

# TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CENTRAL TEXAS SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

SOWK 3310 110: Human Behavior in the Social Environment II

Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM, Room 304 Warrior Hall

**Semester:** Fall 2021  
**Instructor's Name:** Claudia Rappaport, PhD, ACSW, MSSW  
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**E-Mail:** [rappaport@tamuct.edu](mailto:rappaport@tamuct.edu). Note: **PLEASE ALWAYS USE THIS EMAIL ADDRESS; DO NOT EMAIL ME THROUGH CANVAS.** I respond to emails regularly, including at night and on weekends, other than on Saturdays while I am volunteering with hospice.

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 to 2:00 PM  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 to 6:00 PM  
These are times when I will be in my office and available to meet with students. If you would prefer to schedule a WebEx meeting with me, that can also be arranged. Call the Social Work office at 519-5406 to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are also possible as long as I do not already have an appointment scheduled at that time.

**A note about the COVID-19 pandemic:** For the most recent campus information about COVID-19, see the Texas A&M University-Central Texas Fall 2021 Return to Campus Plan (<https://www.tamuct.edu/covid19/>)

See the current protocols described later in this syllabus.

## I. Course Description

*Description:* Using systems theory as an organizing perspective, this course provides an integrated look at the bio-psycho-social-spiritual factors influencing human development. Emphasis is placed on theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live and the ways in which systems deter people from achieving well-being. Cultural factors affecting human functioning, as well as implications for social work practice, are explored. Values and ethical issues related to bio-psycho-social-spiritual theories are included.

*Prerequisites:* For social work majors, completion of Human Behavior in the Social Environment I with a C or better.

## II. Nature of Course

This course will provide students an opportunity to explore issues related to the person in environment. Emphasis will be placed on the process of human development (early, middle, and late adulthood, geriatrics, and death and dying) and on the environment surrounding each individual and his/her family. Students will become familiar with the normal range of biological, cognitive, personality, and social developments throughout the life span, and will consider the effects of environment on individual development. Students will also learn how to conduct comprehensive psychosocial assessments, using a strengths and family systems perspective.

This course has infused curriculum that prepares students with the necessary casework skills required by 45CFR 1356.60 Title IV-E Training Program.

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:* This course meets face-to-face, and the primary teaching approaches are collaborative and active learning. Material in the course will be presented through interactive class discussions on readings and on additional material presented by the professor in handouts, class activities, videotapes, and written psychosocial assessments.

*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. Two times during the semester (after the mid-term exam and before the final exam) Dr. Rappaport will complete grade sheets to show each student where their course grade stands at that time. In the interim, grading can be seen in Gradebook on Canvas, though that will not also reflect the grades for attendance and for class participation, so your final grade will be different than what the Gradebook reflects.

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 using the Canvas Help link located at the bottom of the left-hand menu. Select Chat with Canvas Support, submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line at 1-844-757-0953.

### **III. Department Mission**

The mission of the BSW Program at Texas A&M University - Central Texas 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.

Until Fall 2014 the TAMUCT Social Work Department had accreditation through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) as a branch campus of Tarleton State University. Now our Department has been awarded our own independent accreditation, effective February 2017.

### **Department Framework**

The Social Work Department curriculum is rooted in a framework established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Specifically, the Department endeavors to develop social workers who promote human and community well-being by being able to demonstrate the 9 core competencies in CSWE’s EPAS (2015 version). Each core competency also has specific, measurable practice behaviors that help students and their professors determine whether the competency has been achieved. The following explains how this course intends to help students achieve those practice behaviors and core competencies.

## **IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND RELATED CSWE-MANDATED CORE COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS**

This course provides content (through reading materials, assignments, and class discussions and activities) that helps to prepare you, the student, to engage in the following CSWE competencies and related practice behaviors:

- (1) Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
  - a. Behavior 1: Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to content.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and to maintain professionalism in practice situations.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - c. Behavior 3: Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior ... and oral [and] written ... communication.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (2) Competency 2: Engage diversity and difference in practice.
  - a. Behavior 1: Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - c. Behavior 3: Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (3) Competency 3: Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
  - a. Behavior 1: Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (4) Competency 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
  - a. Behavior 1: Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (5) Competency 5: Engage in policy practice.
  - a. Behavior 1: Identify social policy at the local, state and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - c. Behavior 3: Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (6) Competency 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
  - a. Behavior 1: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.

- i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage diverse clients and constituencies effectively.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (7) Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
  - a. Behavior 1: Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - c. Behavior 3: Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - d. Behavior 4: Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (8) Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
  - a. Behavior 1: Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and to enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - c. Behavior 3: Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - d. Behavior 4: Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - e. Behavior 5: Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
- (9) Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
  - a. Behavior 1: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams
  - b. Behavior 2: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.
    - i. Course assignments: Client assessments, Child Observation Essay, Class discussions of readings and videotapes, Concept mastery quizzes, and Exams

## Course Requirements

- A. *Required Textbook:* Hutchison, E. D. (2019). *Dimensions of human behavior: The changing life course* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Sage Publications. ISBN 978-1-5443-393-44. **[Note: This is the same textbook we used in HBSE I.]**

B. *Final Grades:* A total of 10,000 points may be earned from the course assignments, as follows:

Course Assignment	Percentage of final grade	Total possible points
Interview Paper, Young Adult	10%	1,000
Interview Paper, Senior Adult	10%	1,000
Psychosocial Assessment One – Robert Eads	5%	500
Psychosocial Assessment Two – Noah Dearborn	5%	500
Psychosocial Assessment Three – Fiona Anderson	5%	500
Psychosocial Assessment Four – Edward Cole	5%	500
Paper on the Student's Attitudes/Beliefs about Death	15%	1,500
Mid-Term Exam	10%	1,000
Final Exam	10%	1,000
Concept Mastery Quizzes and Case Scenarios	15%	1,500
Class Attendance	5%	500
Class Participation	5%	500
Totals	100%	10,000 (Total points divided by 100 equals grade)

Points and Corresponding Grades for individual assignments are based on the following:

A+: 100 points	A: 95 points	A-: 90 points
B+: 88 points	B: 85 points	B-: 80 points
C+: 78 points	C: 75 points	C-: 70 points
D+: 68 points	D: 65 points	D-: 60 points
F: 59 points or less		

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

Final Class Grades are based on the following:

A: 90 to 100 (9,000 to 10,000 points)	B: 89 to 80 (8,900 to 8,000 points)
C: 79 to 70 (7,900 to 7,000 points)	D: 69 to 60 (6,900 to 6,000 points)
F: 59 or less (5,900 points or less)	

As much as possible, graded papers are returned the class after they are handed in. Two to three times during the semester, students will be given a grade sheet to show the status of their grade at that point in the course.

### C. *Course Assignments*

The following activities will be completed during the semester.

#### **1. Concept Mastery Quizzes and Case Scenarios (15% of final grade)**

A number of the class periods will include a quiz and/or case scenario to help students solidify their understanding of the concepts presented in the course material and to learn how to apply them. The days quizzes will be given will not be announced ahead of time. 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 to 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 15% 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. Young Adult Interview Paper (10% of final grade)**

Each student will arrange to spend two hours with a young adult between the ages of 22 and 34 years to interview, observe and interact with them. (This young adult **cannot be a relative of the student, AND RELATIVE IS DEFINED AS ANY PERSON RELATED BY BLOOD, MARRIAGE, OR CO-HABITATION**, but can be someone they already know or someone they are meeting for the first time to do this assignment.) **You need to make up a fictional name for the person in your paper AND state that you are not using their correct name.** After interviewing person, you will write a paper of at least 6-8 pages (counting content only, not the face page or the reference page) that is a narrative essay describing what you were told by the person about their life. You will then compare this young adult's story and situation with the material you studied for class about a young adult who is that age. **THAT MEANS YOU NEED TO REVIEW ALL COURSE MATERIAL ABOUT ADULTS OF THAT AGE, INCLUDING THE TEXTBOOK, AND ACTUALLY UTILIZE THAT MATERIAL TO HELP EXPLAIN THE STORY OF THE PERSON YOU INTERVIEWED. THE COURSE MATERIAL SHOULD BE BLENDED IN WITH THE PERSON'S STORY IN A SMOOTH, EXPLANATORY FASHION.** How was this person similar to the material you studied, and were there things about the person that appeared to be different from the material you studied? You should approach writing the paper from a life course perspective, looking at developmental issues and transitions that commonly occur during young adulthood. What would theorists we have studied, such as Erikson and Piaget, say about this person's development? At the beginning of the essay, be sure you give the person's age and a description of the environment in which you did the interview and interactions (were you in the person's home? at school? eating in a restaurant? etc.). Papers must be typed and double-spaced and must use APA format. Students are not allowed to use ANY reference materials other than the course reading assignments, but you are still required to cite any use of reading assignments in your essay. 75% of the essay grade will be based on content, and 25% of the grade will be based on quality and professionalism of the student's writing (see further details in the assessment section, below).

**SEE THE GRADING RUBRIC ATTACHED TO THIS SYLLABUS.**

## **3. Senior Adult Interview Paper (10% of final grade)**

Each student will arrange to spend two hours with a senior adult who is 65 years of age or older in order to interview and interact with them. (This senior adult **cannot be a relative of the student, AND RELATIVE IS DEFINED AS ANY PERSON RELATED BY BLOOD, MARRIAGE, OR CO-HABITATION**, but can be someone they already know or someone they are meeting for the first time to do this assignment.) **You need to make up a fictional name for the person in your paper AND state that you are not using their correct name.** After interviewing this person, you will write a 6-8 page (counting content only, not the face page or the reference page) narrative paper describing what you observed in the person and what they told you about their life. You will then compare this senior adult's story and situation with the material you studied for class about a senior adult who is that age. **THAT MEANS YOU NEED TO REVIEW ALL COURSE MATERIAL ABOUT ADULTS OF THAT AGE, INCLUDING THE TEXTBOOK, AND ACTUALLY UTILIZE THAT MATERIAL TO HELP EXPLAIN THE STORY OF THE PERSON YOU INTERVIEWED. THE COURSE MATERIAL SHOULD BE BLENDED IN WITH THE PERSON'S STORY IN A SMOOTH, EXPLANATORY FASHION.** How was this person similar to the material you studied, and were there things about the person that appeared to be different from the material you studied? You should approach writing the essay from a life course perspective, looking at what cohort the person identifies with, developmental and health issues, and transitions that commonly occur during the senior years. What would theorists we have studied, such as Erikson and Piaget, say about this person's development? At the beginning of the essay, be sure you give the person's age and a description of the environment in which you did the interview (were you in the person's home? in a nursing home? at school? eating in a restaurant? etc.). Papers must be typed and double-spaced and must use APA format. Students are not allowed to use ANY reference materials other than the course reading assignments, but you are still required to cite any use of reading

assignments in your essay. 75% of the essay grade will be based on content, and 25% of the grade will be based on quality and professionalism of the student's writing (see further details in the assessment section, below).

**SEE THE GRADING RUBRIC ATTACHED TO THIS SYLLABUS.**

**4. Four Psychosocial Assessments: 20% of final grade (5% each, total of 4 assessments)**

Students will complete four (4) psychosocial assessments of clients/families studied in class. The stories come from videotapes shown in class, giving the student a chance to practice looking and listening to material and then writing a psychosocial assessment based on what they saw and heard. The format used for writing those assessments is included in this syllabus and is the same format used in HBSE I. The assessments will be graded according to how complete the information is that is included (content – 50% of the grade) and how coherently and appropriately the information is organized and presented within the assessment, as well as how neatly and professionally the assessment is written (organization – whether information about the client was put in the correct place, whether it was chronological, etc. – is 25% of the grade, and the remaining 25% of the grade is based on grammar and punctuation). When you write each assessment, you need to put yourself in the place of being the designated client's social worker. **BE SURE YOU USE THE GUIDELINES SHEET WE REVIEWED IN CLASS ON THE DAY WE TALKED ABOUT HOW TO WRITE ASSESSMENTS; THAT SHEET GIVES HINTS ABOUT WHAT INFORMATION BELONGS IN EACH SECTION OF THE ASSESSMENT. YOU SHOULD ALSO CAREFULLY REVIEW ASSESSMENTS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN GRADED AND RETURNED TO YOU IN ORDER TO AVOID MAKING THE SAME KINDS OF MISTAKES AGAIN.** All assessments must be typed and double spaced; no hand-written assessments will be accepted. The due dates for those assessments are included in the schedule of classes. **Assessments MUST be double-spaced in their entirety to give the professor room to make corrections. Any assessment that is not double-spaced will not be graded and will receive a grade of zero.**

**NOTE: THESE ASSESSMENTS ARE BASED ON STORIES BEING VIEWED FROM VIDEOTAPES. STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO WRITE THEIR ASSESSMENT BASED ONLY ON THE SINGLE VIEWING OF THE MOVIE IN CLASS. DO NOT TAPE RECORD THE VIDEO WHILE WATCHING IT IN CLASS. DO NOT GO RENT THE MOVIE AND WATCH IT ADDITIONAL TIMES IN ORDER TO GET MORE INFORMATION FOR YOUR ASSESSMENT. WHEN YOU INTERVIEW A CLIENT, YOU ONLY GET ONE ATTEMPT TO TALK WITH THE CLIENT BEFORE WRITING THE ASSESSMENT, AND THIS IS GIVING YOU PRACTICE FOR THAT REALITY. YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON DOING A GOOD JOB ON THE PARTS THAT YOU DO RECALL FROM THE VIDEO. IF IT IS OBVIOUS TO THE PROFESSOR THAT A STUDENT DID NOT FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS, THAT STUDENT WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO ON THEIR ASSESSMENT.**

**NOTE: STUDENTS ARE NOT TO WORK ON THE ASSESSMENT ASSIGNMENTS TOGETHER. YOU MUST TURN IN WORK THAT IS ENTIRELY YOUR OWN. THIS PROHIBITION INCLUDES ASKING STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE CLASS PREVIOUSLY FOR A COPY OF THEIR ASSESSMENTS, OR GETTING TOGETHER IN GROUPS TO WORK ON AND WRITE THE ASSESSMENTS TOGETHER, AND THEN EACH OF YOU SLIGHTLY CHANGING THE WORDING SO I WILL NOT KNOW YOU WORKED ON THEM TOGETHER. ANY SUCH ACTIVITY WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF 0 AND SANCTIONS FOR CHEATING ON A SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT. IF ANOTHER STUDENT APPROACHES YOU TO TALK ABOUT HOW YOU WROTE YOUR ASSESSMENT, OR IF ANOTHER STUDENT ASKS TO SEE YOUR ASSESSMENT, TELL THEM THAT IS CHEATING AND THAT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO DISCUSS YOUR ASSESSMENT WITH THEM. THIS ALSO MEANS YOU CANNOT GO TO THE INTERNET TO TRY TO DOWNLOAD ANY KIND OF INFORMATION, INCLUDING REVIEWS OF THE MOVIES. EVERYTHING YOU WRITE NEEDS TO COME FROM YOUR OWN WORK ON THE ASSIGNED CLIENT. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS!!!**

The 25% of the grade on each assessment that is based on organization will be based on the following:

0-2 errors = A+	3-4 errors = A
5-6 errors = A-	7-8 errors = B+
9-10 errors = B	11-12 errors = B-
13-14 errors = C+	15-16 errors = C
17-18 errors = C-	19-20 errors = D+

21-22 errors = D	23-24 errors = D-
25 errors or more = F	

The 25% of the grade on each assessment that is based on punctuation, spelling, APA format, and grammar will be based on the following:

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	

5. **Paper on Student's Attitudes/Beliefs about Death and Dying (15% of final grade)**

**SEE THE RUBRIC THAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS SYLLABUS.** One of the major objectives of this course is an examination of issues related to death, dying, and bereavement and how to provide professional social work services to clients and families who are faced with this life transition. Many students find it difficult to deal with these kinds of issues because they have never thoroughly explored their own cultural, family, and personal beliefs and attitudes about death and dying, so this is an opportunity for you to begin this process. There are several required sections to the paper:

- (1) You will explore your own views of death, of terminal illnesses, and of grief and bereavement. You are urged to consider where your attitudes and beliefs have come from – what cultural beliefs you have been taught, what family issues have impacted your beliefs, and especially, what personal experiences with death and with terminal illnesses have influenced your beliefs and attitudes about death.
- (2) Writing a “bucket list” has become known as a way to consider things you would want to do (including changing how you approach everyday life) if you found out that you had a limited time left to live. What are the 5 highest priority items you would put on your own “bucket list,” and explain why you chose to include each of those items. Are there steps you can take now to start incorporating some of those changes to enable you to “live like you were dying” (as expressed by singer Tim McGraw)?
- (3) Writing an obituary is an example of an American death practice, and it plays a role in how people cope with death and bereavement. Write your own obituary as you would write it today. What are the things you would most want people to know about you as your legacy in life? Writing your own obituary before you find out you are dying is an experience that can have a strong effect on your attitudes and feelings about death and dying. Discuss how having to write it now affected you.
- (4) Describe the funeral service or memorial you would want to have held for you after you die, going into as much detail as possible to reflect your ideal way to celebrate the life you have lived and to leave a lasting impression about you in the minds of the people who care about you. If you have never talked with your family about your wishes, this might be a good opportunity for you to do so.
- (5) Each student must discuss their specific reactions to and thoughts about three videos shown in class that deal with topics related to death. Those videos are “Facing Death,” “Wit,” and “The Self-Made Man.”
- (6) Finally, discuss how you believe that social workers can assist people who are faced with a terminal illness, their family members, and people who have already experienced the death of someone important to them. What are some of the major ways in which social workers should approach carrying out this work? How can social workers engage in appropriate “self care” so they can remain positive while carrying out this kind of work? How prepared do you feel to carry out this kind of work? What can you do to help yourself become better prepared to do it?

There is no specified page limit; students should use whatever length is required to fully explore all of these questions and issues. You should also reflect on what it was like being asked to do this assignment. There is no outside research required; you are to consider your own beliefs, attitudes, and experiences and compare these to the material we have dealt with in class about death and dying, grief and bereavement. The papers will be graded according to the student's efforts to demonstrate a high degree of insight into his/her own attitudes and beliefs and to consider how difficult or easy they feel it would be for them to provide social work services to clients/families dealing with these issues. If your paper is very short (i.e., shorter than 9-10 pages, at a minimum), it probably is not thorough enough; all of the issues mentioned here **MUST** be explored or your grade will be reduced.



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

There will be two examinations given in this course, a mid-term and a final, both of which will be take-home essay exams. See the Course Schedule in this syllabus for exam due dates. Examinations will not be the type of exams students may 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 will ask one or two large questions that expect the student to demonstrate their ability to integrate the learning they have done in the class (from reading, class discussions, watching videos in class, etc.) and show how they can APPLY that knowledge in performing social work functions. The exams will be given to students the class period before they will be due. **EXAM ANSWERS MUST BE TYPED AND DOUBLE-SPACED.** The thoroughness of answers will be a key element since grading will be based on the number of ideas, concepts, examples, and definitions you use in your answers. **You are expected to ANALYZE material we have studied, not just copy material from the textbook and handouts. Late exams will not be accepted.**

## 7. Class Attendance (5% of final grade)

Students are expected to be present for every scheduled class session – **and when I say present, I mean being in class the entire period, not using your telephone during class, not sleeping in class, not working on something for another class while you are in my class – in other words, being HERE and being ENGAGED IN LEARNING.** If any of those things end up not being true for you in a given day, then you will be marked absent. 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 or a funeral of a family member is an excused absence; the professor also allows one day's absence if a deployed significant other returns home. **However, routine doctor's appointments are expected to be scheduled for days and times when you do NOT have class, unless you can verify that the appointment was for a medical emergency and not for a routine visit. Any student who repeatedly asks for excused absences for doctor's appointments can be told that those will not be able to be excused.** 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 will not permit you to attend this class on a predictable basis, you should not be enrolled in the class.

**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. (See the Code of Conduct for further details.)**

The following shows the degree to which unexcused absences will impact your attendance grade.

<i>Number of Unexcused Absences</i>	<i>Attendance Grade</i>
1	A-
2	B
3	B-
4	C
5	D
6 or more	F
Coming to class late twice counts as one absence	

## 8. 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.

**While we cannot require that students wear a mask to class, each student who does wear a face covering will be given an extra participation point for that class session.**

## **VI. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CLASSROOMS**

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

1. Students are not permitted to enter class more than ten (10) minutes late. Exceptions will be made with prior discussion and approval by the professor only.
2. After 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 and that they WILL NOT leave class after it has begun.
3. **AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH CLASS, ALL TELEPHONES MUST BE PUT AWAY FOR THE DURATION OF THE CLASS. THIS INCLUDES NOT PUTTING IT ON THE STUDENT'S DESK WHERE IT IS VISIBLE. IF DR. RAPPAPORT SEES A TELEPHONE ON A DESK OR SEES A STUDENT TRY TO ANSWER ONE, SHE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CONFISCATE IT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CLASS.**

**IN ADDITION, USE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS IS PROHIBITED DURING CLASS EXCEPT FOR ACCESSING THE TEXTBOOK OR CLASS HANDOUTS. IF A STUDENT IS SEEN DOING A LOT OF TYPING, DR. RAPPAPORT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEE WHAT IS BEING WRITTEN, AND IF NECESSARY SHE WILL REMOVE THE STUDENT'S RIGHT TO USE THE LAPTOP DURING CLASS. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN A STUDENT USE THIS CLASS PERIOD TO WORK ON ASSIGNMENTS FROM THIS OR ANY OTHER CLASS.**

**IN OTHER WORDS, STUDENTS NEED TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO EACH CLASS IN ITS ENTIRETY, INCLUDING ANY VIDEOTAPES BEING SHOWN, AND TO USE THEIR INTEGRITY AND RESPECTFULNESS IN HOW THEY BEHAVE DURING CLASS.**

3. Students are expected to display professional decorum at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting classmates and the instructor. 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. It is also expected that students will display patience in raising a hand and recognize that the professor may be trying to call on other students who have not yet participated.
4. To support the academic 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.** *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.
7. All papers submitted for grading **MUST** adhere to APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition standards unless otherwise stated by the professor. This means that all papers must, *minimally*, be: 1) typed, 2) double-spaced, 3) use one consistent font (I prefer Times New Roman since it is easiest to read), 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, read in a textbook, etc.). Further, all typed papers submitted in class **MUST** be stapled. **IF A PAPER IS NOT WRITTEN IN APA FORMAT, DR. RAPPAPORT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RETURN IT TO THE STUDENT WITH A GRADE OF ZERO. USING APA IS NOT OPTIONAL! IF YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW TO USE APA, READ THROUGH THE INSTRUCTIONS LATER IN THIS SYLLABUS OR GO TO THE WRITING CENTER AND ASK FOR SOME TUTORING ON HOW TO USE IT.**
8. TAMUCT expects all students to maintain high standards of personal and scholarly conduct and to avoid any form of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to,

plagiarism (intentional or unintentional), copying another person's work (**INCLUDING THE TEXTBOOK OR OTHER COURSE MATERIALS**), turning in someone else's work as your own, downloading material from the internet and inserting it into a paper as if it were your own work, taking ideas from classes or readings and putting them in a paper without citations/references, cheating on an examination or other academic work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. Any idea, even paraphrased ideas, used or borrowed must be given credit by showing the source with an appropriate citation and reference. **Any student who violates class and/or university policies regarding Academic Honesty will be sanctioned.** More information on university policies can be found at [tamuct.edu/studentconduct](http://tamuct.edu/studentconduct).

9. 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). 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.
10. *An assessment of each student's behavior as it relates to class policies and overall decorum required by 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. Warrior Shield:

Warrior Shield 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 [portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login](http://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login) to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

### 2. COVID-19 Protocols:

- Students and employees must check for symptoms every day before coming on campus. Do NOT come to campus if you suspect that you have COVID-19 or another infectious illness.
- You must complete the COVID-19 Reporting Form if you believe you have been exposed to or have tested positive for COVID-19. Find this reporting form on the TAMUCT website: <https://redcap.tamhsc.edu/surveys/?s=N38DRD4EMK> If you do contract COVID-19 and must stay home, contact the professor to see about remaining current with the course while

you have to remain at home. If ill, you can contact the office of Student Success, Equity and Inclusion to see about requesting accommodations to be able to succeed in the course.

- Free COVID-19 testing will be available on campus
- The university does not require face coverings (masks). However, it is strongly recommended according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people. We encourage students to wear a face covering, to continue social distancing when possible, to wash their hands often, to cough and sneeze into your arm/elbow junction, to disinfect your area that needs to be touched, and to monitor your health daily. The University also strongly encourages people to get vaccinated to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

### 3. **Technology Requirements:**

This course will use the TAMUCT Instructure Canvas learning management system to deliver handouts as supplemental reading assignments and all written assignments. We strongly recommend using the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers, not Internet Explorer.

### 4. **Drop Policy**

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must contact the Records Office and ask for the necessary paperwork. Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The records office will give a deadline for when the form must be completed, signed, and returned. After you return the signed form to the records office and wait 24 hours, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you are still enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the records office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalties for absences. Should you miss the deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course if you stopped attending and doing the assignments.

### 5. **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 this 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 professor before taking a course of action.

### 6. **For Pregnant and/or Parenting Students:**

TAMUCT supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs office can assist students in seeking appropriate accommodations. Students should seek assistance as early in the semester as possible. Visit Student Affairs ([tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html](http://tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html)) or contact the Title IX Coordinator. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender, including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. Contact the Associate Dean in Student Affairs at 254-501-5908.

## 7. Academic Accommodations

At Texas A&M University – Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to an education that is barrier-free. The Dept. 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 of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. For more information, please visit our webpage: <http://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion>.

## 8. Library Services

The university library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 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. The library facility on 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 offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, visit the webpage: <http://tamuct.libguides.com/>

## 9. Tutoring Services

Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT student, 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 in 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 254-519-5836, visit Student Success in 212F Warrior Hall, or email [studentsuccess@tamuct.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@tamuct.edu). Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer through tutor.com, an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log in and receive FREE online tutoring. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas, **but it no longer offers writing support as of 8/1/19**. To access tutor.com, go to the “My Courses” tab in Blackboard.

## 10. University Writing Center

Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10 AM to 5 PM Monday thru Thursday. 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, 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 can 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 the relevant style guides (such as APA). Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proof-reading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the University Writing Center

is available for help. If you have any questions about it, contact Dr. Bruce Bowles, Jr., at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu).

#### **11. Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. TAMUCT offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty 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 [www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php](http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php).

#### **12. Behavioral Intervention:**

TAMUCT cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, those who are exhibiting concerning behaviors, or individuals causing a significant disruption to our community, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. Complete the referral online ([cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout\\_id=2](http://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2)). Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the BIT website ([tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bit.html](http://tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bit.html)). If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or TAMUCT police at 254-501-5800.

#### **13. 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 Course**

Dr. Rappaport decided she wanted to become a social worker during her senior year as a Sociology major and Psychology minor working on a baccalaureate degree at the University of Texas at Austin; she, therefore, went ahead and completed a masters degree in social work. She had 25 years of practice as a medical/pediatric social worker before coming to Killeen to teach social work in August 2000. The first 8 years she worked at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston with infants, children, and adolescents who had chronic and life-threatening illnesses (including cancer, sickle cell anemia, AIDS, cystic fibrosis, spina bifida, and many types of congenital birth defects). She was also the social worker in the newborn intensive care unit and worked with many premature infants. She then became the supervisor of all the pediatric and OB/GYN social workers at that hospital, which she did for 10 years. During that time she also began working on her PhD in Medical Humanities at UTMB, which she completed in 1995. Her dissertation was written on why social workers became involved in the medical field, doing her research at the first medical Social Service Department in the country at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. She then spent 3½ years in private practice, doing contract case management social work with chronically and terminally ill children and adolescents through home visiting, all for the Children with Special Health Care Needs Social Work Services Department. For the next 3½ years she was the Assistant Director of the Texas Department of Health social work services, supervising social workers who worked for CSHCN in 16 counties around the Houston area.

Even though Dr. Rappaport was a pediatric social worker throughout her career, all of her child clients had parents and grandparents who were also her clients. Much of Dr. Rappaport's work experience with adults comes from working with those parents and grandparents, many of whom were dealing with the kinds of adult

transitions and issues that are dealt with in this course. Within her family, Dr. Rappaport also served as caregiver for her mother who was dying of breast cancer and for her maternal grandfather, who became paralyzed and was completely dependent during the last three years of his life. Dr. Rappaport enjoys teaching this class because of her commitment to helping students learn how to become effective social workers when helping children and adults.

Dr. Rappaport takes teaching very seriously. She wants students to enjoy this class and feel like 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.

## IX. Course Schedule

Date	Description	Text / Readings
Monday 8/23/21	Review course syllabus How to write a psychosocial assessment on an adult client, using Lee Park as an example.	Handout: Lee Park assessment, psychosocial assessment format
Wednesday 8/25/21	Practice videotape assessment Watch part of video "Always Outnumbered" (1:15) – how would you write an assessment on Socrates Fortlow?	
Monday 8/30/21	Young Adulthood: Definition      Theoretical approaches: Erikson, Levinson, Arnett      Cultural & social variations Multigenerational concerns      Physical functioning Psychological Self      Cognitive Development Spiritual development      Identity development  Discussion of writing the Young Adult Interview paper	Hutchison pp. 231-251 Handout: Young Adulthood
Wednesday 9/1/21	Depression Video: "The Misunderstood Epidemic: Depression" (0:57)	Handout : Depression
Monday 9/6/21	<b>NOTE: LABOR DAY IS NOT A SCHOOL HOLIDAY THIS YEAR!!!</b> Watch part of video "Southern Comfort" (1:15) – write an assessment on Robert Eads	
Wednesday 9/8/21	Young Adulthood: Social development and social functioning Relationships    Parenthood    Work    Risk and Protective Factors Couple relationships: Theory, interventions Couple burnout: Theory, interventions Videotape: Watch the first part of "Inlaws and Outlaws" (HQ 536.I55) (library video)	Hutchison pp. 251-268 Handout: Couples Relationships, Why We Love
Monday 9/13/21	Gay and Lesbian Couples Videotape: Watch the rest of "Inlaws and Outlaws" Edward and Dave story (in the handout) – how would you provide social work services to them?	Handout: Gay Couple Relationships Edward and Dave scenario <b><u>ROBERT EADS ASSESSMENT DUE</u></b>



Wednesday 9/15/21	<p>Incest effects in adulthood Adult sexuality after childhood incest</p> <p>Video: “When the Devil Knocks: Dissociative Identity Disorder” (0:43) (Films on Demand)</p>	<p>Handout: Effects of Incest on Adults</p> <p>Handout: Incest Effects on Sexuality</p>
Monday 9/20/21	<p>Domestic violence</p> <p>Video: “Let’s Talk about It: Domestic Violence” (0:45) (Films on Demand)</p>	Handout: Domestic Violence
Wednesday 9/22/21	<p>Middle Adulthood: Changing Social Construction Demographics      Definition      Culture Theories: Erikson, Jung, Levinson, Life Span Biological changes      Reproductive System, Sexuality Brain      Health status      Intellectual changes Personality changes      Trait &amp; Human Agency Approaches Life Narrative Approach      Spirituality Relationships      Work      Risk and Protective factors</p> <p>Video: “Transitions of Adulthood” (0:28) (Films on Demand)</p>	<p>Hutchison pp. 269-311</p> <p><b><u>YOUNG ADULT INTERVIEW PAPER DUE TODAY</u></b></p>
Monday 9/27/21	<p>Experience of cancer and other severe illnesses</p> <p>Video: “Tuesdays with Morrie” (1:29)</p>	<p>Handout: Experience of Serious Illness/Disability</p> <p>Cancer Stories</p>
Wednesday 9/29/21	<p>Substance Abuse in Adults</p> <p>Videotape: “The Anonymous People” (1:15)</p>	<p>Handout: Substance Abuse</p> <p>Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment</p>
Monday 10/4/21	Watch videotape “The Simple Life of Noah Dearborn” (1:15) – write an assessment on Noah Dearborn	
Wednesday 10/6/21	<p>Disabilities</p> <p>Videotape: “Debt of Honor: Disabled Veterans in American History” (1:10)</p>	<p>Handout: Young Adults in Nursing Homes</p> <p>Home Care Resources in Texas</p>
Monday 10/11/21	<p>Late Adulthood/Aging:      Demographics      Diversity Cultural construction      Psychosocial Theoretical Perspectives Biological Changes      Health &amp; Longevity      Dementia Alzheimer’s disease      Parkinson’s disease</p> <p>ADL’s/ IADL’s      Personality Types Social Security/ Medicare/OAA      Memory</p> <p>Video: “The Aging Brain” (0:26) (Films on Demand)</p> <p><b>RECEIVE MID-TERM EXAM</b></p>	<p>Hutchison pp. 312-3334</p> <p>Handout: Aging</p> <p>Preventing Falls</p> <p>Retirement &amp; Social Security</p> <p><b><u>NOAH DEARBORN ASSESSMENT IS DUE</u></b></p>
Wednesday 10/13/21	<p>Late Adulthood:      Psychological Changes      Personality Intellectual Changes      Mental Health Social Role Transitions      Grandparenthood</p> <p>Sexuality and Aging      Urinary Incontinence</p> <p>Videotape: “Living Old: The Modern Realities of Aging in America” (0:56) (Films on Demand)</p>	<p>Hutchison pp. 334-343</p> <p>Handout: Sexuality in older people</p> <p>HIV/AIDS in Older Adults</p> <p><b><u>MID-TERM EXAM IS DUE</u></b></p>

Monday 10/18/21	Late Adulthood: Work/Retirement Caregiving Widowhood Institutionalization Search for Personal Meaning Resources Technology Risk and Protective Factors  Videotape: “Living Longer: Aging Well” (0:29) (Films on Demand)	Hutchison pp. 343-356
Wednesday 10/20/21	Watch part of “Away from Her” (1:15) – write an assessment on Fiona Anderson	
Monday 10/25/21	Aging and Gay/Lesbian Clients  Video: “Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis at 100” (1:00) (HQ 75.6.U5 L58 2003) (library video)	
Wednesday 10/27/21	Depression in the Elderly  Videotape: “Late Life Depression” (0:28) (Films on Demand)	Handout: Depression in the Elderly Differential Diagnosis
Monday 11/1/21	Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease The Nuns Study Grandpa Honel, Diana McGowin, and Mardig Avadian stories  Videotape: Watch part of “The Forgetting” (1:30)	Handout: Alzheimer’s disease/ Dementia
Wednesday 11/3/21	Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease, continued  Video: “Alive Inside” (1:18) (also available on Films on Demand)	<b><u>FIONA ANDERSON ASSESSMENT IS DUE</u></b>
Monday 11/8/21	Very Late Adulthood: Historical and Cultural Perspective Centenarians Functional Capacity Relationships Sexuality Technology  Aging and substance abuse Aging and Suicide  Videotape: “Substance Abuse in the Elderly” (0:29) (HV 5138.S83 2005) (library video)	Hutchison pp. 357-369  Handout: Substance abuse in elderly Handout: Suicide in elderly
Wednesday 11/10/21	Elder abuse  Videotape: “Elder Abuse” (0:16) (HV 66 26.3 E4275 2002) (library video) (also available on Films on Demand)  Video: “He Wouldn’t Turn Me Loose: The Sexual Assault Case of 96-Year-Old Miss Mary” (0:40) (Films on Demand)	Handout: Elder abuse
Monday 11/15/21	Videotape: Watch part of “The Bucket List” (1:15) – write an assessment on Edward Cole	<b><u>SENIOR ADULT INTERVIEW PAPER DUE TODAY</u></b>
Wednesday 11/17/21	Very late adulthood, continued  Videotape: “Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters’ First 100 Years” (1:15)	

Monday 11/22/21	Very Late Adulthood, continued: Housing Spirituality Dying Process Advance Directives Hospice End of Life Loss, Grief, & Bereavement Theories of Loss Culture  Death and Dying  Grief and Bereavement, Children and Death	Hutchison, pp. 369-384   Handout: Death and Dying Handout: Grief and Bereavement Handout: Children and Death
Wednesday 11/24/21	<b>NO CLASS TODAY DUE TO THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b>	
Monday 11/29/21	Death and Dying, continued Videotape: "Facing Death" (1:00) <b>RECEIVE FINAL EXAM</b>	Handout: Death and Dying, continued <b><u>EDWARD COLE ASSESSMENT IS DUE</u></b>
Wednesday 12/1/21	Death and Dying, continued Videotape: Watch part of "Wit" (1:15)	Handout: Death and Dying continued -- review the section on Peter Breggin's <i>The Heart of Being Helpful</i>
Monday 12/6/21	Death and Dying, continued Rational Suicide  Videotape: "The Self-Made Man" (0:57) (HV 6545.2.S535 2005) (library video) (also available on Kanopy)	Review material on rational suicide from "Death and Dying" handout <b>FINAL EXAM IS DUE</b>
Wednesday 12/8/21	Death and Dying, continued Video: Watch part of "Serving Life" (1:20) (HV 8843.S47) (library video)	<b>Paper on Student's Attitudes toward Death and Dying due</b>

**IX. Bibliography of Additional Resources (Note: This list is NOT in APA format – do not copy this format in your papers!)**

The following readings can be used by students to provide further information on the topics covered by the course.

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#### **(Effects of) Incest/Childhood Sexual Abuse:**

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## Human Behavior in the Social Environment II, Dr. Claudia Rappaport

### YOUNG/SENIOR ADULT OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT GRADING RUBRIC

	<i>Possible Points</i>	<i>Earned Points</i>
Paper is at least 6-8 pages in length (not counting face page or reference page)	<b>5</b>	
Demographics of person (age is between 22-34 for young adult and 65+ for senior adult, living situation, etc.), where the interview and observation were conducted, and that you are using a false name	<b>5</b>	
Person's story is told in a coherent, interesting, creative way	<b>15</b>	
Course material is used to explain person's story in a comprehensive way, explaining how their story and situation compare to all the theoretical material we studied for a person their age – how they are similar, how they are different – and the course material is blended in with the person's story in a smooth, explanatory fashion	<b>15</b>	
Person's story is told from a life course perspective	<b>10</b>	
Explanation of developmental issues and transitions that typically occur during this stage of adulthood, and how this person compares to that typical development	<b>15</b>	
Explanation of Erik Erikson's theory and how it would be applied in this person's situation	<b>5</b>	
Explanation of Jean Piaget's theory and how it would be applied in this person's situation	<b>5</b>	
Explanation of at least one other major theory we studied and how it would be applied in this person's situation	<b>5</b>	
Citations are correctly done, including personal communication citations in every paragraph in which interview is presented; no citations were left out; if the wording was taken directly from a source from the class (including textbook and handouts), quotation marks are correctly used to indicate that paraphrasing was not used	<b>10</b>	
Paper's format is correct based on APA – margins, page numbers, double spacing (and no extra space between paragraphs), reference page and citations, no contractions, numbers 1-9 spelled out in words, consistent font	<b>5</b>	
No reference material other than course materials was used	<b>5</b>	
<b>Total points (the grade on the 75% of the paper's grade that is based on content)</b>	<b>100</b>	

## GRADING RUBRIC FOR ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH AND DYING PAPER

<i>Section</i>	<i>Possible Points</i>	<i>Your Points</i>
Your views/beliefs about death, terminal illness, and grief. Where do those beliefs come from? Cultural influences. Family Issues. All of your major personal experiences with death/dying. THIS NEEDS TO BE THE LONGEST SECTION OF YOUR PAPER.	30	
Your bucket list with at least 5 items on it. Why are those items on the list? How can you incorporate changes now so you can start achieving some of those goals?	10	
Write your obituary as it would be done today. What do you want your legacy to be? How did writing your obituary affect you?	10	
Describe your desired funeral/memorial service. How do you want to celebrate your life?	10	
Your reactions to and thoughts about all of the major issues raised in the movie "Facing Death". What are key questions and issues, including ethical dilemmas, that you think it raises that apply especially to the profession of social work? How did you react to these clients' stories?	5	
Your reactions to all of the major issues raised in the movie "Wit". What are key questions and issues, including ethical dilemmas, that you think it raises that apply especially to the profession of social work? What did the nurse and the friend do that was helpful? How did you react to this client's issues?	5	
Your reactions to the movie "Self-Made Man". What are key questions and issues, including ethical dilemmas, that you think it raises that apply especially to the profession of social work? What are the criteria that need to be met for a rational suicide? Do you think he qualified as a case of "rational suicide"? Why or why not?	5	
What are all the important ways that social workers can assist people who are dying or grieving? How would you approach doing this kind of work? What kinds of services would you provide, and how would you provide them?	5	
What kind of self-care measures would you engage in to enable you to do this kind of emotional work with terminally ill and grieving people? To what extent are you already doing these kinds of self-care? What is your plan for starting to do the new ones?	5	
Could you provide social work services to people with terminal illnesses and/ or to people who are grieving? How easy or hard do you think that kind of work would be for you to do? How can you work to get yourself better prepared to do this kind of work?	10	
What was it like for you to write this paper? What kinds of reactions and questions did it raise?	5	
Remember that the paper needs to demonstrate a lot of insight and deep reflection. If it is shorter than 9-10 pages, you probably did not put enough thought into writing it.		
	100	

## ***PSYCHOSOCIAL ASSESSMENT FORMAT***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Demographics:**

Name: (Last, First):

Age:

Name(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Note: If you are working with an adult client, this will be N/A

Client/Family Members present at assessment:

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	RELATION	AGE	HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	RELATION	AGE

### **PHYSICAL OR MEDICAL SITUATION:**

History:

Current:

Family's understanding/acceptance of client's needs:

Current medical/physical status of family members:

### **COGNITIVE/DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS:**

History:

Current:

### **BEHAVIORAL STATUS:**

History:

Current:

### **EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES:**

History:

Current:

### **EDUCATIONAL STATUS:**

History:

Current:

### **NUTRITIONAL STATUS:**

History:

Current:

### **VOCATIONAL STATUS:**

History:

Current:



**SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION:**

Employment:

Income:

Financial stresses:

**HOUSING:** Apartment House Mobile Home Homeless Other:

Own Rent Share housing with:

Concerns regarding housing:

Safety concerns related to housing:

**LEGAL ISSUES:** (Such as marital situation, child support, guardianship, immigration status, criminal charges, truancy, etc.)

<i>PSYCHOSOCIAL ISSUES</i>	
Marital or Intimate Partner Relationship	
Parenting	
Siblings	
Other Family	
Community Support Systems	
Family Violence	
Substance Abuse	
Mental Health	
Religious/Cultural	

**OTHER COMMUNITY AGENCIES INVOLVED:**

AGENCY/NAME:	LOCATION:	CONTACT/TELEPHONE:

**PRIMARY STRENGTHS OF CLIENT/FAMILY:** (Note: list should be COMPREHENSIVE!!!)**PRIMARY CHALLENGES OF CLIENT'S/FAMILY'S SITUATION:** (List should be COMPREHENSIVE!!!)**CLIENT'S/FAMILY'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES:** (Only include THE CLIENT AND FAMILY'S EXPRESSED GOALS AND PRIORITIES – do NOT include goals and priorities you as the social worker WISH they would have!!)**TEN SERVICE GOALS TO BE OFFERED TO PATIENT/FAMILY:** (List of ten interventions you feel could benefit the patient/family – If you put more than 10 interventions, this will earn you extra content points)

## 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 (preferred by the professor)
- ☐ 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 1-9 spelled out (e.g. “one”, “five”, “seven”)
- ☐ Numbers 10 and above do not have to be 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, no sentence fragments
- ☐ 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

- ☐ Page # (always starts with “1” at the top right) – do NOT include any words or your name with the page number. It should be the number by itself.
- ☐ Title of work (in bold and followed by an extra space), your name, Department of Social Work and the name of the university, professor’s name, due date of assignment, all centered and not in bold. This should also be double spaced.
- ☐ Title should be no more than 12 words, first letters of words are capitalized except “and”, etc.

### C. Abstract Page

- ☐ This is page 2 (upper right corner)
- ☐ 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 page number on every page in upper right corner
- ☐ 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

- ☐ 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 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, etc., as needed.
- ❑ Double space references
- ❑ Remove extra 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. (2017). *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). 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](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. (2021). *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)
  - Cassavetes, N. (Director). (2002). *John Q*. [Motion picture]. 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. Get the name of the director and the year at the beginning of the entry. Click on Full Cast and Crew, then on Company Credits to list the production companies (ignore the list of distributors, but be sure to list all of the production companies).

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### Checklist to avoid some common errors using APA in papers

Dr. Claudia Rappaport

\_\_\_\_\_ The title on the front page is repeated on the first page of the text of the paper, and both titles are exactly the same wording.

\_\_\_\_\_ Entire paper in Times New Roman 12 font. You can't change font in title, on the front page, etc., to be decorative

\_\_\_\_\_ The front page can ONLY contain the page number, the title of the paper, your name, Department of Social Work and the name of the university, professor's name, and due date of assignment. Nothing else!!

\_\_\_\_\_ No contractions (isn't) are used anywhere in the paper unless quoting someone.

\_\_\_\_\_ There is no extra line space between paragraphs (to achieve this, go to page layout, then go to spacing and make sure that the spacing is set to 0”).

\_\_\_\_\_ All paraphrasing from another source has an in-text citation, and the format would be like this: (Rappaport, 2021). If exact words are used from the source, then you also use quote marks and the page number is included in the in-text citation (the format would be: Rappaport, 2021, p. 2). If you are using more than one Rappaport handout for citations, you will have to use Rappaport 2021a, Rappaport 2021b, etc., and the letters will be assigned based on the titles of the handouts being in alphabetical order on your reference page.

\_\_\_\_\_ When writing a paper about an interview of a person, you use personal communication citations within the text of the paper. After every paragraph in which you summarize information given in the interview, your in-text citation will appear like this: (C. Rappaport, personal communication, August 1, 2021). THERE IS NO REFERENCE PAGE ENTRY FOR PERSONAL COMMUNICATION CITATIONS.

### 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 parts of a date in a sentence.**

- Example: On August 1, 2010, my daughter was born.

**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 five minutes we are leaving for school.

## **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).