

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 512 Social, Economic, and Political Environments
Section#004- Online Course
(2 credit hours)

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Office Hours:

Mondays 3:00-5:15 pm
And by appointment

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*, 2008).

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 2227 Dunford (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 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-F6). *(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, 5; Policy- F.1, F.7, CT/EBP- F.4). *(content: the influence of values of the dominant culture of 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, recognizing the role of social worker as learner and engaging client systems as experts of their own experience. (Pops at-risk & SJ-F.2, F.3). (*content: theories of empowerment, social construction, popular education, and participatory change in the context of group/population membership; how groups attain powers*).

Required texts:

Friedman, T. (2007). *The world is flat: A brief history of the twenty-first century*. NY: Picador/ Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). *Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations*. NASW Press

COURSE SESSIONS

January 12, 2009 – Class 1

Topics: Trends in the social, economic, and political environments;
Critical thinking: What is it? What is it not?

Terms & concepts:

Capitalism	Consumer-side economics	Democratic
Devolution	Devolution Disparity(ies)	Free market
Globalization	Mixed welfare economy	Supply-side economics

Required Reading:

- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat*, Chapter 1: While I was sleeping, pages 3-11.
- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Preface and Chapter 1: *Learning from other countries: Current benefits and future opportunities*. *Lessons from abroad: Adapting international social welfare innovations*. NASW Press. pp. ix-12.
- *Karger, H., & Stoez, D. (2005). *Social policy and the American welfare state*. Chapter 1, pp. 1-24. Boston: Allyn & Bacon Publishers.
- *Kilty, K., & Segal, E. (2003). Rediscovering the other America: The continuing crisis of poverty and inequality in the United States: Introduction. *Journal of Poverty*, 7(½), 1-6.

January 19, 2009- Martin Luther King, JR. Day- No class

January 26, 2009 – Class 2 - Discussion Board #1

Topics: Interest groups; political processes & promoting social & economic justice;
Effects of social, economic & political trends

Terms & concepts:

Devolution	Distributive justice	Economic justice
Globalization	Hegemony	NAFTA

Political process	Power	Social justice
Special interest groups	Structural inequality	

Required Readings:

- *Askeland, G., & Payne, M. (2006). Social work's education cultural hegemony. *International Social Work*, 49(6), 731-743.
- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 8: *International Social Welfare Treaties and Conventions: Implications for the United States*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 137-157.
- *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.

February 2, 2009 – Class 3

Topics: Critically analyzing the affects of social, economic and political trends; Social & economic indicators; Dominant values; Power; Privilege; Social and economic justice

Terms & concepts:

Corporate welfare	Devolution	Disparity(ies)
Distributive justice	Dominant values	Economic justice
Federalism	Individual justice	Privilege
Social justice		

Required readings:

- *Collins, C. (2004). Aid to dependent corporations. In M. L. Andersen, & P. H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*, pp. 379-383, (5th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.
- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 5: *Welfare, poverty and social services: International Experiences*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 75-91.
- *Linhorst, D. (2002). Federalism and social justice: Implications for social work. *Social Work*, 47(3), 201-208.
- *McIntosh, P. (2004). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. In M. L. Andersen, & P. H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*, pp. 103-108 (5th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.

February 9, 2009 – Class 4- Blackboard Discussion Board #2

Topics: Economic systems; dominant values & interest groups; Global economic issues, trends, & influences

Video: *Is Wal-Mart good for America?*

Terms & concepts:

Capitalism	Consumer side economics	Economic justice
Flat world	Free market	In/out sourcing
Interest groups	NAFTA	Power
Social justice	Structural inequality	Supply chaining

Supply side economics

Required readings:

- *Friedman, *The world is flat*, Chapter 2: Eating sushi in Arkansas, pages 151-166 (top) & Insourcing: What the guys in the funny brown shorts are really doing, pages 167-175.
- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 4: *Individual retirement accounts, privatization and social security: International Experiences*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 53-73.
- *Langston, D. Tired of playing monopoly? In M.L.Anderse, & P. H. Collins (Eds.), *Race Class and Gender: An anthology*, pp. 140-149. (5th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.
- *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: www.lib.utk.edu:90/cgi-bin/auth/connect.cgi?netlibrary=75536

February 16, 2009 – Class 5 -Blackboard: Online Quiz #1- Quiz is timed for 45 minutes.

Topics: Social & economic justice; Power, influence, political processes & dominant cultural values

Terms & concepts:

Distributive justice	Dominant values	Economic justice
Free market	Income/wealth disparities	Individualism
Interest groups	Power	PRWORA
Self-determination	Social justice	

Required readings:

- *Collins, C., & Veskel, F. (2004). Economic apartheid in America. In M. L. Andersen, & P. H. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*, pp. 127-139 (5th edition), Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.
- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat: A brief history of the twenty-first century*. Chapter 13, “If it’s not happening, its because you’re not doing it.” pp. 489-514.
- *Reisch, M. (2000). Social workers and politics in the new century. *Social Work*, 45(4), 293-297.

February 23, 2009 - Class 6

Topics: Dominant societal values; social & economic disparities; & privilege

Terms & concepts:

Access to resources	Devolution	Free trade
Individualism	NAFTA	Poverty/rates
Power	Privilege	Socio-economic class (SEC)
Structural inequality		

Required readings:

- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat*, Chapter 5: America and free trade: Is Ricardo still right? pp. 263-277.

- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 3: *Exploring child welfare through international innovations*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 31-51.
- *Karger, H., & Stoez, D. (2006). *In social policy and the American welfare state*. Chapter 5, pp. 111-128. Boston: Allyn & Bacon Publishers.

March 2, 2009: Class 7 - Blackboard Discussion Board #3

Topics: Health and social disparities: Intersections of race; gender & power; resources; economic & social resources

Terms & concepts:

Interactions of social & political trends	Conscientization	Power
Popular education	Social construction	

Required readings:

- * Jennings, J., & Kushnick, L. (2004). Poverty as race, power & wealth.. In M. L. Andersen, & P. H. Collins, *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*, pp. 154-158 (5th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.
- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 6: *Mental health lessons from abroad*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 93-116.
- *Larson, G. & Allen, H. (2006). Conscientization. *The experience of Canadian social work students in Mexico*. International Social Work, 49, pp. 507-518.

March 9, 2009 – Class 8 - Blackboard Discussion Board #4

Topics: Social change strategies: Participatory democracy; social change; civil engagement & civil rights; Role of the social worker as learner & client systems as experts of their own experience

Terms & concepts:

Civic engagement	Civil rights	Community organizing
Economic justice	Empowerment	Micro-enterprise
PACs	Participatory change	Participatory democracy
Social construction	Social justice	Untouchables

Required readings:

- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat*: Chapter 6: The untouchables, pp. 278-300.
- *Carroll, J., & Minkler, M. (2000). Freire's message for social workers: Looking back, looking ahead. *Journal of Community Practice*, 8(1), 21-36.
- *Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 7, *Social development: Lessons from the global south*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 117-135.
- *Theiss-Morse, E., & Hibbing, J. (2005). Citizenship and civic engagement. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 8, 227-249.

March 16, 2009 - Spring Break - Enjoy your vacations

March 23, 2009 - Class 9

Topics: Social change strategies: Participatory democracy; social change; civil engagement & civil rights; Role of the social worker as learner & client systems as experts of their own experience

Terms & concepts:

Civic engagement	Civil rights	Community organizing
Economic justice	Empowerment	Micro-enterprise
PACs	Participatory change	Participatory democracy
Social construction	Social justice	Untouchables

- *Castelloe, P., Watson, T., & White, C. (2002). Participatory change: An integrative approach to community practice. *Journal of Community Practice*, 10(4), 7-31.
- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat*: Chapter 8: The quiet crisis, pp. 337-373.
- *Rogge, M., Davis, K., Maddox, D., & Jackson, M. (2005). Leveraging environmental, social, and economic justice at Chattanooga Creek: A case study. *Journal of Community Practice*, 13(3), 33-53.

March 30, 2009 - Class 10 - Quiz #2. Quiz is timed for 45 minutes

Topics: Global social change initiatives; Tax systems & inequity; Political processes & special interest groups

Terms & concepts:

Democratization	Empowerment	FLA
Free trade	Micro-enterprise	Micro-lending
NAFTA	Progressive tax	Regressive tax
Social capital	Special interest groups	Tax systems

Required readings:

- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat* Chapter 12: Globalization of the local, pages 477-488
- *Jurik, N., Cavender, G., & Cowgill, J. (2006). Searching for social capital in U. S. microenterprise development programs. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 33(3), 151-170.
- *Karger, H., & Stoez, D., pages 233-240. (2006). In *Social policy and the American welfare state*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon Publishers.

April 6, 2009 - Class 11- Blackboard Discussion Board #5

Topics: National and global social, political, and economic initiatives; Non-governmental organizations [preparatory step to group power points]

Terms & concepts:

Democratization	Empowerment	NGOs
Social construction	Social/economic change	Structural inequality

Required readings:

- *Friedman, T. *The world is flat: A brief history of the twenty-first century*. Chapter 15: The unflat world. pp. 533-579.

*Anner, J. (2004). Having the tools at hand: Building successful multicultural social justice organizations. In M. L. Andersen, & P.H. Collins, *Race, class, and gender: An anthology*, pp. 542-552, (5th edition), Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson.

April 13, 2009 - Class 12 - Paper Due

Topics: International human and civil rights; Genocide & hate crimes

Terms & concepts:

Advocacy Civil rights Developing countries
Genocide Human rights

Required readings:

*United Nations Human Rights Commission. UN Mandate on Human Rights: Darfur & Sudan. www.unhrc.org

*Southern Poverty Law Center. www.splcenter.org. Hate crimes.

*Friedman, T. *The world is flat*, Chapter 16: The Dell theory of conflict prevention, pages 580-606.

April 20, 2009 - Class 13- Group Powerpoints Due

Topics: Immigration; multiculturalism; & aging

Terms & concepts:

Global aging Exclusionary policy Green card
Immigration policies Nativism Older adults
Oldest old Undocumented immigrants

Required readings:

*Anderson, G., & Hussey, P. (2001). Population aging: A comparison among industrialized countries. *Health Affairs*, May/June, 191-203.

* Hokenstad, M. C. & Midgley, J. (2004). Chapter 2: *Policies and programs in aging: international initiatives*. Lessons from abroad: Adapting International social welfare innovations. NASW Press. pp. 13-30.

*Passel, J., Capps, R., & Fix, M. (2004). *Undocumented immigrants: Facts and figures*. www.urbaninstitute.org

*Vidal de 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.

*Code of Ethics. www.socialworkers.org

*International Federation of Social Workers. *Code of Ethics*. www.ifsw.org

Total Points for Course Grade: total points for course grade are not rounded	Point distribution for course assignments, quizzes, & discussion board activities & presentation
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(e.g., 81.999 = 81.0, i.e., = "C+")	
100 – 95 A 94 – 88 B+ 87 – 82 B 81 – 76 C+ 75 – 70 C 69 & Below F	Five Blackboard Discussion Boards 15 points Paper 35 points Quiz #1 20 points Quiz #2 20 points Presentation of NGO analysis 10 points Total points available 100 points

Details of Assignment, quizzes & discussion boards

Blackboard Discussion Boards: There are five; each is worth 3 points. Grading for each is as follows:

- 0-1.0 point = inadequate participation & inadequate content in responses to discussion;
- 1.1-2.0 points = adequate participation & adequate content in responses to discussions;
- 2.1-3.0 points = adequate participation & adequate content in response to discussions + evidence of critical analysis and critical thinking in responses to discussion;

Discussion Board #1: Discussing national & international economic & social justice issues, & human rights: UN international economic reports.

Discussion Board #2: Analyzing & discussing local, national, & international health & social disparities, the poverty & structural inequality with information technology.

Discussion Board #3: Critically analyzing & discussing the interactions of race, privilege, advantage & their influence on access to resources.

Discussion Board #4: Recognizing and discussing the ethical dilemmas arising from restricted access to resources & devolving social policies & advocating for their resolution.

Discussion Board #5: Analyzing and discussing national & international NGOs in social, economic empowerment & capacity building strategies to increase access to resources & basic human rights & learning from client systems as experts of their own experiences.

Paper: 35 points, of which 5 are for graduate quality of writing, & 30 are distributed as follows:

Step 1:

Identify & describe the demographics of a population of clients/client systems with which you are familiar (a "population of clients" from your work or placement)

Step 2:

Utilize information technology to acquire the local, state, and national demographics of that larger population in terms of the following, as appropriate: **a)** Prevalence (%s) and/or **b)** Incidence (#s)

#1_____ Create a summarized table of the statistics of the clients/client systems you identified in Step #1. **(2 points)**

#2_____ Create a summarized table of the local, state & national statistics you located in

Step #2. (2 points)

#3 _____ Analyze & compare the two tables; Discuss how are they the same? Different? In what specific ways? (5 points)

#4 _____ Discuss each of the following:

a) _____ What social, economic, and political influences of the community/city in which this "population of clients" reside explain how they differ from their counterparts in the state and nation? (7 points)

b) _____ What elements/issues of social and economic justice—as substantiated in your analyses, statistics, and discussions above—are suggested? (7 points)

c) _____ How do your discussions above (#3, 4a, 4.b) reflect the historical trends of the political and economic system in the U.S.? (7 points)

****NOTE: Maximum 6 pages (double spaced), including the two tables.**

****NOTE:** Be sure to accurately cite the source(s) of the statistics you provide in Step #1 & Step #2 & list these in your Reference list & adhere to the grading policies of the course.

Quiz #1 is comprised of 20 multi-response items (1 point each) concerning concepts and terms for understanding social, economic, & political trends & theories, political processes, globalization, social & economic justice, poverty, disparities, privilege as noted in terms & concepts listed for each course session from the beginning of the semester to February 16, 2009.

Quiz #2 is comprised of 20 multi-response items (1 point each) concerning terms and concepts of the course since February 16, 2009 for understanding tax systems, interactions of dominant values & persons/groups/communities, economic/political decisions and access, national & international poverty, advantage, & hegemony, social, political and economic change strategies, human and civil rights.

Presentation of Critical Analysis of NGOs is a power point presentation of each Discussion Board Group's analysis from Discussion Board #5. Each student can earn up to 10 points for her/his power point with his/her group; it is expected that each group will divide the following among its members for the presentation. It is expected that each group's power point will include the following:

- 1) What type of social/economic/political change project is the NGO project? How is the NGO organized? How does it acquire funding?
- 2) What is the goal of the NGO? What population is the target of the NGO's project(s)?
- 3) What issue/problem(s) of third world economic, social and/or political issues does the project seek to change?
- 4) a) In what specific ways does the NGO empower or dis-empower or is hegemonic? b) How does, or does not, the NGO's project influence power relationships (e.g., between individuals, groups, communities, states and/or nations? c) To what extent does the NGO utilize learning from the perspective of the client systems/population that the NGO targets?
- 5) Would the project of each NGO be a professionally & ethically appropriate project for social workers to be employed and practice?

Additional Resources

Commercial Films:

Babel

Syriana

The Last King of Scotland

Hotel Rwanda

Talk to Me

Paradise Now

The Constant Gardener

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. *Code of Ethics*. www.ifsw.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.

NASW. *Code of Ethics*. www.socialworkers.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.
- Opotow, S. (2001). Reconciliation in times of impunity: Challenges for social justice, *Social Justice Research*, 14(2), 149-170.
- 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.