

2025 Banded Dissertation Defense Day Schedule and Program

April 2025 | All MN Central Time | Zoom link: <https://stthomas.zoom.us/j/8051839544>
 Doctor of Social Work, School of Social Work | Morrison Family College of Health

Click on Banded Dissertation Titles to view Abstract
 Last revised February 13, 2025

WEEK 1

Tuesday, April 8				
Time	Student	State	BD Title	Supervising Professor
12:30 pm	Candice Sorapuru	LA	It's Giving Necessary: Adding Antiracism to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Social Work Practicum Education	Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW
1:40 pm	Donald "Tad" Roberts	TN	The Intersection of Social Work and School Safety: A Social Work Perspective on Preventing Targeted School Violence	Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW
2:50 pm	Talolo Tua Lepale	CA	The Trauma Resiliency Model, TRM®: A Clinical Reprocessing Protocol: A Gentle, Body-Based Approach for Healing Trauma	Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW
Wednesday, April 9				
Time	Student	State	BD Title	Supervising Professor
12:30 pm	Emily Paine	MN	Human Library: Transformational Exchange in Social Work Education	Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW
1:40 pm	Chana Lockerman	MD	Reproductive Justice as Feminist Praxis: Elevating Marginalized Voices in Hospital-Based Childbirth to Empower Rights and Reshape Realities	Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW

WEEK 2

Tuesday, April 15				
Time	Student	State	BD Title	Supervising Professor
12:30 pm	Chipo Nwakwubei	ON	Empathy in Action: Navigating Trauma-Informed Approaches for Social Workers in Domestic Violence Support	Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW
1:40 pm	Sabrina M. Straub	IN	The Journey to Cultural Humility: Globalization and Study Abroad as Essential Elements of Social Work Education	Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW
2:50 pm	Matthew A. Metcalf	CA	Family Systems Dialectical Behavioral Therapy: A Model and Systematic Review	Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW
Wednesday, April 16				
Time	Student	State	BD Title	Supervising Professor
12:30 pm	Kynda K. Stull	MN	Toward an Equitable Homelessness Response System: Recognizing and Transforming our Community Practices	Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW
1:40 pm	Tasha Guerrero	NM	Makóce Tawá Wosdónye kta Čhaŋté Kamná H̄tani Woécon: Honoring Indigenous Knowledge for Meaningful Social Work Practices	Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW

Abstracts

In alphabetical order by last name.

Makóce Tawá Wosdónye kta Čhaŋté Kamná Htani Woécon: Honoring Indigenous Knowledge for Meaningful Social Work Practices

Candidate: Tasha Guerrero

Supervising Professor: Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW

The experiences, wellness, and resilience of Indigenous people are grounded in their profound history and cultural practices. As social workers, we must embrace culturally sensitive practices to provide meaningful social work practices. This banded dissertation encompasses three scholarly products that explore integrating Indigenous knowledge in social work education and practice to enhance outcomes for Indigenous people. The first product is a conceptual framework that provides an Indigenous cultural lens to integrate Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit), Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Indigenous Knowledge, and Indigenous Environmental Practices in social work services for Indigenous people. The second product is a qualitative research study that utilized an Indigenous Research Paradigm, TribalCrit, and a narrative analysis to explore the lived experiences of social workers, emphasizing the best social work practices for Indigenous people. The findings indicate that culturally sensitive practices and Indigenous voices in social work are essential, and Indigenous-focused content in education is beneficial in preparing future social work practitioners. The third product was a peer-reviewed workshop at the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) 42nd Annual Protecting Our Children Conference, held in April of 2024 in Seattle, Washington. This banded dissertation aims to honor and amplify Indigenous voices, knowledge, and ways of knowing in social work practice and education.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous social work, Indigenous ways of knowing, Indigenous social work education

The Trauma Resiliency Model, TRM[®] A Clinical Reprocessing Protocol: A Gentle, Body-Based Approach for Healing Trauma

Candidate: Talolo Tua Lepale

Supervising Professor: Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) affects millions worldwide, yet many evidence-based treatments remain difficult for clients to tolerate, leading to dropout rates as high as 50%. The Trauma Resiliency Model (TRM) offers a gentler, body-based alternative to traditional PTSD interventions. This banded dissertation has three products that explore TRM's theoretical foundation, clinical application, and develops a structured treatment protocol to support implementation and research. The first product is a theoretical analysis that deconstructs the Trauma Resiliency Model (TRM) and the Community Resiliency Model (CRM) as a singular modality for trauma intervention. The paper synthesizes existing CRM research to support TRM's preliminary efficacy and outlines a research agenda to assess its effectiveness. The second product presents qualitative findings from psychotherapists who have been using TRM. Interviews of these psychotherapists highlight TRM's effectiveness and adaptability allowing for its use alongside other models like EMDR. The third product advances TRM's clinical accessibility through a five-phase clinical reprocessing protocol, providing structured guidance for psychotherapists and a standardized framework for researchers to measure its effects. Together, these products establish TRM's conceptual foundation, explore its clinical potential, and present a framework for further study that lays the groundwork for its validation as a trauma-focused treatment model.

Keywords: Trauma Resiliency Model (TRM), trauma-focused care, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), trauma reprocessing, trauma-and stressor-related disorders

Reproductive Justice as Feminist Praxis: Elevating Marginalized Voices in Hospital-Based Childbirth to Empower Rights and Reshape Realities

Candidate: Chana Lockerman

Supervising Professor: Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW

This banded dissertation explores a feminist approach to reproductive justice with a focus on informed consent practices in hospital labor and delivery units. The first product is a conceptual article that explores informed consent as an ethical and legal practice as well as the consequences of absence of consent during hospital-based births. Because lack of consent is one of many factors that leads to high rates of patient mistreatment during birth, the paper argues that a new model for informed consent based in the practice of human rights would refocus informed consent on the rights of the individual, with the goal of reducing rates of patient mistreatment during birth. The second product is a phenomenological study that explores workplace informed consent experiences of labor and delivery nurses. In interviews, nurses relayed instances in which they observed informed consent practices that did not truly inform patients, as well as procedures carried out without consent. The third and final product is a poster presentation that was presented at the Postpartum Support International conference in Washington, DC in July 2024. The presentation addressed high rates of mistreatment reported by patients by proposing a human rights based informed consent model.

Keywords: human rights, informed consent, obstetric violence, birth trauma, social work, perinatal mental health

Family Systems Dialectical Behavioral Therapy: A Model and Systematic Review

Candidate: Matthew A. Metcalf

Supervising Professor: Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW

This banded dissertation examines Dialectical Behavioral Therapy as a clinical intervention for Family Therapy, specifically for families with a family member experiencing intense emotions. Utilizing family systems theory, biosocial theory, and a dialectical philosophy, a clinical synthesis of family systems therapy and DBT is proposed. A systematic review of recent research findings from quantitative studies about DBT and family therapy is also included. The first product is a conceptual article proposing how DBT as a form of family therapy could be conducted. It includes a comprehensive clinical model that synthesizes traditional family therapy methods with comprehensive DBT. The second product of this banded dissertation is a systematic review that examines the findings of quantitative studies about DBT and family therapy. Utilizing an inductive approach leading to a thematic analysis of studies conducted since 2020, the article conceptualizes and expands the understanding of DBT with family systems. The third product is a poster presentation of product one, Family Systems DBT: A proposed clinical synthesis. The presentation occurred at the 2024 International Congress of Family Therapy, held in Toyama, Japan. The purpose of this Banded Dissertation is to provide new provide a unique perspective on DBT as a possible treatment for a family system, particularly one that has a family member who has intense emotions.

Keywords: family therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, DBT, adolescents

Empathy in Action: Navigating Trauma-Informed Approaches for Social Workers in Domestic Violence Support

Candidate: Chipo Nwkwubei

Supervising Professor: Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW

This Banded Dissertation focuses on social workers working with victims of domestic violence while exploring the impact of vicarious trauma and utilizing self-care as a preventative measure. This work is comprised of three scholarly products: a research paper on domestic violence with relevant orienting historical information, a qualitative systematic review of the literature, and a presentation on trauma-informed approaches. Domestic violence affects all societies regardless of their background, race, religion, or circumstance, and these traumatic experiences alter the physical, emotional,

psychological, spiritual, and social planes rupturing one's sense of basic trust. Vicarious traumatization is a concept that was developed to describe the cumulative, pervasive, and damaging effects on the social work practitioner that occur from chronic exposure to a client's traumatic material. The commonality between domestic violence and vicarious trauma is that no one is immune to either one of them, including social workers who encounter both daily. Social work is a profession that can be extremely rewarding. However, if one is not careful in managing work stress, this could lead to vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, or burnout. This research is to inspire those affected by these predicaments so they can engage in self-care since it is never too late to make changes or an impact.

Keywords: burnout, trauma, vicarious trauma, domestic violence, compassion fatigue, social work, victims, self-care

Human Library: Transformational Exchange in Social Work Education

Candidate: Emily Paine

Supervising Professor: Kingsley Chigbu, Ph.D., MSW, CFNIP, LICSW

The Human Library has become a globalized movement drawing on the analogy of a traditional library in hosting a supported exchange between individuals who are storytellers and those who are listeners that engage in open conversation. This Banded Dissertation examines the origins, theoretical foundations, applications, and findings of embedding the Human Library within Social Work Curriculum. Grounded in Intergroup Contact Theory, Narrative Identity Theory, Experiential Learning, and Critical Pedagogy three research products offer critical reflections on the value of the Human Library within social work education including the impact of this event on social work students, its effectiveness in reducing intercultural communication apprehension and bias, emotional experiences of transformational learning, and vital intentions and ethics when embedding this experience within social work courses.

Keywords: Human Library, Social Work education, transformational learning, supported exchange, Critical Pedagogy

The Intersection of Social Work and School Safety: A Social Work Perspective on Preventing Targeted School Violence

Candidate: Donald "Tad" Roberts

Supervising Professor: Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW

The intersection of social work and school safety has received limited attention in academic literature. This banded dissertation explores social work's longstanding commitment to public safety and its potential to strengthen efforts in school safety and prevent targeted school violence. By analyzing conceptual frameworks and historical research on the relationship between social work and public safety, the study proposes a comprehensive framework for integrating social workers into multidisciplinary approaches aimed at enhancing school safety. Particular emphasis is placed on the Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) model for K-12 schools. This work seeks to provide a foundational reference for advancing strategies to prevent targeted school violence and fostering safer educational environments.

Keywords: behavioral threat assessment and management, ecological systems theory, intersectionality, school safety, school social work, school resource officer, strengths perspective, targeted school violence

It's Giving Necessary: Adding Antiracism to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Social Work Practicum Education

Candidate: Candice Sorapuru

Supervising Professor: Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW

A significant change in the 2022 revision of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation standards was the addition of antiracism to the diversity, equity, and inclusion policy. This policy change mandates the incorporation of antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) within the implicit and explicit curricula. This Banded Dissertation

focuses on the concepts of ADEI within the practicum pedagogy, which has been widely recognized as the signature pedagogy of social work education. This Banded Dissertation employs a Critical Race Theory framework and research methods to center racism within the broader discussion of ADEI within social work education. The first product of this Banded Dissertation is a conceptual paper imploring social work programs to offer ADEI continuing education to practicum personnel. This paper titled “Walk It Like We Talk It: ADEI Professional Development for Practicum Personnel” outlines specific topics that encompass the foundational knowledge needed for ADEI social work practice. The second product, “ADEI Perceptions Among Practicum Personnel,” is a qualitative research study that explores the perceptions of persons working in the practicum pedagogy on the concepts of ADEI. The study findings reveal a high value for ADEI, but practicum personnel need further education to implement ADEI into the practicum curriculum. The third product is a workshop, “It All Starts with Us: Integrating ADEI into Supervision.” This workshop presentation explored approaches to incorporating ADEI in supervision, including practical applications and evaluation techniques.

Keywords: ADEI, antiracism, diversity, equity, inclusion, social work, practicum, education

The Journey to Cultural Humility: Globalization and Study Abroad as Essential Elements of Social Work Education

Candidate: Sabrina M. Straub

Supervising Professor: Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW

Globalization calls for the profession of social work to prepare practitioners with the ability to think globally and take global action to appropriately address the needs of diverse clients and constituents, both at home and abroad, which requires the development of cultural humility. Schools of social work are tasked with the globalization of curriculum to teach cultural humility and meet the current needs of society, a challenging task in need of a clear and unifying plan for implementation. Beginning with a foundation of postcolonial theory and utilizing Culturally Responsive Teaching techniques, schools of social work can integrate the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, which are closely aligned with social work values, to provide a unified structure that will instill in students a global mindset grounded in cultural humility, preparing them to work with diverse populations on a wide range of issues. The integration of short-term study abroad experiences can further the development of a global mindset grounded in cultural humility by immersing students in unfamiliar and varied cultures for a learning experience that is far more transformational than classroom learning alone.

Keywords: globalization, cultural humility, postcolonial theory, study abroad, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Culturally Responsive Teaching

Toward an Equitable Homelessness Response System: Recognizing and Transforming our Community Practices

Candidate: Kynda K. Stull

Supervising Professor: Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, LCSW

There is an urgent need to better understand and address racial inequity and homelessness in the United States. This dissertation contributes to that work by examining how homelessness response systems can perpetuate or challenge inequity through specific kinds of community and organizational practices. In three scholarly products, this banded dissertation addresses different elements of homelessness response. The first product addresses the development of permanent supportive housing programs and presents a conceptual framework for integrating principles of equity, community participation, function, and trauma informed care into the design process for new programs. The second product addresses the importance of homelessness response professionals and presents qualitative research that explores how frontline service workers perceive race and learn about anti-racist and culturally affirming service interventions. The third product addresses the Community Mental Health Act and presents a textual and historical analysis of early efforts to design a community-based mental health care system that did not include input from the community. Grounded in social work’s commitment to anti-racist research and practice, this scholarship offers models

for analyzing the design of community-based systems and recognizing the ways racial and other inequities are reproduced within them. It also offers a framework for interrupting that reproduction and transforming our community practices to create the equitable homeless response system we need.

Keywords: homelessness response system, racial inequity, design justice, supportive housing, community practice, social work research