

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW540 – General Topics in Social Work: Seminar on International Social Welfare  
and Sustainability**

Course Outline  
Spring 2005

Section 78611  
6:30 - 9:10 p.m. Thursday  
Room 206 Henson Hall  
Office Hours: Mon. 10 a.m. - noon  
(others by appt.)

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**Course Format and Assignments**

The course will operate in a graduate seminar format with a high level of student responsibility for engaging in weekly discussions of the readings and other presented material. Format will include lectures, guest presenters, class discussions and exercises, student presentations, and videotapes.

Course assignments are designed to build and synthesize critical thinking, knowledge and skills over the course of the semester. Late assignments will be marked down. Requests for exceptions should be discussed with the instructor at least the day before an assignment is due. Please note that there will be, WITH NO EXCEPTION, no late assignments excused because of computer or printer problems. Written materials are to be word processed and double-spaced. APA format should be used unless otherwise specified by the instructor.

Students will be evaluated in four areas:

Preparation for and participation in class	20%
Convention/declaration brief	20%
International practice opportunity portfolio	20%
Global issue paper/project	40%

The grading scale is:

94 - 100	A	Superior performance
90 - 93	B+	better than satisfactory performance
82 - 89	B	satisfactory performance
79 - 81	C+	less than satisfactory performance
72 - 78	C	performance well below the standard expected of graduate students
67 - 71	D	clearly unsatisfactory performance, cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements
< 67	F	extremely unsatisfactory performance, cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements

(descriptions are from the UT Graduate School catalog)

## **1. Convention/Declaration Brief (20%)**

Each student will select one United Nations conference or other international negotiation, held in the last three decades (e.g., 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, 1995 World Conference on Women, 1996 Conference on Human Settlements), that has led to major international agreements or guidance documents. In a maximum of three (text over three pages will not be read) single-spaced pages: 1) provide a concise description of the purpose, location, attendance, and major results of the conference, 2) identify and summarize major documents (conventions, declarations) that derived from the conference, 3) provide an update regarding major follow-up activity or evaluations, and 4) assess major points of relevance to social welfare and sustainability practices in East Tennessee.

Provide references for the three-page brief (APA style; exceptions should be discussed and approved in advance by instructor). For the five most informative references, provide concise annotations (two to three sentences). References should include an electronic copy of bookmarked websites that link to information about your selected conference/convention/declaration.

Students will share conference briefs to classmates electronically and, time permitting, each student will give an in-class briefing about his/her selected conference. In class on Week 4, students will identify preferred topics for the brief and final selections will be made. Final selections may be negotiated in the event that more than one student prefers the same topic. This assignment is due at the beginning of class, Week 7.

## **2. International Practice Opportunity Portfolio (20%)**

Each student will identify six organizations that address an international social issue, problem, or area of practice that is of interest. The issue analyzed for the global issue paper assignment may be used or a different issue, problem, or practice area may be selected. Develop a loose-leaf, hole-punched portfolio that includes for each organization 1) programmatic information (e.g., contact information, mission, programs, geopolitical scope of service), 2) potential employment, internship, fellowship, or volunteer opportunities, 3) examples of position descriptions, and 4) a brief statement about collateral contacts' opinions about the reputation of the organization in terms of service delivery and employee-opportunity.

Each student will provide an electronic copy of bookmarks for Internet websites (e.g., the organizations' websites) developed for the assignment and, for distribution to classmates, a concise (1-2 page maximum) annotated list of your portfolio organizations that summarizes contact information, organizational mission, social issues addressed, and potential practice opportunities. If time permits, each student (or a random set of students) will give a short in-class summary of the practice opportunity findings represented in the portfolio. The portfolio is due at the beginning of the last class, Week 11.

### 3. Issue/Practice Paper OR Project (40%)

Each student will identify an international issue or problem of interest and develop **EITHER** a 12-15-page paper **OR** a project of equivalent weight and scope that addresses the issue.

Resources that will help in the development and research of the paper will be discussed over the course of the seminar. *The paper or project undertaken for the seminar is to be original work that does not replicate previous work nor overlap significantly with other assignments from other classes.*

**Projects** are open to negotiation with the instructor and may include a variety of activities from activities with NGOs, development of Internet resources, and beyond.

The **paper** should be 12-15 pages (maximum) and should address the following content.

- I. Global dimensions
  - A. A concise statement of the issue or problem.
  - B. Background information about the global dimensions of the problem and its relevance to social welfare and sustainability. Include content on the relationship of the problem to diversity and to vulnerable populations.
  - C. A discussion and assessment of the problem using a human rights, social development, or sustainable development perspective.
- II. Cross-national comparisons
  - A. Identification and summary description of one or two countries, in addition to the United States, in which you explore further the dimensions of the problem.
  - B. Background information about the dimensions of the problem in your selected countries.
  - C. A comparative discussion of types of interventions and strategies used (e.g., direct practice approaches, organizing, policy practice) to address the problem in your selected countries.
  - D. Identification of governmental and CSO/NGO organizations addressing the problem in these countries. Discuss organizational successes, limitations, failures, and challenges in regard to their problem-solving efforts. Include where available website information about such organizations.
- III Reflections on applicability to local practice.
  - A. Summarize the major similarities and differences in the approaches used in your selected countries to address the problem.
  - B. Discuss the applicability of 1) approaches used in other countries that you think would be useful in local interventions here regarding the problem and 2) approaches used here to address the problem that you think would be useful in your comparative countr(ies).

Use at least 15 references, eight of which should come from peer-reviewed journals. The paper will be assessed for writing, organization, and integration of course content. Use American Psychological Association (APA) format (or, with instructor's consent, another major format style) The bibliography and any appendices you may attach are not part of the body or text of the paper. Please note that text beyond the 15-page maximum will not be read.

Each student will submit a 1 page (ungraded) preliminary identification of the issue paper or project by the beginning of class Week 4.

Each student will present his/her paper or project (15-20 minutes with discussion; your choice of format (creativity, visuals and handouts encouraged) to the class during Weeks 12, 13, or 14.

The final paper or project materials may be handed in following the in-class presentation but are due at the beginning of class Week 15.

### **Course Expectations**

Regular and on-time class attendance is considered professional behavior. Students are expected to discuss absences in advance with the instructor. More than 2 unexcused absences or tardiness may result in the markdown of the final grade by one or more grade levels (e.g., A to B+). Students are expected to complete and think about assigned readings for preparation for each class section, participate in class discussions and activities using class readings and field and life experience, complete all assignments on time, and enjoy some of the learning at least some of the time.

### **Course Texts:**

Required:

Healy, L.M. (2001). *International Social Work: Professional Action in an Interdependent World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Recommended:

Hoff, M.D. (1998). *Sustainable community development: Studies in economic, and environmental, and cultural revitalization*. Boca Raton: Lewis Publishers.

Willsea, J.S. (Ed.) (2003). *Alternatives to the Peace Corps: A directory of global volunteer opportunities*. 10<sup>th</sup> Ed. Oakland, CA: FoodFirst.

### **Additional Readings:**

Required and optional readings are on reserve at Hodges Library or are at Internet website identified for each week's readings. Additional reading materials may be distributed during class sessions. Some readings may be changed over the course of the semester.

### **Course Outline**

(required readings are astericked\*\*\*)

## **I. THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES**

**Week 1 Jan. 13. Introduction to International Perspectives and Concepts.** Introduction to international perspectives, practices, and key concepts (e.g., globalization, rights and justice, sustainability); review of syllabus; preparation for assignments.

Readings:

\*\*\*Universal Declaration of Human Rights [<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>]

\*\*\*Maathai, W. (2004) *Nobel Peace Prize 2004 Lecture*. Retrieved December 15, 2004 from <http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/2004/maathai-lecture.html>

\*\*\*Key Concepts Handout

*In-class exercise*

**Weeks 2-3 Theoretical Frameworks and Practical Applications: International Social Welfare and Sustainability.** Conceptual frameworks: human rights, social development, sustainable development, ecological perspective.

**Week 2 January 20**

Readings:

\*\*\*United Nations. (Basic Facts about the United Nations: Human Rights [<http://www.un.org/aboutun/basicfacts/hrights.htm>]

\*\*\*Midgley, J. (1995). Introduction (pp. 1-11), Ch. 1, A definition of social development (pp. 12-36), Ch. 4, Strategies for social development (pp. 102-138), *Social Development: The Development Perspective in Social Welfare*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

\*\*\*Rogge, M.E. (2001). Social development and the ecological tradition. *Social Development Issues*, 23:1.

**Week 3 January 27 Global Interdependence and Tools for Sustainability**

Readings:

\*\*\*Healy, L.M. (2001). Ch 3, International Professional Action: A Selective History (pp. 45-79), Ch 4, Social work around the world today (80-104), Ch. 5, Global interdependence and social work (pp. 105-125) in *International Social Work: Professional Action in an Interdependent World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

\*\*\*Link, R.J., Ramanathan, C.S., & Asamoah, Y. (1999). Understanding the human condition and human behavior in a global era. In C.S. Ramanathan & R.J. Link (Eds.). *All our Futures: Principles & Resources for Social Work Practice in a Global Era* (pp. 30-51). New York: Brooks/ Cole.

\*\*\* Hart, M. (1998-2000). Sustainable Measures: "What is Sustainability, Anyway?" (follow the forward arrows in this section) [<http://www.sustainablemeasures.com>]

\*\*\*McKeown, R. *Education for Sustainable Development Tool Kit* [<http://www.esdtoolkit.org/>]

**Week 4 Feb. 3 International Society, Economy, and Environment: The Role of Government.** Structure, functions, programs of the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and others.

Readings:

\*\*\*Selected United Nations websites

UN organizational chart [<http://www.un.org/aboutun/chart.html>];

Alphabetic Index of UN Websites [<http://www.unsystem.org/>]

UN Development Programme [ <http://www.undp.org/>]

UNDP Human and World Development Reports [<http://www.undp.org/hdro/>]

UN Commission on Sustainable Development [<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/>]

UN Research Institute for Social Development [<http://www.unrisd.org/>]

\*\*\*World Bank at: [<http://www.worldbank.org/>]

World Bank Group Development Indicators <http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2003/>

\*\*\*International Monetary Fund at: [<http://www.imf.org/>]

*1 page preliminary outline of research paper or project due*

**Week 5 Feb. 10 International Society, Economy, and Environment: The Role of International Conventions and Declarations.** Intentions, processes, and outcomes of international conventions, treaties, declarations

Readings:

\*\*\*Overview of Conventions and Declarations: Selected UN websites at [<http://www.un.org/>]:

Chronology and action updates of conventions and treaties, convention documents including Declaration of Human Rights and Agenda 21, Summit for Social Development Ten Commitments)

\*\*\*Kansouh-Habib, S. (1997). Sustainable human development: From concepts to programs. *Social Development Issues*, 19(213), 414-157.

*Preliminary identification of selected conventions and documents*

**Week 6 Feb. 17 International Society, Economy, and Environment: The Role of Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations.** Orientation to international relief, development, and advocacy CSOs/NGOs

Readings:

\*\*\*Healy, L. (2001). Ch. 6, International social welfare organizations and their functions (pp. 126-150), and Ch. 8, International relief and development practice (170-192), in *International Social Work: Professional Action in an Interdependent World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

\*\*\*see also CSO/NGO/IGO links at:

PRAXIS website [<http://caster.ssw.upenn.edu/~restes/praxis.html>]

Idealist.org, Nonprofit Support Organizations:[<http://www.contact.org/support.html>]

Oxfam website [<http://www.oxfam.org/>]

## II. GLOBAL SOCIAL PROBLEMS, PRACTICES, AND POLICIES

### **Week 7 Feb. 24 An Introduction to International Problems and Practices: Similarities, Differences, and Challenges.**

Readings:

\*\*\*Healy, L.M. (2001). Ch. 4, Social work around the world today (pp. 80-104); Ch. 7, Values and ethics for international professional action (pp. 151-169); Ch. 9.

International/domestic practice interface (193-218), in *International Social Work: Professional Action in an Interdependent World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

\*\*\*British Broadcasting Corporation. (2004). BBC Migrant World. Retrieved December 15, 2004 from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/talking\\_point/special/migration/default.stm#](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/talking_point/special/migration/default.stm#) (includes a broad range of excellent links)

*(seminar participants are encouraged to identify and share other international news sources)*

*Convention/Declaration Briefs due at the beginning of class*

*Student in-class briefings of conventions and documents*

### **Week 8 March 3 A Sense of Security: Resource Use and Competition, Peace and Justice**

*Guest speakers to be announced*

Videotape: *Stop the Bombs*. (2000). Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, Oak Ridge, TN. [<http://www.stopthebombs.org/>]

\*\*\*Hoff, M.D. (in press). Effects of global warming on human cultural diversity. *Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems*. Oxford, UK: Baldwin House, EOLSS Publishers Co. Ltd., (in cooperation with UNESCO, Paris, France).

\*\*\* Interventions in large scale disasters: Natural, human-made, complex emergencies. See: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies [<http://www.ifrc.org/>]; The Sphere Project [<http://www.sphereproject.org/>]

**Week 9 March 10 Globalization, Trade, and Labor.** Globalization, justice, fair vs. free trade, grassroots organizing.

*Guest Speakers to be announced*

\*\*\*Disney, K. (forthcoming). Building a movement on both sides of the border: Tennessee workers organize for fair trade. *The Global Activist's Manual: 30 Ways to Change the World*. At United for A Fair Economy. At <http://www.ufenet.org/> (go to Global Roots, then Global Activist Manual <http://www.globalroots.net/>)

\*\*\* [www.forumsocialmundial.org.br](http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br)

**Week 10 March 17 Seminar Generated Topic**

*Readings: to be announced*

*Seminar participants will, earlier in the semester, identify 1-2 priority topics not otherwise identified on the syllabus and we'll focus on these topics during this session.*

**Week 11 March 24 Spring Break**

**Week 12 March 31 Environmental Hazards and Human Populations at Risk**

*Guest Lecturer:* Nancy Sykes, Senior Advisor, Aging Initiative, Office of Children's Health Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington DC

Readings:

\*\*\* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2004). *Aging Initiative*. Retrieved December 15, 2004 from <http://www.epa.gov/aging/index.htm>

\*\*\*Global Action on Aging. (2004). *Global Action on Aging Home Page*. Retrieved December 15, 2004 from <http://www.globalaging.org> (see also <http://www.globalaging.org/waa2/documents/> )

**Week 13 April 7 International Practice: Employment, Internships, and Volunteer Opportunities**

\*\*\*Readings: Willsea, J.S. (2003). *Alternatives to the Peace Corps: A directory of global volunteer opportunities*. 10<sup>th</sup> Ed. Oakland, CA: FoodFirst.

\*\*\*The UT Center for International Education at <http://web.utk.edu/~globe/>

\*\*\*UT Career Services <http://career.utk.edu>

\*\*\* *Transitions Abroad Magazine* at <http://www.TransitionsAbroad.com>

\*\*\* Handouts: Lemieux, C. (2000). "Social Work in the International Marketplace"; "Thoughts about Connecting to International Arena and Building International Social Work Interests"

*Student paper/project presentations begin*

*International Portfolios due*

## **Week 14 April 14 Children's Places and Rights in the World**

Readings:

\*\*\*Healy, L.M. (2001). Ch 10, Understanding and influencing global policy (pp. 219-237) and Ch 12, Social work as a force for humane global change and development (pp. 260-280) in *International Social Work: Professional Action in an Interdependent World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

\*\*\*Murphy-Berman, V., Levesque, H., & Berman, J.J. (1996). U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child: A cross-cultural view. *American Psychologist*, 51, 1257-61.

\*\*\* Rogge, M.E. (2000). Children, poverty, and environmental degradation: Protecting current and future generations. *Social Development Issues*, 22(2/3), 46-53.

\*\*\*International Federation of Social Workers website at: [\[http://www.ifsw.org\]](http://www.ifsw.org)

\*\*\*International Council on Social Welfare at [\[http://www.icsw.org/\]](http://www.icsw.org/)

*Student paper/project presentations*

## **Week 15 April 21 Inter-and Intra-Cultural Communication and Collaboration: Locating Similarities and Differences**

*Seminar student-generated guest invitations, discussion, and potluck!*

*Final paper/projects are due at the beginning of class*

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