

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

**Syllabus: SW540 - General Topics in Social Work:
Seminar on International Social Welfare and Sustainability
Spring 2007**

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 MSSW Handbook (<http://www.csw.utk.edu/mssw/>).

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. (*Hilltopics*, 2006).

DISABILITY:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 191 Hokins Library at (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This elective course orients students to concepts and practice issues regarding social welfare in a global context. Students review and apply conceptual frameworks, such as those based on human rights, social development, and sustainable development, to a range of global social problems. Students use these frameworks and an ecological perspective to compare the dimensions of, and interventions used in response to, social problems in the United States and other countries, with particular attention to vulnerable populations. An ecological perspective is integrated into the course in two ways. First, students examine the dimensions of social problems (e.g., poverty, health care, child-well-being, food security, violence) using local, national, and international comparisons. Second, students identify, describe, assess, and compare practice methods (e.g., interventions with individuals and families, groups, organizations, communities, policies) used to address a given social problem in different nations. The course prepares students to use professional knowledge, values, and skills in practice in interdisciplinary collaboration with international populations and communities, whether in work with immigrant individuals, families, groups and populations in the United States, with international social welfare organizations, or on-site work in other countries.

COURSE RATIONALE:

Social workers and other proponents of social welfare and sustainability in the United States encounter many situations that require knowledge and skills in regard to the effects of global interdependence on individuals, families, organizations, and communities. In an era of shifting population demographics and other social, economic, and environmental dynamics of globalization, practitioners must be aware of and able to respond competently in their daily practice when engaged with, for example, family wage earners who lose jobs when employers move overseas, refugees and other immigrants relocating into new communities, or international adoptions. Social services and efforts to promote social change can be enhanced domestically and internationally by the comparative analysis of shared social problems and the programs and policies used to address them. Students' ability to think critically and creatively about addressing social problems, domestically and internationally, is augmented by knowledge about internationally oriented perspectives and social welfare organizations, as is students' knowledge about opportunities to practice in international social welfare settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students will demonstrate (through, for example, examinations, assignments, activities, discussion) the ability to:

1. Define several frameworks for conceptualizing international social welfare practice (e.g., social development, sustainable development, globalization, human rights) and apply knowledge about the frameworks to efforts to ameliorate problems such as poverty, violence, poor health and environmental degradation.
2. Apply knowledge about ecological perspectives to practice assessments and interventions across local, national, and international geopolitical boundaries.
3. Identify and apply assessment skills to issues of cultural competence; diversity; social, economic, and environmental justice; oppression; human rights; and professional ethics in the context of work with international populations.
4. Describe and assess the roles and functions of key international governmental, nongovernmental/civil society organizations, and international conventions in promoting social welfare and sustainability.
5. Identify resources for international practice and employment opportunities.
6. Develop skills in using computer-based technological tools for professional practice in an international context.