

Unit Outline (Higher Education)

Institute / School: Institute of Education, Arts & Community

Unit Title: Foundations of Social Work Theory

Unit ID: MSWPG7101

Credit Points: 15.00

Prerequisite(s): Nil

Co-requisite(s): Nil

Exclusion(s): Nil

ASCED: 090501

Description of the Unit:

This unit introduces students to social work theories but also broadly to the human services context. It introduces students to the multidisciplinary knowledge base of social work by 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 introduces students to the Australian Association of Social Work Practice Standards, that is areas of practice, fields of practice and ethical codes. It exposes students to what it means to be a 'Critical Practitioner' and how to recognise and work at various levels, namely micro, meso and macro. It emphasises the intersection between values, norms and ethical dimensions of social work practice.

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

Work Experience:

No work experience

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, has completed all major assessment tasks (including all sub-components where a task has multiple parts) as specified in the Unit Description and is not eligible for any other form of supplementary assessment.

Course Level:

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 of 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:

Topics may include: 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: 1. psychosocial theory, life course theory, critical theory, radical and feminist theory, postmodern theory and anti-oppressive approaches 2. Areas of Practice: working with children and families, cross-cultural context, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. 3. 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 be 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#)
FEDTASK 1 Interpersonal	Students at this level will demonstrate an advanced ability in a range of contexts to effectively communicate, interact and work with others both individually and in groups. Students will be required to display high level skills in-person and/or online in: • Using and demonstrating a high level of verbal and non-verbal communication • Demonstrating a mastery of listening for meaning and influencing via active listening • Demonstrating and showing empathy for others • High order skills in negotiating and conflict resolution skills\\ • Demonstrating mastery of working respectfully in cross-cultural and diverse teams.	Not applicable	Not applicable
FEDTASK 2 Leadership	Students at this level will demonstrate a mastery in professional skills and behaviours in leading others. • Creating and sustaining a collegial environment • Demonstrating a high level of self -awareness and the ability to self-reflect and justify decisions • Inspiring and initiating opportunities to lead others • Making informed professional decisions • Demonstrating initiative in new professional situations.	Not applicable	Not applicable

FEDTASK attribute and descriptor		Development and acquisition of FEDTASKS in the Unit	
		Learning Outcomes (KSA)	Assessment task (AT#)
FEDTASK 3 Critical Thinking and Creativity	Students at this level will demonstrate high level skills in working 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 to generate and consider complex ideas and concepts at an abstract level • Analysing complex and abstract ideas, concepts and information • Communicate alternative perspectives to justify complex ideas • Demonstrate a mastery of challenging conventional thinking to clarify complex concepts • Forming creative solutions in problem solving to new situations for further learning. 	Not applicable	Not applicable
FEDTASK 4 Digital Literacy	Students at this level will demonstrate the ability to work competently across a wide 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"> • Mastering, exploring, evaluating, managing, curating, organising and sharing digital information professionally • Collating, managing complex data, accessing and using digital data securely • Receiving and responding professionally to messages in a range of professional digital media • Contributing competently and professionally to digital teams and working groups • Participating at a high level in digital learning opportunities. 	Not applicable	Not applicable
FEDTASK 5 sustainable and Ethical Mindset	Students at this level will demonstrate a mastery of considering and assessing the consequences and impact of ideas and actions in enacting professional ethical and sustainable decisions. Students will be required to display skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate informed judgment making that considers the impact of devising complex solutions in ambiguous global economic environmental and societal contexts • Professionally committing to the promulgation of social responsibility • Demonstrate the ability to evaluate ethical, socially responsible and/or sustainable challenges and generating and articulating responses • Communicating lifelong, life-wide and life-deep learning to be open to the diverse professional others • Generating, leading and implementing required actions to foster sustainability in their professional and personal life 	Not applicable	Not applicable

Learning Task and Assessment:

Learning Outcomes Assessed	Assessment Tasks	Assessment Type	Weighting
K3, K5, K6, S3, 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%
K1, K2, K5, S2, S4, A4	Students will complete a quiz based on pre-seminar and face-to-face learning activities. Hurdle Assessment: All students are required to complete the Academic Integrity Module before the submission of the quiz.	Quiz	20%-30%
K1, K2, K4, K5, S1, S2, S3, S4, A1, A2, A3, A4	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%

Adopted Reference Style:

APA ()

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

Fed Cite - [referencing tool](#)