



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our students, faculty and staff are located across Indigenous lands. On our Calgary campus, we acknowledge and pay tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples who made Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations). The city of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (District 5 and 6). Our Calgary campus is situated on land northwest of where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a site known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, Wîchîspa Oyade to the Îyâxe Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda), and Guts'ists'i to the Tsuut'ina and Otos-kwunee to the Metis.

At our Edmonton campus, we acknowledge the Treaty 6 region, the traditional homelands of Cree, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/ Anishinaabe, Inuit and Métis people (Districts 9 and 10). We recognize the rich cultural history of the place, now called the City of Edmonton, which has, for centuries, been a traditional gathering place of Indigenous peoples from across Alberta, BC, and Saskatchewan.

At our Lethbridge campus, we acknowledge the traditional territories of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pay respect to the Blackfoot people past, present and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land. We offer respect to the Metis and all who have lived on this land and made Lethbridge their home.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, RACIAL JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DECOLONIZATION

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW), University of Calgary (UCalgary), is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, racial justice, diversity, inclusion and decolonization. We affirm that diversity and uniqueness are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and community connections. We aim to foster an inclusive, thriving and equitable environment for our students, non-academic and academic staff, and community members. We take the stand that equity does not mean sameness in treatment of people, but rather requires measures and accommodations for diverse life experiences and circumstances to ensure that no one of a particular social group is disadvantaged, underrepresented or overlooked in all aspects of our work. We intend to address systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations, particularly for those who are members of racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, persons with disabilities, migrant groups (including refugees and immigrants), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, linguistic minorities as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, political, and/or cultural barriers to their education and employment. We also recognize, honour, and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, ways of knowing and doing, experiences, and strengths. An anti-oppressive lens, particularly intersectional, anti-colonial, anti-racist and decolonizing frameworks, will inform our work.

Please refer to our full statement of our [Commitment to Equity, Racial Justice, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization](#), our [Statement on Anti-Black Racism](#) and the work of the faculty's [Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#), our [Statement on Anti-Asian Racism](#), and the university's [Indigenous Strategy](#).

Course & Session Number	SOWK 312 S01	Classroom	Please see D2L for classroom information.
Course Name	Social Work Practice Skills, Processes and Strategies		
Dates and Time	Start of Classes: January 12, 2026 Last Day of Classes: April 13, 2026 Dates and Time: In-person instruction Mondays 9:00 AM -12:00 AM Add/Drop/Withdrawal Dates: Please refer to the course-specific deadline in your Student Centre ^[1] .		
Instructor	David Irvine, MSW	Office Hours	As requested
UCalgary E-mail	David.irvine@ucalgary.ca	UCalgary Phone	Please contact by email.

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

You will develop and practice skills and approaches in working with diverse individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. You will critically evaluate and apply anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and anti-colonial models of practice.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You will explore approaches to assessment and intervention in community and organizational contexts. The course will emphasize skill development and integration of theory and practice through experiential learning. You will engage in the helping, assessment, intervention and advocacy processes that you will apply in social work practice. Learning activities and assignments will include discussion, designing, implementing and evaluating interventions, analyzing and discussing practice scenarios and ethical issues, giving and receiving feedback, and self-evaluation.

Prerequisite: Admission to BSW program (University Transfer route, including After-Degree) and Social Work 201.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Apply assessment, intervention and documentation skills to practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities.

2. Analyze factors related to organizational, interprofessional, community and cultural contexts in your selection and implementation of assessments and intervention approaches and articulate rationales for your choices.
3. Identify, describe and apply approaches to evaluating effectiveness and outcomes of interventions.
4. Integrate anti-oppressive, anti-colonial, anti-racist approaches into your assessment and intervention practices.
5. Integrate self-evaluation and feedback from instructors and peers on your assessment and intervention skills into your ongoing skill development.
6. Analyze ethical issues in practice with individuals, families, groups and communities and apply values outlined in the CASW Code of Ethics, Values, and Guiding Principles, and the ACSW Standards of Practice.

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED READINGS, TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Required Textbook:

Rogers, M., Whitaker, D., Edmondson, D., & Peach, D. (2020). *Developing skills and knowledge for social work practice* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A D2L site is set up for this course, which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials. A laptop, desktop or mobile device with Internet access is required for D2L access.

CONNECTION TO PRACTICE

This course will prepare you with assessment and intervention skills for practice with diverse individuals, families, groups and communities. You will apply theory to practice as you develop skills to select, develop, implement and evaluate approaches to assessment and intervention.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

This course is the second in a series of three skills-focused courses: SOWK 314 – Communication and Relationship Building Skills; SOWK 312 – Social Work Practice Skills, Processes and Strategies; SOWK 419 – Leadership and Advocacy Skills for Social Justice.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Important Dates for Winter 2026

- Start of Term: Monday, January 5
- First Day of Class: Monday, January 12
- Fee Deadline: Friday, January 30
- Term Break, no classes: Sunday-Saturday, February 15-21
- Alberta Family Day, no classes: Monday, February 16
- Good Friday, no classes: Friday, April 3
- Easter Monday, no classes: Monday, April 6
- Last Day of Class: Tuesday, April 14
- End of Term: Thursday, April 30

Week	Topic	Learning Activity
Class 1 January 12, 2026	Introduction To Class Course Overview Principles That Guide Your Practice Developing Your Own Creed As A Social Worker	Grandmother's Lodge Community Circle Group Formation
Class 2 January 19, 2026	Understanding Process - The Foundation of The Helping Relationship Self-Awareness: Your Use of Self In The Work (in Relationship Building, Assessment and Intervention) Application To Group Work,	Instructor Demonstration and Practice Group Work
Class 3 January 26, 2026	Psychological Safety - Creating the Conditions for Growth Application To Group Work, Assessment and Intervention	Group Experiential Learning Group Work
Class 4 February 2, 2026	Cultural Humility Guest Lecture	Group Experiential Exercise Group Work
Class 5 February 9, 2026	Assessing And Contracting - With Individuals, Groups, And Systems Application To Group Work	Instructor Demonstration and Practice
Winter Term Break, Family Day, No Classes On February 16, 2026		
Class 6 February 23, 2026	Managing Your Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resiliency, Differentiation, And Thriving in the Work Empowering Clients and Building Resilience In Others	
Class 7 March 2, 2026	Family Assessments	Instructor Demonstration and Practice

	Understanding Process in a Family Understanding Family Systems	Family Genogram
Class 8 March 9, 2026	Assessing and Working With Couples - Individual Therapy in the Presence of a Partner	Family Genogram
Class 9 March 16, 2026	Guiding Clients Through Transitions: A Roadmap To Healing The Hero's Journey Progressing to intervention	Group Presentation #1
Class 10 March 23, 2026		Group Presentations #2, #3, #4
Class 11 March 30, 2026	Resistance, Reframing Problems, And the Theory of Purposeful Intent	Instructor Demonstration And Practice Group Presentation #5, #6
Easter Monday No Classes On April 6, 2026		
Class 12 April 13, 2026	Unfinished Work Endings Community Circle	Group Presentations #7, #8

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL/COMMUNICATION POLICY

All course communication should come through my @ucalgary email. I will respond to emails sent via your @ucalgary emails within 48 hours excluding weekends and statutory holidays. For urgent requests, text me.

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

You are expected to practice professional communication in all interactions with the instructor and your peers. Please use your UCalgary email for all school-related communications. Your email should start with a proper greeting (e.g. Dear/ Good Day), address the instructor by name, and include a sign-off (e.g. Sincerely/ Best regards) and your name.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

ASSIGNMENT 1: INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING THROUGH DEMONSTRATION

Aligned course learning outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Due: Will depend on when group is scheduled for your demonstration during class time

Weight distribution: 40% of final grade

Demonstration of A Social Work Assessment Interview: During the course you will be working in a group of 4-6 of your peers demonstrating, in front of the class, a ten-minute assessment interview with a couple, family, or group. The assessment interview will be followed by a twenty-minute presentation

of your assessment and a fifteen-minute discussion with the class of your key learnings. In total, the demonstration and discussion are expected to be forty-five minutes.

Your assessment should include four key components:

- 1. Purpose** (to be presented at the onset of the demonstration):
 - a) Presenting Problem: Clarify the purpose of the group.
 - b) Predisposing Factors: Identify common underlying vulnerabilities such as genetics, trauma history, family mental health patterns, medical backgrounds, etc.
 - c) Precipitating Factors: Pinpoint triggers or events contributing to the current issue faced by the group, such as recent losses, accidents, or life changes.
 - d) Perpetuating Factors: Isolate ongoing common stressors maintaining the problem, such as substance use, isolation, socioeconomic factors, etc.
- 2. Protective Factors:** Highlight strengths, supports, coping skills, social networks, and resilience resources to empower client-led solutions. Included in these factors is a self-responsible mind-set of both the social worker and the client.
- 3. Process:**
 - How able were you to provide a safe place where the client(s) felt respected and supported to be open and honest? What did you do to create - or inhibit - that?
 - What process did you use to get an agreement from the group members of the expectations they had of each other? How did that work?
 - What was the internal process of the social workers? What was the internal process of the clients?
 - How *differentiated* was the social worker? (Where were they on the continuum between enmeshment and disengagement?)
 - What is the level of willingness of each of the clients to engage in the process? How did you assess this?
 - Evaluation of the intervention: What was helpful to the client? What was not helpful?
 - What beliefs of the social worker guided the conversation? What beliefs guided the client?
 - How did the social worker integrate learnings from the class - particularly what you learned from watching the case studies - into your assessment?
- 4. Contracting:**
 - What will be your defined role as a social worker with this group going forward?
 - Based on this ten-minute assessment interview, what is one of the social work theories and methods (found in Part III in your required textbook) and what is a corresponding intervention that you will use to work with the client/group? Why did you decide on this theory/method/intervention?

Weight distribution: 40% of final grade

- Ability to address each of the above four key components of an assessment: 20%
- Depth of self-awareness of the points listed under *Process*: 20%
- Ability to engage the class in a meaningful learning experience: 10%

Note: All members of a group will receive the same grade on Assignment 1. A grading rubric will be provided on D2L.

ASSIGNMENT 2: REFLECTION ON SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY AND PRACTICE CREED

Aligned course learning outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Due: March 31st

Weight distribution: 40% of final grade

Format: Written. 12- point font. Double spaced.

Length: 4-5 pages (excluding references)

Throughout the course we explored approaches to assessment and intervention in community and organizational contexts. The course emphasized skill development and integration of theory and practice through experiential learning. We increased your self-awareness and ability to analyze whether the degree of your intervention with a client was helpful or not helpful. We explored your professional identity including the ethics, values, and motivation of social work in ways that give strength to your client and to you, the social worker. To integrate your knowledge into your developing social work identity and practice, you are asked to write a paper focusing on the following questions:

1. **Personal Philosophy:** What is your belief about what it means to be a good social worker, particularly as it relates to providing effective assessments and developing interventions? How would you describe your professional identity as a social worker committed to help those you serve? How did your personal philosophy evolve during this course?
2. **Life Experience:** How did your upbringing or encounters with your past shape your personal philosophy and approach to caring in this profession?
3. **Cultural Humility:** How will you address racial justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, indigenization and critical responses to calls for truth and reconciliation?
4. **Ethical Dilemmas:** How do you envision you will deal with an ethical dilemma in your work? How do you foresee resolving it?
5. **Key Learning(s):** What did you learn in this class that will help you to be a better social worker? Specifically, how did this class help you become better at assessments? Cite a minimum of three references that offer a theoretical approach that you are drawn to in this profession.

Grading - Based on:

1. The depth and clarity of how these questions are addressed 20%
2. Writing fluency and clarity 10%
3. Insights shared and awareness of how your philosophy and approach to social work has evolved during the course 10%

ASSIGNMENT 3: REFLECTION ON COURSE ENGAGEMENT

Aligned course learning outcome: 5

Due: April 14th

Weight distribution: 20% of final grade

Format: Students are required to write a 2-page reflection paper and assign a self-grade (on a scale of 1-10) for class engagement (the final grade is at the discretion of the instructor). Please comment on how present and engaged you were with the material and class discussions. Provide specific examples regarding the awareness and insights that surfaced from your experience in class activities during the semester.

Students will watch and engage with the video-based unfolding case study about “Trudy and Evelyn”, an older adult family that is experiencing change and transition. The links to the video segments can be accessed in D2L. While watching the videos segments, you will be prompted to answer some reflective questions. You will answer these questions, save your answers and upload them to D2L. Your responses won’t be graded, but demonstration of completion of the responses and engagement with the case will be considered as part of your instructor assigned overall participation grade.

Grading: Based on:

1. Self-Grade 10%
2. The depth of your self-awareness and insights gleaned from what you experienced this semester 10%

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all assignments electronically through the Dropbox in D2L. Assignments may be submitted in Word or PDF format. Assignments should have a file name as follows: “Full name and assignment number” (e.g., Jane Smith Assignment 2). Assignments are due by 11:59pm on their due date. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted.

MISSED OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor.

A request for an extension should be sent to the instructor at least 24 hours prior to the assignment due date.

Assignments that are submitted after the deadline, without prior arrangements with the instructor, may be penalized with a grade reduction (of 5% per day- including weekends and holidays).

There is a 7-day maximum limit by which students who have not requested for an extension can submit their assignments. No assignments will be accepted after the 7-day limit.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

Please use APA 7th edition formatting for referencing.

All assignments will be partially assessed on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented and referenced in APA 7th edition format. If you need writing support, please connect with the [Student Success Centre](#).

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. Students are reminded that [academic misconduct](#), including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

Restricted Use

Students may use generative AI tools throughout this course to enhance your learning in any learning activities, assignments, and assessments. Students are responsible for citing and referencing all work generated by AI tools. However, AI tools used for expressing one's personal life experiences or philosophy will not be accepted.

GRADING

The undergraduate grading system is included below. All grades with decimals will be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course. The University of Calgary [Undergraduate Grading System](#) and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding performance	95-100
A	4.0	Excellent performance	85-94
A-	3.7	Approaching excellent performance	80-84
B+	3.3	Exceeding good performance	77-79
B	3.0	Good performance	73-76
B-	2.7	Approaching good performance	70-72

C+	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance	67-69
C	2.00	Satisfactory performance	63-66
C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	60-62
D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	57-59
D	1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.	50-56
F	0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	Below 50
CG		Credit Granted. Not included in the GPA calculation. See section F.1.3 for additional detail.	
CR		Completed Requirements. Carries no weight in calculating the grade point average. This will be noted in the calendar description as “Not Included in GPA” where applicable.	

COURSE EXPERIENCE FEEDBACK

At the close of the term, you can provide feedback on your academic learning experience in this course, including your instructor, through university-wide online surveys. You will receive an email from [UCalgary Course Experience Surveys](#) with direct links to your current course surveys, or you can access within the D2L course shell. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with your instructor. You are expected to provide comments that are consistent with the [University of Calgary Code of Conduct](#), the [Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice \(2023\)](#) and the [Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics \(2024\)](#).

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

Professional Conduct

As members of the University community, students and staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary's [Code of Conduct](#). They are also expected to demonstrate professional behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. Consistent with the aims of the Social Work Program and the University of Calgary, all students and staff are expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives; to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback; and to contribute to building learning communities that promote individual and collective professional and personal growth. While critical thought and debate is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must always be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviours in class, including evaluations of teaching and learning, that are consistent with our professional values and ethics, as outlined in the [Canadian Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics](#) (2024) and the [Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice](#) (2023).

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS). SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. Please refer to the full policy on [Student Accommodations](#).

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human participants – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the [Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board](#) or the [Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board](#). In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required. Some courses will include assignments that involve conducting research with human participants; in these cases, the instructor will have applied for and received ethics approval for the course assignment.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please refer to the [Integrity and Conduct](#) section in the University of Calgary Calendar.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Copyright Legislation

All students who use materials protected by copyright are expected to comply with the University of Calgary policy on [Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright](#) and requirements of the [Copyright Act](#) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. [Private information](#) related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's [Sexual and Gender-based Violence Policy](#) guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances.

Other Important Information

Please visit the [Registrar's website](#) for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/ Assembly Points
- Safewalk