

# Course Outline (Higher Education)

<b>School:</b>	School of Arts
<b>Course Title:</b>	FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK THEORY
<b>Course ID:</b>	MSWPG7101
<b>Credit Points:</b>	15.00
<b>Prerequisite(s):</b>	Nil
<b>Co-requisite(s):</b>	Nil
<b>Exclusion(s):</b>	Nil
<b>ASCED:</b>	090501

## Description of the Course:

This course 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)

**Placement Component:** No

**Supplementary Assessment:** Yes

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

## Program Level:

Level of course in Program	AQF Level of Program					
	5	6	7	8	9	10
Introductory	■	■	■	■	✓	■

Level of course in Program	AQF Level of Program					
	5	6	7	8	9	10
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.

#### Course 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:

- 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

### Values:

- V1.** Commit to the values of Social Work espoused in the Australian Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics and Practice Standards;
- V2.** Develop an attitude of scholarly enquiry and an enthusiasm for knowledge; and,
- V3.** Apply principles of self-directed learning in a co-operative education environment.

### Graduate Attributes

The Federation University FedUni graduate attributes (GA) are entrenched in the [Higher Education Graduate Attributes Policy](#) (LT1228). FedUni graduates develop these graduate attributes through their engagement in explicit learning and teaching and assessment tasks that are embedded in all FedUni programs. Graduate attribute attainment typically follows an incremental development process mapped through program progression. **One or more graduate attributes must be evident in the specified learning outcomes and assessment for each FedUni course, and all attributes must be directly assessed in each program**

Graduate attribute and descriptor		Development and acquisition of GAs in the course	
		Learning Outcomes (KSA)	Assessment task (AT#)
GA 1 Thinkers	Our graduates are curious, reflective and critical. Able to analyse the world in a way that generates valued insights, they are change makers seeking and creating new solutions.	K1, K2, K6, S1, S4, A2	AT1, AT3
GA 2 Innovators	Our graduates have ideas and are able to realise their dreams. They think and act creatively to achieve and inspire positive change.	K6, S4, A3	n/a
GA 3 Citizens	Our graduates engage in socially and culturally appropriate ways to advance individual, community and global well-being. They are socially and environmentally aware, acting ethically, equitably and compassionately.	K1, K2, K3, K5, K6, S1, S2, S3, S4. A2	AT1, AT3
GA 4 Communicators	Our graduates create, exchange, impart and convey information, ideas, and concepts effectively. They are respectful, inclusive and empathetic towards their audience, and express thoughts, feelings and information in ways that help others to understand.	K4, S3, S4, S5, A1, A3	AT1, AT2, AT3
GA 5 Leaders	Our graduates display and promote positive behaviours, and aspire to make a difference. They act with integrity, are receptive to alternatives and foster sustainable and resilient practices.	K6, S4, A3	AT1, AT3

### Learning Task and Assessment:

Learning Outcomes Assessed	Learning Tasks	Assessment Type	Weighting
K1, K3, K4, K5, K6, S1, S3, S2, S4, S5, A3, A4	Learning exercises will explore key concepts covered in course 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, S1, A1	Research and develop an annotated bibliography of up to six sources that focus on two key theoretical frameworks widely used in social work practice.  Hurdle Assessment: All students are expected to complete the Academic Integrity Module before the submission of the annotated bibliography.	Annotated bibliography	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%

### Adopted Reference Style:

APA

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

Fed Cite - [referencing tool](#)