

Unit Outline (Higher Education)

Institute / School: Institute of Education, Arts & Community

Unit Title: FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK THEORY

Unit ID: BSWUG3001

Credit Points: 15.00

Prerequisite(s): Nil

Co-requisite(s): Nil

Exclusion(s): Nil

ASCED: 090501

Description of the Unit:

This unit applies a critical lens to the multidisciplinary knowledge base of social work by further exploring major influencing theories, including psychosocial theory, human development theories, critical theory, radical and feminist theories and anti-oppressive approaches. It critically explores the history of social work with a particular focus on the historical and contemporary disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations People and Communities. It also further emphasises what it means to be a 'Critical Practitioner' while working at various levels, namely micro, meso and macro, and at the intersection of social work values, norms and ethics.

Grade Scheme: Graded (HD, D, C, P, MF, F, XF)

Work Experience:

No work experience: Student is not undertaking work experience in industry.

Does Recognition of Prior Learning apply to this Unit? No

Placement Component: No

Supplementary Assessment: Yes

Where supplementary assessment is available a student must have failed overall in the Unit but gained a final mark of 45 per cent or above and submitted all major assessment tasks.

CourseLevel:

Level of Unit in Course	AQF Level of Course					
	5	6	7	8	9	10
Introductory	■	■	■	■	■	■
Intermediate	■	■	✓	■	■	■
Advanced	■	■	■	■	■	■

Learning Outcomes:
Knowledge:

- K1.** Develop a conceptual and practical understanding of key theories that underpin a variety of Social Work practice frameworks;
- K2.** Demonstrate understanding of the relationships between various theoretical perspectives from studies in philosophy, sociology and psychology and their place in Social Work practice;
- K3.** Examine the history of, and current challenges in the profession of Social Work, including the contribution of the profession to the historical and contemporary disadvantage experienced by First Nations People and Communities;
- K4.** Develop beginning understanding of methods of social work intervention, including, counselling, community work, policy development and social action;
- K5.** Examine ethical codes, theories and principles and how they impact on social work practice and;
- K6.** Critically reflect on social work professional identity by examining how personal and professional values impact on social work practice.

Skills:

- S1.** Identify the key theoretical approaches that inform social work practice;
- S2.** Locate and contrast the multi-disciplinary influences that inform the development of social work theories;
- S3.** Understand the historical context of social work profession and its impact on contemporary social work practice;
- S4.** Recognise varied methods of social work intervention in a variety of social work settings and;
- S5.** Develop critical reflection skills as the basis for self-reflection and professional development as a social work practitioner.

Application of knowledge and skills:

- A1.** Develop skills in independently researching and identifying appropriate theoretical frameworks for supporting a range of ethical and effective Social Work practices;
- A2.** Utilise an evidence base in combination with critical reflection to theorise about Social Work practice frameworks;
- A3.** Develop capacity to systematically and creatively explore social work professional identity and its influence on individual social work practice and;
- A4.** Critically reflect upon the self and the impacts of personal and professional values on social work practice.

Unit Content:
The Complex History of Social Work

- Historical development of the profession of social work and the context of the human service sector

- Contemporary trends in the sector
- Historical and contemporary disadvantage experienced by First Nations People and Communities
- Setting the scene –

a). Methods of social work intervention, including counselling, community work, policy development and social action;

b). Fields of practice, including family violence, aged care, child protection, mental health, youth studies etc

Social Work Theories that Inform Practice

- Multidisciplinary nature of social work theories (influences from psychology, sociology, political, social policy etc).
- Theories in Social Work Practice:

a). Problem solving theories: Cognitive- Behavioural therapy, Psychosocial Health and Wellbeing, Human Development Theories, Systems Theories;

b). Empowerment Theories: Strengths and solutions, Narrative Practice, Humanistic and Existential Theories and Social Justice and Empowerment

c). Change Theories- Radical & Critical Social Work, Feminist practice, Anti-Oppressive practice

Introducing the Sector: Role of a Practitioner

- Values and ethics of practice Ethical theories, codes and principles (including the AASW code of ethics and practice standards)
- Understanding the self as human and as a social worker
- Understanding the others you may work with and being aware of language and discourse
- What it means to be a critical practitioner – reflecting on personal values

Topics may include:

- psychosocial theory, life course theory, critical theory, radical and feminist theory, postmodern theory and anti-oppressive approaches
- Areas of Practice: working with children and families, cross-cultural context, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.
- Reflecting on the role of social work profession

FEDTASKS

Federation University Federation recognises that students require key transferable employability skills to prepare them for their future workplace and society. FEDTASKS (**T**ransferable **A**tttributes **S**kills and **K**nowledge) provide a targeted focus on five key transferable Attributes, Skills, and Knowledge that are embedded within curriculum, developed gradually towards successful measures and interlinked with cross-discipline and Co-operative Learning opportunities. *One or more FEDTASK, transferable Attributes, Skills or Knowledge must be evident in the specified learning outcomes and assessment for each FedUni Unit, and all must be directly assessed in each Course.*

FEDTASK attribute and descriptor	Development and acquisition of FEDTASKS in the Unit	
	Learning Outcomes (KSA)	Assessment task (AT#)

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		Learning Outcomes (KSA)	Assessment task (AT#)
FEDTASK 1 Interpersonal	Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate, interact and work with others both individually and in groups. Students will be required to display skills in-person and/or online in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using effective verbal and non-verbal communication • Listening for meaning and influencing via active listening • Showing empathy for others • Negotiating and demonstrating conflict resolution skills • Working respectfully in cross-cultural and diverse teams. 	K4, S3, S4, S5, A1, A3	AT1, AT2, AT3
FEDTASK 2 Leadership	Students will demonstrate the ability to apply professional skills and behaviours in leading others. Students will be required to display skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a collegial environment • Showing self-awareness and the ability to self-reflect • Inspiring and convincing others • Making informed decisions • Displaying initiative 	K6, S4, A3	AT1, AT2
FEDTASK 3 Critical Thinking and Creativity	Students will demonstrate an ability to work in complexity and ambiguity using the imagination to create new ideas. Students will be required to display skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting critically • Evaluating ideas, concepts and information • Considering alternative perspectives to refine ideas • Challenging conventional thinking to clarify concepts • Forming creative solutions in problem solving 	K6, S4, A3	AT1, AT4
FEDTASK 4 Digital Literacy	Students will demonstrate the ability to work fluently across a range of tools, platforms and applications to achieve a range of tasks. Students will be required to display skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding, evaluating, managing, curating, organising and sharing digital information • Collating, managing, accessing and using digital data securely • Receiving and responding to messages in a range of digital media • Contributing actively to digital teams and working groups • Participating in and benefiting from digital learning opportunities 	K2, A1	AT1, AT2, AT3
FEDTASK 5 Sustainable and Ethical Mindset	Students will demonstrate the ability to consider and assess the consequences and impact of ideas and actions in enacting ethical and sustainable decisions. Students will be required to display skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making informed judgments that consider the impact of devising solutions in global economic environmental and societal contexts • Committing to social responsibility as a professional and a citizen • Evaluating ethical, socially responsible and/or sustainable challenges and generating and articulating responses • Embracing lifelong, life-wide and life-deep learning to be open to diverse others • Implementing required actions to foster sustainability in their professional and personal life. 	K1, K2, K3, K5, K6, S1, S2, S3, S4, A2	AT1, AT3

Learning Task and Assessment:

Learning Outcomes Assessed	Assessment Tasks	Assessment Type	Weighting
K1, K3, K4, K5, K6, S1, S3, S2, S4, S5, A3, A4	Learning exercises will explore key concepts covered in unit material, including developing an understanding of critical reflection as a tool for developing professional identity. Critical learning exercises will involve a wide variety of audio-visual/reading and case study resources.	Learning Portfolio	30%-40%
K3, K4, K5, S3, S4	Students will complete a quiz based on pre-seminar and face-to-face learning activities.	Quiz	20%-30%
K1, K4, K6, S1, S3, S4, S5 A1, A2, A3	Using a case study as the basis for your discussion, critically evaluate how social work theories inform and influence social work practice.	Essay	40%-50%

Alignment to the Minimum Co-Operative Standards (MiCS)

The Minimum Co-Operative Standards (MiCS) are an integral part of the Co-Operative University Model. Seven criteria inform the MiCS alignment at a Course level. Although Units must undertake MiCS mapping, there is NO expectation that Units will meet all seven criteria. The criteria are as follows:

1. Co-design with industry and students
2. Co-develop with industry and students
3. Co-deliver with industry
4. FedTASK alignment
5. Workplace learning and career preparation
6. Authentic assessment
7. Industry-link/Industry facing experience

MiCS Course level reporting highlights how each Course embraces the principles and practices associated with the Co-Operative Model. Evidence of Course alignment with the MiCS, can be captured in the Course Modification Form.

MICS Mapping has been undertaken for this Unit No

Date:

Adopted Reference Style:

APA

Refer to the [library website](#) for more information

Fed Cite - [referencing tool](#)