

The University of Tennessee
College of Social Work
BSSW Program
Summer 2004

SW-250: Social Welfare

Professor: Matthew T. Theriot, Ph.D.

Time: T/R 1:30-4:45pm

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BSSW Program Mission

The BSSW Program at the University of Tennessee exists to fulfill a need for disciplined, highly educated and trained generalist social workers to help people improve their social functioning in a technologically complex, culturally diverse, and rapidly changing society. There is a focus on the reciprocal relationships between persons and their environments. Social workers are doers; they are problem-solvers who are able to intervene in multiple-level systems and perform various professional roles. Their actions are guided and informed by a broad knowledge-base, code of ethics, and professional values. Social workers are educated and trained to do things right as well as to do the right thing.

The mission of the BSSW Program is to develop generalist social workers who are strategic thinkers, life-long learners, and opinion shapers. The knowledge-base, skills, and values necessary for generalist practice are taught in an environment that fosters professional development and prepares students for critical thinking throughout their careers. We are dedicated to preparing practitioners for the challenges of the twenty-first century. Since the amount of knowledge doubles approximately every five years, what is taught today may soon be obsolete. Our challenge, therefore, lies in the on-going development and implementation of a curriculum that prepares and energizes students for generalist practice today and in the future.

BSSW Program Goals

Provision of education and training that enable students to become generalist social work practitioners who:

1. are committed to advancing social and economic justice and the principles, values, and ethics that guide the social work profession;
2. are grounded in systems theory and operate within a person-in-the-environment framework;

3. use the problem-solving process to intervene in multiple-level client systems;
4. have an understanding of human diversity and special populations that informs practice interventions;
5. use critical thinking, evaluative, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing society;
6. are committed to continuous development of professional self

Course Description

Examines the development, structure, and function of the social welfare institution. Analysis of social welfare programs and impact of the institution on society.

Rationale

The first course in the Undergraduate Social Work Program (SW 200) emphasized an introduction to the profession of social work. SW 250 will focus on the central domain of social work practice, the social welfare institution. Although not all services in this institution are delivered by social workers, this is the dominant professional group in this arena. An understanding of the structure and functioning of social welfare is relevant, however, not only to social workers, but to all citizens since the institution affects the quality of life for all members of society. Since citizens have various opportunities to influence this social institution and to do so in an informed manner, there is a need for accurate knowledge rather than just opinions or strong feelings.

Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to provide students the opportunities and environment to understand and analyze:

1. the scope of the social welfare institution and its increasing importance in the social structure;
2. discrimination due to race, culture, gender, age, or physical or emotional abilities;
3. the historical evolution of the social welfare institution in terms of society's concern with the needs of people, poor as well as rich, urban as well as rural, minority as well as majority;
4. the major social, cultural, political, and economic motivations which influenced and continue to influence the social welfare institution;
5. the idea that social values affect the social welfare system;
6. social welfare programs in a rational, data-based approach;
7. the impact of organizational settings or workplaces on those delivering and receiving social services;
8. the social welfare institution's response or lack of response to current issues and problems.

Code of Conduct

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct Code that is in the College of Social Work BSSW Handbook (www.csw.utk.edu).

The Honor Statement

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

Disability Services

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library at 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Instructor's Policy

Examinations and Assignments. Missed examinations will be recorded as "0". Only in the case of a verified emergency will make-up examinations be permitted. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each day past the due date unless alternative arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the due date. For all exams and assignments, alternative arrangements, make-up exams, and deadline extensions are made at the discretion of the instructor and only in rare or extenuating circumstances.

Attendance. Given the abbreviated length of the summer session, attendance at all class meetings is very important. Students are allowed one absence or tardy without penalty. For each additional absence or tardy, however, the student's final grade will be penalized 5% unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Readings. Students are expected to finish all readings and be prepared to discuss them before class begins on the day that they are listed.

Writing. All written assignments must be typewritten, double-spaced, and use no smaller than 10-point font. Correct APA style is expected when appropriate.

Course Requirements

I. Readings

In addition to the required texts, students will also be expected to read professional journal articles and research literature. Such additional readings are indicated in the "Class Schedule and Readings" section of this syllabus. These readings are on reserve

in the University Library. Additional readings may be added at the discretion of the instructor.

II. Assignments and Evaluation

A. Group Project: Working in assigned groups, students will investigate a social problem and the services available in East Tennessee to remedy this problem. The project consists of two parts—a *written paper* and a *class presentation*. The instructor will assign topics to each group. Specific guidelines for both components of the project are provided later in this syllabus and will be discussed in class. Each group member will receive an individual grade dependent on his/her verified contribution to the project.

B. Examinations: There will be one examination. The examination will cover assigned readings as well as class lectures and class discussion. The format for the examination will be true/false, multiple choice, definitions, short answer questions, and/or essay questions.

The course grade will be computed as follows:

Group Paper (due Thursday, June 24)	40%
Group Presentation (Thursday, July 1)	20%
Examination (Tuesday, June 29)	40%

The grading scale for SW 250 is:

A	90-100	C	70-75
B+	86-89	D	60-69
B	80-85	F	59 and below
C+	76-79		

Required Texts:

Day, P. J. (2003). *A new history of social welfare* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Dolgoft, R., & Feldstein, D. (2003). *Understanding social welfare* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Class Schedule and Readings

Tuesday, June 1

- Discussion of Syllabus, Assignment of Groups and Topics, Group Meetings (if time permits)
- Defining Social Welfare
- The Scope and Nature of Social Welfare
- Values in Social Welfare

Readings: Day, *A new history of social welfare*, pp. 1-51
Dolgoﬀ & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 1-13; 108-131
Rose, S. M. (2000). Reflections on empowerment-based practice. *Social Work*, 45(5), 403-412.

Thursday, June 3

- Social Welfare and Values (continued)
- The Historical Evolution and Development of Social Welfare

Readings: Day, *A new history of social welfare*, pp. 192-263
Dolgoﬀ & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 15-58

Tuesday, June 8

- History of Social Welfare (continued)

Readings: Day, *A new history of social welfare*, pp. 267-302
Dolgoﬀ & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 60-107

Thursday, June 10

- Social Welfare Programs—Characteristics and Program Evaluation

Readings: Dolgoﬀ & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 133-155; 278-299

Tuesday, June 15

- The Welfare Society and Its Clients
- Diversity Issues and Multiculturalism

Readings: Day, *A new history of social welfare*, pp. 306-369
Dolgoﬀ & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 157-187

Thursday, June 17

- Current Social Welfare Programs

Readings: Day, *A new history of social welfare*, pp. 406-458

Dolgoff & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 189-276

Courtney, M. E., Barth, R. P., Berrick, J. D., Brooks, D., Needell, B., & Park, L. (1996). Race and child welfare services: Past research and future directions. *Child Welfare*, 75(2), 99-137.

Tuesday, June 22

- Social Trends and Alternative Programs

Readings: Dolgoff & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 340-391

Bronstein, L. R. (2003). A model for interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work*, 48(3), 297-306.

Theriot, M. T., Segal, S. P., & Cowsert, M. J., Jr. (2003). African-Americans and comprehensive service use. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 39(3), 225-237.

Thursday, June 24

- The Emergence of Social Work and the Function of Social Workers
- Course Review

Readings: Dolgoff & Feldstein, *Understanding social welfare*, pp. 301-338

Hodge, D. R. (2004). Who we are, where we come from, and some of our perceptions: A comparison of social workers and the general population. *Social Work*, 49(2), 261-268.

LeCroy, C. W., & Stinson, E. L. (2004). The public's perception of social workers: Is it what we think it is? *Social Work*, 49(2), 164-174.

National Association of Social Workers. *The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. [Available at <https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>]

[GROUP PAPERS are Due Today Before 5pm]

Tuesday, June 29 EXAMINATION

Thursday, July 1 GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Group Project Guidelines

This project has two distinct parts. First, each group will complete and turn in one paper that addresses specific issues related to the assigned social problem and related services. The second piece of the project is a group presentation of the information gathered for the paper. Each student will receive an individual grade. This grade will reflect the overall quality of the paper and presentation as well as the student's individual contribution. All students will be asked to describe their contribution as well as the contribution of each group member.

I. Group Paper

The paper should be approximately 17-20 pages long, typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. font, and in correct APA style. The paper needs to be one succinct and consistent document. It should not look like several papers by different authors that were then stapled together. The paper should address the following issues:

A. Background and Introduction to the Social Problem (7-8 pages)

1. Define the social problem (including a scholarly literature review with at least seven references; only one of these references may be from an Internet or online source. All others must be from professional journal articles found in the library or located through library databases).
2. Provide information on the prevalence of the problem locally and on a national level. Use official statistics and other data to support your statements.
3. What is the historical development or evolution of this problem and what actions have been taken in the past to solve this problem? Were any of these actions successful?
4. Identify at least three social service agencies or government programs in East Tennessee working to remedy this problem. Attach brochures or agency documents if appropriate.

B. Agency Assessment (10-12 pages)

For one of the agencies or programs identified above, answer the following questions:

1. Agency Information
 - a. When did this program come into being and why? What is its mission?
 - b. Who were the individuals or group that founded this agency or program?
 - c. Who funds the agency or program and what is the size of their budget?
 - d. What are the overall goals of the agency or program?
 - e. Exactly what services are provided by the agency or program?
 - f. Who provides these services? What are the qualifications of these staff members?

2. Agency Clients or Target Population
 - a. Who are the specific individuals and families who receive the services provided by the agency or program? What are the demographic characteristics (gender, race, socioeconomic status) of these individuals and families?
 - b. What are the geographical target areas or neighborhoods served by this agency or program?
 - c. What are the eligibility requirements to receive services at this agency or program?
 - d. How is the community or target population made aware of the services that are available?

3. Diversity and Multicultural Issues
 - a. How does the agency or program prepare workers to work with diverse and multicultural clients?
 - b. To what extent does diversity exist among agency staff and agency administrators (supervisors, Board of Directors, etc.)?
 - c. How does the agency or program attempt to reach out to diverse or multicultural clients?

4. Program Evaluation
 - a. How does the agency evaluate their services
 - b. How do they know if their services are effective?
 - c. How are the clients involved in the evaluation efforts?

5. Synthesis and Conclusions
 - a. What are the strengths of the agency and services they offer?
 - b. What recommendations would you make to better meet the needs of the target population?
 - c. What is your assessment of the congruence between what the literature suggests for addressing the social problem and what your agency or program does to address the problem? Provide support for your answer.

II. Group Presentation

In addition to the paper, each group will make a presentation based on their paper. This presentation should provide the audience with an introduction to the size and scope of the social problem as well as a review of the services offered to address this problem. Each presentation with class discussion is expected to take approximately 30 minutes. Any group wishing to use Powerpoint or other technology should speak with the instructor as soon as possible so that the necessary arrangements may be made.