**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**Effective Communication**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number:** SW 270: Basic Crisis Intervention Skills

**Home Department:** Social Work

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Abigail Wyche, [awyche@nmu.edu](mailto:awyche@nmu.edu), x2842

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall):

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? YES IN PROGRESS

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well):

**A.** Overview of the course content

This course is a new course currently under review by the Committee on Undergraduate Programming. The proposed bulletin description of the course is as follows: *Crises is best defined as a perception of an event or situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds the resources or coping mechanisms of the person(s). Effectiveness in crisis intervention requires a basic knowledge of human behavior and purposeful communication skills. In this course, the humanistic and strengths perspectives are applied to understanding and responding to persons in crisis. Students will learn and practice skills in establishing rapport, empathetic listening, de-escalation, and other verbal and nonverbal communication. Students are also introduced to the community human services network, so that they have knowledge of resources available for follow-up.*

**B.** Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOME 1: Demonstrates critical thinking.

Students will gain knowledge of crisis with theoretical foundations in both the Humanistic and Strengths perspectives on human behavior primarily from the textbook for the course. They will then be given the opportunity to apply this knowledge to simulated situations of crisis. During the simulations they will have to use critical thinking skills to assess and evaluate the situation in order to respond in a way that is appropriate and helpful. They will also have to observe and critique the performance of their peers in these simulated role plays. Finally they will have to use critical thinking skills in order to reflect on and evaluate their own performance in the class in written form for a final paper assignment.

LEARNING OUTCOME 2: Demonstrates communication skills that express and convey ideas clearly and effectively.

Throughout the semester students will observe and practice using specific oral and non-verbal communication skills to respond to simulated crisis situations. The skills that they develop over the semester will then be evaluated by both the instructor and a group of their peers in a final graded role play. Mostly, their proficiency will be determined by the appropriateness and helpfulness of their response to the simulated situation.

In addition, students will have to write clearly and convincingly in a Self-Reflection and Evaluation paper assignment. The paper will be graded primarily on its effectiveness at communicating an overall theme using a provided outline and using APA formatting conventions.

**C.** Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

This course is designed to be particularly well-suited for students who are pursuing careers in human services professions (i.e., students majoring in social work, psychology, criminal justice, nursing, and education), but can be applied in many other professional, academic and/or personal situations.

**D**. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

This course would not meet any other University or major/minor requirements. It could, however, be used by students seeking the social service minor as an elective to fulfill their total number of credits required designated with the SW prefix.

**E.** Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | *Task Type:* Self-Reflection and Evaluation Paper  *Frequency:* 1x/semester submitted during finals week  *Overall Grading Weight:* 30%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* 90% of students will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment  *Rationale:*  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:* In this assignment, students will be expected to develop an argument that assesses their own performance in the class. They will have to support that argument using evidence of the knowledge and skills that they gained and/or developed during the semester. They will have to incorporate specific behavioral examples from their own experience as well as use scholarly sources of knowledge as evidence. |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | *Task Type:* Review of Peer Role Plays  *Frequency:* 3x/semester  *Overall Grading Weight:* 15%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* 90% of students will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment  *Rationale:*  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:* On the peer evaluation form, students will be expected to document their observations of their classmates’ performance in a role played scenario of a crisis. They will also be expected to use their documented observations to rate their classmates’ overall performance and to justify their rating. |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | *Task Type:* Extemporaneous Role Play  *Frequency:* 1x/semester  *Overall Grading Weight:* 45%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* **75% of students** will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment.  *Rationale:*  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:*  Students will demonstrate that they have developed proficiency at:   * Gathering information about and assess the crisis situation through observation and question asking. * Communicate appropriately to the person in crisis, verbally and non-verbally, using techniques we’ve learned about and practiced in class. * Provide some immediate help to the person in crisis in the form of resources or information.   Which are established social work crisis intervention skills with theoretical foundations in both the Humanistic and Strengths perspectives. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

*Attainment of the EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

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| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Central Message and Structure** | Central message is the primary focus (main idea or thesis) of the work. Structure is the arrangement of the parts or elements of the work that aids in understanding which includes being coherent, logical, and complete. | *Frequency:* Self-Reflection and Evaluation Paper  *Overall Grading Weight:* 30%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* Therefore, it is expected that **90% of students** will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment.  *Rationale:* It is likely that most students that select this course to meet the effective communication requirement of the general education program at NMU will have already completed EN111 or will have otherwise met the benchmark for composition.  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:*  Students will be expected to construct both introductory and concluding paragraphs that convey the main idea of their paper, as well as construct supporting paragraphs that supply evidence to support their theme. |
| **Substantiation** | Substantiation includes solid reasoning and valid evidence supports conclusions; sources are documented in accordance with disciplinary conventions | *Frequency:* Review of Peer Role Plays  *Overall Grading Weight:* 15%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* **75% of students** will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment.  *Rationale:* It is expected that students taking courses at the 200-level will not have significant prior experience giving and substantiating feedback on peer performance. For social work majors, this is a skill that is honed to a higher level in later courses.  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:* On the peer evaluation form, students will be expected to document their observations of their classmates’ performance in a role played scenario of a crisis. They will also be expected to use their documented observations to rate their classmates’ overall performance and to justify their rating. |
| **Delivery-Written** | Text (clear, readable, consistent with disciplinary conventions and standard written conventions including proofreading and proper syntax etc.) appropriate to the purpose and audience. | *Task Type:* Self-Reflection and Evaluation Paper  *Frequency:* 1x/semester  *Overall Grading Weight:* 30%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* Therefore, it is expected that **90% of students** will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment.  *Rationale:* It is likely that most students that select this course to meet the effective communication requirement of the general education program at NMU will have already completed EN111 or will have otherwise met the benchmark for composition.  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:*  Students will be expected to write a clear and convincing paper using the outline provided in the syllabus and using the American Psychological Society’s conventions for academic writing. (APA Manual, 6th Edition). |
| **Delivery-Oral** | Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) and audio/visual aids appropriate to the purpose and audience. | *Task Type:* Extemporaneous Role Play  *Frequency:* 1x/semester  *Overall Grading Weight:* 45%  *Expected Proficiency Rate:* **80% of students** will demonstrate proficiency on this assignment.  *Rationale:* It is expected that many students who choose to take this class will have an interest in a helping profession and will likely have an average or better level of emotional intelligence. Therefore, the skills evaluated in this assignment can come fairly naturally to these students. In addition, the practice throughout the semester in role playing will provide them with a strong experiential foundation preparing them for this assignment.  However, the extemporaneous nature of the assignment simulates the stress felt in situations of real crisis that can often complicate otherwise natural skills. This assignment forces them to control their own reactions and to use communication skills with intention and confidence.  *Link between Assessment Dimension & Assessment Plan:*  Students will demonstrate that they have developed proficiency at communicating appropriately to the person in crisis, verbally and non-verbally, using techniques we’ve learned about and practiced in class. Techniques include but are not limited to controlling personal emotional responses, non-defensive physical stances, rapport-building, observation and question-asking, active and empathetic listening, and using de-escalating verbal cues. |