

SW 512
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
SW 512 Social, Economic, and Political Environments
(2 credit hours)

Spring 2007 Monday: 5:45 p.m. – 9:35 p.m.

Instructor: Fr. Ragan Schriver, ACSW, M.A.

Office Hours: Mondays: 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. and by appointment

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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 (www.utk.csw.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. (*Hilltopics*, 2007).

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 Hoskins Library (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

This course is a required foundation course. Examines the profound influences on and critical interfaces of client systems with the world in which we live. Incorporates local to international information about social, economic, and political trends and innovations, and about effects of social problems, injustice, and power on client systems and on social change and service delivery systems. The course pays special attention to the process of devolution and globalization and the influence of these economic and political forces on the distribution of resources. International comparative social patterns are analyzed to understand economic justice from a national and international perspective. The history of the social and political environment, both nationally and abroad, are considered to enhance students' understanding of how political decisions shape the social welfare arena in which we practice.

Course Rationale

The Social, Economic, and Political Environment course provides a foundation for understanding the interconnectedness of various economic, social, and political theories and systems that influence oppression and social injustice, and the challenge of social workers to change oppressive social systems. Social work students, therefore, must understand and critically analyze the local, national, and international interconnectedness of macro level social arrangements and how these arrangements may result in structural oppression, discrimination, and social injustice. Students require evidence-based

knowledge in preparation for culturally competent practice in work with multicultural client systems, organizations, agencies, and communities.

Course Competencies

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

1. Trace the history and trends of the economic and political system in the United States that affect how the U.S. welfare system is constructed. (Practice-F.1; Values/ethics-F. 1; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.2; Policy- F.1). *(content: define the political economy and the relationship with social welfare; identify the historic trends in economic theory and the changes in political ideology over time (e.g. supply side economics and neo-liberal/conservative movements); utilize information technology to analyze economic and political trends).*
2. Describe the political process in the United States, and how power, and influence prevent or promote social and economic justice within and across multicultural populations. (Policy-F.7; Pops at-risk & SJ- F.2, F.3; Practice-F.8; Diversity-F.6). *(content: how interest group politics influence the political process; understanding the political system; global hegemony, first and third world economic issues and immigration; structural inequality; distributive justice).*
3. Use social and economic justice as a basis for analyzing the effects of social, economic, and political trends and the resultant interactions between individual, families, groups, organizations and communities. (Values/ethics-F.1; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.4, F.5; Policy- F.1, F.7; CT/EBP-F.4). *(content: the influence of values of the dominant culture on societal choices in economic and political systems, and the profession; privilege; the differential effect on client systems, communities, and organizations of tax systems and benefits).*
4. Connect economic and political decisions to peoples' access to resources, locally, nationally, and internationally, and recognize the ethical dilemmas inherent in lacking resources. (Pops at-risk & SJ-F.3, F.4; Values/ethics-F.1, F.2, F.3, F.4).*(content: tax system; economic, distributive justice; disparities in health and welfare; devolution of resources and services; corporate welfare; poverty gap and income/wealth inequality; use information technology to analyze access to resources).*
5. Analyze and compare national and international social, economic and political conditions using existing available statistics to identify differences in societies' access to resources.(CT/EBP-F.3; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.3; Policy-F.7; Research-F.1). *(content: use existing national statistics to compare social welfare and access across states; use international comparative literature to assess differences across countries in social welfare policies and practices; use information technology to identify disparities in access to resources).*
6. Analyze client systems and the relationships of power among individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and societies, using theories of empowerment, participatory change, conscientization, and social construction to understand the relationships of power and advantage in society. (Pops at-risk & SJ-F.3). *(content: theories of empowerment, social construction, popular education, and participatory change in the context of group/population membership; how groups attain powers).*

COURSE EXPECTATIONS and GRADING POLICY

1. Students are expected to participate fully in all activities and in all classroom sessions.
2. Students are expected to read all assigned readings thoroughly before coming to class.
3. Students are expected to complete and submit assignments on time & in response to the questions of each assignment as provided and follow these criteria:
 - a) Use the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edition) as a guide for format, citations, margins in assignments written outside the classroom (e.g., 12 fonts, double-spaced, 1" margins, and inclusive language).
 - b) Errors in spelling and grammar in a paper written outside of the classroom will result in reductions of ½ point for each error in the overall score for an assignment.
 - c) Written assignments are expected to be of graduate level quality; assignments that do not meet that criterion may be returned with an Incomplete grade and a 72-hour extension for final re-submission and grading.

Course Assignments:

1. Exam I 80 points
2. Topical Presentation and Position Paper:
 You will be required to sign up for a team project in which you will facilitate the class in a “workshop” on a certain topic. (Poverty, Immigration, Health Care, Child Welfare, Racism/sexism/homophobia, Housing/homelessness). Sign up for the chosen topic by the second meeting of class. You will be required to provide information in a creative way that will convey key concepts of the topic and you must create an opportunity for the other students to discuss and share their insights from the reading that they have done in preparation for the session. You will be graded on content presented and how it connects to the code of ethics of the Social Work profession, quality of activities prepared for class participation (ie. Case studies, discussion starters, “quizzes”), and a three page position paper that you will turn in the week prior to the session that your group will facilitate. An outline of your presentation will be turned in with the position paper. The paper and presentation will address the economic, political, and social factors at play in the issue you are addressing. The paper will be a position paper in which you will state your thoughts on the issue that is being addressed. The format of the paper will be:
 1. Statement of the issue
 2. Brief history of the issue
 3. Your stance on the issue
 4. How the subject and your stance connect with Social Work profession and our code of ethics

The paper is worth 40 points and class presentation is worth 100 points.

3. Exam II 100 points
4. Class participation: you will be required to provide input into the class discussions that your fellow classmates will be facilitating around the topical areas. If you feel that you can not say something in class then you may email me at frragan@ccetn.org your thoughts on the topic based on your understanding. This will require you to read the material for each class session. To provide basis for this you will need to write a defense

of your participation due at the end of the 15th session. This will be worth 60 points of your grade.

Course Total Points Achieved Grade Point Distribution

100 – 90 A
 89 – 85 B+
 84 – 80 B
 79 – 76 C+
 75 – 70 C
 69 & Below F

Session 1: Introduction to Course and Introductory Material

This session will focus on the concept of justice, critical thinking skills, ethical concepts, and personal learning, thinking and working styles.

Required Reading:

- Schraver, J.M. (1999). Harry Lawrence Lurie and social work's questionable commitment to social and economic justice. In G.R. Lowe & P. N. Reid (Eds.), *The professionalization of poverty: Social work and the poor in the twentieth century* (pp. 121-140). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Castelloe, P., Watson, T. & White, C. (2002). Participatory change: An integrative approach to community practice. *Journal of Community Practice, 10*, 7-31.
- Fook, J. (2002). *Social work: Critical theory and practice*. Sage Publications. Chapter 4- pp. 45-56.
- Larson, G. & Allen, H. (2006). Conscientization – The experience of Canadian social work students in Mexico. *International Social Work, 49*, 507-518.
- Opotow, S. (2001). Reconciliation in times of impunity: Challenges for social justice, *Social Justice Research, 14*(2), 149-170.

Session 2: Introduction to Economic Concepts

This session will focus on such key concepts in the field of economics as supply and demand, GNP, GDP and how these concepts interact with the field of social work.

Required Reading:

- Lewis, M., & Widerquist, K. (2001). Chapter 1 "The economic perspective." In *Economics for social workers: The application of economic theory to social policy and the human services*. New York: Columbia University Press. University Electronic Library: **an e-book:** www.lib.utk.edu:90/cgi-bin/auth/connect.cgi?netlibrary=75536
- Lewis, M.A., & Widerquist, K. (2001). The economic perspective. In M.A. Lewis and K. Widerquist, *Economics for Social Workers: The application of economic theory to social policy and the human services* (pp. 1-14). New York: Columbia University Press. (Chapter one)

- Lewis, M.A., & Widerquist, K. (2001). The economics of poverty. In M.A. Lewis and K. Widerquist, *Economics for Social Workers: The application of economic theory to social policy and the human services* (pp. 129-142). New York: Columbia University Press.
(Chapter nine)
- Soifer, S. (2002). Principles and practices of community economic development In A.R. Roberts & G.J. Greene (Eds.), *Social Workers' Desk Reference* (pp. 557-562). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (chapter 101)
- Reingold, D., Pirog, M., & Brady, M. (2007). Empirical evidence on faith-based organizations in an era of welfare reform. *Social Service Review*. 81 (2), 245-283.

Session 3: Political Environment

The concepts of liberal and conservative, the various political parties, the legislative and judicial processes, political advocacy and such political engines as PACs, SIGs, and 504s will be discussed in this session.

Required Reading:

- Karger, H.J., & Stoez, D. (2005). Social policy and the American welfare state. In H.J. Karger & D. Stoez, *American Social Welfare Policy: A Pluralist approach* (pp. 1-24). Allyn and Bacon, Inc. (Chapter one)
- DeLaney, A. (2002). *Politics for dummies (2nd Ed.)* "Ten common political mistakes" (pp. 309-312). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing Co.
- Collins, C. (2007). Aid to dependent corporations: Exposing federal handouts to the wealthy. In M.L. Andersen & P.H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class & gender: An anthology (6th Ed.)* (pp. 422-426). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Two Handouts that you will receive in class.

Session 4: Social Environment

This session will focus on diversity in various forms (ie. Cultural, religious, gender) and how this effects the function of modern society. We will also address such concepts as family, relationships, community and interpersonal relationships.

Required Reading:

- Kilty, K., & Vidal de Haymes, M. (2000). Racism, nativism, and exclusion: Public policy, immigration, and the Latino experience in the U. S. *Journal of Poverty*, 4(1/2), 1-25.

Session 5: International Social Work and Globalization

This session will focus on the issues of our globalized economy and such aspects as outsourcing, various changes in economic and political theory across the globe. Opportunities for social work intervention on an international level will be presented.

Required Reading:

- Harford, T. (2007). *The undercover economist*. "Beer, fries, and globalization" (pp. 189-217). New York: Random House.
- Harford, T. (2007). *The undercover economist*. "Why poor countries are poor" (pp. 166-

188). New York: Random House.

Friedman, T. (1999). *The lexus and the olive tree: Understanding globalization*. New York, NT: Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Chapter 2- pp. 25-37.

Friedman, T. (2007). *The world is flat: A brief history of the twenty-first century*. "The new age of connectivity: When the web went around and Netscape went public" (pp. 60-77). New York: Picador/Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Films to view: *Hotel Rwanda* *An Inconvenient Truth*

Session 6: History

We will explore the timeline of the history of social work as it relates to various societal, political and economic trends.

Required Reading:

Dolgoff and Feldstein. (2006) *Understanding Social Welfare*. Chapter 3, Social Values and Social Welfare: England from the middle ages onward; chapter 4, Social Values and Social Welfare: The American Experience I; Chapter 5, America, Poverty Two Paths: The American Experience II.

Session 7: Exam

We will have an in-class examination that will involve multiple choice, fill-in, short answer and a couple of essays. The material for this will come from a study guide provided to you in an earlier class session. The material will be based on the content of class meetings up until this point in the course.

Session 8: Poverty

This session will address the confluence of issues that face those who are in poverty in our country. The aspects of social welfare policy that must be addressed to face the issues of poverty will be discussed and debated.

Required Reading:

Sklar, H. (2007). Growing gulf between rich and the rest of us. In M.L. Andersen & P.H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class & gender: An anthology (6th Ed.)* (pp. 116-117). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Jennings, J. & Kusbnick, L. (2002). Poverty as race, power, and wealth. In In M.L. Andersen & P.H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class & gender: An anthology (4th Ed.)*(pp. 139-143). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Rank, M., Yoon, H-S., & Hirschl, T. (2003). American poverty as a structural failing: Evidence and arguments. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 30(3), 3-29.

Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed: On (Not) getting by in America*. NY: Metropolitan Books. [available local bookstores & UT bookstore]

Section 9: Immigration and Migration Issues

The issues facing undocumented immigrants into the United States as well as issues facing those who migrate. Discussion of the whole immigration state in the U.S. will be addressed

Required Reading:

- Furman, R., Langer, C., Sanchez, T. & Nagi, N. (2007). A quality time study of immigration policy and practice dilemmas for social work students. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43(1), 133-146.
- Passel, J.S., Capps, R. & Fix, M.E. (2004) *Undocumented immigrants: Facts and figures*. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm.?ID=10000587> .
- Vidalde Haymes, M. & Kilty, K. (2007) Latino population growth, characteristics and settlement trends/implications for social work education in a dynamic political climate. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 43(1), 101-116.
- Abbot, E. (A27) Human Migration as a Field of research. *Social Service Review*, 12, 158-269.
- Drachman, D. (1995) Immigration statuses and their influence on service provision, access use. *Social work*, 40, 188-197

Section 10: Health Care

The facts and figures of health care will be discussed from various vantage points. Medical social work and the role it plays in the health care delivery system will be addressed as well.

Required Reading:

- DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B.D. & Lee, C.H. (2006) *Income, poverty and health insurance coverage in the United States: 2005* (pp. 60-231). Washington, D.C: US Census Bureau.
- Lewis, M.A. & Widerquist, K. (2001). The economics of health care. In M.A. Lewis and K. Winderquist, *Economics for Social Workers: the application of economic theory to social policy and the human services*. (pp.143-156). New York: Columbia University Press (Chapter 10).
- Iglehart, J.K. (1996). The Struggle to reform Medicare. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 334, 1071-1075.
- Rice, D.P. (1995). Healthcare: Financing. In R.L. Edwards (Ed.-in-chief) *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (19th ed., Vol. 2, pp. 1168-1174). Washington, D.C: NASW Press.

Session 11: Housing/Homelessness

The significant issues of shelter will be discussed. Housing and urban development will be discussed as a tool to deal with housing difficulties. Plans to reduce chronic homelessness will be assessed.

Required Reading:

- Bachrach, L. (1996). Deinstitutionalization: Promises, Problems and Prospects. In J. Knudsen & G. Thornicroft (Eds.), *Mental health service evaluation* (pp. 3-18). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Biggerstaff, M., Morris, P. & Nichols-Casebolt, A. (2002). Living on the edge: Examination of people attending food pantries and soup kitchens. *Social Work*,

47, 267-277.

First, R.J., Rife, J.L., & Toomey, B.G. (1999). Homeless families. In R.L. Edwards (Ed.-in-chief), *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (19th ed., Vol.2, pp. 1330-1337). Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.

www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310305

Session 12: Child Welfare

This session will focus on such issues as child abuse, foster care, kinship care, as well as such policies as Adoption Safe Families Act and the State of Tennessee's Brian A. Settlement.

Required Reading:

- Bakan, D. (April, 2001). Slaughter of the innocents: A study of the battered child phenomenon. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, 10, 147-216.
- Brisset-Chapman, S. (1995). Child abuse and neglect: Direct practice. In R.L. Edwards (Ed.-in-chief), *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (19th ed., Vol.1, pp. 353-366). Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- Wells, S.J. (1995). Child abuse and neglect overview. In R.L. Edwards (Ed.-in-chief), *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (19th ed., Vol.1, pp. 346-353). Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- Barak, M.E.M., Nissly, J.A. & Levin, A. (2001). Antecedents to retention and turnover among child welfare, social work, and other human service employees: What can we learn from past research? A review and metanalysis. *Social Service Review*, 75, 625-661.
- Regehr, C., Chau, S., Leslie, B. & Howe, P. (2002). An exploration of supervisor's and Manager's responses to child welfare reform. *Administration in Social Work*, 26(3), 17-36.

Session 13: Racism, Sexism, Homophobia

This session will address the conflicts resulting from prejudice and discrimination around race, gender and orientation. We will also spend time looking into the other forms of discrimination around age, class and creed. These will be discussed in relation to poverty and oppression.

Required Reading:

- Rubin, L. (2007). Is this a white country, or what? In M.L. Andersen & P.H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class & gender: An anthology (6th Ed.)* (pp. 190-197). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Moore, R.B. (2007). Racist stereotyping in the English language. In M.L. Andersen & P.H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class & gender: An anthology (6th Ed.)* (pp. 365-375). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Lorde, A. (2007). Age, race, class and sex: Women redefining difference. In M.L. Andersen & P.H. Collins *Race, class & gender: An anthology (6th Ed.)*, (pp. 52-59). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Askeland, G., & Payne, M. (2006). Social work education's cultural hegemony. *International Social Work*, 49(6): 731-743.

Amott, T., & Matthaei, J. (1996). Race, class, gender, and women's works. In Andersen, M. & Collins, P. (Eds.) (2006), *Race, class, & gender: An anthology*. Sixth Edition. (pp. 283-292). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Session 14: Summary panel discussion

A panel of persons working in the field of social work will come to discuss their work and opinions about the field in light of social, political and economic environments in which they work. There will be a chance for discussion and questions from the students.

Required Reading:

You will be expected to review the readings that you have done for the course so far so that you will be able to discuss and ask appropriate questions of the panel.

Session 15: Final Exam

Additional Resources

Commercial Films:

Babel

An Inconvenient Truth

Hotel Rwanda

Paradise Now

Sicko

Syriana

Talk to Me

The Constant Gardener

The Last King of Scotland

Website sources:

DeNavas-Walt, C., Cleveland, R. (2003). *Income in the United States 2002. Current Population Reports (P60-221)*. Washington, DC: U. S. Census Bureau.
www.census.gov

Gerontological Society of America. (August 3, 2004). Press release: The Gerontological Society of America announces initiative on civic engagement in an older America. www.geron.org/press/engagement.htm

International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) (2004) 'Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training'. www.iassw-aiets.org/

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) (2000) 'International Federation of Social Workers: Definition of Social Work'.
www.ifsw.org/Publications/4.6e.pub.html

League of United Latin American Citizens. (2003). *LULAC outlines a vision of America as Hispanic population grows*. www.LULAC.org.

Proctor, B., & Dalaker, J. (2003). *Poverty in the United States: 2002. Current population reports (P60-222)*. Washington, DC: U. S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov

U. S. Department of Commerce, U. S. Census Bureau. (2003). *Hispanic population reaches all-time high of 38.8 million, new Census Bureau estimates show*. www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/cb03-100.html

Print resources:

- Calasanti, T., & Slevin, K. (2001). *Gender, social inequalities, and aging*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Dell Carpini, M. X., & Keeter, S. (1998). *What Americans know about politics and why it matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Estes, C., Biggs, S., Phillipson, C. (2003). *Social theory, social policy, and ageing: A critical introduction*. London: Open University Press.
- Jansson, B. (2003). *Becoming an effective policy advocate*. (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press.
- Karger, H., & Stoesz, D. (2006). *American social welfare policy*. (5th ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon Publishing.
- Kearney, M., & Beerra, B. (2004). Introduction to special issue: Migration and identities: A class-based approach. *Latin American Perspectives*, 31(5), 3-14.
- Lewis, M., & Widerquist, K. (2001). *Economics for social workers: The application of economic theory to social policy and human services*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Morrow-Howell, N., Hinterlong, J., Rozario, P. A., Tang, F. (2003). Effects of volunteering on the well-being of older adults. *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, 58B, S137–S145.
- Opatow, S. (1990). Moral exclusion and injustice: An introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 46(1), 1-20.
- Rubin, L. B. (1994). *Families on the fault line: America's working class speaks about the family, the economy, race, and ethnicity*. NY: Harper & Collins.
- Sommerfeld, D., & Reisch, M. (2003). The "other America" after welfare reform: A view from the nonprofit sector. *Journal of Poverty*, 7(1/2), 69-95.
- Zolberg, A. R. (2006). *A nation by design. Immigration policy in fashioning America*. NY: Russell Sage Foundation Books.