

INDIANA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

S500 Social Welfare and the Social Work Profession

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Semester: Summer II, 1999
Section: X971
Time: Saturday 8:45 – 4:15
Room: E/S 2103

I. Course Rationale and Description

As a base for all other MSW foundation courses, this course orients students to the profession of social work by examining the history of social welfare in the context of its values and ethics and by discussing the social welfare framework within which the profession exists. Content includes professional issues and their historical antecedents as well as policy analysis focusing on the commitment of the profession to the development and implementation of policy consistent with the values of social work, particularly in relation to diversity and populations at risk.

The course is developed upon several general propositions. Primary among these is that social workers use skills and carry out roles and functions at multiple levels. The emergence of the profession acknowledges the persistent tension between cases and causes, between amelioration of individual suffering, and social change that addresses the structural and policy flaws in society and culture that foster the varied inequities and disadvantages among human experience.

II. Objectives

In this course, students are expected to demonstrate achievement of the following objectives:

1. Understand the history, mission, and basic values, and ethics of the social work profession as well as the profession's relationship to the development of social welfare systems.
2. Understand the role of social policy in helping or deterring people in the maintenance or attainment of optimal health and well being and in achieving their fullest potential.
3. Analyze current social welfare policy within the context of historical and contemporary factors that shape policy.
4. Recognize the effect of social policy on social work practice.
5. Identify the social policy implications of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression particularly as they have impacted people of color, women, gay men and lesbian women, and other populations discriminated against because of social or economic injustice.

6. Assess social welfare policy and its intended and unintended consequences for the quality of life of people from a social and economic justice perspective.
7. Recognize and understand the history and current regulation of social work practice in Indiana through credentialing and licensing.

III. Course Outline and Readings

Required Text: Dolgoff, R., D. Feldstein, and I. Skolnick. (1977). *Understanding Social Welfare*. (Fourth Ed.) White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group.

Article: Rose, S. M. (1997). Considering managed care. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 8 (1), 57-65.

Unit I – The Profession of Social Work

- 7-3 Goals and objectives of the course
 Introductions and mutual expectations
 Beginning historical overview of the profession
 Ongoing relationship between social work and advocacy with diverse groups
 -- **Readings: DFS Chapters 12 and 13**
 -- **Video: How We Won the Vote** (women's suffrage movement)
- 7-3 Empowerment and social work values
 The mission of social work with populations at risk, including gay and lesbian people, people of color, women, people with disabilities, the aging population, and poor people
 ■ **Readings: NASW Code of Ethics, NABSW Code of Ethics**
- 7-3 Current issues and trends in social work
 Social work licensing in Indiana
 -- **Reading: HB 1961**
- 7-10 Continuing historical overview of social values and social welfare
 -- **Readings: DFS Chapters 2, 3, and 4**

Unit II – The Social Welfare Context of Social Work

- 7-10 Historical and contemporary ideologies on social values and social welfare
 -- **Readings: DFS Chapters 1 and 5**
 -- **Video: Eyes on the Prize** (African-American civil rights movement)

- 7-17 Concepts of social welfare
-- *Readings: DFS Chapter 6*
- 7-17 Policy analysis
-- *Readings: DFS Chapter 7*
- 7-17 Perspectives on poverty
-- *Readings: DFS Chapter 8*
-- *Video: Chicano! (Mexican-American civil rights and labor movement)*
- 7-24 Social Security Act
-- *Readings: DFS Chapters 9 and 10*
- 7-24 The third sector: voluntary social welfare
-- *Readings: DFS Chapter 11*
-- *Video: Berkeley in the Sixties (student free speech movement)*
- 7-31 Issues and trends in social welfare
-- *Readings: DFS Chapters 14 and 15*
-- *Reading: Rose article, pp. 57-65*
-- *Video: The Question of Equality: Outrage '69 (civil rights for lesbian and gay people)*
- 8-7 Group presentations
-- *Video: Without Pity (civil rights for people with disabilities)*
Summary and conclusions
Class evaluations

IV. Course Policies and Evaluation

- Since the course is designed for learning by participating, experiencing and practicing, your **attendance and interaction** in all sessions are important to your learning. Interaction includes participating in course activities and class discussions. If a class must be missed, please let the instructor know. Students are expected to be at class on time, as we will start promptly as scheduled. Attendance will be taken in both the morning and afternoon sessions of each class period. A bonus will be given for perfect attendance; a deduction will be taken for missing more than two class sessions (since both morning and afternoon attendance is counted, this means one full day).
- Because policies are generally based in some feelings and beliefs, there may be emotions, difference of opinion and even some debate during this course. Students are expected to handle themselves in a professional and courteous manner, demonstrating respect for their peers even when there are differences of opinion.

- Plagiarism or any sort of academic dishonesty will result in immediate failure of the course. See the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for guidelines concerning in-text references. Academic integrity is of paramount importance.
- In accordance with the IUSSW grading policy, students must earn at least a “C” to pass this course.
- Please feel free to make contact with me if needed by phone, email, or in person. I am not regularly on campus other than Saturdays, so you may leave a message on my campus voice mail (317-274-6739) or at my office in my home (812-339-5778). You may call the voice mail 24 hours a day, or the home office between 8 am and 9 pm.
- Course evaluation: Formal student evaluation of the course and its instructor will be completed in compliance with policy and procedures approved by the school. The educational process will be enhanced by ongoing mutual feedback between and among students and instructor. Such feedback is encouraged, in a climate of mutual respect.

V. Course Assignments

Reflection Journals and Journal Discussion Groups [DUE at beginning of each class]

Students will record their personal feelings and reactions throughout this course in their Reflection Journals. Write only what you are *willing to share with the class*, as these will be discussed in the Journal Discussion Groups. Each week, write a minimum of **one full page** in your journal notebook (handwritten, or typed, single-spaced). **Journal notebooks are to be in binder format, with the journal pages consisting of loose pages.** Bring each week’s entry to class, discuss it in your Journal Discussion Group. You will then turn it in to me at the end of class. To cut down on “writing what the professor wants to see,” I will not grade the journals for content (only for whether or not they are done), nor write comments on them. The audience for the journals is your self and your group. At times I will provide specific stimuli for you to respond to, other times you may simply write about anything in class that you are reflecting on. You will receive credit for each journal entry written – I will record the credit and return the entry to you each week.

Personal Empowerment Paper [DUE 7/17]

Following in the tradition of Karl Marx, the social work profession is committed to the empowerment of oppressed groups. This course begins with an examination of your own state of oppression, in the form of a 3 to 5 page paper. The goals are the development of group consciousness, reduction of self-blame, assumption of personal responsibility for change, and enhancement of self-efficacy. I hope that this assignment will help students learn to advocate for themselves to facilitate policy changes.

Letter Writing Assignment

[DUE 7/24]

Students will write and send one letter to a public official supporting or opposing a policy. Length is to be ½ to one page (a penalty will be assessed for letters over one page). You will use the Journal Discussion Groups to plan this letter. A copy of this letter is to be turned into the professor.

Policy Interview

[DUE 7/31]

Students will interview one “senior” social worker (one who has at least ten years of experience) about her or his opinions on the following questions:

- 1) What is the most critical issue facing the nation in the next five years?
- 2) Why is it the most critical? On what do you base your opinion?
- 3) What should be the role of government in solving that issue? If not government, who?
- 4) What are your feelings and values about *one or more* (not all) of the controversial social issues of our day, such as abortion, gay/lesbian marriage, the death penalty, gender and race equality, welfare, taxes?

Record the summary of your interview in your journal. Be prepared to share a synopsis of your interview with your Journal Discussion Group and the class.

Group Presentation

[DUE 8-7]

Complete a group presentation on one title of the Social Security Act. The group will consist of members of your Journal Discussion Group. Include historical context and current programs, including any recent changes. Describe ways different populations at risk are affected by the implementation of these programs. Suggest at least three improvements you would make in the program. Include ideas for advocacy for people affected by this policy. Successful completion of this paper will necessitate perusal of current journals, newspapers, and other written materials. Students are encouraged to use sources available through the Internet also. The presentation should last no more than an hour, and will be graded on content, professionalism and creativity. Along with the presentation, each student will write a brief paper (3-5 pages) on the aspect that he or she has contributed and what he or she personally learned from this project. This will also be graded.

Papers should use APA format (4th Edition), and be typed and double spaced. All sources are to be cited. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade. *Please do not use plastic covers on papers.*

VI. Grading

Point system

1. Reflection Journals	15 points
2. Letter writing assignment	5 points
3. Policy interview	10 points
4. Personal Empowerment paper	30 points
5. Group presentation	35 points
[15 for presentation and 20 for paper]	
6. Chapter outline	5 points
Total	100 points

Grading scale

94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-

Attendance

Miss no classes	+2 points
Miss 1 class (½ day)	+0 points
Miss 2 classes (1 day)	-1 points
Miss 3 or more (1 ½ day)	-2 points