

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Ethics and Professionalism in Social Work Practice
SOWK 4000 - 3 credit hours**

Spring 2026

Instructor: Michelle Larson, LCSW-S

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Telephone: 940-215-4885

Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 am - 10:50am

Classroom: Language 310

Office Hours: By appointment

The instructor for this course has the option to revise or alter the course syllabus at any time as class needs dictate.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines ethics, values and professional practice as the foundation of social work practice with individuals, families, small groups, and communities. Students will attain the knowledge base of the social work professional code of ethics, value system and guiding principles. This course will examine complex and contemporary issues impacting social work practice as derived from key ethical processes related to dual relationships, confidentiality, privacy, self-determination, boundary issues, informed consent and many other aspects of practice. Students will also accept a professional persona that is consistent with the identification as professional social workers. This will require students to embrace self-reflection throughout the course to evaluate their own personal strengths, biases, and values. The examination of those concepts and dynamics involved in professional social work relationships will also be explored in consideration of the social context of client systems.

Students will also address the nuances of ethics and values in preparation of making informed decisions that will minimize liability in professional practice. The student's capacity to apply techniques and concepts to actual practice situations will be emphasized. Students will learn to apply ethical decision-making models to help contend with difficult cases. This systematic process will utilize multiple sources of information such as state and national codes and laws and legal obligations to resolve ethical dilemmas. Cases will be analyzed to hone critical thinking skills and make decisions that are consistent with social work values and ethics. The expectation of the course is that students will embrace the ethics and values of social work practice while demonstrating emerging professionalism.

Because this is a class focused on professionalism in social work, your ability to get to discuss ethical issues in a professional manner is important. This course will be full of activities that you will be required to participate in. Because some of the subject matter might be considered controversial by some or very personal to others, it will be important to demonstrate your professionalism by respecting

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all of your classmates, all of the time. A student's inability to show respect for others will affect his/her final grade.

COMPETENCIES & PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Council on Social Work Education approved the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for accredited programs in 2015. These were updated in 2022 and the program is transitioning to the 2022 standards. This course will emphasize the competencies performance behaviors as indicated below.

Core Competency	Course Objectives	Assessment
Competency 1: Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior (2022 EPAS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context (2022 EPAS) 2. Students will demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication (2022 EPAS) 3. Students will use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes (2022 EPAS) 4. Students will use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior. (2022 EPAS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking journals • Ethical dilemma case study • Tests

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS (You WILL need both texts)

Reamer, Frederic G. (2024). *Social work values and ethics, 6th ed.* Columbia University Press.

National Association of Social Workers (2021). *Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.* Washington, D.C.: NASW Press. <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

This class will be taught using a variety of methods including lectures by the instructor, viewing and discussing videos on ethical issues relevant to social work practice, completion of critical thinking journals, participation in class activities, and online participation via Canvas. Quizzes/Online activities will be given throughout the semester to demonstrate student understanding of social work ethical principles and guidelines.

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance and Punctuality COUNT in this class.

In order for students to achieve the course objectives, this class will depend heavily on class/group discussion, videos or other media, and collaborative learning. There are activities done during class that will be important for you to participate in as part of your learning. Absenteeism will negatively impact your grade. Class attendance is required every class period for the entire class period. Coming in late is disruptive to the class and speakers. Consistent tardiness will also impact your grade.

Two absences are permitted without penalty for unforeseen circumstances (provided no assignments are due that day). **50 points will be deducted from your final grade on the third absence and for each absence thereafter.** This could be the difference between you passing and failing this class. Furthermore, arriving late and/or leaving early will also negatively impact your grade. Perpetual tardiness is not professional. I will take roll at the beginning of each class. If you are more than fifteen minutes late, you will be counted as absent for the day. If you come in late, you must send me an email making me aware of your reason for tardiness and the time you arrived. Regular attendance is expected, as is punctuality. Absences may be excused with documentation in accordance with UNT attendance policy 15.2.5.

As any professional social worker should do in the workplace, if you know you are going to miss a class or are going to be significantly tardy, you must contact your instructor via e-mail in advance to alert her of your situation. In advance means before the class period starts, not during or after the class is over.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, UNT promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, forging the signature of the instructor or of another student, fabrication, and/or facilitating or sabotaging the academic dishonesty of other students.

Any suspected occurrence of academic dishonesty will be investigated and handled in accordance with UNT policy and procedures. The following academic penalties may be assessed at the instructor's discretion upon

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determination that academic dishonesty has occurred. Admonitions and educational assignments are not appealable.

1. Admonition. The student may be issued a verbal or written warning.
2. Assignment of Educational Coursework. The student may be required to perform additional coursework not required of other students in the specific course.
3. Partial or no credit for an assignment or assessment. The instructor may award partial or no credit for the assignment or assessment on which the student engaged in academic dishonesty, to be calculated into the final course grade.
4. Course Failure. The instructor may assign a failing grade for the course.

Should the procedure for appeal of a case of academic dishonesty extend beyond the date when the instructor submits course grades for the semester, the student will be assigned a grade that reflects the penalty, which shall be adjusted, as appropriate, at the conclusion of any appeal process.

Specific details and description of UNT's Policy on Student Standards of Academic Integrity (18.1.16) and students' right to appeal are available at <https://policy.unt.edu/policydesc/student-standards-academic-integrity-18-1-16>

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access) website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to request that students discuss such letters during their designated office hours in order to protect the privacy of the student.

Please note that disability accommodations are not retroactively applied to the start of a course. Accommodations in the course become effective after the student has delivered an official accommodation letter from UNT's ODA.

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STUDENT CONDUCT

Any student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any instructional setting at UNT. This includes traditional face-to-face classes, online or blended classes, labs, discussion groups or boards, field trips, and verbal and/or written (including email) communication with the instructor and/or other students. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, disrespectful treatment of other students (verbal or written), disrupting lecture, and use of inappropriate or profane language or gestures in class or other instructional settings.

A student engaging in unacceptable behavior may be directed to leave the classroom or other instructional setting and may also be referred to the Dean of Students to consider whether his/her conduct violates UNT's Student Code of Conduct.

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, & ASSAULT

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

If you are a survivor of relational or sexual violence, there is support for you. There are on- and off-campus resources available to survivors at no cost. Counseling and Testing Services can provide confidential mental health counseling. They are in Chestnut Hall 311. You may also call (940) 565-2741 to schedule an appointment. Denton County Friends of the Family is a community agency that offers free counseling and 24/7 crisis hotline services to survivors. Contact them at (940) 387- 5131. The UNT Survivor advocate can assist in reporting options, arrange for academic and housing accommodations, schedule appointments and help connect students to UNT and other community resources. They are in Union 409 and can be contacted at (940) 565-2648. To report sexual misconduct to Equal Opportunity & Title IX, visit report.unt.edu. The UNT Police Department can be contacted at (940) 565-3000.

PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

The college experience is intended to assist in preparing students for professional and career pursuits. That preparation includes learning to use professional etiquette in dealing with people in positions of authority. The appropriate way to address your instructor depends on her/his particular education credentials. These are usually indicated on the course syllabus. If your instructor has a:

- Doctorate (Ph.D. or Ed.D.), you should address them as: Dr. Instructor's last name
- Master's degree (MA, MS, MSW, MSSW) you should address them as: Professor Instructor's last name
- Law degree (J.D.) you should address them as: Professor Instructor's last name

If you are not certain about an instructor's education credentials, you should address them as "Professor." It is not appropriate to call the instructor by his/her first name unless given permission.

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Professional etiquette extends to all types of communication with your instructor. Written communication—including email—forms a permanent record and so it is important to use care about how you make requests, ask questions, or express concerns. Slang (e.g., Hey, Yo) and texting abbreviations should be avoided. The use of profanity is not permitted.

Any type of communication—verbal or written—is most likely to achieve the intended result when it is polite or courteous. Please note that communication can be polite even if there is some type of conflict involved. Instructors may choose not to respond to emails or other forms of communication that are perceived as insulting or disrespectful.

COMPUTER/CELL PHONE POLICY

Texting in class is not allowable and phones and headphones/earbuds/Airpods must be out of sight. Please step out of the room if you need to make a call and/or use your phone. Though students may prefer to take notes electronically, laptops are strongly discouraged in class as they can become very distracting. Students with ODA accommodations to utilize electronics in class must provide necessary documentation. If computer usage becomes distracting or problematic during class periods or if students are not engaging in discussion due to electronics, this policy may be updated or revised.

REQUESTS TO DROP THE CLASS:

We want you to succeed in this class and at UNT. If you are concerned about your progress in the course, or believe you need to drop for other reasons, it is important that you contact the instructor as soon as possible. We want to make sure that dropping the course is your best or only option.

There are consequences to dropping classes that extend beyond losing your invested time, money, and effort. Dropping one or more classes may make you ineligible for financial aid. There are also limits on the number of courses you can drop.

You can learn more about this at <http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/dropping-class>.

Check with the Registrar's Office or UNT Academic Calendar on deadlines for withdrawing or dropping a class!

REQUESTS FOR AN INCOMPLETE

Students must meet specific criteria to be eligible to receive an incomplete in a course. Review these guidelines on UNT's Incomplete Grade policy is available at <http://registrar.unt.edu/grades/incompletes>.

COMMUNICATION

The best way to communicate with me is through email. All of my communication with students will be done through your official UNT assigned, external email address; this is known as EagleConnect (<http://eagleconnect.unt.edu>). Please be sure to check this account frequently, or forward it to your most frequently utilized email service. I may also occasionally communicate with you on Canvas Announcements.

Remember to keep all communication with your instructor professional. Keep in mind that anytime you write something in an email message, it is there forever. All emails should be written in a professional manner and

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spell checked before being sent. It is unacceptable to send an email as one might send a text message with abbreviations, text-like acronyms, no capitalization or periods. If I receive an email from you like this, you will be asked to compose a professional e-mail before I respond. Also emailing your instructor should not take the place of face-to-face conversation. Students who are encountering problems are encouraged to make an appointment or to talk with the instructor.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS & PROCEDURES:

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all currently enrolled students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at <https://my.unt.edu/>. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

COURSE EVALUATION

The Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) is required for all classes at UNT. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. The SPOT survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Please visit my.unt.edu and fill out the evaluation form when it is available. Bonus points can be earned.

ASSIGNMENTS

LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND MAKE-UP POLICY

Late assignments ARE NOT ACCEPTED. All assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas prior to the deadline. To avoid any unforeseen circumstances, it may be prudent to upload your assignments at least a day before they are due. The only exception to this policy is if the student has provided documentation from the Office of Disability Accommodation or the Dean of Students' Office.

If you miss one of the scheduled classes for any reason, you are expected to get copies of notes and handouts from your colleagues. Make-up exams will only be given in circumstances approved in advance by the instructor. Students who no-show for an exam without advance approval from the instructor will not be allowed to make it up and will receive a grade of zero. There will be no exceptions.

CRITERIA FOR STUDENT EVALUATION

Students' progress will be evaluated utilizing the following criteria:

In-Class Activities	100
3 Critical Thinking Journals (100 points each)	300
Ethical Dilemma Case Study with Partner	200
3 Exams (100 points each)	300
UnEssay	<u>100</u>
	1000

Overall course grades will be assigned strictly on the basis of a point system as follows:

A =	900 - 1000 points
B =	800 - 899 points
C =	700 - 799 points
D =	600 - 699 points
F =	< 600 points

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

It is expected that readings will be done **prior** to class discussions. The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule, as class needs dictate.

WEEK	DATE	GENERAL TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1	Jan 13	Class Introduction Syllabus Review	
	Jan 15	Pretest and Discussion Assign Partners	
2	Jan 20	Social Work Taboo	READING: Reamer Chapter 1
	Jan 22	Foundations of Values and Ethics	
3	Jan 27	Black, White or Gray Activity	READING: Reamer Chapter 2
	Jan 29	Values—Mine, Theirs and Ours The Human Continuum	Homework Assignment: Critical Thinking Journal #1 DUE on Canvas by 11:59pm
4	Feb 3	The History and Evolution of Social Work Values	
	Feb 5	The NASW Code of Ethics Introduction to Applying the Code	READING: NASW Code of Ethics
5	Feb 10	NASW Policy Positions Corner Policy Debate	
	Feb 12	Factors that Affect Moral Decision Making and Ethics	

6	Feb 17	Looking at Ethical Theory	READING: Reamer Chapter 3
	Feb 19	Models of Ethical Decision Making and Dolgoff's Ethical Decision-Making Screens	Homework Assignment: Critical Thinking Journal #2 DUE on Canvas by 11:59pm
7	Feb 24	Ordering Moral and Ethical Principles, Ethical Theory cont. Exam Prep and Review	
	Feb 26	In-Class Exam #1 Values and Ethics/Ethical Theory Multiple Choice (Reamer Chap 1,2,3, and NASW Code of Ethics)	
8	Mar 3	Ethical Dilemmas in Clinical Practice: Commitment to Clients, Self-determination and Paternalism	READING: Reamer Chapter 4
	Mar 5	Ethical Dilemmas in Clinical Practice: Informed Consent, Confidentiality and Privacy, Competence	
9	Mar 10	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASSES
	Mar 12	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASSES
10	Mar 17	Ethical Dilemmas in Clinical Practice: Boundaries, Sex and Conflicts of Interest	READING: Reamer Chapter 5
	Mar 19	Ethical Dilemmas in Macro Practice: Commitment to Equality, Distribution of Scarce Resources, Discrimination and Whistle Blowing	

11	Mar 24	<p>Organizational and Work Relationships</p> <p>Applying the Code of Ethics, cont.</p>	<p>READING: Reamer Chapter 6</p>
	Mar 26	<p>Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues</p>	<p>Homework Assignment: Critical Thinking Journal #3</p> <p>DUE on Canvas by 11:59pm</p>
12	Mar 31	<p>Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals and to the Social Work Profession and Broader Society</p>	
	Apr 2	<p>Risk Management</p> <p>In-Class Work Time on Ethical Dilemma Case Study</p>	
13	Apr 7	<p>Texas Rules and Regulations and Licensure</p>	<p>READING: Read the Texas Administrative Code Part 34 Chapter 781</p> <p>https://www.dshs.texas.gov/socialwork/sw_rules.shtm</p> <p>Rules Relating to the Licensing and Regulation of Social Workers</p>
	Apr 9	<p>Licensure Rules Scavenger Hunt</p>	<p>Homework Assignment: Ethical Dilemma Case Study Paper</p> <p>DUE on Canvas 11:59pm</p>
14	Apr 14	<p>Exam Prep and Review</p>	
	Apr 16	<p>In-Class Exam # 2 Identifying Ethical Breaches and Texas Rules and Regulations <u>Students will need their Code of Ethics</u></p>	<p>Use time after exam to work on your UnEssay.</p>

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15	Apr 21	5-Minute Presentations: Ethics and Values Journey UnEssay	Homework Assignment: Uploaded Picture of UnEssay and One-Page Summary Due by Class Time
	Apr 23	5-Minute Presentations: Ethics and Values Journey UnEssay	
16	Apr 28	Semester Wrap-up Case Study Exploration	
	Apr 30	LAST Day of CLASS Semester Wrap-up and Identification of Learning	
Finals Week		Comprehensive Final Exam Multiple Choice on Canvas Open Book/Open Notes	Open May 2 nd – May 7 th 11:59pm

OVERVIEW OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
Due Dates & Times are specified in this syllabus

Assignments	Points	Due Dates
Critical Thinking Journal #1	100	Jan 29
Critical Thinking Journal #2	100	Feb 19
Exam #1	100	Feb 26
Critical Thinking Journal #3	100	Mar 26
Ethical Dilemma Case Study	200	April 9
Exam #2	100	April 16
UnEssay	100	April 21
Final Exam	100	May 2- May 7
Total Points	100%	
	1000	

ETHICS ASSIGNMENTS

1. Critical Thinking Journals (100 points each)

You should complete this assignment independent of all other students. **ALL** journal entries must be turned in online via Canvas.

Using proper grammar in written communication is very important in social work practice settings. It demonstrates professionalism and helps to establish your credibility. **Turning in a professional product that you can be proud of should be a priority EVERY TIME!** Make sure that all of your journals are carefully proofread and follow **APA guidelines** (typed, double spaced, one inch margins, 12 font size, have a cover page and are page numbered). It should be easy for the reader to understand your line of reasoning. **All journal entries should be a minimum of two full pages in length; however, most entries should be two to four pages long, depending on the assigned entry. Excessive grammatical/syntactical errors will result in a lower grade. Please proofread!**

Reflective writing encourages in-depth thought and application of what you have learned in class and read in your textbooks. Be sure to **include specific information** showing your thoughtfulness in regard to the content of the assignment and its implications for you both personally and professionally. I will be looking carefully at your ability to **think critically** about the subject and your “personal struggle” with each topic. I ask that you **be very honest** about any difficulties you have or feelings you are having difficulty rectifying. That is what this class is for! If you are having specific difficulty with a topic, please note it in your journal so that the topic may be further discussed in class if necessary to aide with understanding, or make an appointment with the instructor to discuss one-on-one.

Journal prompts can be located at the end of the syllabus as well as on Canvas.

2. Ethical Dilemma Case Study with Partner (200 points)

Each student in the class will be assigned a partner to complete a case study with. One paper will be turned in for each dyad. The paper must be written in APA style, including 1 inch margins on all sides, subheadings, 12 font size, cover page, page numbers, etc. The paper will be 8 to 10 pages long and will include a reference page done correctly in APA style.

Several case scenarios will be presented in class. Each dyad is to choose a scenario and then decide on the ethical dilemma(s) that are present.

Next you will write a paper, jointly, using the following subheadings:

1. **The Dilemma:** Start your paper off by summarizing and describing the ethical dilemma(s) you have identified. For example: Permanency vs. Physical Safety, or Confidentiality vs. Self-Determination, etc. Include what parties must be considered in the social worker’s decision when resolving the dilemma.

2. **Position Number One:** Choose a position on the topic and support the position by completing a search of scholarly literature that backs the position chosen using three to five sources. The position should be supported as if you and your partner very strongly believe that this position on the topic is the correct way to look at the dilemma.
3. **Position Number Two:** Then, come back and support the opposite position also completing a search of scholarly literature using three to five different sources. The position should be supported as if you and your partner very strongly believe that this position on the topic is the correct way to look at the dilemma.
4. **NASW Code of Ethics:** Next, reference and explain the part(s) of the NASW Code of Ethics that apply to your ethical dilemma. Remember, several different sections of the Code may apply to one dilemma.
5. **Reasoning, Rationale and Resolution:** Then, describe what conclusion you and your partner have come to based upon your (a) research of the topic, (b) use of the NASW Code of Ethics, (c) use of relevant ethical principles as discussed in class and, (d) by discussing the ethical framework you utilized showing the steps you followed to resolve the ethical dilemma. Include information about what reasoning and rationale you used to come to your conclusion.
6. **Reflections:** Lastly, in this section, for each member of the dyad, reflect upon your own personal values. Each partner's section should be identified with their name in the subheading (For example, **Reflections of Cassidy Baker**). In each section, the student will answer these questions: (a) What are your personal values? (b) How did your personal biases affect your decision making during this process and paint your view? (c) What were your ethical stances? (d) Discuss any debate that took place between you and your partner where your values and ideas may have not been the same. (e) What conflicts were there and how were they resolved? (f) Did you consult the help of a third party to help you resolve the conflict (include who it was and what they had to say)? (g) Did researching the position in the literature help in the decision making process or make it more difficult? (h) How do you feel about your final decision? (i) What if you had to apply it in real life? Does this change how you feel about it?

3. Exams (100 points each)

Three exams will be given over the course of the semester. They will be either multiple choice or written application of the concepts learned during the course. The first two exams will be taken during class. There will be a multiple-choice final exam administered on Canvas where students can refer to course textbooks and other class notes for assistance.

4. UnEssay: Ethics and Values Journey (100 points)

An UnEssay is a way to move “beyond traditional papers...a form of self-expression and a way to demonstrate learning in a hands-on and visual way. [Catering] to students of different learning styles and expressions” (Mader 2020).

Students will reflect on their own personal values and what they have learned throughout the course related to their values journey, professional values, and social work ethics to create an UnEssay product

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in their own interpretive way. This can be accomplished through a variety of mediums: collage, pottery, painting, needlework, photography, song-writing etc. The sky is the limit!

This assignment emphasizes creativity and self-reflection and will be assessed based on “critical and active engagement with the course material” demonstrating “insight...time and effort devoted to creating something thoughtful” (Clark 2016).

The assignment will be assessed in three parts:

1. UnEssay Product (60 points)
2. One-page written description/reflection of the UnEssay (20 points)
3. 5-minute class presentation (20 points)

Critical Thinking Journal Prompts

Ethics and Professionalism in Practice (SOWK 4000-001)

Critical Thinking Journal #1

Personal Values:

Social workers deal with varied situations which may be congruent or dissonant with their personal values.

1. From where did you derive your personal values?
2. Can you identify how your values play a part in your personal life and how they might play a part in your professional life?

Professional Social Work Values-Based Policy Statements:

1. Discuss at least two NASW Policy Statements that you agree with. What is the basis for your agreement?
2. Discuss at least two NASW Policy Statements that make you uncomfortable or with which you disagree. What is the basis of your discomfort/disagreement?
3. How will you resolve these when working as a professional social worker?

Critical Thinking Journal #2

These questions and exercises are designed to help you understand the following concepts: moral decision making, ethical decision making, and biopsychosocial-spiritual factors affecting moral decision making.

1. *Factors Affecting Moral Choices:* For each of the following scenarios, explain how biological, psychological, social, or spiritual factors may be affecting the client's moral decision-making process: (Some of the scenarios may be affected by multiple factors. Be sure to list *all* that may have an effect on the client)
 - a) You are working with Colin, a 10-year-old who has been picking on a Vietnamese American boy in his class, calling him names and taunting him into fights. Colin's father is currently unemployed. He blames his predicament on immigrants who come here and take all the good jobs. Colin's father has told him that America is for Americans and everyone else should stay home in their own countries.
 - b) You are counseling Charlotte, a woman who suffers from kidney failure and urgently needs a kidney transplant. Over 70,000 people are on the waiting list for transplants. Charlotte feels desperate, so she has placed an advertisement on the Internet saying that she is willing to buy a kidney for \$100,000. She knows that buying organs is illegal in the United States, so her advertisement uses an overseas address.
 - c) You have been helping Clara deal with a loveless marriage. Her family and religious community pressured her into marrying a man who impregnated her. She says her religion prohibits divorce as marriage is a lifelong commitment. She feels sad and alone but believes trying everything to make the marriage work is the right thing to do.
 - d) You are a case manager for Chris, a 24-year-old with Down syndrome. Cognitively, he functions at the level of a 6-year-old and lives in a supportive housing facility for other men and women with Down syndrome. Chris tells you that his parents want him to get a vasectomy. He thinks this is the right thing to do because his parents always know what is best for him.

2. *Moral-Ethical Conflicts*: For each of the following cases, using the Code of Ethics as a guide, identify the conflicts between the social worker's moral convictions and ethical obligations.
- Sripada likes her field instructor, Fritz, very much. In fact, she likes him so much that she wants to invite him to her mountain cottage for the weekend. She knows the Code of Ethics says something about dual relationships and maintaining professional boundaries. Still, she personally believes in free will and individuality, so what could it hurt to spend the weekend with Fritz?
 - Sacha worked as a journalist before she became a social worker. She still writes articles for a human interest magazine. She finds that she gets good story material from the clients she works with. Her colleague says she is breaching client confidentiality, since she does not ask the clients for permission to tell their stories. Sacha thinks that people living in a democratic society have a right to know what is going on in their communities.
 - Selwyn is working in a nursing home when he receives a phone call saying that he might be the winner of \$1,000,000. All he has to do is fly to the Bahamas and participate in a televised talent contest. He has always wanted to be on television, so he informs his supervisor that he will be back in a couple of weeks, maybe. His supervisor says that he needs to take care of his clients first, but Selwyn says he has no time and this contest is more important. Besides, if he wins, he'll give a big donation to the home. (Barsky, 2010)

Critical Thinking Journal #3

- The director of a drug addiction rehabilitation program faces a difficult budget allocation decision. He has sufficient budget to mount only one of two programs his agency would like to offer. Program A is geared to elementary students. It will serve 500 children from some of the city's most troubled neighborhoods. Past experience has shown that without such a program 200 children will be addicted by the time they are 16 years old. With such a program, it is expected that no more than 50 will become addicted. Program B focuses on the rehabilitation of adolescent drug addicts. Fifty teens can be served each year, with a 60% success rate.
 - What ethical considerations should the director examine?
 - What ethical rules and ethical principles can he use to help him make a decision?
 - How does the availability of the outcome data provided affect the decision-making process? (Dolgoff, Loewenberg, & Harrington, 2009)
- Review the ethical decision-making framework. Apply steps I-IV of the framework to the ethical dilemma you identified above and answer these questions. **Make sure to document your work as you go through the steps.**
 - Did you reach a different conclusion using this framework from the one you reached when you originally encountered the ethical dilemma?
 - In what ways does the decision-making framework help you understand the ethical dilemma?