

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY – CENTRAL TEXAS SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

SOWK 3315, Seminar: Professional Writing for Social Workers

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM, Room 304 Warrior Hall

THIS COURSE MEETS FACE TO FACE, WITH SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS MADE AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH THE A&M-CENTRAL TEXAS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (TAMUCT.INSTRUCTURE.COM/)

Semester: Summer 2023

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

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

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:00 to 4:30 PM

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 to 3:00 PM

These are times when I will be in my office and available to meet with students. 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.

For the most recent campus information about COVID-19, see the Texas A&M University-Central Texas website (<https://www.tamuct.edu/covid19/>)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Description: Social work electives are intensive studies of current trends and issues related to professional social work practice, social service delivery, and populations at risk. This particular elective is also what is known as a writing instructive course because writing is an integral part of my instruction and our interactions. Writing will be a fundamental way that I measure student mastery of course content. WI means that you will have numerous opportunities to work on improving your writing skills by submitting drafts of essays, getting feedback, and revising those essays before getting a grade on them.

Prerequisites: None. This course is designed for social work students who want to strengthen their writing skills as professional social workers, working on various aspects of writing that students need to improve most.

II. NATURE OF COURSE

Social work is a field of practice that places heavy demands for professional-quality writing skills. On a regular basis, social workers are required to write client assessments, home studies, progress notes, correspondence and emails, diagnostic reports, intervention plans, court documents, community needs assessments, requests for grant or community funding, monthly and annual service reports, and many other types of documentation. It is essential that all social workers develop skills at expressing themselves effectively and accurately in writing so

their passion for their profession can be undiminished and so their professional goals can be achieved. Written work that is poorly done and read by other people casts a negative impression on the social worker's competence and knowledge, which makes it more difficult for the social worker to achieve his/her professional goals and achieve a reputable standing in the field. This course will work to improve each student's ability to write as a professional social worker.

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

Teaching Method: The primary teaching approach in this course will be collaborative and active learning. Material in the course will be presented through interactive class discussions based on reading assignments, classroom exercises, videotapes, and written assignments.

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.

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. Our Department has been awarded our own independent accreditation effective February 2017.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND RELATED CSWE 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 (2022 version):

- (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 the context.

- i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (2) Competency 2: Advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
- a. Behavior 1: Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
 - b. Behavior 2: Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (3) Competency 3: Engage anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) in practice.
- a. Behavior 1: Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
 - b. Behavior 2: Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (4) Competency 4: Engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice.
- a. Behavior 2: Identify ethical, culturally informed, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive strategies that address inherent biases for use in quantitative and qualitative research methods to advance the purposes of social work.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (5) Competency 5: Engage in policy practice.
- a. Behavior 2: Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (6) Competency 6: Engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- a. Behavior 1: Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
 - b. Behavior 2: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies.

- i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (7) Competency 7: Assess individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - a. Behavior 1: Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other culturally responsive and interprofessional conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
 - b. Behavior 2: Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (8) Competency 8: Intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - a. Behavior 1: Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
 - b. Behavior 2: Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
- (9) Competency 9: Evaluate practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - a. Behavior 1: Select and use culturally responsive methods for evaluation of outcomes.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.
 - b. Behavior 2: Critically analyze outcomes and apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 - i. Course assignments: Writing correction exercises on topics relevant to the social work profession; movie-reflective essays on topics that are essential for social workers to consider; writing corrections on students' own essays about issues raised by professionally relevant movies; class discussions of readings and of writing approaches; two-part final exam.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. *REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS*: Lester, M.; and Beason, L. (2019). *The McGraw-Hill Education Handbook of English Grammar and Usage* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill. ISBN 978-1-260-12167-4

Kaufman, L., & Straus, J. (2021). *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy-to-Use Guide with Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes* (12th ed.). Jossey-Bass. ISBN 978-1-119-65302-8.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

B. FINAL GRADES

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

Course Assignment	Percentage of final grade	Total possible points
Writing Corrections Exercises (10 of them)	10%	1,000
Essay on Why Writing Skills are Important in Social Work	5%	500
“The Blind Side” Essay	10%	1,000
“The Missing” Essay	15%	1,500
“Normal” Essay	20%	2,000
Final Exam – Take home portion	10%	1,000
Final Exam – movie video essay portion	20%	2,000
Attendance	5%	500
Class Participation in discussions and board activities	5%	500
Totals	100%	10,000 (Total ÷ 100 = final 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 x 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)

C. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The following activities will be completed and graded during the semester.

1. Writing Correction Exercises (10% of final grade)

There will be eight Writing Correction Exercises utilized to help students improve their writing skills as professional social workers. Each assignment will consist of a few badly written sentences on social work topics, and students will need to rewrite the sentences to reflect more appropriate professional language and correct usage of composition, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. At the end of the course, the student’s average grade on the eight assignments will constitute 10% of their final grade in the course. Each student is allowed to drop their one lowest grade on these exercises.

The following are explanations of essays that students will write in this class. In each case, students will submit an initial draft of their essay after watching a movie or participating in a discussion in class. At the following class session students will receive these drafts back, and Dr. Rappaport will have indicated in numbers how many errors in writing the student made on each line of their essay, but Dr. Rappaport will not make the corrections herself. During the class period students can ask questions about things they don't understand about how what they wrote is incorrect, and they will receive both peer assistance and assistance from Dr. Rappaport in figuring out how to improve the errors they made. Then at the following class session they will turn in the final version of their essay, and this is the one that will receive a grade. When the final graded version of each essay is returned to students, they will have the opportunity to ask questions about the reasons for any corrections Dr. Rappaport made that they do not understand.

2. *Essay on Why Writing Skills are Important in Social Work (5% of final grade)*

Students will write an essay discussing why good writing skills are important in the practice of professional social work. They will consider the variety of types of writing that social workers are required to do, and why making errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, formulation of their thesis, and other types of errors can have negative effects on the work of the social worker. The grade on the final version of this essay will make up 5% of the student's final grade in the course.

There will be four movies shown in class that students need to write essays about, reflecting on questions given to them by Dr. Rappaport. All four movies deal with topics that are important in social work, including social work with diverse populations of clients; prejudice, discrimination, and racism; ethical dilemmas that social workers have to deal with; complex issues that families deal with; and types of services clients might need from a social worker. The following explains the essays that will be written on these four movies:

3. *Essay on the movie "The Blind Side" (10% of final grade)*

Students will write an essay of at least four paragraphs based on reflections about the movie "The Blind Side." In particular, students should consider the following questions in thinking about what they want to write about in this essay:

- What are positive and negative ways that race is demonstrated in the movie?
- What do you believe are pro's and con's of a young black man being raised by a wealthy white family?
- What is your impression of the types of and quality of social services that were received by this young man and his birth family? What social work services could you have offered to them (both the young man, his birth family and his adoptive family)?
- How will the understanding you obtain from watching this movie help you in your future engagement with multi-racial family clients?

4. *Essay on the movie "The Missing" (15% of final grade)*

Students will write an essay of at least four paragraphs based on reflections about the movie "The Missing." In particular, students should consider the following questions in thinking about what they want to write about in this essay:

- What are the positive and negative ways that Maggie and her father were affected by his abandonment of his family and his decision to go live with the Jicarilla Apache?
- What are ways in which traumas she experienced significantly changed Maggie's character and how she interacted with people?
- What does the movie teach us about human forgiveness?
- What are the major ways that Maggie, her daughters, and her father changed during the movie?
- What social work services could you have offered this family?
- How can the understanding you get from this movie help you as a social worker engaging with future clients?

5. **Essay on the movie “Normal” (20% of final grade)**

Students will write an essay of at least four paragraphs based on reflections about the movie “Normal.” In particular, students should consider the following questions in thinking about what they want to write about in this essay:

- Why do you think the title of the movie is “Normal”?
- How does this movie illustrate how our society’s strict views of what is normal and not normal caused severe trauma for this family? What were the major ways that this trauma affected each member of the family?
- What was positive and negative about the assistance their minister tried to provide the family? What would you have done differently if you have been providing social work services to the family?
- How did the movie illustrate how love and resilience were eventually able to help this family overcome their adversities?
- How can the understanding you get from this movie help you in your future engagement with social work clients?

Note: Students need to base their essay only on watching the movie one time in class. Do not go and watch the movie again on your own. I want you to write your reflections on your immediate reaction to what you saw in the movie.

For each essay, 75% of the grade will be based on content of the essay (clarity of the thesis of the essay, how well the student is able to utilize self-reflection in responding to the questions given about the essay, etc.) and 25% of the grade will be based on the number of errors in such things as punctuation, spelling, APA format, and grammar, based on the following:

0-3 errors = A+	4-6 errors = A
7-9 errors = A-	10-12 errors = B+
13-15 errors = B	17-18 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. **Final Exam (30% of final grade in two parts that are 10% and 20% each)**

One part of the final exam will be a take-home test that consists of having the student proof-read and correct badly written sentences on topics relevant to social work activities, utilizing everything they have learned about writing from the course. These will be similar to the Writing Correction Exercises the students have been completing throughout the course. For the other part of the final exam, students will watch a final movie on the next to the last day of class. They will then write an essay responding to the movie; they will be given some questions to reflect on in their essay after they have watched the movie. The name of the movie will not be pre-announced. Students will turn in the essay at the beginning of the final class, and they will not get feedback on writing errors before turning in their essays this final time.

In an emergency that keeps a student from being able to attend class on the day the final exam is given, the student is responsible for contacting the professor **in advance** to see what arrangements, if any, can be made to make up the test early. It cannot be taken later since the exam is being given at the end of the course.

6. Class Participation (5% of grade)

Dr. Rappaport has an interactive teaching style and expects every student to be an active participant in class. An old Chinese proverb says, “Tell me and I will forget—Show me and I may remember—But involve me and I will understand.” You will learn more from this class if you talk and participate. Ask questions, remembering that there is no such thing as a stupid question. Share your reactions to what is being discussed. Reflect on implications of what we are studying. If you are a student who has never before chosen to talk in classes, this will be a good opportunity for you to start developing a new life skill that will serve you well in the profession of social work. Being an active participant increases understanding of the material for your fellow students as well. This particular course involves a lot of very interactive coaching and assistance to help students improve their writing skills, so your participation in the process is essential to your learning to be a better writer.

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.

In most class sessions there will also be some correction exercises written on the board that students then work together to correct. Dr. Rappaport will work with the groups one-on-one to help them learn more effective strategies for proof-reading their work. All students are expected to participate in these board activities.

7. Class Attendance (5% of final grade)

Students are expected to be present for every scheduled class session and to remain for the entire class. If you are unable to avoid missing a class, you must contact the professor within one week of the class period to explain the absence. Any unexcused (or unexplained) absence will affect this portion of your grade. Illness is an excused absence. 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 **NOTE: if you do not email the professor within one week of the absence to get it excused, this will NOT be changed later to an excused absence.**

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

The following shows the degree to which unexcused absences will impact your attendance grade. (Note: There are fewer class periods in the summer term, so absences affect this portion of your grade to a larger extent.)

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

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 except during the collaboration portion of work that is done during 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 7th 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.
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

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

SAFEZONE. SafeZone provides a public safety application that gives you the ability to call for help with the push of a button. It also provides Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate emergency information quickly via push notifications, email, and text messages. All students automatically receive email and text messages via their myCT accounts.

Downloading SafeZone allows access to push notifications and enables you to connect directly for help through the app.

You can download SafeZone from the app store and use your myCT credentials to log in. If you would like more information, you can visit the [SafeZone](http://www.safezoneapp.com) website [www.safezoneapp.com].

To register SafeZone on your phone, please follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Download the SafeZone App from your phone store using the link below:
 - o [iPhone/iPad](https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756): [https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756]
 - o [Android Phone / Tablet](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp) [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp]
2. Launch the app and enter your myCT email address (e.g. {name}@tamuct.edu)
3. Complete your profile and accept the terms of service

Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari browsers. Canvas will run on Windows, Mac, Linus, iOS, android, or any other device with a modern web browser. **Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.**

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [https://tamuct.instructure.com/] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [https://tamuct.onecampus.com/] by clicking on the “TAMUCT Online Canvas” tile. You will then log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help tab, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can search the support articles or use the Email, Call, or Chat buttons at the bottom of the support pop-up to contact the Canvas Help Desk.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Online Proctored Testing

A&M-Central Texas uses Proctorio for online identity verification and proctored testing. This service is provided at no direct cost to students. If the course requires identity verification or proctored testing, the technology requirements are: Any computer meeting the minimum computing requirements, plus web camera, speaker, and microphone (or headset). Proctorio requires use of the Chrome web browser with their custom plug in installed.

Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [<http://hdc.tamu.edu>]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

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 a barrier-free education. The Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity 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 Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information, please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required) [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717>]

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University-Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas 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. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. All academic misconduct concerns will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the student conduct process](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas), [<https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas>].

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete the [Drop Request](#) Dynamic Form through Warrior Web.

[<https://federation.ngwebsolutions.com/sp/startSSO.ping?PartnerIdId=https://eis-prod.ec.tamuct.edu:443/samlso&SpSessionAuthnAdapterId=tamuctDF&TargetResource=https%3a%2f%2fdynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com%2fSubmit%2fStart%2f53b8369e-0502-4f36-be43-f02a4202f612>].

Faculty cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Records and Admissions Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed. Once you submit the completed form to the Records and Admissions Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Records and Admissions Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Pregnant and/or Parenting Students' Rights and Accommodations

A&M-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant, experiencing pregnancy-related conditions, and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of [Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights](#), the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs, (254) 501-5909, can assist students who are pregnant, experiencing pregnancy-related conditions, and/or parenting by provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodations. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible through the [Pregnancy & Parenting webpage](#) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html>]. For more information, please visit [Student Affairs](#) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html>]. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](#) online, please visit the website [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>].

[Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972](#) specifically prohibits discrimination against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions [<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.html>].

Students experiencing any form of discrimination due to any of these conditions are encouraged to reach out to the Title IX Coordinator, 254.519.5716, titleix@tamuct.edu, Founders Hall 317B, or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, 254.501.5909, Warrior Hall 105.

Title IX Rights and Reporting Responsibilities

A&M-Central Texas is committed to creating a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you or another student has experienced any form of gender discrimination or sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and/or sex-based stalking, help and support are available. Our university strongly encourages all members of our campus community to report incidents and seek support for gender discrimination and sexual misconduct through the Title IX Office. You may contact the Title IX Office at 254.519.5716, titleix@tamuct.edu, Founders Hall 317B, or learn more by visiting the [Title IX webpage](#) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html>].

Please be aware that that under [Title IX](#), [Texas Senate Bill 212](#), and [System Regulation 08.01.01](#), [<https://policies.tamus.edu/08-01-01.pdf>] all university employees are mandated reporters and are required to disclose information about suspected or alleged violations as listed above and defined in System Regulation 08.01.01. If the Title IX Office receives information about an incident, they will reach out to offer information about resources, rights, and procedural options as a member of the campus community. Although I have an

obligation to report, you will, in most cases, control how your case will be handled. When working with the Title IX Office you will have access to resources and accommodations but also have the opportunity to express if you wish to move forward with an investigation. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the options available to you as a student. Community members are not required to respond to this outreach.

If you or another student wishes to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the [Student Wellness & Counseling Center](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html), [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html], 254.501.5955, or swacc@tamuct.edu, located in Warrior Hall Room 207L or the Student Support Advocate, 254.501.5978 or ssa@tamuct.edu, located in founder Hall Room 317D.

Tutoring and Success Coaching

Tutoring and success coaching services are available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both virtually and in-person.

To schedule tutoring sessions or view tutor availability, please contact Warriorcenter@tamuct.edu or visit Warrior Hall, 111.

If you have questions about these or other academic support services or are interested in becoming a tutor, please contact the Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion at (254) 501-5836, email us at WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu. You are welcome to visit the Warrior Center at Warrior Hall, suite 212.

Chat live with a remote tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Library & Archives

The University Library & Archives provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 350 electronic databases containing approximately 631,525 eBooks and 75,149 journals, in addition to the 97,443 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 A&M-Central Texas 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 may take place virtually through WebEx, Microsoft Teams or in-person at the library. [Schedule an appointment here](https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments) [https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments]. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group workspaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](https://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [https://tamuct.libguides.com/index]

University Writing Center

University Writing Center: For the summer semesters, all University Writing Center (UWC) tutoring services are entirely online. The hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday with additional hours Monday through Thursday nights from 6:00-9:00 p.m. The UWC is also offering hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor.

OTHER POLICY STATEMENTS

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university 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/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 Wellness and Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html].

Behavioral Intervention

Texas A&M University-Central Texas 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, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](#) online

[https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?TAMUCentralTexas].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](#) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/bit]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5805.

VIII. The professor teaching this class

Dr. Rappaport has had a life-long interest in writing, starting with writing short stories and novels during childhood and adolescence, helping produce a Creative Writing Newsletter for her senior class in high school in Tehran, Iran, and continuing on through writing her PhD dissertation on how medical social work developed as a profession. Being a professional social worker for 25 years involved countless hours of writing all the types of activities that will be discussed in this class, and she quickly learned the importance all that writing played in the strength of her professional reputation. When she supervised other social workers, she was often dismayed

at the poor writing skills some of them had, and she often had to do extensive proof-reading and editing of those social workers' written work before it could be finalized. In August 2000 when she came here to teach full-time in the Social Work Department, she quickly discovered that many social work students also struggle with their writing skills and that the students feel as frustrated by this as do the professors. With this elective class, Dr. Rappaport is seeking additional ways to help students improve their ability to write professionally.

Dr. Rappaport takes teaching very seriously. She wants students to enjoy this class and to feel like they learned a great deal from it. She is committed to coming to class prepared, to openly and willingly doing everything she can to help students improve their writing, and to encouraging everyone to participate actively in the discussions and writing exercises. In return, she expects students to come to class prepared, having read the day's assignment and being ready to ask any questions they have about things they did not understand in the reading. Writing exercises that are to be completed at home must be done before class or the student will not benefit as much from the class session that day. Dr. Rappaport also expects students to approach this class with a spirit of adventure and cooperation, readily agreeing to participate in the various exercises and activities to see how much these can help improve their writing. She is committed to having all assignments graded by the next class period since that is particularly crucial in this class.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Description of Class Activities and Reading and Other Assignments Due
Tuesday 6/6/23	Review course syllabus Review of APA format for writing papers (in all SWK classes). Bring your copy of the APA Manual to class. Discussion of why good writing skills are important in social work Review the most common errors Dr. Rappaport has to correct in students' papers (her "pet peeves") Write an essay on "Why Good Writing is Important in a Social Worker." Turn it in at the beginning of the next class.
Thursday 6/8/23	Reading: The importance of correct spelling Lester and Beason, Appendix A – "Homophone Misspellings and Commonly Confused Words" Lester and Beason, Appendix B – "Commonly Misspelled Words" Lester and Beason, Appendix C – "Eggcorns: Incorrect Wording that Seems Correct" Kaufman & Straus, pp. 85-154, Chapter 5 – "Confusing Words and Homonyms" Turn in your draft essay on "Why Good Writing is Important in a Social Worker." You can ask questions about it in class before you turn it in and make any final corrections you want to make before it gets turned in. Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #1, do it at home and turn it in next class

<p>Tuesday 6/13/23</p>	<p>Reading: Chapter 1, Lester & Beason, Parts of Speech Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 1-4, 9-25</p> <p>Receive your “Why Good Writing is Important in a Social Worker” draft essay with numbers showing how many writing errors are on each line. Work on making corrections in class. The final version of the essay is due next class for grading.</p> <p>Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #1</p>
<p>Thursday 6/15/23</p>	<p>Turn in final essay on “Why Good Writing is Important in a Social Worker” for grading. Receive graded Writing Corrections Exercise #1; review errors in class</p> <p>Watch “The Blind Side” (2:08). Draft of your essay on a topic inspired by the movie is due next class. See the syllabus description of what the essay should consider.</p>
<p>Tuesday 6/20/23</p>	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 11, Commas Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 32-39 Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 2, Basic Phrases</p> <p>Receive the graded essay on “Why Good Writing is Important in a Social Worker.” Review the kinds of errors that students made on their essays.</p> <p>Turn in your draft essay on “The Blind Side.” Ask questions in class as needed.</p> <p>Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #2, do it at home and turn it in next class</p>
<p>Thursday 6/22/23</p>	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 3, Sentences and Clauses Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 9-10.</p> <p>Receive “The Blind Side” essay with numbers written on them. Ask about corrections in class. Finish revising the essay at home, due next class.</p> <p>Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #2</p>
<p>Tuesday 6/27/23</p>	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 4, Verb Forms Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 5, Verbals</p> <p>Turn in final essay on “The Blind Side”</p> <p>Receive graded Writing Corrections Exercise #2.</p> <p>Watch “The Missing” (2:17)</p>
<p>Thursday 6/29/23</p>	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 6, Writing Complete Sentences Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 7, Subject-Verb Agreement Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 4-8</p> <p>Receive graded essay on “The Blind Side.” Review common errors made by students. Turn in initial draft of your essay on “The Missing”</p> <p>Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #3 in class; complete it at home, due next class</p>
<p>Tuesday 7/4/23</p>	<p>HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY – NO CLASS TODAY</p>

Thursday 7/6/23	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 8, Pronoun Problems Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 9, Verb Problems Receive “The Missing” Essay draft essay with numbers; work on corrections in class, then complete revising it at home; due next class</p> <p>Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #3 for grading</p>
Tuesday 7/11/23	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 10, Modification Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 12, Apostrophes Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 50-56</p> <p>Turn in “The Missing” Essay for final grading Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #3 graded, review errors in class Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #4, do it at home, due next class Watch “Normal” (1:48)</p>
Thursday 7/13/23	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 13, semicolons and colons Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 39-43 Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 14, Quotation Marks Reading: Straus, pp. 43-49 Receive graded “The Missing” Essay; discuss common mistakes made</p> <p>Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #4 for grading Turn in draft of “Normal” essay</p>
Tuesday 7/18/23	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 15, Dashes, Hyphens, and Other Punctuation Lester & Beason Chapter 16, Capitalization Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 56-67 and 69-77 Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 17, Parallelism Receive graded Writing Corrections Exercise #4 Receive “Normal” essay with numbers; discussion of corrections needed</p>
Thursday 7/20/23	<p>Reading: Lester & Beason, Chapter 18, Grammar Etiquette for Digital Communication Reading: Kaufman & Straus, pp. 79-83, Writing Numbers Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #5, do it at home, due next class</p> <p>Turn in final essay on “Normal” for grading</p>
Tuesday 7/25/23	<p>Receive graded “Normal” essays, review common errors Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #5 for grading Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #6, do it at home, due next class Receive written portion of final exam to work on at home</p>
Thursday 7/27/23	<p>Receive graded Writing Corrections Exercise #5; review errors made Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #6 for grading</p>
Tuesday 8/1/23	<p>Receive graded Writing Corrections Exercise #6; review errors made Turn in written portion of final exam Watch movie for final exam essay (1:49)</p>

Thursday 8/3/23	Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #7, work on it at home, due next class Discuss common errors you are still making in your writing and how to avoid them
Tuesday 8/8/23	Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #7 for grading Receive Writing Corrections Exercise #8 to work on at home, due next class Turn in movie essay for final exam
Thursday 8/10/23	Review what you have learned and anything that is still confusing about writing Receive graded Writing Corrections Exercise #7, review errors in class Turn in Writing Corrections Exercise #8 for grading FINAL EXAM: Your essay on the final movie is due today

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following resources were used in developing handouts for this class and/or can be used by students to provide further information on the topics covered by the course:

- Aaron, Jane E. (2012). *The Little, Brown Essential Handbook, 8th edition*. Glenview: Pearson Education.
- Alter, Catherine; and Carl Adkins (2006). "Assessing Student Writing Proficiency in Graduate Schools of Social Work." *Journal of Social Work Education*, 42 (2) Spring/Summer, 337-354.
- Casson, Leslie E. (2006). *A Writer's Handbook: Developing Writing Skills for University Students*. Broadview Press.
- Goldstein, H. (1993). "Writing to be Read: The Place of the Essay in Social Work Literature." *Families in Society*, 74, 441-446.
- Good, C. Edward (2002). *A Grammar Book for You and I ... OOPS, Me! All the Grammar You need to Succeed in Life*. Sterling, VA: Capital Books.
- Harris, Robert (2003). *When Good People Write Bad Sentences: 12 Steps to Better Writing Habits*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.
- Harris, Robert (2002). *Using Sources Effectively: Strengthening Your Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism*. Los Angeles: Pyczak Publishing.
- Heppner, P. Paul; and Mary J. Heppner (2004). *Writing and Publishing Your Thesis, Dissertation, and Research: A Guide for Students in the Helping Professions*. Belmont: Brooks/Cole.
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- Lederer, Richard; and John Shore (2005). *Comma Sense: A Fundamental Guide to Punctuation*. St. Martin's Press.
- O'Conner, Patricia T. (2003). *Woe is I: The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English*. New York: Riverhead Books.
- Oglensky, B. D. (2008). "Record Writing and Professional Socialization in Social Work." *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 3 (6), 7-14.

Parrish, Thomas (2002). *The Grouchy Grammarian*. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons.

Richardson, L. (1990). *Writing Strategies: Reaching Diverse Audiences*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Stilman, Anne (1997). *Grammatically Correct: The Writer's Essential Guide to Punctuation, Spelling, Style, Usage, and Grammar*. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books.

Szuchman, Lenore T.; and Barbara Thomlinson (2004). *Writing with Style: APA Style for Social Work, 2nd edition*. Belmont: Brooks/Cole.

Troyka, Lynn Quitman; and Douglas Hesse (2010). *Quick Access Reference for Writers, 6th edition*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Tullos, Margaret (2014). *Grammar Therapy for Social Workers: A Basic Guide to Standard English, 2nd edition*. M & W Publishing Company.

Weisman, Daniel; and Joseph L. Zornado (2013). *Professional Writing for Social Work Practice*. New York: Springer Publishing.

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* (6th 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
- 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).

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).**