



**CONNECTING CORE COMPETENCIES SERIES**

## **Instructor's Manual and Test Bank**

*for*

# **Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Social Systems Theory**

**7th Edition**

*prepared by*

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Middle Tennessee State University

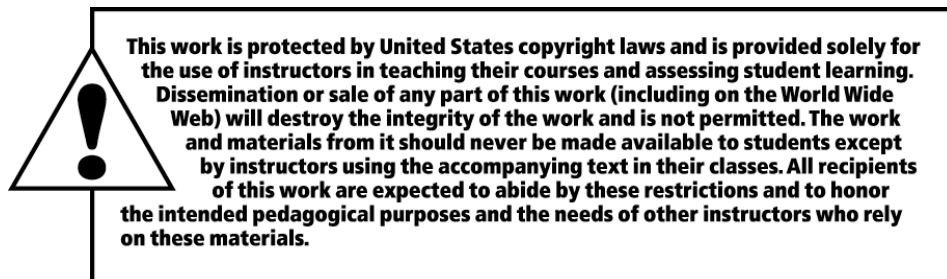
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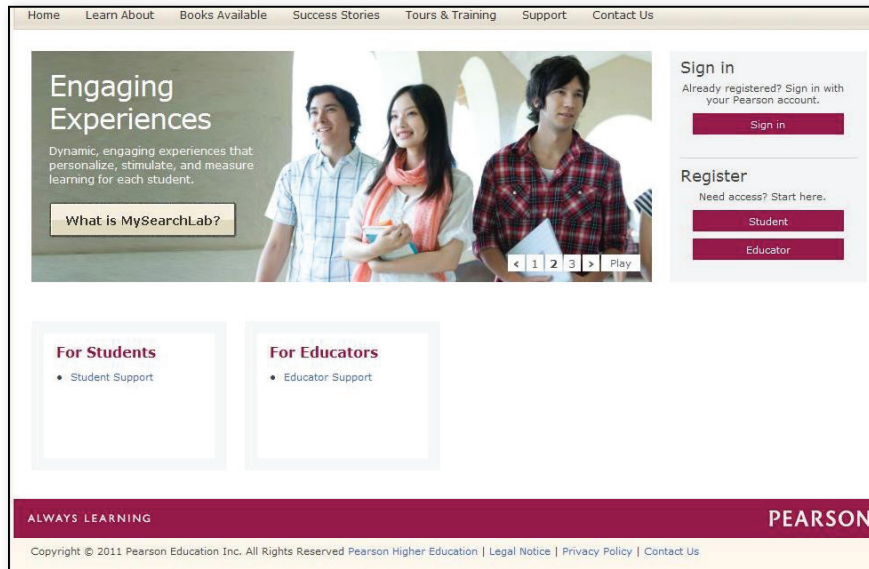
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## CSWE's Core Competencies and Practice Behavior Examples in this Text

Competency	Chapter
<b>Professional Identity</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Serve as representatives of the profession, its mission, and its core values	
Know the profession's history	
Commit themselves to the profession's enhancement and to their own professional conduct and growth	
Advocate for client access to the services of social work	
Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development	
Attend to professional roles and boundaries	1, 14
Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication	11
Engage in career-long learning	
Use supervision and consultation	
<b>Ethical Practice</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Obligation to conduct themselves ethically and engage in ethical decision-making	
Know about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law	
Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice	3, 13
Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Schools of Social Work Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles	
Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts	8
Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions	2, 11, 14
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Know about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment	4, 13
Use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity	8
Requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information	12
Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom	1, 10
Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation	14
Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues	



## CSWE's Core Competencies and Practice Behavior Examples in this Text

Competency	Chapter
<b>Diversity in Practice</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity	4, 13
Understand the dimensions of diversity as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation	
Appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim	
Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power	15
Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups	
Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences	3, 9, 10
View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants	6
<b>Human Rights &amp; Justice</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Understand that each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education	5
Recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights	
Incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice	8
Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination	
Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice	15
Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice	4
<b>Research Based Practice</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery	
Comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge	7
Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry	
Use research evidence to inform practice	14



## CSWE's Core Competencies and Practice Behavior Examples in this Text

Competency	Chapter
<b>Human Behavior</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Know about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being	4, 5, 8
Apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development	6, 11, 12
Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation	1, 3, 7
Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.	2, 9, 10, 13, 15
<b>Policy Practice</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Understand that policy affects service delivery and they actively engage in policy practice	11
Know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development	7, 15
Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being	2, 13
Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action	
<b>Practice Contexts</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Keep informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice	3
Recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively	9, 10
Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services	6, 12
Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services	7





## CSWE's Core Competencies and Practice Behavior Examples in this Text

Competency	Chapter
<b>Engage, Assess Intervene, Evaluate</b>	
<i>Practice Behavior Examples...</i>	
Identify, analyze, and implement evidence-based interventions designed to achieve client goals	
Use research and technological advances	
Evaluate program outcomes and practice effectiveness	
Develop, analyze, advocate, and provide leadership for policies and services	
Promote social and economic justice	
A) ENGAGEMENT	5
Substantively and effectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities	
Use empathy and other interpersonal skills	
Develop a mutually agreed- n focus of work and desired outcomes	
B) ASSESSMENT	
Collect, organize, and interpret client data	
Assess client strengths and limitations	6, 9
Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives	
Select appropriate intervention strategies	5
C) INTERVENTION	12
Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals	
Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities	
Help clients resolve problems	
Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients	
Facilitate transitions and endings	
D) EVALUATION	
Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions	

# **HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

## **SAMPLE SYLLABUS**

### **Instructor Information**

**Instructor:**

**Office Location:**

**Office Phone:**

**Office Hours:**

**Email:**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

An introduction to the theories and knowledge of the human bio-psycho-social development including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, agencies, and communities).

### **COURSE PURPOSE:**

Students gain an understanding of the interactions among human biological, psychological, social, and cultural systems as they effect and are affected by human behavior. These theories are presented in a systems perspective, and address systems at the individual, family, group, organization and community levels. Students learn to evaluate theoretical perspectives and to apply theories to client situations with an understanding and appreciation for the impact of social and economic forces, at-risk status, and/or diverse background has on individuals and social systems. The course encourages the development of critical thinking and assessment of the theories, an understanding of the empirical foundations of the theories, and the application of theories to practice with all levels of social systems. Values and principles, as they relate to the various theoretical perspectives, are infused throughout the course to enhance students' awareness of their personal values and clarification of conflicting values and ethical dilemmas.

### **COURSE COMPETENCIES**

At the completion of this course the student will demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Ability to recognize, select and apply relevant theories of human behavior to the assessment of client systems at all social levels.  
(CSWE: CC 7, PB 23,24)

2. Critically assess and synthesize the theories presented into a culturally sensitive practice perspective. (CSWE: CC3, PB 11,12,13; CC 4, PB 14,16; CC 10, PB 29 33)
3. Critically assess the empirical validity and cross cultural applicability of theories of human behavior that are selected as a basis for practice. (CSWE: CC 3, PB 11,12 13; CC 4, PB 14; CC 6, PB 21,22)
4. Articulate and apply a life span perspective on human behavior that takes into account the impact of culture and context on human behavior. (CSWE: CC 7, PB 23,24; CC9, PB 27; CC 4, PB 14, 15, 16)
5. Critically assess and apply the value and ethical issues that are implicit or explicit in the theories addressed. (CSWE: 7, PB 23,24; CC 2, PB 7, 8, 9, 10)

## **COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE:**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Unit 1 | Introduction<br>The Foundations for Social Systems Theory<br>Social Systems and Social Work<br>Social Systems and Social Roles                 |
| Unit 2 | Psychodynamic Theory<br>Psychosocial Theory: A Social Systems Perspective<br>Behavioral Learning Theories<br>Cognitive and Humanistic Theories |
| Unit 3 | Family Theories<br>Group Theories  |
| Unit 4 | Organizational Theories<br>The Community   |
| Unit 5 | Theories Applied to Addictions<br>Theories Applied to Violence<br>Theories on Social Systems, Social Capital, and Diversity                    |

## **TEXTBOOK:**

Dale, O., & Smith, R. (2013). *Human behavior and the social environment: Social Systems Theory* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson.

## **ASSESSMENT AND GRADING:**

30%: Three critical thinking writing assignments, one in each system size (micro, mezzo, macro) requiring the student to apply theory to social experience.

20%: Mid-term exam.

20%: Class presentation. Alone or in groups, make a critical presentation of an assigned theory or issue to the class. Use media

30%: Term Paper: The student will select a population-at-risk for the subject of this paper and apply theoretical concepts presented in the course

## **GRADING SCALE:**

Student evaluation is based on

- the application of critical thinking skills as applied to theory as demonstrated in the writing assignments,
- mastery of course content as demonstrated in the mid-term exam,
- presentation and mastery of course content and competencies utilizing media, and
- the student's ability to apply and analyze course content processes as demonstrated in the term paper.

Grading is based on standard grading practices:

100%-90% = A; 89%-80% = B; 79%-70% = C; 69%-60% = D; 59% & below = F

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS**

**Three critical thinking writing assignments** ( represents 30% of grade)

(1) The student will complete a 30 minute field observation of an individual involved in a social setting or will conduct a 30 minute interview with an individual. The student will then complete a 3-4 page paper, written in APA style, with a minimum of 2 references (text + additional reference), which

will include: a summary of the observation or interview (approximately 2 pages) and an analysis of the behavior of the individual utilizing theoretical concepts from readings in the text (approximately 2 pages). **Due** \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) The student will observe human interaction in a group setting. The student will then complete a 3-4 page paper, written in APA style, with a minimum of 2 references (text + additional reference), which will include: a summary of the group interaction (approximately 2 pages) and an analysis of the interaction utilizing theoretical concepts from readings in the text (approximately 2 pages). **Due** \_\_\_\_\_.

(3) The student will select a social service agency and complete a 3-4 page paper, written in APA style, with a minimum of 2 references (text + additional reference), which will include: a summary of the agency's mission, goals, and services (approximately 2 pages) and an analysis of the agency and its services utilizing theoretical concepts from readings in the text (approximately 2 pages). **Due** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Mid-Term Exam**, available \_\_\_\_\_ covering chapters \_\_\_\_\_.  
(represents 20% of grade)

**Presentation** (represents 20% of grade). Along or in a group the student(s) will make a critical presentation (15 minutes) of an assigned theory or issue to the class. Use media. Sign up for presentation topics and dates.

**Term Paper:** (represents 30% of grade). **Due** \_\_\_\_\_.

Select a population-at-risk for the subject of this paper and address:

1. A description of the target population
2. A discussion of one of the theories of individual development which impacts this population.
3. A discussion of a family perspective relevant to this population
4. A description of groups and organizations in the larger environment that influence this population
5. The consequences of diversity, discrimination, and oppression on this population
6. Analysis of the systemic approach presented and its utilization in social work practice.

Requirements: (a) 8-10 pages of text, (b) APA style, (c) minimum of 10 references, (d) using the 6 required headings

*Note that references must be professional references published within the last 9 years, only one homepage may be utilized as a reference, dictionaries do not count as references.*

### **Measurement of competencies and practice behaviors**

<b>CSWE Competencies</b>	<b>CSWE Practice Behavior</b>	<b>Assignments Measuring Practice Behaviors</b>
<i>Ethical Practice</i>	7-personal & professional values 8-ethical decision making 9-ambiguity in resolving conflict 10-strategies of ethical reasoning	Critical thinking writing assignments Mid-term exam Term paper
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	11-multiple sources of knowledge 12-analyze models of assessment 13- oral & written communication	Critical thinking writing assignments Mid-term exam Presentation Term paper
<i>Diversity in Practice</i>	14-culture's structure & values 15-self-awareness of biases/values 16-difference shaping experience	Mid-term exam Term paper
<i>Research Based Practice</i>	21-practice informs inquiry 22-research informs practice	Mid term exam Term paper
<i>Human Behavior</i>	23-frameworks to assess/intervene/evaluate 24-critique & apply knowledge to To p-i-e	Critical thinking writing assignments Mid-term exam Presentation Term paper
<i>Practice Contexts</i>	27-continually learn contexts	Critical thinking writing assignments Mid-term exam Presentation Term paper
<i>Engage/assess/ Intervene/evaluate</i>	33-assess	Mid-term exam Term paper

### **PUNCTUALITY**

Any assignment turned in late will receive a 5% reduction for each day it is late, up to one week from the original due date. After that no papers will be accepted and the student will receive a zero for the assignment.

### **Student Resources**

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Adaptive Technology Center](#)
- [D2L Student Support](#)
- [Disabled Student Services](#)
- [Disruptive Behavior Policy](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [ITD Resources Policy](#)
- [Library Services for Distance Learners](#)
- [Smarthinking](#) Online Tutorial Service
- [Student Readiness for Online Instruction](#)
- [Student – Academic Misconduct](#) (including plagiarism) – page 18
- [Student – Statement of Community Standards and Expectations](#) – page 28

### **Copyright Resources**

- [Citation Style Guides](#)
- [Copyright Website](#)
- [The Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998](#)
- [Fair Use Guidelines](#)
- [The TEACH Act](#)
- [United States Copyright Office](#)

### **Library Resources**

- [Distance Librarian](#)
- [Research Guides and Tutorials](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Resources for Distance Learners](#)

### **University Writing Center**

The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing assistance for any writing assignment in any class. Check the Center website for hours. Access to online services is available 24/7.

## **Syllabus Changes**

The instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to this syllabus. If changes are necessary during the term of the course, the instructor will immediately notify students of such changes both by individual email communication and posting both notification and nature of change(s) on the course bulletin board.

## **Technical Support**

Students who experience problems logging into their course, using the course web site tools or experience other technical problems, should be encouraged to contact the helpdesk.

## **Reasonable Accommodations for Students With Disabilities**

If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodations, or if you have any questions related to any accommodation for testing, note taking, reading, etc., please contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss the needed accommodation. To register with the university for accommodations, the contact information is: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to be intellectually honest and forthright in their academic activities. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and facilitation. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly through participation or assistance, are subject to the disciplinary procedures of the college. See the catalog for information on disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **Non-Discrimination**

The University strives to provide all students with educational opportunities to achieve their fullest potential, both as individuals and as members of society. The University is committed to a nondiscriminatory philosophy that extends to all constituents. For more information contact: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Harassment Information**

The university is committed to establishing an atmosphere where your work, education, and participation in the university's activities and programs will be free from intimidation or offensive behaviors. Sexual, racial or other forms of harassment have no place in a university community. For more information contact: \_\_\_\_\_.

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# Chapter 1

## *Introduction*

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

By now it is apparent that grand theory in particular is concerned with finding the patterns and regularities that exist among all social phenomena. The problem for social work practice is that while theories search for the rules, social workers deal all the time with people and problems that break the rules. By its nature social work is concerned with exceptions and uniqueness. For this reason, social work is constantly trying to find new models of understanding why the grand theories don't work for some people and some problems but do work for others. The historical tendency has been to develop focal theories to address the practice problems, and then over time to wedge these exceptions into the larger theories. This is one of the inductive processes by which social work theory is constantly renewed.

The micro level work of developing theories to address the problems and exceptions encountered by social workers is constant. At the same time, the body of knowledge that informs social work practice is continuously massaged to embrace the new data, search for patterns, and provide a medium of language and concepts across a broad range of social systems and social issues.

### STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the five social system levels that are addressed in the CSWE Core Competencies, and be aware of their implications for practice.
- Student will be familiar with the phrase "person in the environment," and understand the use of this perspective in selecting theories for social work practice.
- Students will understand the concept of theoretical range, and apply this concept to the evaluation of theories.
- Students will understand the concept of eclecticism and its implications for generalist practice.

### TEACHING TIPS

- Three levels of theory. Explore student's command of grand, middle range and focal theories. Which are most familiar to them? Which seem most useful? Note the tendency to focus on theories of individual behavior.
- Ask students to identify the theories or concepts they know that apply to each of the system levels in the generalist practice model.
- Have students discuss the distinction between concepts and theories, and identify the ways that we can use evidence to support our theories.

### LECTURE GUIDE AND ASSET CORRELATION

The below lecture guide and asset correlation indicates where discussion prompts, assignments, activities or MySearchLab activities connect to a given topic. The full descriptions of these prompts and assignments follow the below guide.

### ***Discussion Prompts***

- Throughout this chapter, various discussion prompts have been provided for in-class use. These prompts are developed to assist you in starting open conversation with students about key topics of the chapter.

### ***Assignments and Activities***

- These assignments and activities can be used in place of or in supplement of the MySearchLab activities available for students.

### ***MySearchLab Connections***

- The MySearchLab Connections at the end of the chapter highlights assets available on [www.mysearchlab.com](http://www.mysearchlab.com) that connect to the topics and/or competencies in the chapter.

### ***Chapter Outline***

Human Behavior Theory and Social Work Practice

CSWE Core Competencies

Generalist Practice

Theory and Practice in Social Work: Connecting the Dots

Theoretical Range

Theories as Maps: Grand, Middle Range, and Focal Theories

Summary

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What is the relationship between human behavior and social environment theory and critical thinking? Discuss the relationship between problem solving and critical. Then address how to use critical thinking in HBSE.
2. What are your views on the causes of human behavior? It is beneficial to begin the discussion with an example such as bullying, then allow students to introduce other social problems demonstrated in human behavior as they connect the behavior back to possible causes.
3. What role does theory play in making professional judgments? Once again begin with an example to stimulate student participation.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. **Generalist Practice.** Is generalist practice possible? In a complex society, specialization has proven the key to success. What are the arguments for the generalist model? We argue that the generalist “knows the local territory” and has an advantage over specialists who see only one kind of problem or issue, not the whole context. See if that flies in a class discussion.
2. **Theory of Everything.** Is there a theory of everything? Generalist practice seems to require specialty knowledge of everything. Since this is not possible, can we come up with a theory that covers the waterfront? Here we propose the three level model, saying that the grand theory offers an overview, middle range role theory offers common language, and focal theories address specific populations or concerns. Refer to the map analogy in the text.
3. **Grand Theory.** What are the uses of grand theory? Explore the values and limits of grand theory including social systems. Note the Texas River problem—a grand theory is a mile wide and an inch deep.

## STUDENT MYSEARCHLAB STUDY PLAN FOR THIS CHAPTER

Go to [www.mysearchlab.com](http://www.mysearchlab.com)

Login to Dale & Smith, *Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Social Systems Theory*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

### ***Read the Chapter***

- Read this chapter
- Review the Learning Objectives

### ***Chapter Activities and Assignments***

- Watch the Videos and take the quiz
  - Applying Critical Thinking
    - Take the Quiz
- Read the Cases or Documents and take the quiz
  - Human Behavior
    - Take the Quiz
- Explore the Assets
  - Social Science Research Center: <http://www.ssrc.msstate.edu/>
  - Society for Judgment and Decision-Making: <http://www.sjdm.org/>
  - Society for Social Work and Research: <http://sswr.org/>

### ***Prepare for the Exam***

- Review the Flashcards
- Take the Formative Assessments
- Review the Learning Outcomes

### ***Take the Chapter Exam***

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Students will be able to name and give examples of the five social system levels that are addressed in the CSWE Core Competencies, and be able to assess their implications for practice.
- Student will be able to exemplify the concept of "person in the environment," and use this perspective in social work practice.
- Students will be able to apply the concept of theoretical range, and to use this concept in the selection of theories.
- Students will be able to define eclecticism and give examples of this approach.



## Chapter 1 Test Bank

The following assessment has been created for in-class use. This assessment is available through Pearson's MyTest website—allowing for easy access for creating your own tests. *Please contact your local Pearson sales representative to learn about the options available. Visit <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/relocator>.*

*Difficulty: 1 = Easy; 2 = Medium; 3 = Challenging*

### Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the best possible answer for each of the following.

1. The variety of theories relating to human behavior leave us with the need to develop  
a.
  - a. Systems perspective
  - b. Eclectic perspective
  - c. Psychosocial perspective
  - d. Wide perspective

Answer: b  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Knowledge

2. The guiding principles of social work education are developed by
  - a. The National Association of Social Workers
  - b. The American Human Services Association
  - c. The Council on Social Work Education
  - d. The Council on Higher Education Administration

Answer: c  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Knowledge

3. A manner of approaching practice that focuses on the strengths and capacities of individuals and social systems is known in social work as
  - a. Hope therapy
  - b. Generalist practice
  - c. Problem solving perspective
  - d. Strengths perspective

Answer: d  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

4. A form of professional practice competently conducted in a variety of settings with client systems of various size at the several levels of prevention using a transferable body of knowledge, values and skills is a definition of
  - a. Casework
  - b. Generalist practice
  - c. Psychotherapy
  - d. Community practice

Answer: b  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Comprehension

5. Which of the following content areas is not included as a main element in social work curricula?
- a. Non-profit management
  - b. Social and economic justice
  - c. Research
  - d. Values and ethics

Answer: a  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Knowledge

6. Good theory building involves careful observation, measurable description, and testing of our hypotheses about
- a. Variables we observe
  - b. Cause and effect
  - c. The degree of relationship
  - d. Prediction and control

Answer: a  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Synthesis

7. A logically derived set of assumptions and concepts used to explain something is a
- a. Scientific method
  - b. Experimental design
  - c. Theory
  - d. Perspective

Answer: c  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

8. The assumptions upon which theory building is based serve to specify
- a. The tests to be used in measuring results
  - b. Its scientific accuracy
  - c. The laws upon which it is founded
  - d. The underlying set of beliefs and logic upon which the theory is based

Answer: d  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Synthesis

9. The dominant structural feature of the social systems model is
- a. Interaction
  - b. Ego
  - c. Environment
  - d. Role

Answer: d  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

10. Social Systems Theory is a
- a. Focal Theory
  - b. Middle Range Theory
  - c. Grand Theory
  - d. Perspective

Answer: c  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Knowledge

11. All social phenomena are
- a. Related and interdependent
  - b. Qualitatively measureable
  - c. Independent
  - d. Unpredictable

Answer: a  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Comprehension

12. Utilizing maps to explain different levels of theories serves as an example of a
- a. Social system
  - b. Model
  - c. Concept
  - d. Social organization

Answer: b  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

13. How many core competencies are addressed in social work education
- a. 6
  - b. 2
  - c. 10
  - d. 12

Answer: c  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Knowledge

14. Using practice techniques that have been shown to be effective with a client problem is known as

- a. Research informed practice
- b. Clinical practice
- c. Administrative practice
- d. Policy practice

Answer: a

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

15. The process of identifying, describing, measuring, and testing the variables and their relationship is the heart of

- a. Service to clients
- b. Intervention strategies
- c. Process planning
- d. Theory building

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Analysis

### Essay Questions

1. What are the uses of grand theory? Explore the values and limits of grand theory including social systems.

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Application

2. Social work deals with exceptions and theories deal with patterns. Can we have a theory of exceptions, rather than patterns?

Difficulty: 3

Bloom's Level: Evaluation

3. In a complex society, specialization has proven the key to success. What are the arguments for the generalist model? Is generalist practice possible?

Difficulty: 3

Bloom's Level: Analysis

4. Explain how the map analogy in this chapter applies to generalist practice.

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Application

5. What does it mean when social work educators assert that eclecticism is the goal of theory utilization in practice?

Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

## Chapter 2

# *The Foundations for Social Systems Theory*

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

Here we developed a social systems perspective comprised of nine assumptions. This perspective puts forward a set of beliefs on which our presentation of social systems theory builds.

We summarized five lines of theory: general systems, ecological theory, functional theory, symbolic interactionism, and role theory. These theories have served to extend and support our social systems perspective. In part, we have also derived our presentation of this perspective from assumptions that we believe serve as foundations for some of these theories.

Just as the assumptions comprising the social systems perspective form a hierarchy of levels of specificity, so do the theories. General systems theory has been likened to a theory of order itself. Ecological theory deals with the ordering of the organic and the inorganic parts of our world. Functional theory deals with the ordering found in society, including its component parts.

Symbolic interactionism and role theory are addressed to apply the concepts of functionalism to individuals in society. By virtue of shared norms and internalized expectations, the process of social ordering is injected into the behavior of individual members of society.

Our particular interest has been in the work of Talcott Parsons, a leading functional theorist, and his quest for a general theory that would unite the human and behavioral sciences. Central to Parsons' later work was his formulation of what we have chosen to call his four problem matrix. Parsons held that all social systems can be understood as structurally organized around efforts at managing these four problems.

Parsons' work has received considerable criticism, particularly because of what many saw as an inherent conservative bias. Many held that his attention to the ordering processes left little room for understanding social change and processes of disordering. We will be reviewing these criticisms and our approach to the construction of social systems theory in later chapters.

### STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the formal elements used in theory construction in social science.
- Students will learn the formal assumptions of social systems theory.
- Students will learn the relationships between ecological theory, general systems theory and social systems theory.
- Students will learn the core concepts of social systems theory, and be able to exemplify them.
- Students will understand and apply the concepts of functionalist theory, and relate these concepts to symbolic interactionism and role theory.

## TEACHING TIPS

- Stress the interaction between person and the environment, and between various systems in the environment and within the person.
- Address the evolution of social systems theory, the linkage to the environment, and the importance of understanding the analogy between organic systems and social systems as living things.
- Stress the reflexive nature of the self - the self is not a passive process, but we take part in our own self creation. Note the limits of cause and effect thinking when dealing with a conscious person or system.
- Note the importance of boundaries in maintaining social systems, and in determining what is allowed to cross the boundary and enter the system. Some discussion of cognitive dissonance is helpful here in allowing students to become aware of the tension of conflicting explanations in their own cognitive field.
- "Chicken and egg," the question of which came first-self or society? Evaluate the process of constant mutual creation and adaptation.

## LECTURE GUIDE AND ASSET CORRELATION

The below lecture guide and asset correlation indicates where discussion prompts, assignments, activities or MySearchLab activities connect to a given topic. The full descriptions of these prompts and assignments follow the below guide.

### ***Discussion Prompts***

- Throughout this chapter, various discussion prompts have been provided for in-class use. These prompts are developed to assist you in starting open conversation with students about key topics of the chapter.

### ***Assignments and Activities***

- These assignments and activities can be used in place of or in supplement of the MySearchLab activities available for students.

### ***MySearchLab Connections***

- The MySearchLab Connections at the end of the chapter highlights assets available on [www.mysearchlab.com](http://www.mysearchlab.com) that connect to the topics and/or competencies in the chapter.

### ***Chapter Outline***

The Nature of Theory

Social Systems Perspective

General Systems Theory

Ecological Theory

Generalist Social Work Practice and Person in the Environment

Functional Theory

Symbolic Interactionism and Role Theory

Summary

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. In working toward well-being in the area of health care, what steady state factors are currently fueling the debate? First define steady state, then have students contribute to a list of current health care issues, with the final focus on the health care systems attempt to maintain the status quo.
2. Identify an example in the dual traditions that must be addressed by ethical reasoning to arrive at a positive outcome for both the individual and society. Discuss dual tradition before identifying social problems that affect both individuals and society.
3. What are the major elements in the environment that impact the reflexive self? Define reflexive self before identifying the environmental elements.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. **Build a theory.** Have students develop a theory about why we fall in love with a particular person. Require the student to specify the perceptions that are involved in falling in love, including sights, sound, smell, touch and taste. Next, have the students specify the concepts (ideas) that are involved. Including what we think about the loved one. Finally, specify the syntax of the relationships among the varied perceptions and concepts regarding the beloved, and how they work to explain both who we love and why we do not love certain others.
2. **Who goes into social work?** Have students develop a set of hypotheses about why people choose to enter social work. Examine each hypothesis for testability. Specify a process for testing the hypothesis. Compare and organize the varied hypotheses into a hierarchy suitable for empirical investigation.
3. **The Real Me.** Have students think of a time when they consciously assumed a role that was significantly different than their perceived self. Try to become aware of the tension between the role being portrayed and the subjective self. What is the process of self-evaluation? What is the experience of behaving in a way that is incompatible with the self-concept? Are there feelings of guilt associated with the role enactment? Excitement? Confusion?

## STUDENT MYSEARCHLAB STUDY PLAN FOR THIS CHAPTER

Go to [www.mysearchlab.com](http://www.mysearchlab.com)

Login to Dale & Smith, *Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Social Systems Theory*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition.

### ***Read the Chapter***

- Read this chapter
- Review the Learning Objectives



### ***Chapter Activities and Assignments***

- Watch the Videos and take the quiz
  - Entry to the Social Work Profession
    - Take the Quiz
  - The Ecological Model Using the Friere Method
    - Take the Quiz
- Read the Cases or Documents and take the quiz
  - Ethical Dilemmas
    - Take the Quiz
- Explore the Assets
  - Ecopsychology, Theory, and Practice:  
<http://www.well.com/user/suscon/esalen/ecopsyche.html>
  - Social Work Resources:  
<http://www.clinicalsocialwork.com/socialwork.html#MAILING>
  - *Journal of Social Work Practice*:  
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/carfax/02650533.html>

### ***Prepare for the Exam***

- Review the Flashcards
- Take the Formative Assessments
- Review the Learning Outcomes

### ***Take the Chapter Exam***

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Student will be able to use the formal elements used in theory construction to analyze theories.
- Students will be able to articulate and exemplify the assumptions of social systems theory.
- Students will be able to understand and apply ecological theory, general systems theory and social systems theory.
- Students will be able to exemplify the core concepts of social systems theory.
- Students will apply the concepts of functionalist theory, and apply these concepts to symbolic interactionism and role theory.

## Chapter 2 Test Bank

The following assessment has been created for in-class use. This assessment is available through Pearson's MyTest website—allowing for easy access for creating your own tests. *Please contact your local Pearson sales representative to learn about the options available. Visit <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/relocator>.*

*Difficulty: 1 = Easy; 2 = Medium; 3 = Challenging*

### Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the best possible answer for each of the following.

1. The person largely responsible for formulating general systems theory was
  - a. Allport
  - b. Freud
  - c. Lewin
  - d. vonBertalanffy

Answer: d  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Knowledge

2. General systems theory seeks to explain the principles of
  - a. Social behavior
  - b. Organization
  - c. Models
  - d. Personality development

Answer: b  
Difficulty: 1  
Bloom's Level: Comprehension

3. Properties of a whole that are not possessed by the parts comprising the whole are known as
  - a. Emergent
  - b. System
  - c. Feedback
  - d. Entropy

Answer: a  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

4. According to general systems theory, all systems are
- a. Autonomous
  - b. Closed
  - c. Open
  - d. Humanistic

Answer: c

Difficulty: 1

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

5. The quality of the self as being able to consider itself objectively is termed
- a. Syntonic
  - b. Autistic
  - c. Conundrum
  - d. Reflexive

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

6. The 'generalized other' is defined by Mead as
- a. The family system
  - b. An internal representation
  - c. The same as the id
  - d. Public opinion

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Synthesis

7. Goal attainment (one of the four functional requisites) is consummatory (an end state) and
- a. Internal
  - b. Instrumental
  - c. External
  - d. Equifinal

Answer: c

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Comprehension

8. According to Koestler, the attribute of all systems is to be simultaneously oriented outward to the environment and inward toward internal functioning. This is known as
- a. Holon
  - b. Multifinality
  - c. Equifinality
  - d. Entropy

Answer: a

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Knowledge

9. Ecological theory offers a way of examining the effects of environment on social organization and therefore it becomes an approach to the general study of
- a. Well-being
  - b. Homeostasis
  - c. Social change
  - d. Social work practice

Answer: c

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Analysis

10. Working with individuals to improve their conditions, while at the same time, working to change the social conditions that oppress and limit human potential is
- a. Policy practice
  - b. Community practice
  - c. Systems emergence
  - d. The dual tradition

Answer: d

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Synthesis

11. Social functions that are formally recognized by society, as the police function of preventing crime are
- a. Manifest social functions
  - b. Latent social functions
  - c. Family social functions
  - d. Autonomous social functions

Answer: a

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Analysis

12. An agency program is created to treat heroin addiction. Over time the need for this treatment decreases, while the need to address Ecstasy addition increases. This is an example of
- a. Integration
  - b. Adaptation
  - c. Latency
  - d. Goal attainment

Answer: b

Difficulty: 2

Bloom's Level: Application

13. A sociological theory that addresses the interactions between the individual and society through symbolic communication is
- a. Role theory
  - b. General systems theory
  - c. Symbolic Interactionism
  - d. Functional theory

Answer: c  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Synthesis

14. The internalized rules for proper behavior in a particular situation involve
- a. Roles
  - b. The reflexive
  - c. Latency
  - d. Adaptation

Answer: a  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Comprehension

15. For most of us, the family is central in the development of our sense of the generalized other and also our enduring values. The family is
- a. A primary group
  - b. A secondary group
  - c. A tertiary group
  - d. A dominant group

Answer: a  
Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Application

## Essay Questions

1. General systems theory is essentially a theory of order. From this perspective define and contrast the concepts of entropy and negative entropy and the link with the concepts of open and closed systems.

Difficulty: 3  
Bloom's Level: Synthesis

2. The social systems perspective is based on nine assumptions. Identify and discuss four of these assumptions

Difficulty: 3  
Bloom's Level: Comprehension

3. Ecological theory focuses on the interdependence of everything sharing the same habitat. Provide a definition of PIE and discuss its impact on social work practice.

Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Application

4. Identify and differentiate the four functions that can, according to Parsons, be used for the analysis of all social systems.

Difficulty: 3  
Bloom's Level: Analysis

5. What are the hallmarks of a good theory?

Difficulty: 2  
Bloom's Level: Evaluation