

**University of Arkansas - Fort Smith**  
**5210 Grand Avenue**  
**P. O. Box 3649**  
**Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649**  
**479-788-7000**

**General Syllabus**

**SOWK 3043 Human Behavior in the Social Environment**

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite: SOWK 2103 Introduction to Social Work

Prerequisites or corequisites: BIOL 1153/1151 Biological Science/Lab and PSYC 1163 General Psychology and SOCI 2753 Introduction to Sociology

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

**I. Course Information**

**A. Catalog Description**

Introduces social works' perspective on human behavior and the social environment. An ecological perspective is used to focus on the biological, psychological, and sociological context of human development. Relationships between life span issues and the understanding of person-environment are all areas of study.

**II. Student Learning Outcomes**

**A. Subject Matter**

Upon successful completion of the course the students will be able to:

1. Examine and assess problematic situations and identify various alternatives available to the client.
2. Articulate a basic understanding of ecosystems theory and its application in social work.
3. Explain the major biological developments and changes that take place during infancy, childhood, and adolescence.
4. Identify the basic elements of Freud's psychodynamic theory, Piaget's theory of cognitive development, and other theories relevant to the psychological development of infants and children.
5. Describe learning theory and its application within social work, along with an understanding of the importance of social interaction during the infancy and early childhood phases of the life cycle.
6. Explain Erikson's psychosocial theory, along with other theories relevant to the psychological and moral development of adolescents.

7. Discuss the underlying causes of adolescent suicide and intervention strategies to combat its occurrence.
8. Illustrate the impact of social pressures on adolescents, including the development of eating disorders.
9. Demonstrate the ability to empathize with potential clients experiencing a wide range of social problems.

## **B. University Learning Outcomes**

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

### **Analytical Skills**

#### **Critical Thinking**

Students will critically explore major theories on human behavior and development, comparing and contrasting within the social work paradigm and applied to direct practice.

### **Communication Skills**

Students will communicate in writing and orally at a sufficient depth, precision and clarity when evaluating and applying theories to social work practice vignettes.

### **Ethical Decision Making**

Students will appraise theories ethical goodness-of-fit with the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics, considering how these influence generalist practice.

### **Global & Cultural Perspectives**

Students will reflect upon how culture differences and diversity influences human behavior in the social environment as well as theories used in social work practice.

## **III. Major Course Topics**

- A. Biological, psychological and sociological theories of human development, behavior
- B. Lifespan
- C. Systems theory
- D. Ecological perspective