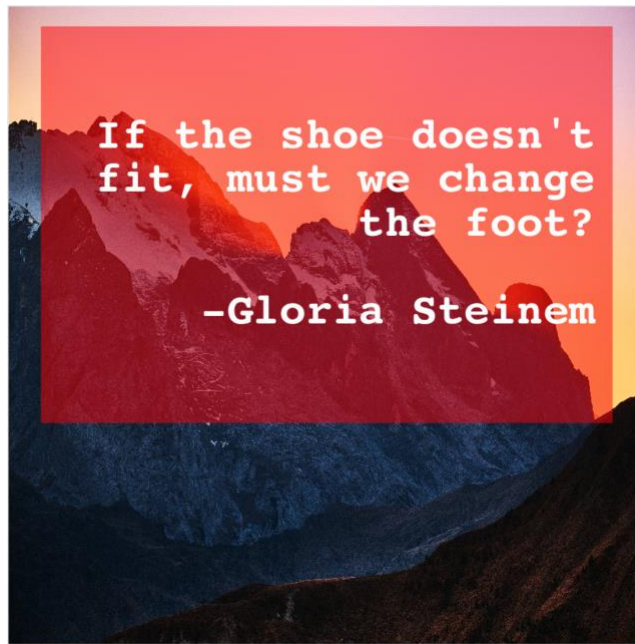




UTTyler SOCIAL
WORK

SOCW 4331: Individual Practice Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor:

Ericka Freeman, LCSW-S
Associate Professor of Practice

Office:

College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) #152B

Telephone Number: 817-774-8420

Email Address (preferred method of communication): efreeman@uttyler.edu

In-Person Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 2 - 3 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

Time and Place of Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 – 1:50 p.m., RBN #3039

Description of Course Content: This course introduces students to both theory and methods for social work practice with individuals and families. It emphasizes a generalist perspective, beginning interviewing and relationship skills, problem assessment, goal setting, and contracting. Special attention is given to the common roles assumed by social workers (e.g. facilitator, broker, advocate).

Prerequisites: SOCW 2361, SOCW 2362, SOCW 2371, SOCW 3303. **Corequisite:** SOCW 4132

Course Overview:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to critical evaluation of the value base of the social work profession and basic practice concepts including interviewing, communication and problem-solving skills, theories and methodologies of social work assessment, case management and other generalist interventions with individuals and families across a variety of practice settings.

Student Learning Outcomes for SOCW 4331:

Upon successful completion of this course, undergraduate students will be able to demonstrate the following beginning generalist social work knowledge and skills consistent with professional ethics, evidence-informed practice, applicable laws, the NASW Code of Ethics, and the person-in-environment perspective:

1. Apply the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws, ethical decision-making models, and professional judgment to simulated social work practice situations.
2. Use reflection and professional self-awareness to recognize how personal values, assumptions, and life experiences may influence engagement with clients while maintaining ethical practice.
3. Apply theories of human behavior, person-in-environment, and interdisciplinary practice frameworks to engagement and interviewing in simulated practice situations with individuals and families.
4. Demonstrate empathy, reflection, professional communication, and relationship-building skills when engaging individuals and families in simulated practice.
5. Collect, organize, interpret and synthesize intake and interview information using critical thinking to guide beginning stages of the social worker-client helping relationship.

Required Course Readings and Expectations

No need to lug around a heavy and expensive textbook for this course! All your brain food will be served upon Canvas via Open Education Resources (OER), UT Tyler Library E-Books, or through a delightful mix of podcasts, articles, and videos whipped up by the instructor.

Dive into those FREE and RIVOTING reading, listening and viewing assignments before class—they're your ticket to lively discussions! Feel free to bring all your burning questions and quirky comments to the lecture. Your curiosity and insights are the best indicators for the instructor to gauge if you're flipping through those pages outside of class.

Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations:

Quizzes and Knowledge Checks (20% Final Grade)

Throughout the semester students will take 5 quizzes or “knowledge checks.” These are designed as check points so that both the instructor can gauge progress of learning (or need to revisit) and students to demonstrate knowledge gleaned in small chunks. Several are comprised of multiple choice and true/false questions while a few are short answer and demonstrative in nature. The due date for each is listed in the course schedule.

Workbook Lessons (30% Final Grade)

Students will engage in assigned interviewing workbook activities such as reading vignettes or watching client simulations, and then demonstrate learned knowledge and skills through three (3) separate lessons dispersed throughout the semester. The workbook is provided to students on Canvas. Each lesson corresponds to what we are learning in class. Additional information, instruction and rubric for this assignment will be posted in Canvas. The due date for each lesson is listed in the course schedule.

Client Simulations and Observations (30% Final Grade)

Students will participate in simulated client interviews. Clients are portrayed by social work students. Each student is assigned a partner; partners will take turns being the social worker and client. Every student will participate each class, although only two students at a time will interview. Remaining students will provide feedback and practice note taking (also a graded component of the assignment.) During some classes, students will also be given in-class homework that compliments the interview and allows further practice of oral presentation skills. Additional information, instruction and rubric for this assignment will be posted in Canvas. The due date for completed notes is listed in the course schedule.

Ethical Dilemma (20% Final Grade)

In this assignment, students, in two to three groups, are responsible for determining an ethical course of action for handling a dilemma in an assigned scenario. Students should utilize resource materials in class lecture, course readings, and the NASW Code of Ethics. Students will review a scenario (assigned by the instructor) and discuss what ethical principles, core values and practice principles are at play, arriving at a suggested solution. Students will share their dilemma and subsequent course of action to the class, using a visual depiction (e.g., infographic, Canva, Power Point, brief video) and oral presentation. Additional information, instruction and rubric for this assignment will be posted in Canvas. The due date for this assignment is listed in the course schedule

Grading Information:

Assignment	%
Knowledge/Quiz Checks	20
Workbook Lessons	30
Client Simulations and Observations	30
Ethical Dilemma	20
Total	100

Grading Scale:

90 and Above =A

80 - 89.9 = B

70 -79.9 = C

60 - 69.9 = D

Below 60 = F

A grade of incomplete will not be given for this class.

Expectations for Grading

All written assignments must be grammatically correct using APA style. Assignments with many grammatical errors, misspellings, and/or evidence of plagiarism or incorrect use of AI 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.

*Weekly Role Plays, Evaluations and Observations are difficult for late submission as most occur during regularly scheduled class times; however, make-up assignments may be offered on a case-by-case basis by speaking directly with Professor Freeman within 5 days of absence.

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 4331:

We are going to promote the responsible use of AI as a learning tool for social work students and future practitioners, while keeping academic and professional integrity intact. Think of it as trying to ride a unicycle on a tightrope!

For each assignment, I'll clearly outline the level of AI involvement allowed, which could range from "no AI at all" to "bring your AI to school day." When you do use AI, make sure to give it a shout-out, provide links to all the AI shenanigans, and include your original work.

You'll need to stick to these guidelines and be ready to chat about how AI contributed. This policy is here to boost your proficiency in critical thinking and hone those vital social work skills. Remember,

the aim is for everyone to learn and level up their skills, without accidentally creating an AI that takes over the world!

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 9 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 and presence in all assignments and classes constitutes "attendance" for purposes of this course. As students cannot engage and participate without being physically present for class, attendance will be taken each class meeting unless otherwise announced by the instructor.

Each student is allowed up to two (2) absences without grade reduction penalty. Each absence after the second (2nd) absence will result in a 5-point reduction in final grade per absence. (e.g. absence #3 = 95, absence #4=90, etc.) In addition, it is important for students to come to class prepared to take part in class. Grades will reflect accordingly.

Students who miss more than 50% of the scheduled in-person class dates will not pass the class.

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.



Thanksgiving Break:

No course material or assignments during the week of November 23 – 27, 2026,

Unless otherwise indicated, assignments are due on Sundays, end of day, 11:59 p.m. (Stroke before midnight) at the end of the assigned module.

Module	Class Dates	Topics	Required Readings/ Activities	Assignments Due
Getting Started	8/25 and 8/27	Course Overview	Syllabus, Assignments and Simulated Interview Guidelines	"Getting Started Module," includes Quiz/Knowledge Check 1 Due 8/30/26
1	9/1 and 9/3 9/8 and 9/10	Ethical Practice	Read: "Ethical Issues in Social Work", "Integrating Values into Social Work Practice", NASW Social Work Code of Ethics Workbook Lesson 1 "Ethics"	Skills Workbook Lesson 1 Due 9/6/26 Ethical Dilemma Presentations in Class Due 9/10/26
2	9/15 and 9/17	Preparing	Watch, Listen To or Read: Podcast or YouTube Video: "Absorbing Emotions"	Quiz/Knowledge Check 2 Due 9/20/26
3	9/22 and 9/24	Documenting Client Simulation Guidelines and Practice	Read: "Best Guide on Social Work Case Notes" and Case Documentation examples	
4	9/29 and 10/1 10/6 and 10/8	Intake and Engagement	Read: "Developing the Relationship"	Quiz/Knowledge Check 3 Due 10/4/26 <i>Client Simulation 10/1</i> <i>Client Simulation 10/8</i>
5	10/13 and 10/15 10/20 and 10/22	Beginner Interviewing Skills: Communication	Read: Keys to Communication: Ch 3, 4 Workbook Lesson 2 "Body Language and Non-Verbal Communication"	Workbook Lesson 2 Due 10/18/26 Quiz/Knowledge Check 4 Due 10/25/26 <i>Client Simulation 10/15</i> <i>Client Simulation 10/22</i>

6	10/27 and 10/29 11/3 and 11/5	Beginner Interviewing Skills: Listening	Read: Keys to Communication: Ch 5, 6 and 7	Workbook Lesson 3 Due 11/8//26 <i>Client Simulation 10/29</i> <i>Client Simulation 11/5</i>
7	11/10 and 11/12	Motivational Interviewing	Read: “Motivational Interviewing”, Listen to or Read: Podcast “Motivational Interviewing, 3 rd edition”	Quiz/Knowledge Check 5 Due 11/15/26 <i>Client Simulation 11/12</i>
8	11/17 and 11/19 12/1 and 12/3	Handling Conflict and Managing Expectations	Read: Interpersonal Communication, ch 9 Watch, listen to or read: YouTube Video/Podcast “Managing Expectations”	<i>Client Simulation 11/19</i>

University Policies and Information

For 2026-2027 Academic Year policies, please visit:

<https://uttyler.instructure.com/courses/55508/pages/university-policies-and-information-4>