I. Course

A. Catalog Description. Cr. 3 (3-0). Prerequisite: Foundation; Prerequisite or Concurrent with SOCW 7397/15607; Selected Topics in Social Work: Advanced Clinical Practice: Suicide Assessment and Treatment). Provides theoretical content and empirically supported knowledge to develop evidence-based clinical skills in the risk identification, assessment, and treatment of suicide behavior across the life spectrum and within the larger social, racial, economic environment.

B. Purpose. Most clinical social workers will encounter suicidal clients more than once in their careers. Practitioners must have the skills to intervene the full spectrum of suicidality that occur including suicidal ideation or thoughts; suicidal verbalization, often in the form of suicide threats, intentional self-harm, suicide attempts, and suicide. Understanding the risk factors for and protective factors against suicide is a critical step in this process. A more nuanced understanding of which specific risk and protective factors are relevant for an individual client based on his/her age, gender, social context, and racial-ethnic group is yet another critical step in arriving at an accurate evaluation of risk. Equally important is to understand how to implement interventions to reduce suicidal behavior. It is the goal of this course to provide the fundamental knowledge needed to conduct an evidence-based suicide risk assessment with clients and to utilize evidence-based practices targeting suicidal behavior. This course will prepare beginning social work practitioners to assess and manage the clinical risks associated with suicidal behavior as well as expose them to the most recent empirical research advances in treating suicidal behavior.

II. Course Objectives

Specifically, the students who successfully complete this course will learn:

1) The incidence and prevalence of various suicidal behaviors in demographic and diagnostic groups

2) Ethical considerations and implications related to suicidality
3) The significance of culture, race, and ethnicity on suicidality

4) Religious/spiritual influences on suicidality

5) Risk, identification, and assessment of suicidal behaviors across the lifecycle (children/adolescents, adults, older adults)

6) Working with at-risk populations (e.g., LGBTQ, Native Americans, Homeless, Military)

7) Evidence-based treatment interventions for suicidality, including Crisis management, Motivational Interviewing (MI); Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT).

III. Course Structure.

A. This 15-week course (excluding holidays) will follow the subsequent structure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Overview of Course, Introduction, and Ethics and Suicidality; Crisis Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of module</td>
<td>This module introduces the importance of recognizing personal values and ethics in relation to suicide; examines multiple ethical perspectives regarding suicide, and explores evidence-based practices for immediate intervention in a suicide crisis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Sociocultural Factors and Suicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of module</td>
<td>This module will examine the relationship between culture, race, ethnicity, religion/spirituality, and suicide assessment. The influence of these socio-cultural factors and risk and protective factors and intervention strategies will be explored.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Evidence-Based Practices and Suicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of module</td>
<td>This module will examine evidence-based practices that have been shown to be effective at reducing suicidal behavior.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>Suicide Across the Lifespan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of module</td>
<td>This module will risk and protective factors for suicide, assessment requirements, and intervention strategies across the lifespan.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 5</th>
<th>Special Populations and Suicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of module</td>
<td>This module will examine a number of specific groups within society that are at elevated risk for suicidality: military personal, Native Americans. LGBTQ, homeless, and incarcerated individuals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. **The main focus of the course is skill acquisition within the context of social justice.** Competent social work practice requires an understanding of the purpose and acquisition of the values, knowledge and skills of the profession. Social work education at the master's level is designed to engage and assist students in the acquisition, integration, evaluation and utilization of these critical components to inform their practice and professional development, and to prepare them to work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination, and promote social, racial, economic, and political justice. Ultimately, students are expected to possess the advanced analytic and practice skills sufficient for self-critical, accountable and autonomous practice, with particular attention to practice with populations at risk and oppressed groups. This course focuses on a particularly vulnerable group, individuals at risk of attempting and/or completing suicide.

IV. **Textbooks.**

A. **Required Textbook**


B. **Supplemental Textbooks.** In addition to the required textbooks, there are several supplemental texts specific to suicide that are also worth your consideration.


C. **Journal Articles.** Peer-reviewed journal articles will be assigned as well. The UH library has the full text on most articles online through the electronic resources section. Students are also encouraged to register for remote access to the HAM-TMC Medical Library at the M. D. Anderson Library Service Desk, which allows
students to access other mental health journal resources. Assigned journal articles will be listed in the syllabus, and can be located electronically through the UH library website and databases.

V. Course Requirements.

A. Attendance. Like out-of-class assignments, in-class learning opportunities are unique and cannot be duplicated. Therefore, it is expected that you will be present for the FULL class every week. Attendance will be taken each week. Please note that the instructor makes no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. There is no graded penalty for one missed absence, but each absence over will result in a lowering of the attendance portion of your grade. If you miss 2 classes, whether excused or unexcused, your grade will be lowered, resulting in an inability to achieve the highest grade (A). The instructor and students will work together to insure a supportive environment that encourages open exploration of practice issues. The success of the course depends on participation from the instructor and students. Accordingly, class attendance is mandatory for all of us. If you must miss class, email and let me know the reason.

B. Reading Assignments/Class Participation. Your learning requires active participation. Active participation occurs when your mind is engaged in a process of critical thinking. The results of critical thinking are reasoned conclusions about the validity and generalizability of the ideas presented in the course. You must complete all assigned readings prior to class, be prepared to engage in class discussion and role play activities, and will receive credit for participation (20% of grade). In addition, several strategies will mark active participation in this course: preparing for class by reading the assigned material; giving voice to your questions and ideas; and listening carefully to the ideas and questions of others. Evidence of active participation includes a range of behaviors such as asking questions in class (giving voice), emailing classmates or the instructor with clarifying questions or comments about course material (giving voice and/or listening), volunteering to participate in in class activities (giving voice), commenting directly on ideas presented by other students (listening), and monitoring your own participation levels to avoid “monopolizing” class discussions (listening).

C. Guided Instruction (GI) (20%) - (Due week 4 – February 6)

D. Integrated Clinical Exam (20%) - (On week 11 – April 3)

E. Term Paper (40%) - (Due week 13 – April 17): See separate handout

Professional development:
Complete an online suicide prevention training course (hand in a copy of your completed course certificate) during the intensive and write a short reflection paper explaining how it contributed to your professional development goals. Free training course can be accessed at:
http://training.sprc.org/
http://jasonfoundation.com/get-involved/educator-youth-workercoach/professional-development-series/
https://mentalhealthscreening.org/gatekeeper
Participation and write-ups should constitute 10 hours.

VI. Evaluation and Grading.

A. STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE COURSE
Student feedback on the course and its instruction is encouraged throughout the semester. An open mid-term evaluation and a formal evaluation will be completed at the semester’s end consistent with school policy.

B. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE
Your grade will be based on the total points accumulated for the course, as follows:

- A   = 96 to 100 points
- A -  = 92 to 95.9
- B+  = 88 to 91.9
- B   = 84 to 87.9
- B-   = 80 to 83.9
- C+  = 76 to 79.9
- C   = 72 to 75.9
- C-  = 68 to 71.9
- D   = 64 to 67.9
- F    = below 64 points

VII. Policy on Incomplete grades
The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are either (a) passing a course or (b) still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor of the course in which they receive an "I" grade to make arrangements to complete the course requirements. Students should be instructed not to re-register for the same course in a following semester in order to complete the incomplete requirements.

The grade of "I" must be changed by fulfillment of course requirements within one year of the date awarded or it will be changed automatically to an "F" (or to a "U" [Unsatisfactory] in S/U graded courses). The instructor may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements, and the grade may be changed by the instructor at any time to reflect work completed in the course. The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of W.

VIII. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism
Please click the link below for the full explanation of the Academic Honesty policy and procedure

Definitions:
“Academic dishonesty” means employing a method or technique or engaging in conduct in an academic endeavor that contravenes the standards of ethical integrity expected at the University of Houston or by a course instructor to fulfill any and all academic requirements. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, the following:
Plagiarism
a. Representing as one’s own work the work of another without acknowledging the source (plagiarism). Plagiarism includes copying verbatim text from the literature, whether printed or electronic, in all assignments including field.

Cheating and Unauthorized Group Work
b. Openly cheating in an examination, as copying from another’s paper;
c. Being able to view during an examination, quiz or any in-class assignment an electronic device that allows communication with another person, access to unauthorized material, access to the internet, or the ability to capture an image, unless expressly permitted by the instructor;
d. Using and/or possessing “crib notes,” as unauthorized use of notes or the like to aid in answering questions during an examination;
e. Giving or receiving unauthorized aid during an examination, such as trading examinations, whispering answers, and passing notes, and using electronic devices to transmit or receive information;
f. Securing another to take a test in the student’s place. Both the student taking the test for another and the student registered in the course are at fault;

Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation
g. Changing answers or grades on a test that has been returned to a student in an attempt to claim instructor error;
h. Using another’s laboratory results as one’s own, whether with or without the permission of the owner;
i. Falsifying results in laboratory experiments;
j. Misrepresenting academic records or achievements as they pertain to course prerequisites or core requisites for the purpose of enrolling or remaining in a course for which one is not eligible;
k. Representing oneself as a person who has earned a degree without having earned that particular degree

Stealing and Abuse of Academic Materials
l. Stealing, as theft of tests or grade books, from faculty offices or elsewhere, or knowingly using stolen tests or materials in satisfaction of exams, papers, or other assignments; this includes the removal of items posted for use by the students;
m. Mutilating or stealing library materials; misshelving materials with the intent to reduce accessibility to other students;

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty
n. Failing to report to the instructor or departmental hearing officer an incident which the student believes to be a violation of the academic honesty policy;

Academic Misconduct
o. Any other conduct which a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest or improper in an academic setting.
Process:
Students shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty to the instructor of record involved or to the appropriate authority if the alleged act is not associated with a specific class within 5 class days of the incident. Faculty or instructor of record shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty through their college hearing officer within 5 class days of the incident. The faculty should include the recommended sanction in the report. The college hearing officer will notify the student of the report and recommended sanction. The student can accept the sanction and waive a hearing or request a college hearing. A hearing shall be set within 10 days and would consist of two faculty and three students chosen by the hearing officer.

Students are expected to demonstrate and maintain a professional standard of writing in all courses, do one’s own work, give credit for the ideas of others, and provide proper citation of source materials. Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an “I” for the class with a recommendation that a grade of F be assigned, subsequent to a College hearing, in accordance with the University policy on academic dishonesty. Other actions may also be recommended and/or taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty.

All papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced using APA style format (or as approved by the instructor), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you must set the quote in quotation marks or use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must clearly indicate that this is a direct quotation.

Academic dishonesty includes using any other person’s work and representing it as your own. This includes (but is not limited to) using graded papers from students who have previously taken this course as the basis for your work. It also includes, but is not limited to submitting the same paper to more than one class. If you have any specific questions about plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please raise these questions in class or make an appointment to see instructor. This statement is consistent with the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty.

IX. Americans with Disabilities Statement

Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call 713-743-5400 for more assistance. Instructors may not provide accommodations without supporting documentation from the UH Center for Students with Disabilities.
Counseling and Psychological Services

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. Also, there is no appointment necessary for the “Let's Talk” program, which is a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html.

X. Course Schedule and Assignments

A. Assignments: As per section V above.

B. Course Schedule. The Spring 2019 session runs for 15 weeks, from January 16th through the week of May 1st, 2019. Class will meet on Wednesdays from 6:00pm to 9:00pm.

C. A Note on Technology. As clinical social workers, you would not answer your cell phone or pager, check your email, or surf the web while meeting with your client. Since this class is part of your professional preparation, the same level of professionalism is expected of all students. Students are encouraged to turn off cell phones, smart phones, I-phones, I-pads, pagers, laptops, and any other technology that might interfere with focusing on the class. The expectation is that students will monitor themselves on this point, but Dr. Gearing reserves the right to ask a student to put away or disengage from their technology. No recording of the lectures, class or discussions are permitted. Any exceptions will require prior written permission and approval from Dr. Gearing.

D. Consultation. By appointment. Dr. Robin Gearing may be reached at (713) 743-9505 or rgearing@uh.edu

E. Statement on changes to syllabus. Dr. Robin Gearing reserves the right to revise the syllabus content and/or schedule for time management or topical reasons.

F. Week-by-Week Schedule. See below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>COURSE SCHEDULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Introduction and Course Overview: Ethics, Philosophical Issues, and Suicidality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January 23</td>
<td>Crisis Management and Suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>Culture, Race, and Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>February 6</td>
<td>Religion and Spirituality <em>(Guided Instruction (GI) due)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>February 13</td>
<td>Motivational Interviewing (MI) for Suicidal Clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>February 20</td>
<td>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Suicidal Clients</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) for Suicidal Clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) for Suicidal Clients</td>
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<td>[]</td>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>Spring Break <em>(No Scheduled Classes)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>Children and Adolescents: Risk, Assessment, and Treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 27</td>
<td>Adults: Risk, Assessment, and Treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Older Adults: Risk, Assessment, and Treatment <em>(Exam)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>At-Risk Populations and Suicide I: LGBTQ; and Incarcerated Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>At-Risk Populations and Suicide II: Military Personal; Homeless; and Native American <em>(Term Paper due)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Surviving Suicide for Family Member and Clinicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Clinical Practice Integration, Review, and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 1 (January 16th, 2019): Introduction and Course Overview: Ethics, Philosophical Issues, and Suicidality

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:
Mishara, B. L., & Weisstub, D. N. (2007). Ethical, legal, and practical issues in the control and regulation of suicide promotion and assistance over the Internet. Suicide and Life Threatening Behavior, 37(1), 58-65.

Week 2 (January 23rd, 2019): Crisis Management and Suicide

Required Readings:


**Suggested Readings:**


**Week 3 (January 30th, 2019): Culture, Race, and Ethnicity**

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Week 4 (February 6th, 2019): Religion and Spirituality (GUIDED INSTRUCTION DUE)**

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Readings:**


**Week 5 (February 13th, 2019): Motivational Interviewing (MI) for Suicidal Clients**

**Required Readings:**


**Week 6 (February 20th, 2019): Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Suicidal Clients**

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Readings:**


Week 7 (February 27th, 2019): Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) for Suicidal Clients

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:

Week 8 (March 6th, 2019): Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) for Suicidal Clients

Required Readings:
Week 9 (March 20th, 2019): Children and Adolescents: Risk, Assessment, and Treatment

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:
Week 10 (March 27th, 2019): Adults: Risk, Assessment, and Treatment

Required Readings: (Read 1, and 3 others)

Suggested Readings:

Week 11 (April 3rd, 2019): Older Adults: Risk, Assessment, and Treatment (EXAM)

Required Readings: (Read 1, and 3 others)


**Suggested Readings:**


Week 12 (April 10th, 2019): At-Risk Populations and Suicide I: LGBTQ; and Incarcerated Individuals

Required Readings: (Read 1, and 3 others)

Suggested Readings:

Week 13 (April 17th, 2019): At-Risk Populations and Suicide II: Military Personal; Homeless and Native American (TERM PAPER DUE)

Required Readings: (Read 4 of the following)


**Week 14 (April 24th, 2019): Surviving Suicide for Family Member and Clinicians**

**Required Readings: (Read 1, and 3 others)**


Davidsen, A. (2011). 'And then one day he'd shot himself. Then I was really shocked': general practitioners' reaction to patient suicide. Patient Education and Counseling, 85(1), 113-118.


**Week 15 (May 1st, 2019): Clinical Practice Integration, Review, and Evaluation**

**Required Readings:**


IX. Americans with Disabilities Statement.

The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the UH Center for Disabilities at 713-743-5400.

X. Counseling and Psychological Services

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. Also, there is no appointment necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, which is a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html.

Recommended Websites.

American Psychological Association: www.apa.org/
Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies: http://www.abct.org/
Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy: http://www.beckinstitute.org/
Behavioral Tech, LLC (DBT): http://behavioralttech.org/
Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): http://www.cdc.gov/
Center for Psychoanalytic Studies (formerly HGPI): http://centerforpsychoanalyticstudies.com/
Evidence-Based Intervention Network: http://ebi.missouri.edu/
Houston Psychological Association: www.hpaonline.org/
Jung Center of Houston: http://www.junghouston.org/
Mental Health America: http://www.nmha.org/
Mental Health America of Greater Houston: http://www.mhahouston.org/
Motivational Interviewing: http://www.motivationalinterview.org/
National Alliance on Mental Illness: http://www.nami.org/
National Alliance on Mental Illness—Metropolitan Houston: http://www.namimetropolitanhouston.org/
National Association of Social Workers: http://www.socialworkers.org/
National Association of Social Workers—Texas: http://www.naswtx.org/
National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities http://ncmhd.nih.gov/
National Hispanic Council on Aging: http://www.nhcoa.org/
National Institute of Mental Health: http://www.nimh.nih.gov/
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/
National Institute on Drug Abuse: http://www.drugabuse.gov/
National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices: http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/
Pew Hispanic Center: http://pewhispanic.org/
PsychCentral: http://psychcentral.com/
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: http://www.samhsa.gov/
Texas Psychological Association: http://www.texaspsy.org/
US Census Bureau: http://www.census.gov/
US Census Bureau American FactFinder: www.factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en
US Dept. of Health & Human Services, Office of Minority Health: http://www.omhrc.gov/