AGS Course 750 Fall 2012
Social Interest: Theory and Use

1. Course Designation and Identifier

1.1 Adler Graduate School
1.2 Course number: 750
1.3 Course title: Social Interest: Theory and Use
1.4 Three (3) credits
1.5 Prerequisite: 711, 712, or 511

2. Course Description

This course explores Adler’s proposition that the primary solution to the major problems, maladjustments and dysfunctions in life lies in the human capacity for social interest. The concept of social interest, as defined by Adler, will be studied, including the childhood origins of social interest and the family consequences of the three handicaps of childhood in interfering with the development of social interest. The process of personal and professional cultivation of social interest from an Adlerian perspective will also be addressed as a tool of resiliency to social stressors, as well as the role of social interest in working with clients. The class will also investigate the difference in meaning of social interest across different cultures and within different contexts, such as social media.

3. Texts, Materials and Resources (required and optional)

3.1 Required texts: None

3.2 Required Articles:

Adler (1998), Social Interest, Introduction


Johnson, Smith & Nelson (2003). Predictors of social interest

Meaning of Life (book), pages 19-22


3.3 Required Video(s):


Global Oneness Video: What would it look like? Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ96y_yOkI0&feature=related

Jerry Rifkin: An Empathic Civilisation. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7AWnfFRc7g

4. Competencies and Learning Outcomes

Students in this course learn:

4.1 The definition of social interest from an Adlerian perspective. 10(c)

4.2 The childhood origins of social interest and the consequences of the three handicaps of childhood in interfering with the development of social interest. 3(c), 10(c)

4.3 The role of social interest in successfully resolving the major problems of life: communal life, work, intimacy, relation to self and spiritual matters cross culturally. 2(a), 10(c)

4.4 The process of cultivating social interest in therapeutic and larger social environmental contexts, from an Adlerian perspective. 3(d)

4.5 The role of social interest in resolving the larger collective issues that humankind currently faces. 10(c)

4.6 To understand and experience the Adlerian Family model of therapy including its therapeutic application to issues in family development, families under stress, as well as,
consideration of environmental and cultural issues. 9(h)

4.7 Applications of Social Interest as a dynamic to therapeutic settings, e.g. family, couples and groups. 9(f)

5. **Course Overview**

5.1 AGS on-line courses have the same total duration as residential courses – 7 weeks (5 weeks of coursework plus two weeks for completing final assignments). You should expect to spend approximately 120 hours on all course-related activities. Your instructor will be actively available for all class activities and individual consultations for the duration of the coursework and as needed until final papers grades are submitted.

5.2 Your course instructor will respond to your questions or comments within 48 hours (barring unforeseen circumstances). You will be expected to observe the same response time-- replying within 48 hours. During the class, your instructor will post specific office hours on your class webpage.

5.3 Please stay current in the class. Generally, you will be expected to complete reading assignments, submit at least two substantive postings per week (in response to the questions and/or tasks by your instructor), and – in some cases - engage in experiential activities, per syllabus. These expectations are very general, as you will find unique teaching style and specific expectations presented in each on-line class.

5.4 Although you will likely find that you have a lot of experience in the discussed topics, please remember that the most convincing position is the one supported by the most current and relevant research. You will find these sources in peer-reviewed journals. Use APA style and format requirements in referencing sources.
### Course Outline

#### 6.1 Course Outline (brief):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Number</th>
<th>Unit Topic</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Knowledge, awareness, &amp; skills in applications</th>
<th>Reading and other sources</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Social Interest (SI): Theory</td>
<td>2(a), 10(c)</td>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>readings</td>
<td>Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>SI: Theory (cont.)</td>
<td>2(a), 10(c), 3(d)</td>
<td>knowledge/awareness</td>
<td>readings/video</td>
<td>Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>SI and cultural differences</td>
<td>3(d), 9(f), 10(c), 9(h)</td>
<td>knowledge/awareness/applications</td>
<td>readings/video/activity</td>
<td>Outside Exercise/activity and paper; Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>SI: Families and Childhood development</td>
<td>3(c), 3(d), 10(c)</td>
<td>Knowledge/awareness</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>SI and personal development</td>
<td>3(d), 9(h), 9(f)</td>
<td>Knowledge/awareness/application skills</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>SI and Pathology</td>
<td>2(a), 9(h), 10(c)</td>
<td>Knowledge/awareness</td>
<td>Readings/activity/video</td>
<td>Outside Exercise/activity and paper; Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>SI and Professional Development</td>
<td>3(d), 9(f), 9(h)</td>
<td>Knowledge/awareness/skill applications</td>
<td>Readings/videos</td>
<td>Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>SI and Clinical applications</td>
<td>3(d), 9(f), 9(h)</td>
<td>Knowledge/awareness/skill applications</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>SI and Social Media</td>
<td>2(a), 9(h), 10(c)</td>
<td>knowledge/awareness/skill applications</td>
<td>Readings/activities/observations/video</td>
<td>Outside Exercise/activity and paper; Discussion/response postings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Project Time (SPT)**

1: SI and Hands
2: SI and false Societies
3: SI and Social Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speci al Project Time (SPT)</th>
<th>1: SI and Hands</th>
<th>2: SI and false Societies</th>
<th>3: SI and Social Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2(a), 3(d), 9(f), 9(h), 10(c)</td>
<td>Knowledge, awareness, &amp; skills in applications</td>
<td>Readings/videos/observations/activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Course Assignment**

| Final Course Assignment | SI and Global Development | 2(a), 3(d), 10(c) | Knowledge, awareness, & skills in applications | Readings/videos | APA formatted Response Paper |

| Speci al Project Time (SPT) | 2(a), 3(d), 10(c) | Knowledge, awareness, & skills in applications | Readings/videos | APA formatted Response Paper |

| Final Course Assignment | SI and Global Development | 2(a), 3(d), 10(c) | Knowledge, awareness, & skills in applications | Readings/videos | APA formatted Response Paper |
Week 1: Units 1 & 2

Unit 1 – Introductions (An exercise in Social Interest)

Readings: Adler (1998), Social Interest, Introduction


Watts in *Alfred Adler Revisited*, pgs. 41-56 (Ch. 5)

Viewings: Mosak, H. (video) 12/09/2011 Social interest discussed (@ 20 minutes into viewing)

Unit 2 – An Adlerian perspective on Social Interest: Theory

Readings: Meaning of Life (book), pages 19-22


Week 2: Units 3 & 4

Unit 3 – Cultural Differences in Social Interest


Available at: http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=jice

Video: Jerry Rifkin: An Empathic Civilisation. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7AWnfFRe7g

Assignment/Activity/Exercise #1 (10 pts):

Assignment: Read different sources about what “hands” mean e.g. figures drawn without hands vs. with hands; how they are defined differently across different cultures, and participate in the following exercise:

Activity: Trace your hand and draw on it or decorate it as you wish. Examine your
We all have a “hand” in the future and today, what hand will you have in life? Please take a photo of your hand and e-mail it to me THIS WEEK at:

jsisk@mail.alfredadler.edu

I will make a class collage to display at AGS and send each of you a picture of our collage!


Assignment: Write a 2-3 page paper discussing the importance of hands in this movie and their (hands) relationship to the character and others. This response/reaction paper is due and should be posted in Week 7.

Unit 4 – Social Interest: In the family and its impact upon development


Berkowitz & Grych (1998). Fostering goodness

Johnson, Smith & Nelson (2003). Predictors of social interest

The Child's Inner Life and a Sense of Community (Ch. 10), Alfred Adler Revisited, Edited by Jon Carlson and Michael Maniaci, 2012.


Week 3: Units 5 & 6

Unit 5 – Social Interest and Personal Development


Unit 6 – Social Interest and its role in pathology

Readings:  

Question 2: Discuss how an underdeveloped Social Interest in childhood can contribute to the development of psychopathology.

Assignment/Activity/Exercise #2 (10 pts):

Activity: Watch the one of the following Hollywood movies: The Hunger Games, Dune or The Truman Show (with Jim Carey).

Assignment: Write a 2-3 page paper in which you discuss how these “created” societies do or do not demonstrate or foster the development of social interest in its societal members/communities. This paper is due and should be posted within the courseroom during Week 7).

Week 4: Units 7 & 8

Unit 7: Social interest and professional development

Readings:  
Monnier (2000). Prosocial and Antisocial coping behaviors

Video: Fisher and Romantic Love. Available at:  

Fisher outlines the bio-chemical foundations of love and lust and discusses the natural talents of women, and their new significance in the modern world
Unit 8: Social Interest and clinical applications


Week 5: Unit 9

Unit 9: Social Interest and Social Media


Assignment/Activity/Exercise #3 (10 pts):

Activity: Observe an individual engaged in an on-line interactive “game” or a video game (min. of 30 minutes) and react to how they do or do not interact with social interest.

Exercise: Create a 2-3 page reaction / response paper to be due and posted within the courseroom under *Week 7.* Please note what activity and/or game the individual was engaged in, their age, gender, ethnicity, and any other characteristic specific to the individual, e.g. socioeconomics, family structure that may have a relationship to their level of engagement, playing time, etc... Offer a clinical eye to what factors may contribute to their level of engagement.

Extra Class Survey: You will find a prompt within the courseroom for a brief, unscientific survey re which social mediums you and your peers (classmates) currently participate in:

Facebook
Twitter
Instagram
Pinterest
Video games

Final Paper: Social interest and global development (worth 16 points)

Instructors notes:
Social media may allow greater global connectivity (see: empathic civilization video) but may interfere with more intimate connectivity relative to social interest. Write a response paper to your position re the future of our global connectivity, and its impact upon our more intimate relationships with ourselves (inner self-conflicts) and others. 3-5 pages (not inclusive of title and reference pages).

This paper is due and should be posted in the courseroom under Week 7. The following readings and video will be helpful in writing your response and more deeply integrating your position.

**Readings:**


**Video:**
Global Oneness Video: What would it look like? Available at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ96y_yOkI0&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ96y_yOkI0&feature=related)

This 25-minute retrospective asks us to reflect on the state of the world and ourselves, and to listen more closely to what is being asked of us at this time of unprecedented global transformation.

7. **Assessment/Evaluation Procedures**
(Detailed descriptions of these assignments are available on Moodle)

7.1 **Assignment Overview:** Each week will contain two units on specific topics relative to Social Interest. A single discussion post and two substantive responses to others' original discussion posts will be expected to each unit. There will be three outside activities/exercises that make up Special Projects Time, as well as a final paper.

7.2 **Special Project(s) Time:** Consists of three (3) independent activities and exercises. (30 points total). They will be presented during different units and focus upon relative readings during that unit. They are, however, not due until Week 7. Please post each, individually, as prompted under Week 7 in the courseroom.

Activity/Exercise #1: Hands (worth 10 points). Includes a 2-3 page response paper due at end of course.

Activity/Exercise #2: Show-time (worth 10 points). Includes a 2-3 page response paper due at end of course.

Activity/Exercise #3: Social media (worth 10 points). Includes a 2-3 page response paper due at end of course.

7.3 **Final paper:** Social interest and global development (worth 16 points)

Students will complete a response paper re their position on the future of our global connectivity, and it's impact upon our more intimate relationships with ourselves (inner self-conflicts) and others. It should be 3-5 pages in length (not inclusive of Title and Reference pages) and is due at the end of the course, in Week 7. Please post your paper under
Week 7 in the coursesroom, where prompted.

### 7.4 Discussion Questions (DQ)/Original Forum Posts (36 pts)

For **each unit** (there are 9 units in all AGS courses) choose **1 discussion question** to answer. Post your response to your chosen questions in the appropriate discussion thread in the main forum. Discussion question responses should be at least 350 words (see grading rubric below). Please make sure to proofread carefully. Grammar and spelling errors may impact the grading.

I expect your discussion question responses to reflect critical thought. Whenever possible, please try to relate the course content to real-world applications, and use at least **one reference** to support your positions.

### 7.5 Original Forum Posting Submissions

Original posts are graded on a scale of 0-4 points. Responses posted after the deadline will not be graded. You can earn a maximum of 36 points in this required activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Grading Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Comments a) are accurate and relevant; b) demonstrate original thinking; c) use appropriate scholarly support; d) are well written, with no significant grammar and punctuation errors and no violation of “netiquette”. Four point comments contribute substantially to the course discussions and stimulate additional thought and further discussions about the topic discussed in the particular unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Comments lack at least one of the above qualities, but are above average overall, with regard to their content, and make a good contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Comments lack two or three of the required qualities. Comments which are based upon personal opinion but not supported by scholarly research or personal experience and/or comments violating important netiquette rules often fall within this category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Comments present little or no new information, lack three or more of the above qualities. However, one point comments may provide important social presence and contribute to a collegial atmosphere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>The comment lacks all four qualities or in violation of AGS academic integrity policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7.6 Peer responses (18 pts)
For each unit you will also be required to post 2 substantive messages (peer responses). Substantive messages are posted in response to other individual DQ responses and other individual substantive messages.

Peer responses can earn 1.0 point per each peer response (with the total of 2 points per unit, and a maximum of 18 points per course). Peer responses are graded on accuracy, relevance, presence of scholarly support, and delivery (including compliance with major grammar and punctuation rules and netiquette). Peer responses posted after deadline will be not be graded.

In these responses, you will a) bring another aspect to the discussion, add a new insight to already offered ideas; b) find additional scholarly support for your classmate’s position and demonstrate that you have done some good additional reading on the issue; c) reply to a group of your classmates by comparing or contrasting their stated positions, or probing, offering a counter-thought; and/or d) integrate your classmates’ observations into your original position (whether supportive or not).

In meeting at least one of the above (a-d) requirements, a good peer response will bring the discussion to an advanced level and will parallel what you might observe in a live scholarly debate. While offering a good challenge in your peer responses, please don’t forget that validation and respect are two integral rules in any scholarly conversation.

Point summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Project(s)</th>
<th>30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions (DQ)/Original Forum posts</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Responses</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points Possible:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.7 Grading

A 90-100 points
B 80-89 points
C 70-79 points
R 69 and under

8. On-Line Discussions or Activities

On-line classes provide an opportunity for open and insightful dialogue. As in any dialogue, these discussions demonstrate many facets of diversity, including diversity of values, opinions, and experiences. We view these differences as welcomed and needed attributes of a scholarly discussion. Acknowledgement of and respect for these differences is a sign of mature scholarly debate.

Following are guidelines governing on-line discussions:

8.1 Faculty members monitor discussions and intervene when requested or deemed necessary.

8.2 NEVER post to the courseroom content:
That is known to be illegal,
That is potentially harassing, threatening, or embarrassing,
That might be offensive and might be received as disrespectful in any way.
That is vulgar or sexually explicit

8.3 The tone of the exchange is one of respect for individual differences. If you disagree with an opinion expressed by a classmate or instructor, respond in a scholarly manner, arguing about the subject of discussion vs. the person who posted it.

8.4 Students are encouraged to not overuse exclamation marks!!!!!, CAPITAL LETTERS, or other marks of emotional reaction that may be received as yelling, etc.

8.5 On-line communication presents a significant level of ambiguity, as verbal content of communication is not well supported by its non-verbal (including contextual) components. If a student feels threatened or offended by a statement made by another student during on-line portion of a class, please address the issue immediately with the other student(s) to clarify their position and your reaction. If this does not work, contact your class instructor so actions can be taken if necessary.

8.6 During on-line discussion, follow the same rules concerning protection of confidential information as you would follow in face-to-face discussion. Confidential client information is not appropriate in forum postings. Further, mental health related issues pertaining to you or your family members must be used with caution, if at all.

8.7 Be aware that some agency-specific information, such as descriptions of programs that have been developed or specialized treatment approaches, may potentially be a subject of copyright law. Although it is not always possible to know whether information is protected, the minimum expectation is to always identify and credit the source of information.

8.8 If the expectations in professional communication or other expectations specific to unique nature of online scholarly activities are not met, the concerning issue will be addressed with involvement of Program Director (or Academic VP, if needed or determined by the PD as requiring higher level of intervention). A student or a faculty member may raise the issue.

8.9 Any off-list communication between student and faculty will be conducted through Moodle, or redirected to Moodle of a student starts it via conventional private e-mailing.

9. Special Project Time (SPT)

Special Project Time (SPT) allows students the opportunity to integrate course materials. SPT is meant to be a self-contained experience, requiring 30 hours to complete.

SPT experiences may be constructed in such a way that they pertain to students’ unique degree plans. For example, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist students, Licensed Professional Counselor students, and Licensed School Counselor students may construct a SPT experience unique to their chosen disciplines. This is done in consultation with the course instructor.

SPT specifics for this course are posted on Moodle.
10. **Writing Guidelines including APA Format**

10.1 All written assignments in courses at the Adler Graduate School, including those submitted in on-line courses, must be in APA format unless specifically noted by the course instructor (*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition), 2009, American Psychological Association. ISBN 1-4338-0561-8).

10.2 Strict APA publication rules in Online Peer Discussions might prove difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. Following the “letter” of the Manual (i.e., not using “I”, or passive voice, keeping proper margins, or complying with headings requirements) may be either difficult or counterproductive in forums such as peer discussions. However, it is still important to adhere to the “spirit” of the APA Manual (i.e., grammar, orderly presentation of ideas, reducing bias in language, and presenting scholarly statements and arguments).

10.3 Prior to submitting a response, please proofread carefully. Grammar and spelling errors may make your response difficult for other students to appreciate.

10.4 Please keep in mind that, while the internet offers a lot of exciting and up-to-date information, not all internet sources are considered scholarly. For example, Wikipedia is not an academically peer-reviewed source. Rather, it is an “anybody-reviewed” source and, therefore, can’t be used in presenting your argument in AGS classes-related tasks.

11. **Attendance and Participation Policy**

11.1 At the beginning of each course, please complete or update your student profile on Moodle and get familiar with your classmates and the instructor by visiting their profile information.

11.2 You are expected to attend all the course learning activities. In the AGS asynchronous on-line courses, you attend the class by complying with posting and other submission deadlines.

11.3 In most of the courses, you will have two deadlines per week during the five weeks of coursework. For each week, and in conjunction with on-line instruction and other learning activities, your course instructor will announce two discussion questions or topics corresponding with two of the units in the course outline. The questions will appear in Moodle each Monday morning at least two weeks in advance for the five weeks of coursework. You will have until Tuesday night (11:59 PM CST) for the first question and Thursday night (11:59 PM CST) for the second question to submit your original response.

11.4 Your original response will be at least 350 words, with at least one scholarly reference. Through discussions supported by in-text citations and other references, your response will reflect critical thought related to the topic and specific assignments for that unit.

11.5 Typically, you will then have until Wednesday night (11:59 PM CST) and Saturday night (11:59 PM CST) to respond to at least two of your classmates’ postings for each question (four responses per week). These peer responses have to be substantive. In these responses, you will bring another aspect to the discussion, find additional scholarly support for your classmate’s position, reply to a group of your classmates by comparing or contrasting their stated positions, integrate your classmates’ observations into your original position. In sum, an ideal peer response will bring the discussion to an advanced level and will parallel what you might observe in a live scholarly debate. You will see occasional variations from that common practice, depending on
specific needs in your classes. Your course instructor will provide you with more specific information.

11.6 You can post your peer responses at any time between Monday and Wednesday (for discussion topic One) and between Thursday and Saturday night (for discussion topic Two), but **not before** you post your original response. Your course instructor will acknowledge your participation and will grade the quality of it by responding to your original pasting, whether individually or in a summary format.

11.7 **It is the AGS attendance policy that student have to attend at least 80% of the class sessions in order to be eligible for a letter grade.** Online attendance is posting on time. Not complying with posting deadlines or not posting at all will be counted as a missed class.

12. **Participation Disclaimer**

Active participation in class discussions/exercises/demonstrations is encouraged.

As with other AGS courses, in this course, individual students must determine for themselves the level of personal disclosure/intimacy that is appropriate for them.

Faculty members and students do not disclose confidential, personally identifiable information concerning their clients, students, research participants, organizational clients, or other recipients of their services.

Whenever confidential information/material is used in any AGS course, students and faculty members are expected to observe AGS policy concerning the handling of confidential information/material. Full descriptions of these policies are readily available on Moodle main page.

13. **Academic Integrity Policy**

Honesty and trust among students and between students and faculty are essential for a strong, functioning academic community. Consequently, students are expected to do their own work on all academic assignments, tests, projects, and research/term papers. Academic dishonesty, whether cheating, plagiarism, or some other form of dishonest conduct may result in failure for the work involved. Academic dishonesty could also result in failure for the course and, in the event of a second incident of academic dishonesty, suspension from the Adler Graduate School. Here are examples of academic dishonesty:

§ Cheating - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit.

§ Fabrication - Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

§ Facilitating academic dishonesty - Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of academic integrity.

§ Plagiarism - The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgment.
14. **Nondiscrimination Clause**

The Adler Graduate School is an equal opportunity educator and employer. The Adler Graduate School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or physical disability in the employment of faculty or staff, the admission or treatment of students, or in the operation of its educational programs and activities. The institution is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws.

15. **Learning Accommodations (including students with disabilities)**

If a student in this course has a documented learning disability, tell the instructor during the first week of class. The instructor needs to know on the front end so that he or she can work with you. The Adler Graduate School is committed to helping all students be successful, as best as can be reasonably accommodated. Documenting a learning disability occurs at the student’s expense. When documented appropriately, the Adler Graduate School makes all reasonable accommodations.

16. **Instructor Contact Information**

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Richfield, MN  55423, Cell: 952-237-6198
Email: jsisk@mail.alfredadler.edu