COURSE DESCRIPTION

“If I take a finger and touch you, you won't even know you've been tapped.
If I take two fingers, you will know that something touched you.
But if I bring all of those fingers together in a fist, I can give you a terrible blow.” Dorothy Height

The power of the relationship between an individual social worker and a client can be life-changing to a client. But, the power of many social workers working together to address social problems can make a lasting positive impact on society. This is why organizing to support social welfare is at the heart of the development of the social work profession.

The mission of the social work profession is to “enhance human well-being” (NASW Code of Ethics, Preamble, Revised 2017). But, unlike other professions with a related mission, fundamental to social work is our Ethical Principle that implores us to look beyond the needs of individual clients, and to challenge social injustice, “particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people.” (NASW Code of Ethics, Ethical Principles, 2017). The NASW Code of Ethics further outlines social workers’ ethical responsibility to the broader society through section 6 of the NASW Code of Ethics.

“Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.” (NASW Code of Ethics, 6.01)

This foundation level course lays the groundwork in preparing students to be informed and competent professionals who implement programs and work to create policy change within organizations and beyond. Starting with an understanding of the development of the social work profession over time, students learn how theory impacts policy and agency work, with a focus on how social work values and ethics impact this trajectory.

This course introduces basic concepts related to social welfare (ie. the wellbeing of groups of people in society), with particular focus on economic inequality, poverty, and systematic oppression through a human rights perspective. These areas are analyzed in view of the interrelationship of political, economic and social factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status. Students begin the application of social policy analysis that deepens their understanding of the political processes relevant to shaping and influencing the institution of social welfare. Throughout the course, the unique and important role and function of the social work profession is stressed.

This course is generally taken in the first semester of study, because it relates to, and builds upon, the content covered in Human Behavior and the Social Environment I and Foundations of Social Work Practice I. This course is important to help connect students with content infused throughout the curriculum related to social justice, and equality for oppressed and vulnerable populations. This course is a pre-requisite Policy Advocacy in Practice, SWK 6210, taken during the advanced year of the MSW program.
COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES

This course will help students achieve the following competency:

Competency 5 – Engage in Policy Practice

Students will understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare needs and services, are influenced by public policy, as implemented at the federal, state, and local levels. Students will understand the impact of policy in service delivery and the influence of practice in policy development. They will understand the role of social work in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels, and how social workers can actively engage in policy practice to effect change within these settings. Students will recognize and understand the historical, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. Students will become knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation.

Specifically, students will:

• Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal levels that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
• Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services;
• Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights, and social, economic, and environmental justice.

Assignments for this course are used to assess/measure Competency 5A.

COURSE POLICIES

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

PLAGIARISM

Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically FAIL the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion.
HIPAA ALERT

In line with the HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

COLLEGIALITY

During this course, open dialogue is encouraged, while acknowledging that not everyone will feel comfortable contributing to each discussion. All students should remember that although you may hold a strong opinion or belief about a particular subject-matter, you must remain sensitive to the fact that your peers may not share that belief, or hold the same opinion. Everyone will be held to the expectation that they will be respectful of differing perspectives, in accordance with the Section III. E. (Professional Conduct) in the Wurzweiler MSW Student Manual, found here.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED TEXTS (for both SWK 6201 and SWK 6210)


Note: Other required readings are available on-line through electronic reserve (E-RES). See instructions below.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS


**E-RESERVES (Electronic Reserve)**

Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve (E-Reserve). You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

To access E-Reserves from Canvas (Recommended):
1. Electronic reserve lists are automatically added to all Canvas course pages (https://yu.instructure.com/).
2. Students can directly access the list without a password from the Canvas page.
3. Go to your course Canvas Page.
4. Click on “Library Resources and E-Reserves”.
5. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login and password (YUAD): https://library.yu.edu/OffCampusAccess
6. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.
7. If you have any problems, please contact - ereserves@yu.edu.

* Please note, Canvas no longer supports Internet Explore. If you are having trouble open up an eReserve item, please try other web browsers.

You can also access e-reserves through http://www.yu.edu/libraries/
1. Click on online resources.
2. Click on eReserves.
3. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off-Campus Access Service login and password (obtain this from the library).
4. In the ‘search for Courses’ box, type in the name of your course.
5. Click on the link to your course.
6. Enter the password wurzweiler.
7. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.
8. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.
9. If you have any problems, please contact eres@yu.edu.

**Instructional Methods, Course Requirements and Grading**

Class sessions include lectures that follow the progression of the course outline. Discussions focus on lecture content, reading assignments, current events relevant to social policy and student experiences in the field. A variety of techniques, including classroom exercises, audio-visual presentations and guest speakers may be used.

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings on time, attend class and participate knowledgeably in class discussions. In addition to the assigned readings, students are expected to skim news sources such as major national newspapers (such as *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or *Wall Street Journal*), news radio (such as NPR), podcasts (such as Up First, The Daily, This Week with Sam Sanders, the Globalist, the Takeaway, or PRI’s the World), television news (such as local news or BBC), and specialized or long form publications (Politico, the Hill, the Atlantic, or Vox). In-depth sources such as *Congressional Quarterly*, *Congressional Weekly*, and professional journals may also be useful. These sources will be extremely helpful to all students in preparing class assignments and participating in class discussions.
Assignments

Values Inventory (Final product: 2-3 page reflection, using questions provided by faculty)
In this assignment provided by your instructor, you will read statements about values and mark your personal agreement or disagreement. You will then indicate how knowledgeable you are about each of the issues. Keep in mind as you complete this inventory that there is no right or wrong answer to each question. The goal here is to understand what your own personal values are, what your knowledge is about these areas, and what the social work profession's official stance/value/position on the issues are. Your assignment will not be submitting the values inventory itself, but rather your reflection on the questions it raised for you.

Exploring Social Change Project
Note: Except Part 6, all should be in APA format, with a title page and separate page reference list. The title page and reference list are not included in the page length estimates. No abstract is required.

Part 1: Population Identification (1-2 pages)
A. Identify a population that is connected to your internship, work, personal experience, or personal interest.
B. Explain how this group is marginalized in society (ie. lacks political and social power). Consider factors like race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, etc.
C. Explain what protective factors and advantages this group has.

Part 2: Connecting to History (1-2 pages)
A. Choose one area of social policy from units 6-7 (ie. Child Welfare and Education) to focus on in this assignment.
B. Choose two historical eras in which there was attention to your chosen area of social policy.
C. Describe major events of that era as they relate to your chosen area of social policy.
D. What role did social workers play, if any, in those events?
E. Based on the readings so far, what important events of these time periods connect with the population you identified in Part 1.

Part 3: Connecting of Economic Inequality and Poverty to Social Work Values and Human Rights (1-2 pages)
A. Provide 2 examples of how economic inequality and/or poverty impact the population you identified in Part 1.
B. Choose 2 Ethical Principles identified in the NASW Code of Ethics and explain how they relate to the economic inequality experienced by your chosen population.
C. How does economic inequality, particularly as experienced by this group, connect to human rights concepts?

Part 4: Connecting to Theory (1-2 pages)
A. Choose one area of social policy from units 8-9 (ie. Successful Aging, Health, Mental Health, and Disability) to focus on in this assignment.
B. Choose one theoretical perspective that relates to your chosen area of social policy.
C. How does this theory inform social worker’s understanding of this problem (particularly as experienced by this group)? How does this theory inform our understanding of society’s response to this problem?
D. Based on the readings so far, how does this theory or another theoretical perspective inform your understanding of the population you identified in Part 1?
Part 5: Creating Change (2-3 pages)
A. Choose one area of social policy from units 10-11 (i.e. Migration and the Environment).
B. With your new understanding of the role of social work in the context of social change, how can you impact this social policy area through your current or future social work practice with this population?
C. How can larger levels of social change improve the lives of the population impacted by this problem?
D. Returning to the population identified in Part 1, how can you create social change through your current or future social work practice with this population?

Part 6: Communicate Your Findings (1-2 pages)
Create a one-page document aimed at informing the social work staff at your fieldwork agency, your place of employment, or another relevant agency, about the population that you have been studying this semester. What information would help them understand or better serve the population? What information helps them to understand the policy context affecting the population? This does not have to be in APA format. It can be formatted in any way that you think effectively gets the information across. Consider looking at examples of policy briefs and executive summaries for some ideas.

Class Participation: Attendance, Punctuality, Participation in class discussions, Completion of licensure exam questions, Canvas assignments, in-class presentations.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values Inventory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Change Project Part 1: Population Identification</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Change Project Part 2: Connecting to History</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Change Project Part 3: Connection of Economic Inequality and Poverty to Social Work Values and Human Rights</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Change Project Part 4: Connecting to Theory</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Social Change Project Part 5: Creating Change</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Change Project Part 6: Communicate Your Findings</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
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Final Grading:
A= 94-100  A-= 90-93  B+= 87-89  B= 83-86  B-=80-82  C+= 75-79  C=70-74  F<74
COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1: Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Work and Social Welfare Policy (2 weeks)

Learning Objectives:
• Identify course objectives and requirements
• Introduce online library searching, and writing formats expected in the MSW program
• Examine personal values, and how they align with the values of the Social Work Profession
• Define social welfare and related terms
• Discuss the ways in which social work values and ethics connect with social welfare policy and organizational policy
• Identify and describe theories that explain the evolution of the social welfare system.
• Recognize the impact of racial, ethnic, religious, economic, and social class discrimination on the development of social welfare

Required Readings:
• Chapter 1: Social Work: A Value-Based Profession in Historical Context
• Chapter 3: Practical Theories for Understanding and Analyzing Policy


Recommended Readings:


Canadian Association of Social Workers. Code of Ethics


Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) View video introduction to library and YU find: 
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Blw3Fy6EZrA
3) Values Inventory

Unit 2: Social Welfare History

Learning Objectives:
• Identify the origins and roots of social welfare in the United States
• Examine “invisible populations” including First Nations people, people of color, women, children, and elderly.

Required Readings:
• Chapter 1: Social Work: A Value-Based Profession in Historical Context
Read at least 3 of the following:
Affirmative Action, Civil liberties and justice, Peace and social justice, Racism, Women’s issues, Homelessness, Housing, Welfare Reform

Recommended Readings:

Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Social Change Project Part 1: Population Identification

Unit 3: The History of the Social Work Profession

Learning Objectives:
• Understand the development of the profession of social work in the context of the influence of specific historical.
• Identify the development of casework practice, as championed by Mary Richmond
• Describe the primary role of social justice in early forms of social work practice, as championed
by Jane Addams and the Settlement House Movement.

- Evaluate the challenge to social work as a profession, as expressed by Abraham Flexner.
- Examine ethical issues, professional vs. personal values, and assumptions about oppression and discrimination as they influence the development of the social work profession.

Required Readings:


- Role of Government, Social Policy, and Social Work


Recommended Readings:


Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Start working on Social Change Project, Part 2

Unit 4: Human Rights and Social Change

Learning Objectives:
- Identify basic human rights and civil liberties
- Explore groups vulnerable to oppression of their basic human rights and civil liberties
- Examine the role of social justice in securing equal rights
- Describe the role and responsibility of social work towards justice

Required Readings:


- Affirmative Action
- Civil liberties and justice
- Peace and social justice
- Racism
• Women’s issues


**Recommended Readings:**


  Relevant content on pages: 241-242 (racial discrimination); 313 (gender discrimination); 322 (Bakke case); 309; 313; 343 (backlash against affirmative action); 375; 424-427 (Clinton administration); 521 (age discrimination in employment).


**Assignments:**

1) Class participation

**Unit 5: Economic Inequality, Poverty, and Social Change**

**Learning Objectives:**

- Examine theories, definitions and measures of work, poverty and inequality
- Explore the role of social work in addressing economic inequality and poverty
- Examine how various reforms to social welfare policy have disproportionately impacted particular populations, by race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status
- Social Changemaking Tactic: Voter Empowerment
  - Example: Human SERVE

**Required Readings:**


- Chapter 9: Work and Employment Policy


- Homelessness
- Housing
- Welfare Reform

**Recommended Readings:**


Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Social Change Project Part 2: Connecting to History

Unit 6: Child Welfare and Social Change

Learning Objectives:
- Examine the historical development of child welfare services in the US
- Identify the rights and roles of children, parents and the government in providing for the welfare of children
- Explore the impact of race, religion, ethnicity and social class on the provision of social welfare for children
- Describe the role and responsibilities of social work in providing for the welfare of children
- Social Changemaking Tactic: Judicial Advocacy

Required Readings:

- Chapter 4: Family Policy
- Chapter 5: Child Welfare Policy

- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Welfare Workforce


Recommended Readings:


Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Begin working on Social Change Project: Part 3
Unit 7: Education and Social Change

Learning Objectives:
- Examine the historical development of education in the US
- Identify the rights and roles of children, parents and the government in providing for the education of children.
- Explore the impact of race, religion, ethnicity and social class on the provision of education and higher education
- Describe the role and responsibilities of social work in providing services within education

Required Readings:
- Chapter 6: Early Childhood Education and Care Policy
- Chapter 7: Education Policy, Kindergarten Through High School
- Chapter 8: Higher Education Policy

Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Social Change Project Part 3: Connection of Economic Inequality and Poverty to Social Work Values and Human Rights

Unit 8: Health, Mental Health, Disability, and Social Change (2 weeks)

Learning Objectives:
- Examine the historical development of policies and programs to support health, mental health, and services to persons with disabilities in the US
- Identify the rights and roles of individuals, their families, and the government in providing health, mental health, and services to persons with disabilities
- Explore the impact of race, religion, ethnicity and social class on the provision of health, mental health, and services to persons with disabilities
- Describe the role and responsibilities of social work in providing for health, mental health, and services to persons with disabilities

Required Readings:
- Chapter 11: Health Policy
- Chapter 12: Disability Policy

- People with disabilities


**Assignments:**
1) Class participation  
2) Begin working on Social Change Project, Part 4

**Unit 9: Successful Aging and Social Change**

*Learning Objectives:*
- Examine the historical development of policies and programs to support successful aging in the US  
- Identify the rights and roles of older adults, their families, and the government in providing for the welfare of older adults  
- Explore the impact of race, religion, ethnicity and social class on the provision of social welfare programs for older adults  
- Describe the role and responsibilities of social work in providing for the welfare of older adults

**Required Readings:**  

- Chapter 10: Policy for Older Adults


- End of life care

**Assignments:**  
1) Class participation  
2) Social Change Project Part 4: Connecting to Theory

**Unit 10: Migration and Social Change**

*Learning Objectives:*
- Examine the historical development of immigration, asylum and refugee policy and related services in the US  
- Identify the rights and roles of immigrants, asylees, and refugees, as well as the international community and the American government in providing for the welfare of these groups  
- Explore the impact of race, religion, ethnicity and social class on the development of immigration, asylum, and refugee policy in the US  
- Describe the role and responsibilities of social work in providing for the welfare of immigrants, asylees and refugees

**Required Readings:**  
• Chapter 15: Immigration Policy

Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Begin working on Social Change Project, Part 5

Unit 11: The Environment and Social Change

Learning Objectives:
• Examine the historical development of environmental policy at international and national levels
• Explore the impact of race, religion, ethnicity and social class on the development of environmental policy and practice
• Describe the role and responsibilities of social work in responding to threats to the environment

Required Readings:

• Chapter 16: Environmental Policy

Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Social Change Project Part 5: Creating Change

Unit 12: Current Policy Environment and Social Change

Learning Objectives:
• Identify historical roots of social movements to create social change.
• Identify current social movements that are actively creating social change.

Required Readings:


Assignments:
1) Class participation
2) Social Change Project Part 6: Communicate our findings