americans with Disabilities Act:**

The University of Texas at 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)*. 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 that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. 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) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Q. Title IX:**

The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law “Title IX” such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**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 as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) 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.

**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. Student Feedback Survey:**

At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be 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 enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**U. Final Review Week**:

This ONLY applies to courses administering a major or final examination scheduled in the week and locations designated for final examinations following last classes. 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.

**V. School of Social Work - Definition of Evidence-Informed Practice:**

Evidence-informed practice (EIP) is a guiding principal for the UTA-SSW. This approach is guided by the philosophy espoused by Gambrill (2006) and others who discuss evidence-based practice (EBP). Though many definitions of EIP/EBP saturate the literature, we offer two definitions that most closely define our understanding of the concept and serve to explicate our vision of EIP for the UTA-SSW:

The use of the best available scientific knowledge derived from randomized, controlled outcome studies, and meta-analyses of existing outcome studies, as one basis for guiding professional interventions and effective therapies, combined with professional ethical standards, clinical judgment, and practice wisdom (Barker, 2003, p. 149). ...the integration of the best research evidence with our clinical expertise and our patient’s unique values and circumstances (Strauss, et al., 2005).

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work vision statement states that the “School’s vision is to promote social and economic justice in a diverse Environment.”  Empowerment connects with the vision statement because, as Rees (1991) has pointed out, the very objective of empowerment is social justice.  Empowerment is a seminal vehicle by which social justice can be realized.  It could well be argued that true social justice cannot be realized without empowerment. Empowerment, anchored with a generalist base, directs social workers to address root causes at all levels and in all contexts, not simply “symptoms”.  This is not a static process but an ongoing, dynamic process, a process leading to a greater degree of social justice and equality.

University of Texas at Arlington-School of Social Work: Definition of Empowerment

Empowerment is defined by Barker (2003:142) as follows: In social work practice, the process of helping individuals, families, groups, and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and political strength and develop influence toward improving their circumstances.

*Note: Please also consider conserving paper by formatting and two-sided printing of syllabi with ½ inch margins. Please help our fragile environment by recycling all paper when finished, as well as plastic bottles, cans, etc., in the many recycling stations available in the Social Work Complex. Thank you.*