

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

**SW 250 – Introduction to Social Welfare
FALL 2009 (3 credit hours)**

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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 world without borders. 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, critical thinking, and leadership and prepares students to take appropriate action guided by the best available scientific evidence. We are dedicated to preparing practitioners for the challenges of today's complex pluralistic world. 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.

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 committed to evidence-based practice;
3. are grounded in systems theory and operate within a person-in-the-environment framework;
4. use the problem-solving process to intervene in multiple-level client systems;
5. have an understanding of human diversity, special populations, and domestic and international challenges, that informs practice interventions;
6. use critical thinking, evaluative skills, and leadership skills to address the needs of a complex, changing global world; and
7. are committed to continuous development of professional self.

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 our society. Also, citizens have various opportunities to influence this social institution. To influence this institution in an informed manner, there is a need for accurate knowledge rather than just opinions or strong feelings.

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.

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.

Course Competencies:

By the completion of this course, students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1. discuss current policies, attitudes, and programs in terms of past and current economic, political, religious, and social developments in social welfare;
2. discuss the emergence, growth and importance of the social welfare institution and the relationship with the social work profession;
3. differentiate between social welfare and public welfare;
4. discuss the meaning of "blaming the victim" and "creaming the poor" and how these concepts influence the social welfare institution;
5. identify and utilize a framework to critically analyze social welfare programs;
6. identify trends and drastic shifts in social welfare through the utilization of a historical investigation;
7. list the attributes of a profession and a bureaucracy and discuss some of the problems faced by professionals in a bureaucratic environment;
8. discuss the importance of paraprofessionals and volunteers in the social welfare institution;

9. discuss social problems in terms of definition, contributing factors, interventive strategies and programs;
10. articulate what one needs to know and be able to do for effective professional practice within the social welfare institution.

INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS:

- Demonstrated growth, development, and maturation in critical thinking capacity as it relates to the social work profession, social welfare institutions, the individuals and families affected by social policy, and current national and international events related to social welfare policy;
- Demonstrated ability to effectively work in teams to in order to complete a sophisticated and challenging Social Problem Investigation and Oral Defense (SPIOD) in a timely manner; and,
- Demonstrated ability to prepare for and actively engage in research and fact-gathering, interview with professional social workers, engage in public speaking in a classroom forum, and actively engage in discussions and debate regarding past and current social welfare policies and their impact on the public-at-large.

Required Textbook:

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (6th Ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Note: The textbook and reserve reading content will be supplemented to a significant degree with PowerPoint class presentations by the instructor. The PowerPoint slides will include content from assigned reading, as well as current scholarly literature and research on social welfare institutions and structure. The PowerPoint slides will be provided to the class electronically and students are responsible for knowing the information.

Class requirements, Assignments, and Grading:

The final grade in the class will be based upon the following criterion and their corresponding grade percentages:

<u>Event</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>	<u>Date/Due</u>
Examination 1	25%	October 6 (T)
SPIOD* Group Term Papers	20%	November 3 (T)
SPIOD* Group Presentations	20%	November 3,5,10,12,17, & 19
SPIOD E-Critiques	10%	November 5,7,12,14,19, & 21
Peer Review Evaluation	15%	November 24 (T)
Examination II	10%	December 1 (T)
Total =100%		

SPIOD* Presentation Dates and E-Critique Deadlines

<u>SPIOD Date</u>	<u>E-Critique Due Date (5:00 PM)</u>
• Nov 3	Nov 5
• Nov 5	Nov 7
• Nov 10	Nov 12
• Nov 12	Nov 14
• Nov 14	Nov 16
• Nov 19	Nov 21
• Nov 21	Nov 23

*SPIOD= Social Problem Investigation and Oral Defense

Disability Services:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 2227 Dunford Hall at (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Attendance Policy:

Absences and tardiness are not permitted in this class. The consequence of a combination of more than three (3) absences and/or tardiness is the final course grade being lowered one letter grade. Emergencies, illness, accidents and inclement weather do occur. You may need to be late or be absent sometime during the semester. This policy allows three absences and/or tardiness for such events before your final grade is lowered.

MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS:

Examinations I and II: (Exam I - 25% of final grade and Exam II = 10% of final grade)

**[Exam I addresses course competencies#1,3,4,7,9,10]

**[Exam II addresses course competencies #9,10]

The class examinations will be administered on **October 6 and on December 1, 2010**. Examination I will cover course material from weeks 1-7, and Examination II will cover course material from weeks 9-15. The format for the examinations will be true/false, multiple choice, definitions, short answer questions, and/or extended essay questions.

Group SPIOD Presentations: (20% of final grade)

**[SPIOD presentations address course competencies #1,2,5,6,7,8,9,10]

Students will work in teams of 2 - 5 individuals to conduct a comprehensive investigation of a specific social problem in East Tennessee, and a private, non-profit agency or government program that is attempting to address the social problem. One student will serve as representative of each investigative team, and will serve as the team spokesperson and liaison to the instructor. Social problem areas investigated may be substance abuse, racism, gender discrimination, poverty, youth

violence, immigration or refugee issues, terrorism, homelessness, crime, nutrition, health and health care, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, mental health, urban decay, housing, teenage pregnancy, civil liberties, and so forth. The topic selected for each group will be assigned by the instructor. The group presentation will be comprehensive in scope and will follow the format as outlined in the SPIOD Assignment Specifications. In other words, the group presentation will answer the 14 main questions in the SPIOD Assignment Specifications, as well as the specific sub-questions listed under each one.

SPIOD “E-Critiques:” (10% of grade)

All students are required to conduct “e-critiques” of each of the SPIOD presentations. Critique forms will be provided to students at the beginning of each presentation to facilitate the process. E-critiques will be electronically aggregated and forwarded to the respective debate teams through BlackBoard. This process will ensure anonymity of the raters. The E-critiques will rate SPIOD groups on organization, effectiveness, strength of investigation and data collected, and quality/effectiveness of oral presentations.

SPIOD Group Term Papers: (20% of final grade)

****[SPIOD term papers address course competencies #1,2,5,6,7,8,9,10]**

The assigned teams will be required to do a collective term paper as part of the SPIOD. The term paper will be comprehensive in scope and will follow the format as outlined in the SPIOD Assignment Specifications. In other words, the group term paper will answer the 14 main questions in the SPIOD Assignment Specifications, as well as the specific sub-questions listed under each one. The SPIOD Assignment Specifications are as follows:

SOCIAL PROBLEM INVESTIGATION AND ORAL DEFENSE (SPIOD)

The following information is **required** to be reported and addressed in the group term paper and group presentations.

- I. **What is the identified need or social problem being investigated?**
 - A. Define the need or social problem (this includes a scholarly literature review).
 - B. Provide information on the prevalence of the need or problem locally and on a national level. Use statistical and other data to support your statements.
 - C. What attempts have been made to address the problem locally and nationally (This includes efforts by the specific agency you are investigating, as well as other organizations)?

- II. **What is the name, location, and philosophical/historical foundations of the agency you will analyze?**
 - A. When did the program come into being and why? What is its mission?
 - B. Who were the individuals or group that founded the program or agency?
 - C. What is the philosophical premise of the program or agency? What is its mission?
 - D. Provide a brief summary of the agency’s history and major milestones.
 - E. Who funds the agency or program and what is the size of their budget?

III. What are the overall goals of the agency or program?

- A. What are the specific objectives outlined for achieving this goal?
- B. How are these objectives translated into program services, i.e., exactly what services are provided by the agency, and by whom? What are the qualifications of the staff members? Be specific.
- C. What are the intervention methods used by social workers and other agency personnel?

IV Who are the specific individuals and families who receive the services provided by the agency or program?

- A. What are the geographical target areas or neighborhoods served?
- B. What are the specific demographic characteristics of the community served and/or the clients served by the agency or program? Use data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census for support.
- C. Who is eligible for the services delivered by the agency or program?
- D. How is the community or target population made aware of the services?

V How does the agency or program representatives know that their program or agency is responsive to the needs of the community? What is their evidence?

VI How does the agency prepare their workers to work with diverse and multi-cultural client populations? What mechanisms, if any, exist to attract diverse and multi-cultural clients to the agency (e.g., outreach activities)? To what extent does diversity exist among agency staff and the Board of Directors? What does the agency do to assess their effectiveness in working with diverse and multi-cultural client groups? If efforts to diversify the staff or client population are not taking place, how do agency personnel justify the lack of action on their part?

VII How does the agency or program evaluate their services?

Who are the specific individuals responsible for evaluation?
Exactly what do they do to assess program outcomes?
How are the clients involved in the evaluation?

VIII. What are the projected reforms for the agency or program?

- A. What specific programmatic reforms are planned in the future?
- B. What specific plans are being made for fiscally-related reforms?

IX. What is your assessment of the congruence between what the literature suggests for addressing the identified problem and what your agency or program does to address the problem? Be sure to have a rational basis for your response.

X. What social work values are reflected in the social service programming by the program or agency? Be specific and use examples to back up your statements.

SPIOD Interview with Social Work Profession in an agency setting:

In order to complete this investigation, the team is required to interview administrators and other appropriate personnel from the agency or program you selected. The rule of thumb is that you need

to interview whomever can provide you with the information needed for the SPIOD. The literature review must include at least eight (8) professional hard copy journals and/or books, and two (5) references from an electronic data base. This information is available through UT Library services. Each team will assign members to complete specific parts of the paper, and address those same areas during the oral presentation. This will be a coordinated group project, but **each student will be graded individually for their part in the group term paper and presentation and each group member's section must be 5-6 pages in length, not including their reference section.**

Students will complete their own individual sections of the group paper, and will be responsible for their own citations of references used and personal communications. Students are required to rigidly adhere to the guidelines of the APA writing and citation guidelines (6th Edition). Students will also be responsible for proof reading, sentence construction, grammar and spelling. Specific evaluative criterion will be provided for the term papers and the group presentations.

It is estimated that the group presentations, class questions, and discussion will take approximately one hour. The SPIOD presentations are expected to include audio visuals through the use of PowerPoint or other media. All presentations will be videotaped by the instructor. All group papers must include the name, title, and telephone number of any individuals you interviewed for this assignment.

Selection of Topics, Team Meetings, and Meeting Summaries:

The professor will assign each of the SPIOD groups and will assign a social problem to be investigated. Each group is required to have at least five (5) team planning meetings to properly plan for SPIOD. If any group member does not attend a meeting, they must explain their absence to the professor, and it must be legitimate and verifiable or the student will lose 3 points for each incident. The group is required to provide the instructor with electronic summaries of team meetings, including who was present, what was discussed, the location, what time, what assignments were given to whom, and the status of previous assignments. Each Group will elect a spokesperson who will be the primary liaison between the group and the instructor. The groups will also decide who will be responsible for meetings summaries (it is assumed that this would be a "rotating" responsibility).

Peer Review Evaluation by SPIOD Group Members: (15% of final grade)

The BSSW Program goals include a deliberate process of developing "generalist social work practitioners who...are committed to continuous [personal] development of professional self." With that goal in mind, all SPIOD team members will be accountable to their peers in terms of handling their tasks, duties, and responsibilities related to the SPIOD project. At the end of the semester, each team member will conduct an anonymous Peer Review Evaluation Rating of other team members that addresses the following:

- Extent of participation at group meetings, including attendance and punctuality
- Extent of active involvement in planning and completing SPIOD Group Term Paper; and,
- Extent of active involvement in planning and completing SPIOD Group presentation; and,
- Extent that member handled their overall SPIOD responsibilities (i.e., "carried their weight") with both the Group term Paper and Group Presentation in a responsible and productive manner.

Assignment/Exam "Make-Up" Policy:

If an assignment is not completed by the deadline date, or an examination is missed, the grade will be recorded as a "0" (no points). Make-up examinations or assignment extensions will only be given in cases of verifiable emergencies. If there are extenuating circumstances, the instructor must be notified **prior** to the date of an examination or the due date of the assignment. Be prepared to verify any emergency in writing.

Grading Scale:

100-90	A	Outstanding/superior—exceptional performance. Consistently met expectations.
89 -85	B+	Very good—student consistently met and occasionally exceeded normal expectations for the course.
84 -80	B	Good—student consistently met normal expectations for the course.
79 -75	C+	High average—there was unevenness in grasping course content. Student was Inconsistent, but met expectations for the course.
74 -70	C	Average—there was a lack of understanding of course content and/or effort. Student met course expectations.
69 -60	D	Below average. Student had erratic attendance, unacceptable work with assignment groups, and poor performance on exams and/or other class assignments. Barely met course requirements.
59 -0	F	Minimum course requirements were not met

Honor Statement:

The University of Tennessee is proud of its student's commitment to academic integrity and their pledge to abide by the Honor Statement found in *Hilltopics*. "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 personal commitment to honor and integrity." According to *Hilltopics*, "each faculty member is responsible for defining, in specific terms, guidelines for preserving academic integrity in a course." I shall discuss the important Honor Statement, as it relates to both individuals and groups in this particular course, at either the first or second class meeting.

Extra Credit:

It is the BSSW program's expectation that all social work majors participate in the BSSW Student Social Work Organization (BSSW-SWO) or the National Association of Black Social Workers Organization (NABSW). All students, regardless of major, who are enrolled in a social work course or considering a major in social work are welcome. BSSW-SWO meets every Tuesday from 11:10 - 12:25 in room 209, Henson Hall. This time slot is built into the class schedule as a lab for many social work courses. Given the time of the meetings, students are encouraged to bring their lunch.

The BSSW-SWO and NABSW are student organizations that provide an excellent opportunity for leadership development, community and university service, the enhancement of group skills, research opportunities, and socialization. The organization and its activities are viewed as an extension of the BSSW curriculum. **Students in this class will have the opportunity to earn 3-5 points added to their final course grade by attending and participating in the BSSW-SWO or NABSW this semester.** Your attendance and participation must be documented. Attendance will be taken at each

meeting. To be an active member in BSSW-SWO and be eligible for extra credit, students are required to attend at least 7 meetings per semester (officers are required to attend 75% of the meetings each semester) and earn between 3 and 5 participation points. Participation points are earned using the following scale:

- 1 point for attending minimum number of meetings required for membership (see above);
- 1 point for participating in one or more drives;
- 2 points for fundraising participation;
- 2 points for community service or other participation

Criteria for participation in all activities is determined by BSSW-SWO faculty advisor and committee chairs. Students may earn 3 to 5 extra credit points in designated BSSW courses. Points awarded for extra credit equal BSSWO-SWO participation points for a minimum of 3 and not to exceed 5 points. No points will be awarded for students earning less than 3 participation points. **No other extra credit is available in this class.**

SEMESTER TIMETABLE

WEEK MAJOR DISCUSSION TOPICS (**)

- #1
Thu, 8/20
- Student/Instructor Introductions
 - Overview of program goals, course, and required assignments
 - SPIOD Group assignments

- #2
Tue, 8/25
Thu, 8/27
- Socioeconomic structure, human needs, and mutual responsibility
 - structure of the federal government
 - Social work and social welfare, defined and contextualized
 - The relationship between social work and social welfare
 - Salient theoretical perspectives (worldviews) in social welfare
 - Outgroups, defined, and the implications of “false consciousness” (i.e., racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, ableism, religious discrimination, etc.) in social work and social welfare
 - Social welfare in the news
 - SPIOD Prep

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #3
Tue, 9/1
Thu, 9/3
- The historical evolution of social welfare in the U.S., from Colonial times to the 21st Century
 - Social welfare in the news
 - SPIOD Prep

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #4
 - Social problems classification
- Tue, 9/8
 - Common human needs
- Thu, 9/10
 - Structural components of the social welfare institution
 - Social work values and social welfare design
 - SPIOD Prep
 - Social welfare in the news

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #5
 - Types of social service delivery systems
- Tue, 9/15
 - Types of benefits and services
- Thu, 9/17
 - Methods of financing social welfare services
 - Diversity, multi-culturalism, and the 21st Century social welfare constituency
 - SPIOD Prep
 - Social welfare in the news

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #6
 - Private non-profit and for-profit social services
- Tue, 9/22
 - Generalist practice in social welfare
- Thu, 9/24
 - Problem-solving models
 - Economic security programs
 - Social welfare in the news
 - SPIOD Prep

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #7
 - Housing programs
- Tue, 9/29
 - Health care programs
- Thu, 10/1
 - Disability programs

**** Exam Review ****

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #8
 - ***** EXAMINATION I, Tuesday October 6th, 2009*****
- Tue, 10/6
 - Social insurance programs
- Thu, 10/8
 - Criminal justice programs
 - Food and nutrition programs

- #9
 - Child welfare programs

- Thu, 10/15
- substance abuse and alcohol programs
 - Social welfare in the news
 - SPIOD Prep

***** NO CLASS THURSDAY, Fall Break *****

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

#10

- Tue, 10/20
- Thu, 10/22
- GLBT issues
 - Working Americans and their issues
 - Social welfare in the news
 - SPIOD Prep

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

#11

- Tue, 10/27
- Thu, 10/29
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
 - Future challenges in social welfare
 - Social welfare in the news
 - SPIOD Prep

Reading Assignment:
Weekly PowerPoint Slides

- #12
- Tue, 11/3
- Thu, 11/5
- **SPIOD Presentations, Group #1**
 - **SPIOD Presentations, Group #2**

- #13
- Tue, 11/10
- Thu, 11/12
- **SPIOD Presentation, Group #3**
 - **SPIOD Presentation, Group #4**

- #14
- Tue, 11/17
- Thu, 11/19
- **SPIOD Presentation, Group #5**
 - **SPIOD Presentation, Group #6**

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- #15
- Submit Peer Review Group Evaluations

- Tue, 11/24 · Course Evaluations
 · **Examination #2 Review**
- Thu, 11/26 · ****** Thanksgiving Holiday******
-
- #16 · **Exam #2**
 Tue, 12/1 · Final Class
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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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