

**INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

S500 Social Welfare and the Social Work Profession

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R498
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 work 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 its values, particularly in relation to diversity and populations at risk.

The course is developed upon several general propositions. Primary among these is that social workers take part in skills and carry out roles and functions that constitute a dual perspective. 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 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, lesbian and gay people, 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.

III. Course Outline and Readings

Unit I - The Profession of Social Work

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|------------------------|--|
| 8/22/1996 | <p>Goals and objectives of the course</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Introductions</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Mutual expectations</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">E-mail assignments</p> <p>Beginning historical overview of the profession</p> |
| 8/29/1996 | <p>Email training</p> <p>Ongoing relationship between social work and advocacy with diverse groups.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Readings</p> <p style="padding-left: 60px;">Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik chapters 9 & 10</p> |
| 9/5/1996 | <p>Empowerment and social work values</p> <p>Continuation of discussion concerning 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.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Readings</p> <p style="padding-left: 60px;">Simon, Preface, chapters 1 & 2</p> <p style="padding-left: 60px;">NASW Code of Ethics</p> |
| 9/12/1996
9/19/1996 | <p>Continuing historical overview of social work and social welfare</p> <p>Participation of social workers in the development of social welfare policy and programs, tensions and issues within the profession, relationship of the profession to various social movements.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Readings</p> <p style="padding-left: 60px;">Simon, chapters 3, 4, 5, & 6.</p> <p style="padding-left: 60px;">Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik, Introduction, chapters 2 & 3.</p> |

- 9/26/1996 Current issues and trends in social work
 Positioning the profession for the 21st century in an era of
 diminishing commitment to resources for social welfare.
 Continuing involvement in issues of diversity.
 Readings
 Simon, chapters 7 & 8, Epilogue
- Unit 2 - The Social Welfare Context of Social Work
- 10/3/1996 Perspectives on social work and social welfare
 Philosophy and history
 Paper # 1 due
- 10/10/1996 Concepts of social welfare
 The relationship of government to social welfare - where
 responsibility should reside. Funding, delivery of services, public-
 private initiatives.
 Readings
 Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik, chapters 1 & 4.
- 10/17/1996 Perspectives on poverty
 Causes, issues, and views of poverty. Demographic considerations.
 Relationship of ideologies to strategies. Current election issues,
 including welfare and immigration.
 Readings
 Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik, chapter 5
- 10/24/1996 Social Security Act
 10/31/1996 Development of Social Security Act, including involvement of
 social workers, provisions of each Title, current changes, including
 Title IV-A (AFDC)
 Readings
 Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik, chapters 6 & 7.
 Handout - compilation of Titles
- 11/7/1996 The third sector - voluntary social welfare
 History of third sector, for-profit and not-for-profit entities, current
 issues.
 Readings
 Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik, chapter 8
- 11/14/1996 NO CLASS - NASW NATIONAL CONFERENCE, CLEVELAND OHIO

- 11/21/1996 Issues and trends in social welfare
 Proposed changes at Federal and State levels, ongoing debates re:
 causes, responsibilities, solutions.
 Readings
 Dolgoff, Feldstein, & Skolnik, chapters 11 & 12
- 12/5/1996 Summary, conclusions, evaluation
 Connection of class content to future courses, summary of course,
 suggestions for future directions and study.
 Paper # 2 due.

Texts

Simon, B. L. (1994). The empowerment tradition in American social work. New York: Columbia University Press.

Dolgoff, R., Feldstein, D., & Skolnik, L. (1993). Understanding social welfare. (Third ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group.

American Psychological Association (1994). Publication manual of the American psychological association. (Fourth ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Recommended Text - In reference section of the library

Edwards, R. L. (Ed.). (1995). Encyclopedia of social work. (19th ed.). Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.

IV. Course Format & Assignments

1. Email

Each student is expected to send a minimum of six original Email messages and six replies over the course of the semester. Each original message must be at least one full computer screen and replies at least one half of the computer screen. Both messages and replies are to contain a substantive reflection on the assigned readings or on points covered in class. Credit will be given for messages posted to the S500 listserv, no more than one original message and/or one reply per week. Students may post as many messages as they choose in addition to required messages. Participants in the S500 listserv are expected to follow protocols of courtesy and mutual respect.

A grade will be assigned for participation in the listserv, based on the quality of the messages.

2. Paper # 1

The first paper should be a discussion of the history of the social work profession, particularly the development of the social work value base and the profession's focus on diversity. In @ 10 double spaced pages or less, discuss the connections between one historical aspect of social work and a current area or method of practice. Include issues of diversity, including a discussion of each of the following: race, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and age. Examine ways in which the profession has changed and remained the same over time and your suggestions for future development.

3. Paper # 2

The second paper should focus on the social welfare system, particularly the Social Security Act. In 10 double spaced pages or less, address no more than one title of the Social Security Act, both through historical context and current programs. 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.

Both papers should use APA format, 4th Edition, be based on class discussions, assigned readings, and some outside references as well as the student's own assessments and conclusions. Papers are to be each student's independent work. All sources are to be cited. Proof of plagiarism will result in failure. Papers are to be typed and double spaced. Covers for papers are unnecessary.

V. Course Policies, Evaluation, & Grading

Class Procedures and Expectations

The class will operate in a lecture/discussion format, with guest speakers on appropriate topics. Small group discussions will also be used. Students will communicate with the instructor and each other on electronic mail as well as in classroom discussion. Written assignments will be based on outside research, assigned readings, and lecture and discussion material from class.

Students will be expected to complete assigned readings prior to class, attend class, and actively participate in class discussions. Students will also be expected to conduct library research.

I will be available all day on Thursdays and on other days by appointment. Please feel free to make contact in person, by E-Mail, or by telephone.

Grading will be based on written assignments:

1. Email messages - 20%
2. Paper # 1 - 40%
3. Paper # 2 - 40%

Evaluation of Course

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.

VI. Bibliography

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Welfare,XXI (3), 53- 67.

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