

SOCW 4143-001: Professional Social Work

Spring 2026



UTTyler™ **SOCIAL
WORK**

Instructor Information

Instructor:

Ericka Freeman, LCSW-S
Associate Professor in Practice

Office:

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In-Person Office Hours:

Thursdays 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.; 5-6 p.m.

Mondays 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Other hours available by appointment only.

Virtual Office Hours via Zoom: By appointment only. Please email me directly and we can schedule a time that works best for you (unless I am teaching a class or attending a faculty meeting)!

Course Information

Section Information:

SOCW 4143-001

Time and Place of Class Meetings: Thursdays, 6 – 7:50 p.m., College of Arts and Sciences, Room 104

Course Overview: The course draws on topic areas that are relevant to beginning social work generalist practice including the transition to graduate school, job marketability, job searches, assumption of a professional practice role, ethical social work practice, preparation for professional examinations, professional test-taking, and developing the attitude of a long-term learner.

Description of Course Content: Built on the content of all other courses in the social work curriculum, Social Work Professionalism is designed as a bridge to professional social work practice. Course content helps students to transition into professional practice through preparing and completing the professional licensing exam. Additionally, the course provides content on salient aspects of professional social work practice. Finally, students are given skills to enable them to prepare a professional resume and interview for professional positions.

Students will work independently out of class to prepare for the licensure examination including taking practice examination in preparation for the actual examination. The purposed of this course is to provide closure on undergraduate education and ensure readiness for social work job searches and professional practice.

Prerequisites: SOCW 2361, SOCW 2362, SOCW 2371, SOCW 3303, SOCW 3304, SOCW 3308, SOCW 3108, SOCW 3409, SOCW 4132, SOCW 4331. SOCW 4332.

Student Learning Outcomes for SOCW 4143:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following outcomes as progression in the noted areas of the nine Core Competencies established by the Council on Social Work Education (EPAS 2022):

The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs follow the CSWE Educational Policy and Standards (EPAS) comprised of nine core competencies as follows:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
3. Engage in Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Articulate the implications of Social Work values and the NASW Code of Ethics for: interpersonal relationships with colleagues in future agency settings, handling issues that may be perceived as unethical; and identifying ethical issues within a licensing exam setting. **Competency 1**
- Demonstrate the knowledge of interlocking and complex nature of culture and personal identity; recognition of diversity within and between groups, of human behavior in rural environments including strategies of cooperation, natural helping networks as students prepare to either enter the profession or enroll in graduate school. **Competency 2**
- Describe the extent to which a culture's structure and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power. Identify ways to communicate effectively through electronic and in-person environments to ensure oppression and privilege are addressed and mitigated. **Competency 3**
- Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to evaluate social programs regarding the needs of groups served and cultural relevance, including best practice knowledge on professional dress, communication and agency protocols. **Competency 4**
- Discuss ways that social work students in future generalist practice can advocate for policies that advance the social well-being of clients and the profession. **Competency 5**
- Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice to inform and communicate professional judgments in preparation for direct client contact. **Competency 6**
- Identify the characteristics of constructive use of supervision to problem-solving issues that may occur in the practice setting regarding engaging, assessing, intervening, and evaluating with clients at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. **Competencies 6-9**
- Demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills to define, design, and implement strategies to enhance the well-being of persons from diverse groups. **Competencies 2, 8**

Course Reading Assignments and Expectation

All reading materials for this course are furnished to students **free of charge** through Open Education Resources (OER) and copyright free material. The materials are embedded in this course and available for download. Students are not required to purchase a textbook.

All readings, study guides and videos will be posted on Canvas.

Students are encouraged to read any material assigned in the module *before* the corresponding class date. Alongside learning about professionalism, we will be practicing it!

Descriptions of Assignments:

Preparing for Practice

Students are highly encouraged to be present for all scheduled classes. Students cannot earn points toward the Preparing for Practice portion of their final grade if they are not present. Each class will contain a practical application to the week's reading assignment and course material, such as

interviewing skills, professionalism, mock exams, and use of supervision. Students earn 10 points for each class they are present. Students must earn at least 70 points to pass the class*.

Students who do not earn at least 70 points (attending less than 7 out of 15 meeting times) will **fail the course, regardless of grades in other assignments.*

Self-Study Module Assignments

Three of the course modules will contain a self-study assignment. Students will utilize results from the assignment in class discussions and to receive feedback from the instructor. Assignments will compliment assigned readings to address any barriers to successfully entering the social work practice.

Assignment specifics for submissions, including due date(s), are found under the “Assignments” link in Canvas and will be presented during class.



LBSW Mock Exam

Students will sit for a mock exam to demonstrate knowledge gleaned. Scoring on the exam will NOT indicate the scoring for this assignment. That is, students can fail the mock exam and not fail this assignment. Additional information on this assignment is found under the “Assignments” link in Canvas and will be presented during class.

Job Search Portfolio

Students will complete a portfolio that will include a resume, as well as other self-promotion material, such as a LinkedIn profile, a personal website, and a profile on at least one social work-specific job search website. Additional information on this assignment is found under the “Assignments” link in Canvas and will be presented during class.

Grading Information

Course Grading	
A = 90 – 100	
B = 80 – 89.9	
C = 70 – 79.9	
D = 60 – 69.9	
F = Below 60	

Grading Weight of Each Assignment

Assignment	%
In-Class Activities: Preparing for Practice	20
Self-Study Module Assignments	30
LBSW Mock Exam	20
Job Search Portfolio	30
Total	100

Expectations for Grading

All written assignments must be grammatically correct using APA style. Assignments with many grammatical errors, misspellings, and/or evidence of plagiarism will not receive a satisfactory grade. All written assignments will be due on the date listed on the course schedule.

Ten points will be deducted for late assignments*.

No assignment will be accepted after five days late.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is completed on time and submitted correctly.

Academic Integrity

All work in this course is expected to be your own, completed by you for this class. If you receive help from an article, book, website, another person, etc., you must indicate that on the assignment. This is called citing your sources. When you take credit for someone else's work, it is plagiarism. If you are ever unsure about whether you have correctly given credit to a source, please ask, and I will help you.

AI Usage in SOCW 4143

In this course, we will practice using artificial intelligence (AI) **transactionally—as a tool, not a crutch**—to strengthen professional judgment and better serve future social work clients.

Professor Freeman will provide clear guidance for each assignment regarding the appropriate level (or lack thereof) of AI to use. For more information, see UT Tyler's AI Statement in the "University Policies and Information" link at bottom of this syllabus.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study:

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 3 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for quizzes, etc.

Attendance:

Engaged and timely participation in all assignments constitutes "attendance" for purposes of this course.

That is, while attendance is not "taken" officially, Professor Freeman is most cognizant of your engagement and participation each class. Participate actively in class discussions by asking questions and responding to questions. Encourage your classmates to engage, as well, by practicing social work empathic and active listening skills. We sometimes learn best vicariously.

Stay off your cell phones or other electronic devices unless instructed to do so as part of an in-class assignment. As much as we want to believe we can "multitask" our attention is compromised when we do more than one brain activity at a time!

Course Schedule

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course. Any changes will be communicated in a timely manner through UT Tyler email and announcement(s) in Canvas.

This course is organized by modules. Each module begins on a Sunday, at 12 a.m., and ends on the following Sunday, at 11:59 p.m. Any assignment due in a module must be submitted by the corresponding Sunday.

Module	Class Dates	Topics	Required Readings	Assignments Due/ Date
1	1/15	Carving out a future in Social Work	Syllabus	
2	1/22	Knowing Yourself Using Self Reflection and Self-Regulation to Promote Well-Being Through Self-Care (Speaker: Triciana Porter, LMSW)	Booklet: "Self-Care Toolkit" Selected Chapter, Ch 5: "Using Reflection and Self-Regulation to Promote Well-Being Through Self-Care"	
3	1/29	Strategic Job Searching (Speaker: Amy Swindle)		Self-Study #1: Social Work Self Inventory (Due Feb 1)
4	2/5	Demonstrating Professional Behavior in Oral, Written, And Electronic Communication (Speaker Kristi Lemmert, LCSW-S)	Selected Chapter, Ch 6: "Developing Your Professional Competencies"	
5	2/12	Using Supervision to Guide Professional Development And Behavior (Speaker Dr. Chuck McPherson, LCSW-S)	Selected Chapter, Ch 4: "Using Supervision to Guide Professional Development And Behavior" Podcast: "What does reflective supervision really look like?" (Social Work Café)	Self-Study #2 Professional Documentation Workbook Lesson 6 (Due Feb 15)

6	2/19	Professional Dress (Speaker Jackie Clay-Robertson, LMSW)	Journal Article: “ <i>Dress Like Me: An Exploration of Rural Graduate Social Work Attire</i> ”	
7	2/26	Building Relationships And Interprofessional Collaboration: Mentors, etc.	Article “Collaborations in Social Work – How to Effectively Serve Clients Through Teamwork” Podcast “The Social Worker’s Role on an IPE” (IPE 10X10)	Self-Study #3 Professional Presentation, Workbook Lesson 7 (Due March 1)
8	3/5	Graduate School 101	Review Canvas-posted material of 3 graduate schools of choice	
SB	3/12	SPRING BREAK		Enjoy some self-care ☺
9	3/19	LBSW Exam Prep Part 1	LBSW Study Guide	
10	3/26	LBSW Exam Prep Part 2	LBSW Study Guide	
11	4/2	LBSW Exam Prep Part 3	LBSW Study Guide	
12	4/9	LBSW Mock Exams		LBSW Mock Exam (in class)
13	4/16	Safety in Field and Agency	Chapter 1, pp 8-11 NASW Guidelines for Social Worker Safety	
14	4/23	Establishing a Professional Identity	Article: “The Place of Knowledge in Constructing Social Work Identity: Validating Vagueness” Podcast: How do you Define Your Professional Identity (Social Work Café)	Job Search Portfolio due April 26
15	4/30	What else do I need to know? Student-driven Q&A		

University Policies and Information

For all updated UT Tyler student policies and information for the 2025-2026 Academic Year, please visit:

<https://uttyler.instructure.com/courses/52073/pages/university-policies-and-information-4>