HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT I
SOWK 8070 | 3 credit hours

Fall Semester 2022
Class Meetings: Mondays, 4:00–6:00 P.M., 126 CPACS

Instructor: Professor C.J. Washington (Dr. Washington; She | Her | Hers)
Office: 206 CPACS
Office Phone: 402.554.2792
Email: cjwashington@unomaha.edu

NOTE: Students should contact the instructor via email rather than by phone. Email messages will be responded to within 24 hours, excluding weekends, holidays, and breaks.

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00–3:00 P.M. or by appointment
Online Office Hours: Wednesdays, 6:30–8:00 P.M. or by appointment

Department: Grace Abbott School of Social Work
Main Office: 206 CPACS
Dept. Phone: 402.554.2972

COURSE INFORMATION

Description
This course is the first part of a two-semester sequence within the MSW required curriculum. It focuses on major contributions of theories from the biological, social, and behavioral sciences that help to understand human functioning across the lifespan, particularly infancy through adolescence, within the social environment at the micro- and macro-level (e.g., individuals, families, groups, institutions, organizations, and communities), as they relate to effective social work generalist practice.

Rationale/Overview
The purpose of this course is to provide the student with basic knowledge of major contributions of the biological, social, and behavioral sciences to the understanding of human functioning across the lifespan, particularly from infancy through adolescence. This course focuses on the reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments within the context of micro- and macro-level social systems (e.g., individuals, families, groups, institutions, organizations, and communities). Within a social systems framework, this course emphasizes theories of biological, psychological, sociological, cognitive, moral, and cultural development during infancy through adolescence. These
lifespan development theories are applied to dimensions of human life, including culture, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, ability, sexual orientation, spirituality, and gender. The intent of this course is to develop students’ ability to assess and intervene with social work clients, utilizing a strengths-based, person-in-environment perspective in a way that will foster the health and well-being and promote social and economic justice.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe human behavior and functioning from a social systems theory perspective and its usefulness in social work practice on the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities).

2. Describe theories of lifespan development (e.g., bio-psycho-socio-cultural-spiritual) and the impact of development on human behavior from infancy through adolescence.

3. Describe the impact of the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities) on the promotion of and obstruction to individual well-being from infancy through adolescence.

4. Assess the use of lifespan models of development with diverse populations, including such factors as race/ethnicity, nationality, ability, gender, class, sexual orientation, and religion/spiritual beliefs, particularly as it applies to infancy through adolescence.

5. Identify the impact of oppression, discrimination, and economic deprivation upon populations at risk from infancy through adolescence.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)/SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Required Text(s)

Readings for this course will be assigned and available on Canvas. All course materials will be free to access, and most of the assigned readings will be available through Open Educational Resources (OER). A link to our primary textbook can be found here: https://uark.pressbooks.pub/hbse1/

“OER are teaching, learning, and resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by other.” –The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Instructions on how to use and gain access to these materials will be discussed in class.

COURSE STRUCTURE/FORMAT

Instructional methods used in this course may include lectures, class discussions, media/internet instruction, guest speakers, field experiences, reflective and self-awareness exercises, group exercises, written assignments, handouts, and quizzes/exams. Instructional methods in this course will be supported by UNO’s Learning Management System (e.g., Canvas). For totally online sections of this course, asynchronized instructional methods will be made through UNO’s learning management system (e.g., Canvas) and may include recorded lectures, discussion board, YouTube, and other internet/media-based instruction, recorded guest speakers, field experiences, reflective and self-awareness exercises, written assignments, electronic handouts, and/or quizzes/exams.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Introduction to Theory, Strengths, Bio-Psycho-Social Model</td>
<td>Introduction 1-10</td>
<td>Reading: 1-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Salience and Critical Thinking, PIE, Systems, Micro, Mezzo, Macro SOWK</td>
<td>Part I: 11-24&lt;br&gt;Chap I: 25-64</td>
<td>Reading: 11-24, 56-57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Disease and Medical Models&lt;br&gt;Social Learning Theory&lt;br&gt;Biological Aspects</td>
<td>Part II: 65-78&lt;br&gt;Chap 2: 79-98</td>
<td>Reading: 65-9</td>
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<td><strong>Due: Life Event Assignment #1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Sociological Theories&lt;br&gt;Culture</td>
<td>Part III: 99-104&lt;br&gt;Chap 3: 105-119&lt;br&gt;Chap 4: 120-150</td>
<td>Reading: 99-104</td>
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<td><strong>Due: Quiz #1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>Heredity, Prenatal Development, and Birth</td>
<td>Part V: 275-277&lt;br&gt;Chap 9: 279-345</td>
<td>Reading: 275-345</td>
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<td><strong>Due: Life Event Assignment #2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Due: Theory Application #1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Due: Life Event Assignment #3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 9</td>
<td>Development in Middle Childhood</td>
<td>Part VIII: 599-602&lt;br&gt;Chap 16: 603-628&lt;br&gt;Chap 17: 630-688&lt;br&gt;Chap 18: 690-728</td>
<td>Reading: 599-728</td>
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<td><strong>Due: Quiz #2</strong></td>
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<td>Module</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Development in Adolescence</td>
<td>Part IX: 729-732&lt;br&gt;Chap 19: 733-762&lt;br&gt;Chap 20: 763-784&lt;br&gt;Chap 21: 786-810</td>
<td>Reading: 729-810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Due: Theory Application #2** |
| 12    | Development in Middle Adulthood   | Part XII: 1131-1134<br>Chap 28: 1135-1196<br>Chap 29: 1197-1244<br>Chap 30: 1245-1297 | Reading: 1131-1297  
**Due: Life Event Assignment #4 AND Quiz #3** |
| 13    | Development in Late Adulthood     | Introduction 1-10<br>Part I: 11-24<br>Chap I: 25-64 | Reading: 1-10, 11-24, 56-57 |
| 1     | Introduction to Theory, Strengths, Bio-Psycho-Social Model | Introduction 1-10 | Reading: 1-10 |
| 2     | Salience and Critical Thinking, PIE, Systems, Micro, Mezzo, Macro SOWK | Part I: 11-24<br>Chap I: 25-64 | Reading: 11-24, 56-57 |

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Last day to drop a course (via MavLink) and receive a 100% refund January 19, 2020

Last day to withdraw from a course (via MavLink) with a grade of “W” April 3, 2020

NOTE: This syllabus is written as an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and expected learning outcomes. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule that may result in enhanced or more effective learning for students. These modifications will not substantially change the intent or objectives of this course.
ASSESSMENTS (ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXAMS)

Theory Application Journals (2 @ 20 pts. each) 40 points (total)
When working with clients, critical assessment is extremely important. This assignment is designed to help you practice the skills involved in critical assessment. There are vignettes listed at the beginning of each Life Stage Dimension of our OER textbook. Read the assigned vignette and then answer the Critical Thinking questions listed at the end of the vignette. You will respond to these in short answer format.

Quizzes (3 @ 20 pts. each) 60 points (total)
You will complete three (3) quizzes via Canvas throughout the semester. Quizzes are multiple choice and will cover content from our OER textbook. Each quiz will be 20 questions, worth 1 point each for a total of 20 points per quiz.

Life Event Paper
Over the course of the semester, you will work on your signature assignment. The paper is scaffolded into multiple assignments that you will turn in for feedback. For the final product, you will incorporate the feedback into one 6–8-page final draft.
This assignment will require you to identify a life event that will be your primary area of focus. This life event can be a marriage, birth of a child, a divorce, starting or graduating from school, loss of a loved one, surviving a traumatic event (e.g., natural disaster; car accident; violent crime), reaching a goal, etc. Life events are circumstances (can be positive or negative) that occur in all our lives that require us to adapt to them. Please be thoughtful about your choice of life event. It can perhaps seem initially obvious to choose something that was difficult or challenging as these events are sometimes more quickly recalled when we think about “significant” events. While you are going to be sharing from your personal experience, it will be important to do so from a professional vantage point.
For this assignment, choose a life event that impacted at least three generations. You can include yourself as one generation if you’d like. A generation for the purpose of this paper involves people who are in different phases of life. A child, a young adult, and an older adult would represent different stages of development. An adolescent, a middle-aged adult, and an older adult would also represent different stages of development.
Throughout the semester, you will collect oral histories around this life event from multiple individuals who shared the experience, you will evaluate and reflect on these histories, and you will apply theories from our course to help further define the experiences.
The assignment is scaffolded as follows:
Life Event: Assignment #1

For this assignment, you will identify your selected life event and your interviewees. You must choose at least 3 individuals who shared the experience. You may choose to write about a life event that includes your perspective, in which case you will identify 2 additional interviewees from other developmental stages. Additionally, you will create a list of questions that will be asked of all interviewees. Please consider the developmental stages of all interviewees and account for that in your universal questions. You should create at least 20 questions. Some ideas to explore might be ways the event impacted interviewee attitudes, behaviors and thoughts; how the interviewee adapted to the event; and how the event impacted existing relationships. You are seeking to understand how each person perceived the event and how their reactions to the event compare to one another.

Live Event: Assignment #2

You will complete your interviews and begin writing your draft. Your final draft will be comprised of 4 sections; for this assignment, you will focus only on the first two.

- Section 1: Introduction
  - Describe the life event that will be the focus of your interviews and why you chose this topic.
  - Describe the settings in which these interviews have taken place.
  - Briefly describe the people you are interviewing. No identifying information is necessary other than demographic data such as “a 51-year-old Asian woman.”
  - What was your hypothesis about the likely responses of the individuals you interviewed to the life event?
  - How did their responses differ or coincide with what you had expected?

- Section 2: The Interviews
  - Identify the list of questions that were used in your interviews. (Appendix)
  - Share the responses of your interviewees by simply writing a narrative that reflects the questions asked and their responses.
  - This section should include content only from your interviews and not your opinion.
What was your experience doing these interviews? What was most challenging? What did you enjoy about this process?

**Life Event: Assignment #3**

100 points (total)

This assignment covers the latter 2 sections of your final paper.

- **Section 3: Analysis** - The content in this part of the paper is an analysis of your interviews. This is the most important part of the paper.
  - Review Erikson’s developmental milestones for the developmental stage that your interviewees are in (e.g., middle childhood, adolescence, older adulthood, etc.), and comment on these.
  - In addition, you may also want to relate the analysis to some of the other developmental or intergenerational theories that have been discussed in class and your text that you find most relevant.
  - How can these theories explain some of the reactions or forms of coping that were utilized by those you interviewed? What insights did you develop because of these interviews?
  - Be sure and comment on these elements for all 3 interviewees.

- **Section 4: Conclusion**
  - What did you learn about how one’s place in the life course impacts how various life events affect people?
  - What are the implications for understanding human behavior in the social environment?
  - How will this assignment inform your future work as a social worker?

**Life Event: Assignment 4**

100 points (total)

This will be the final draft of the entire paper. You will need to be sure and incorporate feedback from your instructor from your previous assignments. The paper must adhere to APA formatting and style protocols, including references as needed. It is suggested that these major sections and subsections be used as APA-style headings to help structure your work.

400 points (total)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory Application Journals</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Event Assignment #1</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Event Assignment #2</td>
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<td>Life Event Assignment #3</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Life Event Assignment #4</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance / In-class Work</td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
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**GRADING SCALE**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
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<th>Quality Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98–100%</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94–97.9%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91–93.9%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>88–90.9%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84–87.9%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>81–83.9%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>78–80.9%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>77–77.9%</td>
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<td>71–73.9%</td>
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<td>68–70.9%</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>64–67.9%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>61–63.9%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
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<td>Below 60.9%</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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**WRITING GUIDELINES**

Students should make sure that writing assignments are free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Papers should adhere to the most recent citation style outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA).

**PLAGIARISM STATEMENT**

In this course, students will submit written work by making use of information and ideas found in print or online sources. Whenever material from another writer is used, it is important that students quote or paraphrase appropriately and cite the source.

The UNO Academic Integrity policy defines plagiarism as "presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person."

Failure to cite sources appropriately is plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will not be accepted. Consequences for plagiarism are up to the discretion of the instructor; they may range, for example, from rewriting all or part of a paper to a grade of F for the course. Students who plagiarize more than once are subject to disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the university.
Students SHOULD NOT GUESS when it comes to using or citing another writer's work. Students should contact the instructor or a consultant at the UNO Writing Center with questions. Students should take a printout of the original source as well as the paper that is being written to the consultation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found responsible for violating the policy on Academic Integrity shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Violations of the policy on Academic Integrity include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating, fabrication and falsification, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials and/or equipment, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsifying grade reports, and/or misrepresentation to avoid academic work. More information about these areas and the procedures addressing academic integrity is available from the Office of Academic and Student Affairs (EAB 202 | 402.554.2262).

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS
Students are expected to arrive on time to class meetings. Students should come to class well prepared, meaning readings and other assignments have been completed. Students are expected to be respectful of their classmates and the instructor. Distracting and/or disrespectful behaviors will not be tolerated.

CELL PHONES, MOBILE DEVICES, AND LAPTOPS
Students are welcome to use cell phones, mobile devices, and/or laptops in class provided they are used for academic purposes such as note taking, accessing course materials, or researching course concepts and their use does not disrupt fellow classmates. Please silence devices if at all possible. A student who receives a phone call or text, should step outside the classroom to respond. DO NOT take pictures or video during class.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
Students will be expected to have access to a computer frequently, as all writing assignments used will be typed out and not handwritten. The software students use to write assignments is irrelevant, as long as the writing guidelines outlined in this syllabus are followed. It is recommended that students have access to a computer weekly. Public computers are available on the UNO campus. Consult Information Technology Services and the Criss Library, for more information on equipment locations and availability.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT
Technical support for common university systems, including Canvas and email, is available from Information Technology Services technical support located in Eppley Administration Building (EAB) 104.
ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS
Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: 104 H&K, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)

CRISS LIBRARY
UNO’s Criss Library offers a wide variety of resources that support student learning. Subject specialist librarians have in-depth knowledge of researching within specific disciplines and can provide guidance for a specific area of study. Students are encouraged to explore customized resources featured on the Criss Library website.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
The University of Nebraska at Omaha is prepared for a wide range of emergencies. Students should familiarize themselves with procedures and assistance available on UNO’s emergency information page. If travel to campus is not feasible due to a declared emergency, a combination of Canvas, teleconferencing, and other technologies will be used to facilitate academic continuity. Students will be notified of procedures through Canvas course site announcements and email as appropriate.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
In the event of inclement or threatening weather, students should use his/her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Students who are not able to attend class due to adverse weather conditions, should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Similarly, if the instructor is unable to reach the class location, students will be notified of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (by approximately 1 hour before class starts and by posting an announcement in Canvas). Students who cannot get to class because of weather conditions, will be provided allowances relative to attendance policies as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.

PREFERRED NAME AND PREFERRED GENDER PRONOUNS
Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. The instructor will gladly honor a student’s request to be addressed by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise the instructor of this preference early in the semester so that instructor records may be changed appropriately.

WRITING CENTER
The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, go to unomaha.edu/writingcenter or visit their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall (ASH) 150.
SPEECH CENTER
The UNO Speech Center provides free consulting and coaching services to all UNO students, faculty, and staff in preparing oral presentations. The Speech Center Consulting Room can help students with presentation preparation, outlining, effective delivery techniques, along with any other presentational needs. Speech consulting will help at any stage in the speech-making process. For more information, visit the UNO Speech Center in Arts and Sciences Hall (ASH) 183 and 185.

STUDENT SAFETY
A variety of resources are available to support student safety and security. Students have experienced or are experiencing a difficult personal situation, should consult the resources available through the Division of Student Success.

OUTCOMES MAP AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)
Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Competencies
The student learning outcomes for this course are built upon the following nine social work core competencies set forth by the CSWE’s 2015 Educational Polices and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) which is required for all accredited social work programs.
1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.
2. Engage diversity and difference in practice.
3. Advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
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.

This map is intended to show how course topics, content, and activities align to the student learning outcomes outlined above. Course objectives are italicized to distinguish them from the core competencies set forth by the CSWE’s 2015 EPAS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Objective/Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>EPAS Competency</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Dimension*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Describe human behavior and functioning from a social systems theory perspective and its usefulness in social work practice on the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities).</td>
<td>5 and 7</td>
<td>Exams/quizzes; Theory Application Journals</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objective/Student Learning Outcome</td>
<td>EPAS Competency</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Dimension*</td>
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<td>2. Describe theories of lifespan development (e.g., bio-psycho-socio-cultural-spiritual) and the impact of development on human behavior from infancy through adolescence.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exams/quizzes; Theory Application Journals; Life Event Assignments</td>
<td>K, S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Describe the impact of the micro-macro level continuum (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities) on the promotion of and obstruction to individual well-being from infancy through adolescence.</td>
<td>7 and 9</td>
<td>Exams/quizzes; Theory Application Journals</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess the use of lifespan models of development with diverse populations, including such factors as race/ethnicity, nationality, ability, gender, class, sexual orientation, and religion/spiritual beliefs, particularly as it applies to infancy through adolescence.</td>
<td>2 and 7</td>
<td>Exams/quizzes; Theory Application Journals; Life Event Assignments; Classroom exercise</td>
<td>K, S, and CAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify the impact of oppression, discrimination, and economic deprivation upon populations at risk from infancy through adolescence.</td>
<td>2 and 3</td>
<td>Exams/quizzes; Theory Application Journals</td>
<td>K, V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dimensions Key:  
K = Knowledge  
S = Skills  
V = Value  
CAP = Cognitive and Affective Processing
REFERENCES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

References


Classic References


**Journals**

Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment

**Websites**

Child Abuse and Neglect / Sexual Violence


**Disabilities**


**Teen Pregnancy**

NARAL Pro-Choice America. (2020). Retrieved from [https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/about/](https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/about/)


**Hate Crimes**


**HIV/AIDS**


**LGBTQ**


**Others**
