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SOCW3010

Organisational Practice

Term Three // 2020

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

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School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

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Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

This course provides a critical and practical examination of social work practice in organisations. It introduces organisational and management theories and considers their relevance for social work settings. You will examine the tensions inherent in professionalism and contemporary ideas about management and the management of change in organisations and the importance of planning and evaluating for change. The course explores and examines strategies for effective and ethical practice in organisations. Issues-based and experiential learning provides a basis for the development of organisational skills, such as skills in negotiation, advocacy, teamwork, program planning, supervision and the management of information.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate important organisational issues involved in social work practice, including the relationship between social work and management, and the role social workers can take in leading and facilitating organisational change.
2. Critically evaluate organisational processes in hypothetical organisations and in organisations in which they have worked.
3. Consolidate practice skills developed in earlier courses and apply these to organisational work.

Teaching Strategies

This course focuses on social work practice in organisations because the social work role is largely shaped by the human services organisations which employ social workers. Students are introduced to theory and knowledge about organisations and management, and consider their relevance for the contexts in which social workers operate. The course also considers the opportunities within organisations to further social work's professional agenda. As stated above a strategic, ethical and reflective approach to organisational practice is encouraged.

Teaching in this course is predicated on the assumption that students are adult learners who are preparing for professional practice as social workers in a few months time and who will be building on their existing knowledge and various skills acquired in earlier courses and through life experience. Students are expected to take active responsibility for their own learning and that of their classmates.

Assessment

This course will assist you to understand the organisational context in which social workers practice as well as how social workers can work effectively in organisations. You are likely to work in a range of organisations during your career. These organisations could vary from large to small government agencies (e.g. Commonwealth, State or Local governments), as well as community-based agencies and large multifaceted NGOs. Some agencies will primarily focus on service delivery, while others will work in advocacy, policy and development. These agencies have a range of structures, cultures and management approaches.

Each assessment has a strong practice focus and is structured to prepare you for professional practice in a diverse range of social work contexts. Although the three assessments have been designed to follow on from your Level 3 placement, it is recognised that in 2020 placement arrangements changed for most students due to COVID 19. If you are unable to use your placement experience, you can reflect on your paid work in human service organisations or alternatively one of hypothetical organisations from the tutorials. By critically reflecting on your experience on placement and/or working in a human services agency you will develop an understanding about the importance of organisational contexts - how human service organisations operate and their impact on social work (Assessment 1).

You will also develop an awareness about the importance of leadership and interagency collaboration in social work practice, including the potential for social workers to be practice leaders in human service policy and everyday frontline practice as well as influencing organisational change (Assessment 2).

Finally, by critically reflecting on your organisational experiences on placement and/or in your workplace, you will develop knowledge and skills about social workers working effectively in organisations to engage with contemporary challenges facing human services in Australia, while placing the client or service user at the centre (Assessment 3). To assist your thinking about Assessment 3 you will participate in three online discussion forums. The purpose of these forums is to help you better understand course content through sharing your thoughts on integrating theory and practice with your peers and teachers. You will receive feedback from both your peers and teachers.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Reflective Journal	25%	01/10/2020 11:00 PM	1
Essay	30%	01/11/2020 11:00 PM	1,2,3
Essay	45%	28/11/2020 11:00 PM	1,2,3

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Reflective Journal

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 750

Details:

750 words.

This task will rely upon student's experiences of human and health services organisations especially through first field placement at Level 3 of the BSW as a corequisite. Students will receive individual written feedback within 10 working days of submission.

Additional details:

Assessment 1: An overview of social work in organisations, management and managerialism

The first assignment will involve you engaging with the literature on social work in organisations by critically applying the literature to your own experiences of working in a human service organisation. This assignment addresses the first learning outcome of the course in that it provides you with an opportunity to develop and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between social work, management and managerialism to critically reflect on organisational processes in agencies in which you have practiced (or in a hypothetical organisation).

It also serves to develop and assess the graduate attributes of:

- The skills of effective [written] communication;
- Skills involved in scholarly enquiry;
- Capacity for analytical and critical thinking and for creative problem-solving
- Ability to engage in independent and reflective learning.

Assessment 1 Task: Reflecting on your experience of social work, management and managerialism

Based on your experience in either a human service organisation in which you have worked or been on placement (or if this is not possible in a hypothetical organisation from the tutorials) reflect on the relationship between social work and management. Consider the extent to which managerialist influences were evident. Based on your experiences, what might be some issues for social work in that organisational setting?

In developing your arguments you should combine personal reflections with academic literature. You should write in the first person when discussing your experience and should include a short introduction and conclusion to the paper. Assignments should have numbered pages, be one and a half spaced and in at least 11 point font. Assignments must be properly referenced, including a correctly formatted reference list. Assignments which do not comply will not be marked. Assignments more than 10% over the maximum word count will be penalised.

Assessment 1: Marking criteria

- Discussion of the intersection of social work and management
- Application of theory and knowledge to your professional experiences
- Development of arguments through the paper
- Written expression
- Referencing

A detailed marking rubric is available on Moodle.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1,500 words +/-10%

Details:

1500 words.

Students will submit an essay on a topic relevant to the course. Students will receive individual written feedback within 10 working days of submission and group feedback will be provided to the whole class

Additional details:

Assessment 2: Exploring leadership and collaboration in social work practice

This second assignment addresses all three course learning outcomes in that it asks you to consider the issue of organisational change, particularly the application in practice of theory and knowledge about facilitating organisational change, in an hypothetical human services organisation. This case scenario assessment explores the roles that social work practitioners and managers can play in leading practice changes within agencies or interagency settings.

Assessment 2 Task: Case scenario on coordinating service responses in addressing parental substance abuse and child safety

You are one of several social workers working in a hypothetical community health centre in a culturally diverse region of metropolitan Sydney. You and your social work colleagues are concerned that child safety issues are not being fully considered. The detailed description of the scenario will be available on Moodle.

Write an paper, responding to the scenario above and drawing on relevant literature. The assignment is broadly about organisational change, although within this there is a choice of addressing a specific aspect of organisational practice that can be used to facilitate change. Although it is recognised that there may be some overlap, please select one aspect to focus on.

You should include an introduction and a conclusion to the paper and ensure that the following questions are addressed:

- *What are some possible challenges facing the social workers in the community health centre in pursuing their change agenda?*
- *Focus on one aspect of organisational practice, apply it to the scenario and discuss how it could be used to assist the social workers' efforts in pursuing changes in organisational practices. You can choose to focus on either (1) **leadership** OR (2) **interagency** and/or **interdisciplinary collaboration**.*

Assignments should have numbered pages, be one and a half spaced and in at least 11 point font.

Assignments should be properly referenced. Assignments which do not comply will not be marked. Assignments more than 10% over the maximum word count will be penalised.

Assessment 2: Marking criteria

- Understanding of theory and knowledge about organisational change
- Relevance to given scenario
- Development of arguments
- Written expression
- Referencing

A detailed marking rubric is available on Moodle.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 2,500 words +/-10%

Details:

2,500 words.

Students will write an essay on a topic relevant to the course. Students will receive written feedback and a numerical grade within ten working days of submission. The feedback sheet/rubric will be available to students at the start of the course so that they can work towards specified standards. This is the final assessment for the course.

Additional details:

Assessment 3 Task: Reflective essay

The purpose of this assessment is for you to bring together key learnings from the course about social work as organisational practice. You will critically reflect on your learning by linking course material and theory with your experiences and observations about your placement or your work in a human service organisation (*or if this is not possible in a hypothetical organisation from the tutorials*)

You will write a reflective essay which answers the question: "*What key things have you learnt about organisations and management in social work?*"

In writing this essay you will choose 4 topics from the course. This means you will select:

- 3 of the 7 issues covered in Weeks 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 & 10 and
- 1 of the 8 organisational theories outlined in Week 2.

You will analyse your past practice on placement or a human service agency in which you have worked for each of the issues and theory you selected. For example, if you chose the topic of leadership you

could reflect on an example of good leadership on your placement, or you could explore the leadership approach of your placement organisation.

This will involve you (briefly) describing your practice experience and then using the organisational and management literature to analyse your practice, before finally reflecting on the implications for your future social work practice. You would need to allocate between 400-600 words on each issue/theory (total 2000 words), with the remaining 500 words allocated for the introduction and conclusion. In developing your arguments you should combine personal reflections with academic literature. You should write in the first person when discussing your experience.

Assignments should have numbered pages, be one and a half spaced and in at least 11 point font. Assignments must be properly referenced, including a correctly formatted reference list. Assignments which do not comply will not be marked.

Assignments more than 10% over the maximum word count will be penalised.

Given the structure of this assignment you will be able to complete sections during the term, rather than needing to leave the essay to the end of the course.

A more detailed essay guide will be provided on Moodle.

To assist in developing your analysis and reflection you will be able to post comments on **3** online forums (each post about 100 words) about each selected issue/theory, as well as commenting on the posts of two other students for each issue/theory. More information about the online forums will be available on Moodle.

Assessment 3: Marking criteria

- Explanation of your learning about practice
- Connections between your learning and course materials
- Evaluation of your learning
- Implications for your professional practice
- Written expression
- Referencing

A detailed marking rubric is available on Moodle

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

The School of Social Sciences expects that students will attend and participate actively in 100% of learning and teaching activities. The discipline needs to be able to demonstrate that you experienced this course to a level of depth and engagement as part of the accreditation requirements for the BSW (Hons) program. Please note that:

- Lectures in this course are designed to provide essential learning. This means you must listen to all 9 lectures which are being offered synchronously (and recorded) in T3.
- Tutorials are designed to provide essential application of content. This means you must attend 7 (78%) or more of the 9 tutorials which are being offered face to face (and synchronously for students living overseas) in T3.

If you are unable to attend a class, you must email your course tutor and the course convenor at your earliest convenience. If you attend less than 80% of classes, you may be refused final assessment. This means that if you do not attend at least 80% of possible classes your final assignment may receive a mark of zero. You are responsible for keeping track of your attendance and contacting your course convenor (Alison Wannan) immediately if you are concerned about your attendance record and its impact on your ability to complete your course successfully. For the purpose of attendance monitoring, the final assessment for this course is the Substantive Assignment worth 45% of your overall grade for this course. This is the assessment item that will be graded at zero if you do not meet the attendance requirement.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 14 September - 18 September	Lecture	Organisational practice in social work.
	Tutorial	Your experiences of management and managerialism in the human services.
Week 2: 21 September - 25 September	Lecture	What can organisational theory offer social work practice?
	Tutorial	<i>Avalon Care</i> : Applying organisational theories to understanding organisational practices.
Week 3: 28 September - 2 October	Lecture	Understanding organisational change.
	Tutorial	<i>Avalon Care</i> : A proposed organisational restructure which impacts on social workers.
	Assessment	Assessment 1: Reflective Journal due 11PM Thursday 1 October 2020.
Week 4: 5 October - 9 October	Lecture	Understanding leadership in human services.
	Tutorial	<i>Bluegum Community Support</i> : Organisational approaches to leadership and supervision.
Week 5: 12 October - 16 October	Lecture	Working Together: Collaboration, partnership and teamwork.
	Tutorial	<i>Currajong Mental Health</i> : Collaboration and team work.
Week 7: 26 October - 30 October	Lecture	Communicating and responding to emotions in the workplace.
	Tutorial	<i>Currajong Mental Health</i> : Mediation in organisations.
	Assessment	Essay on leadership or collaboration due 11PM Sunday 1 November 2020.
Week 8: 2 November - 6 November	Lecture	Decision making: Juggling risk, professional autonomy and discretion.
	Tutorial	<i>Currajong Mental Health</i> : Responsibility and accountability.
Week 9: 9 November - 13 November	Lecture	Social work accountabilities: reconciling the tensions between being accountable to the organisation, service users and the profession!
	Tutorial	<i>Currajong Mental Health</i> : Exploring the differences between responsibility and accountability.
Week 10: 16 November - 20 November	Lecture	Active and ethical practice in organisations.
	Tutorial	Advocacy, whistleblowing and ethical practice.
	Assessment	Assessment 3 Reflective essay is due 11PM Saturday 28 November 2020

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Hughes, M. & Wearing, M. (2017) *Organisations and Management in Social Work: Everyday Action for Change*. Third Edition. London: Sage.

Recommended Resources

Other recommended Australian books on management and organisational practice

Berends, L. & Crinall, K. (2014) *Management and Practice in Health and Human Service Organisations*. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

McDonald, C., Craik, C., Hawkins, L. & Williams, J. (2011) *Professional Practice in Human Service Organisations*. St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin.

Gardner, F. (2016) *Working with Human Service Organisations*. Second Edition. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Additional readings:

All other readings are provided on the course Moodle site under the Leganto link. This will give you direct access to the articles. Other additional readings may be added during the term.

The readings listed in Moodle are provided as preliminary background reading. Each has been selected to provide an introduction to the key course theoretical and practical principles. It is expected that students will have read the nominated readings prior to the scheduled class and that they will draw on these in their written assignments. However, students are expected to do their own research at the library additional to the recommended readings and class handouts. Thus, although a text for this course is listed above, it is up to you to make the link to lectures and to read the relevant chapters in preparation for tutorials.

Students wishing to obtain high grades for assessment will have to demonstrate individual research and application of theory to descriptions of policy and practice. Unless using references for historic purposes, never use books or articles older than ten years (unless these are seminal articles). The more recent the better.

Course Evaluation and Development

Student feedback both formal via MyExperience and informal on the course will be gathered, and used to improve the student learning experience. A summary of how student feedback on SOCW3010 in 2019 influenced the design of SOCW3010 in 2020 is available on Moodle.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.