

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CENTRAL TEXAS SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

SOWK 3302 110: Social Welfare in America

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:00 to 7:30 PM, Room 304 Warrior Hall

Semester: Summer 2018

Instructor's Name: Claudia Rappaport, PhD, ACSW, MSSW

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E-Mail: rappaport@tamuct.edu. **NOTE: ONLY USE THIS ADDRESS TO EMAIL ME; DO NOT TRY TO EMAIL ME THROUGH THE CANVAS SYSTEM! Emails are responded to as soon as possible, usually the same day (or the next day if sent very late at night). I do respond to emails at night if I am still up grading papers.**

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 12:00 to 1:00 PM

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 to 4:30 PM

I. Course Description

Catalog Description: Provides a general introduction to social welfare services in the United States and how they have developed historically. Emphasis is on services and programs directed at the most vulnerable populations in our society. Race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status are considered in an effort to understand the need for and eligibility for various social welfare programs and services.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this class.

II. Nature of Course

This course will provide students an opportunity to explore issues related to the history of the social welfare system, including looking into the social, racial, political, and economic forces that have impacted and that continue to impact the development of services and service delivery in the United States. The course focus includes an investigation into and an analysis of values and ethics, and it guides students in the ability to identify the financial, socio-political, cultural, and human diversity factors in providing social welfare services in the U.S. Social work roles historically and currently are also explored.

This course supports students' learning the model of Generalist Social Work Practice: Work with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations in a variety of social work and host settings. Generalist practitioners view clients and client systems from a strengths perspective in order to recognize, support, and build upon the innate capabilities of all human beings. They use a professional problem-solving process to engage, assess, broker services, advocate, counsel, educate, and organize with and on behalf of clients and client systems. In addition, generalist practitioners engage in community and organizational development. Finally, generalist practitioners evaluate service outcomes in order to continually improve the provision and quality of services most appropriate to client needs. Generalist social work practice is guided by the NASW Code of Ethics and is committed to improving the well-being of individuals, families, groups, communities and

organizations and furthering the goals of social justice. (From the website of the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors, Inc.)

Teaching Method: The primary teaching approaches in this course will be collaborative and active learning. Material in the course will be presented through interactive class discussions on readings, analysis of case scenarios, and videotapes.

Grading: As much as possible, Dr. Rappaport tries to return graded assignments the class after they were due. For longer assignments it may be the second class after they were due. Twice during the semester Dr. Rappaport will complete grade sheets to show each student where their course grade stands at that time.

Note: Handouts for the course will be available via the Canvas Online Learning System. Please ensure that you have access to it. For concerns, please contact the Help Desk Central, 24 hours a day, by emailing helpdesk@tam.u.edu, 254-519-5466. See tamuct.instructure.com. For help you can also call the Canvas support line at 1-844-757-0953.

III. Department Mission

The mission of the Texas A&M University-Central Texas Bachelor of Social Work Department (TAMUCT BSW Department) is to prepare high quality graduates for entry-level generalist social work practice and for advanced education. This education is delivered in a rigorous and student-centered learning environment that promotes professional behavior, values, and ethics, human and community well-being, respect for human diversity, and a global perspective, and is guided by a person-in-environment framework, knowledge based on scientific inquiry, and social work competencies.

The TAMUCT Social Work Department has full accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), effective February 2017.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND RELATED PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

This course provides content that helps to prepare you, the student, to engage in the following CSWE competencies and related practice behaviors:

- Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior
- Competency 2: Engage diversity and difference in practice
- Competency 3: Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
- Competency 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice
- Competency 5: Engage in policy practice
- Competency 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities
- Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities

Each core competency has specific, measurable practice behaviors that help students and their professor determine whether the competency has been achieved. There are 41 total practice behaviors. The complete list of practice behaviors can be found in the TAMUCT Social Work Department Student Handbook.

This course provides content that helps to prepare you, the generalists social work student, to engage in the following CSWE competencies and related practice behaviors:

- (1) Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and to maintain professionalism in practice situations. (1.2)
- (2) Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. (2.1)
- (3) Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels. (3.1)
- (4) Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery. (4.3)
- (5) Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services. (5.1)
- (6) Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services. (5.2)

The objectives for this course that support the CSWE-related practice behaviors are:

- (1) Students will be able to recognize historical factors and influences impacting the development of the social welfare system in the United States, as evidenced by effectively identifying and describing them in course assignments.
- (2) Students will be able to describe the importance of values and ethics in social welfare service development and delivery, as evidenced by effective articulation through course assignments.
- (3) Students will be able to identify key social welfare services and programs most often used in social service settings, as evidenced by effectively identifying and describing them in course assignments.

The following table shows the relationship between A) the course objectives, B) the CSWE-related practice behaviors, and C) the assignments used to assess students' ability to fulfill the objective related to the practice behavior:

A. Objectives <i>(By the completion of the course, it is expected that you will be able to...)</i>	B. CSWE- Related Practice Behaviors <i>(This is the practice behavior that objective supports)</i>	C. Course Assignments <i>(The assignment is used to assess your ability to fulfill the objective related to the practice behavior)</i>
Students will be able to recognize historical factors and influences impacting the development of the social welfare system in the United States, as evidenced by effectively identifying and describing them in course assignments.	2.1 3.1	Class discussions Quizzes/exams <i>Evicted</i> scenarios
Students will be able to describe the importance of values and ethics in social welfare service development and delivery, as evidenced by effective articulation through course assignments.	1.2 2.1 3.1	Class discussions Quizzes/exams <i>Evicted</i> scenarios
Students will be able to identify key social welfare services and programs most often used in social service settings, as evidenced by effectively identifying and describing them in course assignments.	3.1 4.3 5.1 5.2	Class discussions Quizzes/exams <i>Evicted</i> scenarios Poverty paper

V. Course Requirements

A. **Required Texts:** Popple, P. R., and Leighninger, L. (2011). *Social work, social welfare, and American society* (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted*. New York: Broadway Books.

There will also be readings assigned in handouts based on the following sources:

Rappaport, C. D. (1975). *Attitudes toward poverty and welfare in Texas*. MSSW thesis, University of Texas at Austin.

Rappaport, C. D. (1996). *To make treatment effective: The development of medical social work at Massachusetts General Hospital, 1905-1945*. PhD dissertation, the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston.

Richmond, Mary E. (1917). *Social diagnosis*. New York: Free Press.

B. Final Grades

A total of 10,000 points can be earned from the course assignments, as follows:

Course Assignment	Percentage of final grade	Total possible points
Concept Mastery Quizzes	20%	2,000
<i>Evicted</i> assignment #1	10%	1,000
<i>Evicted</i> assignment #2	10%	1,000
<i>Evicted</i> assignment #3	10%	1,000
Poverty paper	20%	2,000
Mid-term Exam	10%	1,000
Final Exam	10%	1,000
Attendance	5%	500
Class Participation	5%	500
Totals	100%	10,000 (Total points ÷ 100 = final grade)

Final Class Grades are based on the following:

A: 90 to 100 (9,000 to 10,000 points)

C: 79 to 70 (7,900 to 7,000 points)

F: 59 or less (5,900 points or less)

B: 89 to 80 (8,900 to 8,000 points)

D: 69 to 60 (6,900 to 6,000 points)

Example: A test worth 15% of the grade, on which a student earned a B+, would give 1,320 points toward the final grade ($88 \times 15 = 1,320$).

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C. Course Assignments

The following activities will be completed during the semester.

1. *Concept Mastery Quizzes (20% of final grade)*

Many of the class periods will include a quiz to help students solidify their understanding of the concepts presented in the course material and learn how to apply them. The quiz will typically be given at the end of class as a take-home quiz, and it is due at the beginning of the next regularly scheduled class period. **A student who misses class will be allowed to submit a make-up quiz; however, it is the student's responsibility to pick up the quiz from Dr. Rappaport and turn it in by the class period in which it is due (typically the next scheduled class period). If the student does not do this, then a make-up quiz will not be accepted. DO NOT ASK FOR A COPY OF THE QUIZ AFTER STUDENTS HAVE ALREADY TURNED IT IN!**

At the end of the course, the student's average numerical grade on all quizzes (including any zeros) will represent 20% of their final grade. Each student will have one quiz grade (the lowest one) dropped by the professor; if you only missed a single class during the semester, that zero will not impact your average quiz grade.

Note: Take-home quizzes must be completed by each student ALONE. There is to be NO sharing of quiz answers with other students; this constitutes cheating. If a student shares their quiz answers with another student, BOTH students will receive a grade of 0 (zero) on that quiz.

2. *Evicted assignments (10% each, total of 30% of final grade)*

After each section of the book *Evicted* has been discussed in class, students will be given a question or questions that will require them to apply some of the material contained in the book to questions about social work practice with people like those whose stories are being presented. These assignments will be given as take-home exercises and are due at the beginning of the next regularly scheduled class period. The purpose of these assignments is to help students consider social work applications and implications of the material in the book. The grade will be based on how comprehensive the student's answer is, so responses should be as thorough and thoughtful as possible. **Students are not allowed to use ANY outside sources or the internet while writing their answers. The ONLY sources that can be referred to are the course's assigned readings, and students are NOT to simply copy those readings in their answer. Your focus should be on APPLYING what you read while responding to the question(s). If it is apparent to the professor that outside sources were used, the student's grade on the assignment will be a zero. Even though only course materials are being used as references, you still need to use appropriate citations in the assignments. THE ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED AND DOUBLE-SPACED OR THEY WILL NOT BE GRADED. HAND-WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED.** Each of the separate assignments will constitute 10% of the student's final grade in the course.

3. *Poverty Paper (20% of final grade)*

Each student will write a paper in which you must put yourself in the situation of a parent who is living on several kinds of social welfare assistance. You have a family of four (you are the single adult in the home, and you have three children). At least one of your children must be over the age of 6 (and in school), and none of the children can be over the age of 15. Your cash budget is \$343 per month in TANF benefits, and you also receive \$649 per month in food stamps (SNAP benefits). The following factors need to be included in your paper:

- Remember that SNAP can ONLY be used for food and beverages; none of it can be used to pay for other household items, such as toilet paper, toothpaste, laundry powder, etc.

- You may choose to own a car, but you are not allowed to have assets that are worth more than \$2,000, so it would have to be an old car, and you will have to include in your budget gasoline and maintenance/repairs on the car. If you do not own a car, you need to develop a plan for transportation and budget those costs into your plan.
- You will need to plan what food your family will need for the month, and then go to the grocery store and explain in detail what food you will buy for the month, showing that you did not go beyond the \$649 in SNAP benefits. If you plan to buy food on sale each week, you could attach some cut-outs from newspaper grocery store sale advertisements to show how much you are saving on those food items. Think seriously about using generic food items instead of name brand items, and indicate that you did that on various items.
- If you decide to have a child who is younger than 5, you can contact the WIC office and find out what food you would be able to get from them each month, and then show that as part of your monthly food plan and budget.
- If you want to, you can also contact a local food pantry and see if your fictional family would be eligible to get any food from them despite the fact that you receive SNAP. If so, you can add that food to your monthly food plan and show that you did this.
- Your \$343 per month in cash benefits will have to cover your living expenses besides food (unless you are unable to get enough food for the month with SNAP and need to use some of your cash income for food). This cash budget needs to show housing, utilities, household items (toothpaste, toilet paper, laundry soap and laundromat expenses, soap and shampoo, school expenses – including school lunches, or note whether your children could qualify for free lunches, any recreation you plan to try to include in the budget, personal hygiene items such as sanitary napkins or contraceptives such as condoms, etc.).
- You will need to explain in detail what your housing is and that you are able to pay for that housing with this cash assistance. You can decide to live in shared housing if you want to, but you need to explain who you are sharing with (such as your parents) and how much you are paying them for your share of the rent and utilities. If you want to be on the waiting list for Section 8 housing, check to find out how long the waiting list would be and how much your rent will be when you qualify to move into that housing.
- The actual budgets (for both the cash expenses and the food expenses) need to be shown in tables, and they need to be realistic. Again, the tables need to show how much you will spend on EVERYTHING for the month, and you have to live within your monthly allotment from TANF and from SNAP.
- Remember, too, that TANF benefits are time-limited, so you will also have expenses related to attending job training classes and meeting with your TANF caseworker to discuss your plan for getting off of public assistance. If you have pre-school children, you will have to discuss your plan for day care or babysitting for your children since they cannot go to the classes with you.
- You will have Medicaid coverage for most of your medical expenses, so you would only have to include in your budget any over-the-counter medications you might need for yourself or for your children. That would need to come out of your cash budget.
- Also include in your paper a description of things you would NOT be able to include in your lifestyle that you currently have (such as cable TV, regular use of a gym, regular recreation, pets, etc.) if you are not able to fit these things into your cash budget.

The purpose of this exercise is to show students how people try to live from month to month on public assistance. You are encouraged to be creative and thorough in developing a plan for how you and your three children can live a meaningful lifestyle despite these significant financial limitations. Papers will be graded according to how well the student addresses all of these questions about their monthly expenditures and their lifestyle. You will be evaluated on content, clarity, organization, completeness of the budgets, and the degree of critical thinking you applied to describing how you and your children will live. Thoroughness and creativity are

encouraged. Papers must be typed and double-spaced (if they are not, the paper will not be graded, and you will receive a zero for the assignment), and you must use APA format correctly.

Note: On all four of the written paper assignments (the three *Evicted* assignments and the poverty paper), 75% of the grade will be based on content, and 25% of the grade will be based on punctuation, spelling, grammar, APA format, organization, etc., as follows:

0-3 errors = A+	4-6 errors = A
7-9 errors = A-	10-12 errors = B+
13-15 errors = B	16-18 errors = B-
19-21 errors = C+	22-24 errors = C
25-27 errors = C-	28-30 errors = D+
31-33 errors = D	34-36 errors = D-
37 errors or more = F	

4. Mid-Term and Final Exams: 20% of final grade total (10% each)

There will be two take-home examinations given in this course, a mid-term and a final. See the Course Schedule in this syllabus for exam dates. Examinations will not be the type of exams students might be used to (such as multiple choice, true-false, matching, and short essay questions). That type of examination merely expects students to repeat back facts and definitions, and the concept mastery quizzes will be verifying your ability to answer those kinds of questions. Instead, the exams might ask one or two large questions that expect students to demonstrate their ability to integrate the learning they have done in the class (from reading, class discussions, watching videos in class, etc.) and to show how they can APPLY that knowledge in performing social work functions. **SINCE THESE ARE TAKE-HOME EXAMS, THEY MUST BE TYPED AND DOUBLE-SPACED. HAND-WRITTEN EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

5. Class Attendance (5% of final grade)

Students are expected to be present for every scheduled class session. If you are unable to avoid missing a class, you must **email** the professor **within one week of the class period** to explain the absence if you want it to be considered an excused absence. Every unexcused (or unexplained) absence will affect this portion of your grade. For example, an illness, doctor appointment, or funeral of a family member is an excused absence; the professor also allows one day's absence if a deployed significant other returns home. You need to email about **every** absence from class; for example, if you were sick both days of the week, one email for the first day will not suffice as the professor will not assume that you were still sick on the second day. The professor will review other types of absences to determine how unavoidable they were; not being able to leave work is NOT an excused absence. If your work schedule or your health will not permit you to attend this class on a predictable basis, you should not try to take the class. **NOTE: if you do not email the professor within one week of the absence to get it excused, this will NOT be changed later to an excused absence.**

Students must be present when class begins and are expected to remain until class is dismissed; students are not allowed to arrive late or leave early. In addition, to be counted as present, you must demonstrate attentiveness and engagement in all the class activities. Any student found sleeping or doing work for another class will have their attendance for that day changed to "absent".

The following shows the degree to which unexcused absences will impact your attendance grade. Since this is a summer class, the deduction for each unexcused absence is greater than it is during a fall or spring semester.

<i>Number of Unexcused Absences</i>	<i>Attendance Grade</i>
1	B
2	C
3	D
4 or more	F
Note: Being late to class twice counts as one absence	

6. Class Participation (5% of grade)

Dr. Rappaport has an interactive teaching style and expects every student to be an active participant in class. An old Chinese proverb says, “Tell me and I will forget–Show me and I may remember–But involve me and I will understand.” You will learn more from this class if you talk and participate. Ask questions, remembering that there is no such thing as a stupid question. Share your reactions to what is being discussed. Reflect on implications of what we are studying. If you are a student who has never before chosen to talk in classes, this will be a good opportunity for you to start developing a new life skill that will serve you well in the profession of social work. (Students are encouraged not to divulge any personal information they will not be comfortable having their fellow students know about them.) Being an active participant increases understanding of the material for your fellow students as well.

Your class participation grade will be determined by whether you talked during class discussions **and by whether your contributions added to the quality of the class sessions**. Dr. Rappaport also reserves the right to call on students in class if they are not participating regularly in the discussions. Each day a student will earn between 0 and 3 participation points; the points will be totaled at the end of the semester, and grades will be determined based on the student’s total number of points compared to the points of all the other students in the class.

VI. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CLASSROOMS

The following policies apply to all students enrolled in this course:

1. Students are requested not to enter class more than ten (10) minutes late due to the degree to which this disrupts class for the other students. If you do come to class late twice, it counts the same as an unexcused absence on your attendance grade for the class.
2. Once class has begun, students are expected to remain for the duration of the class. It is expected that all students will take care of personal affairs (i.e., get beverages, take care of phone calls, meet with students and other professors, use the restroom, etc.) before class begins. ***Please note:*** *During the summer when classes are 2 hours and 30 minutes in length, the instructor will have a minimal 10 minute break built into each scheduled learning period to support student needs.*
3. Students are expected to display professional decorum at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting classmates and the instructor. In this regard, it is expected that students will not speak to/hold conversations with/pass notes to other students, use cell phones, or engage in other types of unprofessional behaviors after class has begun. Talking during class discussions out of turn or while other students are talking is disruptive to the learning environment, disrespectful to peers, and unprofessional in demeanor. Students are strongly encouraged to engage in discussion in a respectful and appropriate manner; hence, it is expected that students

apply classroom etiquette and raise a hand if there is something you want to share or you want to answer a question.

4. To support the learning environment, students are asked to refrain from sharing personal information in class that will not support/add significantly to the class discussion. Sharing of personal stories and/or issues that are not directly related to the topic can distract class learning and limit knowledge-sharing by the professor and other students. The professor reserves the right to redirect/limit such conversations in class as needed.
5. Students are NOT permitted to work collaboratively (together) on *any* assignment in this class. All work turned in must be the student's own product. This includes take-home quizzes, papers, etc. Failure to adhere to this policy can result in a zero (0) on the assignment and referral to Student Affairs for academic integrity concerns.
6. **All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the day they are due.** Late work ***will not*** be accepted or graded unless this has been discussed with and approved by the professor **BEFORE** the due date of the assignment. *Being absent from class on a day when an assignment is due does NOT grant a student an extension to the due date*; the student must still arrange to get that assignment turned in to the professor before class starts. Allowing students to turn in assignments late for a grade is not fair to other students who get their work done on time, disrupts the grading process for the professor, and sends a message that such behavior is professionally "okay," which it is not. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a zero (0) for the assignment. This is inclusive of all assignments.
7. All papers submitted for grading **MUST** adhere to APA 6th edition standards unless otherwise stated by the professor. This means that all papers must, *minimally*, be: 1) typed, 2) double spaced, 3) use Times New Roman font, 4) use 12 point font, 5) include an APA style cover page, and 6) include in-text citations **AND** a reference page for **ANY SOURCED INFORMATION** (this includes information learned in current or previous classes, read online, learned during a personal communication, reviewed over email, read in a textbook, etc.). Further, all typed papers submitted in class **MUST** be stapled. Submitting papers in folders, binders, etc., is not allowed.
8. Class discussions, oral presentations, and written materials must adhere to professional standards of expression and conform to the style described by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2009). This includes avoidance of the use of language that degrades women; people of color; people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender; and other diverse and at-risk populations. All students are expected to display the utmost respect for all people, regardless of differences.

Final Note Regarding Class Policies

The aforementioned policies are designed to create and foster a positive and rewarding learning environment for all students. Failure to adhere to the aforementioned class policies, as well as university policies, demonstrates a potential inability to conduct oneself professionally in social

work. These policies are applicable throughout the department and, as such, students who consistently fail to comply with these policies will be considered inappropriate candidates for field placement and/or for the degree of Bachelor of Social Work at TAMUCT, as their behavior is considered inappropriate for a social work practitioner.

An assessment of student behavior as it relates to class policies, and overall decorum required throughout the TAMUCT Social Work Department and the university, is provided via the “Rubric for Assessing Professional Behaviors” that is given to students at the New Social Work Student Orientation. All social work majors receive a RAPB when they apply to the social work major and again when they apply for a field placement. Failure to obtain scores of 3 or 4 in any of the 15 professional behavior areas listed in the rubric will limit a student’s ability to be admitted to the social work major, or assigned to a field placement and/or can result in removal from a field placement. These behaviors, which align with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) core values and ethics, the TAMUCT Code of Conduct, and the Social Work Department class policies, are considered the expected professional behaviors of social work interns and future generalist social workers and, therefore, are held to the strictest code.

VII. University Policies

- 1. 911 Cellular:** 911 Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives TAMUCT the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in it through their myCT email account. Connect at 911 Cellular, portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911 Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.
- 2. Drop Policy:** If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a Drop Request Form, found through the Registrar’s web page: tamuct.edu/departments/business-office/droppolicy.php. Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar’s Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar by which the form must be completed, signed, and returned. After you return the signed form to the Registrar’s Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled in the class. If you still show as enrolled, follow up with the Registrar’s Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalties for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course if you stopped attending and doing the assignments.
- 3. Academic Integrity:** Texas A&M University - Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. TAMUCT expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from the expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student’s academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student’s work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university’s Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university’s standards and

expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

- 4. Academic Accommodations:** At Texas A&M – Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact the Department at 254-501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. For more information, please visit the Access and Inclusion website at tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion.

TAMUCT supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and guidance from U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. For more information, please visit tamuct.departments/index.php. Students can also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these requirements and guidelines, please visit www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf

- 5. Library Services:** The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 20 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 ebooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders. Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance and can take place on Skype or in person at the library. Assistance can cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments. Our facility on the main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our homepage: tamuct.libguides.com/
- 6. Tutoring Services:** Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include: Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center at Warrior Hall, Suite 111. If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-510-5796 or by emailing Kim Wood at k.wood@tamuct.edu. Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.
- 7. The University Writing Center:** Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center (UWC) at TAMUCT is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10 am to 4 pm Monday thru Thursday during the summer semester. Students can arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and

hour sessions are available). Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WiFi, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides (i.e., APA). Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help. If you have any questions about the UWC, contact Dr. Bruce Bowles, Jr., at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

8. **Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. TAMUCT offers support for anyone struggling with this issue. University faculty members are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of domestic or dating violence or stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955), located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L). It is incumbent on all of us to find ways to create environments that tell predators that we do not agree with their behaviors and to tell survivors that we will support them. Your actions matter; do not be a bystander. Be an agent of change. For additional information visit the title IX webpage at tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php.
9. **Textbook Purchasing:** A student of this institution is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.
10. **Copyright notice:** Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and against TAMUCT's Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

VIII. The professor teaching this class

Dr. Rappaport had 25 years of social work practice experience before she came to TAMUCT (which was Tarleton – Central Texas at that time) in 2000 to teach full-time. Throughout that practice experience, the vast majority of her clients were low to very low income, many of them living in public housing and surviving on such public assistance services as TANF, SNAP, WIC, SSI, Social Security, etc. At the same time, some of the clients were also middle to upper class. This social work career focused on medical social work (working with infants, children, and adolescents who had congenital defects, physical and mental disabilities, chronic illnesses, or life-shortening medical conditions). Throughout those years of practice as a social worker, Dr. Rappaport saw direct evidence of how important it is for all social workers to have a strong understanding of all aspects of the social welfare delivery system, including governmental, private, public, and church or other charitable organizations. She made constant referrals of clients to all of those types of programs to try to help them get their needs met and to support maximum possible functioning and maintaining a good quality of life.

Dr. Rappaport also has a personal fascination with the history of both social work and medical social work. She parlayed this interest into her PhD dissertation, for which she made six trips to Boston, Massachusetts, to study how social work moved into the first hospital in 1905 and how that Social Service Department developed over the next forty years. She is happy to have an opportunity to share some of the information from that dissertation in this class.

Dr. Rappaport takes teaching very seriously. She wants students to enjoy this class and to believe that they learned a great deal from it. She is committed to coming to class prepared, to sharing her professional knowledge and experiences with students, and to encouraging everyone to participate actively in the discussions. In return, she expects students to come to class prepared, having read the day's assignment ahead of time and being ready to ask any questions they might have about things they did not understand in the reading. She responds to emails as soon as possible, and she tries to get all written assignments graded and returned to students within the following one to two class periods. Twice during the semester she will also give a grade sheet to each student, showing them where their grade in the class stands as of that point.

IX. Course Schedule

Date	Activities	Reading/ Assignment Due
Tuesday 6/5/18	Review the Syllabus Video: "Our America" (1:35)	.
Thursday 6/7/18	Chapter 1 – Competing Perspectives on Social Welfare Political Perspectives – Conservatives, Liberals, and Radicals Attitudes toward change Views of human nature, individual behavior, the family, the social system, government, and the economic system Social work values Class exercise	Poppo and Leighninger (P&L), pp. 3-26
Tuesday 6/12/18	Chapter 2 – Social Welfare: Basic Concepts Stigma, social exclusion Definitions of social welfare Social welfare services Political perspectives on social welfare Guest Speaker: Department of Human Services	P&L, pp. 27-60 Handout: Attitudes toward Poverty and Welfare in Austin, Texas, in 1975
Thursday 6/14/18	Chapter 3 – Social Work as a Profession Professionalism History – charitable institutions, Charity Organization Societies, Social Settlements, Growth of a profession, Diversity and unification, The Depression Federal Social Welfare programs Social work values and ethics Social work methods and practice Practice settings Guest Speaker: Social Security	P&L, pp. 61-104 Handout: Mary Richmond, <i>Social Diagnosis</i>

<p>Tuesday 6/19/18</p>	<p>Chapter 4 – Generalist Social Work Practice</p> <p>Historical evolution of social work practice Generalist social work practice – development, definition, skills, relationship to specialized practice Case management – definition, history, skills, framework, advocacy Ethical dilemmas</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 106-130</p>
<p>Thursday 6/21/18</p>	<p>Presentation on the historical development of medical social work – Dr. Rappaport’s doctoral dissertation</p>	<p>Handout: Precursors to Professional Social Work: The Case Example of Boston, Massachusetts, Before 1905</p>
<p>Tuesday 6/26/18</p>	<p>Chapter 5 – Responses to Human Diversity</p> <p>Definitions, dynamics of intergroup relations History – immigrants, African Americans, women Current issues – multiculturalism, immigration, Affirmative Action, separatism vs. integration</p> <p>Class exercise in groups</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 131-176</p>
<p>Thursday 6/28/18</p>	<p>Chapter 6 – Religion and Social Work</p> <p>Religious roots of social welfare (early Egyptian, Jewish, Christian, Muslim) Religious roots of organized social work (Charity Organization Societies, Social Settlements, social work, secularization) Social work and religion as uneasy bedfellows</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 179-210</p>
<p>Tuesday 7/3/18</p>	<p>Chapter 7 – Poverty: The Central Concept</p> <p>Poverty, Rich country/Poor country (economic inequality, distribution of income and wealth) Poverty – The Dark Side of Inequality (poverty in the US, measuring and defining poverty)</p> <p>Guest speaker: Indigent Health Care</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 214-240</p>
<p>Thursday 7/5/18</p>	<p>Chapter 8 – Nature and Causes of Poverty</p> <p>Who are the poor? Statistics – race, age, region, nativity, family type, feminization of poverty 3 levels and types of poverty Why are the poor poor? (Individual, cultural, structural explanations)</p> <p>RECEIVE THE MID-TERM EXAM</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 243-278</p> <p>POVERTY PAPER IS DUE</p>

<p>Tuesday 7/10/18</p>	<p>Chapter 9 – Development of Antipoverty Programs</p> <p>English roots, colonial years, early years, reform The Reluctant Welfare State Prosperity, Reform, a New Era</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 281-315</p>
<p>Thursday 7/12/18</p>	<p>Chapter 10 – Child Welfare</p> <p>Definitions, statistics, dynamics, history Child welfare services Permanency planning Family preservation Class action lawsuits Investigation vs. services Appropriate discipline Causes of maltreatment Rights of children, parents, and the government Social work roles</p> <p>Guest speaker: Department of Family and Protective Services</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 318-362</p> <p>Mid-term Exam is due</p>
<p>Tuesday 7/17/18</p>	<p>Chapter 11 – Crime and Criminal Justice</p> <p>Definitions, statistics, and patterns of crime Dynamics (Control Theories, Cultural Theories, Social Victim Theories) History of criminal justice (prisons, sentences, parole, probation, delinquency and juvenile court, reform) Current issues Social work roles (treatment, victim assistance, mediation, police work)</p> <p>Guest speakers: Probation, Healthy Families in Harker Heights</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 368-408</p>
<p>Thursday 7/19/18</p>	<p>Chapter 12 – Health Care</p> <p>Definitions, statistics Dynamics of health and illness History (scientific medicine, medical social work, 1960's and 1970's, managed care, business of health care, government action) Social work roles</p> <p>Guest speaker: Texas Department of Health Services and Children with Special Health Care Needs Services Program</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 411-446</p>

<p>Tuesday 7/24/18</p>	<p>Chapter 13 – Mental Health and Developmental Disability</p> <p>Definitions of mental illness Dynamics of mental illness Statistics Developmental disability, definitions Dynamics of developmental disability Statistics History of mental illness and developmental disability Current issues and trends Social work roles</p> <p>Guest speaker: Mental Health-Mental Retardation</p> <p>Receive Final Exam</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 450-494</p>
<p>Thursday 7/26/18</p>	<p>Chapter 14 – Housing, Homelessness, and Community Development</p> <p>Definitions The US Housing Situation Statistics History of housing (through 1920s, modern housing, the New Deal, urban renewal, HUD, mortgage meltdown, Bush II and Obama) Current issues and trends</p> <p>Guest speaker: Public housing</p>	<p>P&L, pp. 497-541</p>
<p>Tuesday 7/31/18</p>	<p><i>Evicted</i>, Part One – Rent</p> <p>Receive <i>Evicted</i> Assignment #1</p>	<p>Desmond, pp. 1-110</p> <p>Final exam due</p>
<p>Thursday 8/2/18</p>	<p><i>Evicted</i>, Part Two – Out</p> <p>Receive <i>Evicted</i> Assignment #2</p>	<p>Desmond, pp. 111-206</p> <p><i>Evicted</i> Assignment #1 due</p>
<p>Tuesday 8/7/18</p>	<p><i>Evicted</i>, Part Three – After</p> <p>Receive <i>Evicted</i> Assignment #3</p>	<p>Desmond, pp. 207-336</p> <p><i>Evicted</i> Assignment #2 due</p>
<p>Thursday 8/9/18</p>	<p>Chapter 15 – Aging</p> <p>Definitions Statistics Dynamics (biological, social psychological, sociological) History of aging Current issues and trends (programs, long-term care, community services, ageism)</p> <p>Guest speakers: Department of Aged and Disabled Services, Lion’s Park Senior Center, Adult Protective Services</p>	<p>P&L pp. 544-576</p> <p><i>Evicted</i> Assignment #3 due</p>

APA CHECKLIST

The following checklist is designed to serve as a guide for you when writing papers in the Social Work Department. Use of this guide will support your success when using APA and help to prevent plagiarism. All instructors in the Social Work Department will use this checklist as a guide when grading your papers for APA policy adherence, so it is advisable that you become familiar with and apply these rules to all papers.

A. Entire document MUST HAVE

- Times New Roman Font
- 12 font size
- 1 inch margins on all four sides
- Double spacing after periods at the end of a sentence (except in the “Reference” page)
- Double spacing *between lines* in paragraphs (remove double spacing between paragraphs)
- Numbers 1-10 spelled out (e.g. “one”, “five”, “seven”)
- Numbers above 10 not written out (except at the beginning of a sentence)
- Introduction of acronyms (e.g. “Supplemental Security Income (SSI)”, “SSI” may be used alone thereafter)
- Paragraphs versus bullets (unless approved by professor)
- No use of “I” (unless approved by professor due to nature of the assignment)
- No contractions (won’t, can’t, don’t), lbs, %, \$ (percent signs may be used directly after numbers)
- Complete sentences
- Indented paragraphs (tab once from margin)
- Introduction, body and conclusion (unless otherwise noted by professor)
- Cover page, abstract page, reference page (unless otherwise advised by professor)

B. Cover Page

- Header flushed left and written as “Running head: SHORT TITLE” (note how “Running head:” is written)
- Page # (always starts with “1” at the top right)
- Title of work, your name, and the name of the university (in this order), centered and not in bold. This should also be double spaced and the title of the work should begin 9 single spaces after the header.
- Title should be no more than 12 words, first letters of words are capitalized except “and”, etc.
- The “SHORT TITLE” is always in capital letters and is a shortened version of your title. This can be no more than 50 characters

C. Abstract Page

- This is page 2 (upper right corner)
- In the Header section flushed left will show on this page “SHORT TITLE” only. No “Running head:” used on this or subsequent pages
- The word “Abstract” is centered, not bold at the top of the paper
- The Abstract is only 4-5 sentences (max 150-250 words)
- There is no indentation at the beginning of this paragraph
- Must be double spaced

D. START OF YOUR BODY

- Continue your “SHORT TITLE” and page number on every page

- Write the title at the very top. This should be the same one used on the cover page above your name
- The title is centered and not in bold
- All paragraphs must be indented
- Paragraphs have a minimum of 5 sentences
- Using Level Headings where appropriate (refer to your professor on when to use; see APA manual for all levels of headings: 1-5)

E. Reference Page

- Header section flushed left should show the “SHORT TITLE” and the page # on the right side.
- The word “Reference” (or “References” if more than one) is centered and not bold
- The references must be alphabetized (by last name of author of work as listed on the work. DO NOT reorganize the authors in alphabetical order from the source).
- If there is more than one citation with the same author and year, put them in alphabetical order by title and make them 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, etc., as needed.
- Double space references
- Remove space between references
- Only single spacing after punctuation
- Remember that personal communication in-text citations are not listed on the reference page
- Remove hyperlinks from websites (a line should not appear under websites in your reference page)
- If the reference is long and continues on the next line, then you must indent the second line (this is called a “hanging indent”)
- All references MUST have an in-text citation to match (except in personal communication; only in-text citations are used).
- If the reference has an edition, it goes in parentheses and is not italicized. For example, Turner, F. J. (2011). *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches* (5th ed). New York: Oxford University Press.

Following are explicit examples that can serve as guides for you when writing your papers.

- Boston University School of Social Work:
<http://www.bu.edu/ssw/files/2010/10/BUSSW-style-guide-6th-ed-April-13.pdf>
- Sample APA Paper Owl Purdue:
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20090212013008_560.pdf
- Son of Citation Machine Citing Support:
<http://citationmachine.net/index2.php?reqstyleid=2&newstyle=2&stylebox=2>

EXAMPLES OF APA ERRORS

- ❖ Missing comma after name and before year
 - Incorrect: (Dobson & Pewter 2013)
 - Correct: (Dobson & Pewter, 2013)
- ❖ Missing parenthesis
 - Incorrect: Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD Dobson & Pewter, 2013.
 - Correct: Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD (Dobson & Pewter, 2013).

- ❖ Using *and* instead of & in a citation
 - Incorrect (Dobson and Pewter, 2013)
 - Correct: (Dobson & Pewter, 2013)

- ❖ Using “pp.” instead of “p.” to denote page.
 - Incorrect: “Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD” (Dobson & Pewter, 2013, pp. 5).
 - Correct: “Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD” (Dobson & Pewter, 2013, p. 5).

- ❖ Missing punctuation at the end of sentences when citing.
 - Incorrect: Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD. (Dobson & Pewter, 2013)
 - Correct: Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD (Dobson & Pewter, 2013).

Correct Citation Example:

In-Text: (Dobson & Pewter, 2013)

Reference Page: Dobson, J.H. & Pewter, W.P. (2013). Understanding writing for bachelor social work students. *Journal of American Health, 4*, 24-29.

- ❖ Using quotation marks without page number/paragraph information.
 - Incorrect: “Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD” (Dobson & Pewter, 2013).
 - Correct: “Many children in America are diagnosed with ADHD” (Dobson & Pewter, 2013, p. 5).

- ❖ Example of how to cite a class handout: (Be sure to use the hanging indent on your paper)
 - Rappaport, C. (2018). *The muscular system*. [Class handout]. SOWK 3305: Biological Foundations of Social Work Practice. Social Work Department, Texas A&M University-Central Texas: Killeen, TX.

- ❖ Example of how to cite a movie: (Be sure to use the hanging indent on your paper)
 - Burg, M. & Koules, O. (Producers), Cassavetes, N. (Director), & Kearns, J. (Writer). (2002). *John Q.* [Motion picture]. USA: New Line Cinema, Burg/Koules Productions, & Evolution Entertainment.

 - To obtain information for a movie citation, look up the movie on the internet and select the IMDb listing. First look up (under Full Cast and Crew) all the producers (listed after all the cast), ignoring those listed as executive producer, co-producer (unless ALL the producers are listed as co-producers), assistant producer, line producer, etc. Then to back to the top before the cast members and add the director(s) and writer(s). Go to Company Credits to list the production companies (ignore the list of distributors, but be sure to list all of the production companies).

USES OF COMMAS AND OTHER COMMON PUNCTUATION/GRAMMAR ERRORS

The following are some common uses of commas:

Putting two sentences together, joined by *and*, *but*, or another linking word. Both parts have to have both a subject and a verb, or you don't need a comma.

- Example: Martha went to the Laundromat, and she discovered that she forgot her money at home.
- Does NOT need a comma: Martha went to the Laundromat and discovered that she forgot her money at home.
- **Note: Two sentences can also be joined together by a semicolon without a connecting word.**
- Example: Martha went to the Laundromat; she discovered that she forgot her money at home.
- Example: I thought this was going to be complicated, but I was surprised; they listened and paid attention.
- **Note: Two sentences can also be joined together by a semicolon and a connecting word such as *however*, followed by a comma.**
- Example: Martha went to the Laundromat; however, she discovered that she forgot her money at home and had to make a return trip.

Writing a list of objects, when no item of the list requires a comma within the item. If one item requires a comma, then the items have to be separated with semicolons instead of commas.

- Example: Martha went to the store and bought apples, plums, oranges, and nectarines to make a fruit salad.
- Need to use semicolons instead: Martha went to the store and bought golden, delicious apples; purple, juicy plums; plump, navel oranges; and nectarines to make a fruit salad.

Note: The above example with semicolons also illustrates another use of commas: When you are using more than one adjective to describe a noun (such as golden, delicious apples), the two adjectives need to be separated with a comma.

Separating the name of a city and the state in which it is located.

- Example: I was born in San Antonio, Texas, in the year 1950.

Separating a person's name and their relationship to another person, the name of a book and its author, etc.

- Example: Her father, Burton Rappaport, was born in New York City in 1921.
- Example: Burton Rappaport, the father of Claudia Rappaport, was born in New York City in 1921.
- Example: Harper Lee's novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is required reading in many schools.

Separating a prepositional phrase at the beginning of a sentence from the remainder of the sentence.

- Example: In case of a fire, you need to move quickly to the nearest exit.
 - **Note another grammar rule: Do not put the adverb in between *to* and *move* (i.e., do not say “you need to quickly move to the nearest exit”). Doing this is referred to as a split infinitive.** Just remember Shakespeare: It is “To be or not to be,” not “To be or to not be.”
- Example: From one social worker to another, you need to be on the lookout for signs of social work burnout.
- Example: During the depression of the 1930’s, food was scarce and unemployment rates were high.
 - Question: Why do you not need a comma after scarce?
- Example: If you are not ready to calm down, I want you to go to your bedroom and think about why your behavior has not been appropriate.
- Example: Because she got paid a lot less this week, she was not able to give the landlord her rent.
- **Note: If the prepositional phrase is in the middle of the sentence, it does not require commas.**
 - Example: The hot air in the classroom made it very difficult to study.
 - Example: She couldn’t give the landlord her rent because she got paid a lot less this week.

After using a single word to catch your attention at the beginning of a sentence; most commonly this will be done in conversation, not in formal writing.

- Example: “Well,” she said, “I guess I need to go ahead and start fixing dinner.”
 - **Note another rule of grammar: Punctuation marks (commas, periods, exclamation points, question marks) always go INSIDE the quotation marks.**
- Example: Gosh, it is really hot today.
- Example: Hello, my name is Dr. Rappaport.
- Example: No, you can’t have a cookie right now.
- Example: Yes, I heard what you said.
- Example: Unfortunately, one of the social work professors has decided to leave Tarleton.
- Example: However, you need to remember that I expect you to study hard for my tests.
- Example: John, did you have a question you wanted to ask?

To add additional details to clarify a sentence; if you removed those additional details, you would still have a complete sentence.

- Example: When I started college, something I had always dreamed of doing, I decided to major in social work.
- You could remove the phrase in the middle and still have a complete sentence: When I started college, I decided to major in social work. Why do you still need a comma there?

When getting ready to quote a sentence – but only if you are really quoting the person’s exact words, not paraphrasing.

- Example: I wasn’t saying, “How could you?” Rather, I wanted to know, “What were you thinking when you did that?”
- Example: Dr. Rappaport always said, “Be careful of using Spell Check as your only type of proof-reading on papers.”
- Example of NOT using quotation marks: Dr. Rappaport always told us to be careful of using Spell Check as our only type of proof-reading on papers.

Before adding a phrase starting with *which* or *whose* to add more details to the sentence.

- Example: A major strength of the agency is the fact that each social worker uses a different approach, which allows them to complement each other’s skills.
- Example: He is a millionaire now, which only goes to show how much a person can accomplish if he really sets his mind to it.
- Example: The crowd, whose patience had worn thin, was threatening to tear down the sign and instigate a riot.
- Example: The building, whose architect had won a national award, was one of the most popular tourist attractions in the city.

To separate out parenthetical words from the rest of the sentence.

- Example: Expensive items, however, will not be included in the auction.
- Example: Expensive items, of course, will not be included in the auction.
- Example: Expensive items, unfortunately, will not be included in the auction.
- Example: Expensive items, therefore, will not be included in the auction.

Before a word like *also* or *too* or *as well* at the end of a sentence.

- Example: We should plan to have another fundraiser before the end of the month, also.
- Example: He’s quite good looking, too.

Do not use a comma if the additional words identify the subject word and are not additional information.

- The company rewards employees who work hard. (Do not put a comma if what you mean is that the company ONLY rewards employees who work hard. If ALL employees work hard and get rewarded, then put a comma: The company rewards its employees, who all work hard.)

You usually do NOT use a comma before “because.”

- Example: She was deeply ashamed because she was the only woman who failed the exam.

You often do not need to use a comma after an introductory phrase that designates when something occurred.

- Example: In about five minutes we are leaving for school.

- Example: In 2000 Dr. Rappaport came to teach at TAMUCT.

OTHER COMMON WRITING ERRORS

Capitalizing words that do not need capitals

- Capital letters are used for proper nouns, people's names, names of cities and states, etc. They are often used when they are not needed. For example:
 - I am a student in the Social Work Department at Tarleton State University-Central Texas. It is correct to capitalize social work here because it is in the name of a Department.
 - I want to be a social worker. You do not capitalize it here because it is not a proper noun.
 - My biggest supporter is Mother. You need to capitalize mother here because you are using it as a person's name.
 - I live with my mother and my father. You do not capitalize them here because you are not using them as names.
 - I graduated from Alamo Heights High School. You capitalize high school here because it is the name of a specific high school.
 - I graduated from high school. You do not capitalize it here because it is not a proper noun. **Also note that you need the word "from". I graduated high school is slang without the word from.**

Confusing different forms of words that sound the same.

- **Where:** I asked him where he was born.
- **Were:** There were 25 questions on the test.
- **Wear:** I asked him what he was going to wear to the interview.

- **Their:** These parents really love their children.
- **There:** There are too many students in this class.
- **They're:** This is the contraction for "they are." **Note: You usually do not use contractions in formal written work.**

Two different forms for possessives:

- **This is my parent's house.** Use the apostrophe before the s only if it is ONE parent's house. Both parents do not live in the house, or you only have one parent.
- **This is my parents' house.** Use the apostrophe after the s if it is BOTH parents' house. Both parents live in the house.
- **Parents are very important people.** You do not use any apostrophe because you are simply making a noun plural. Never use an apostrophe unless you are making a noun a possessive word (meaning it belongs to someone).