



**OSHKOSH**

**Social Work Department**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

Social Work 167 Introduction to Social Work  
Fall 2008

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Section 001  
10:20 – 11:20 am MWF  
Room: N. Halsey 270  
Section 002  
1:50 – 2:50 pm MWF  
Room: S. Halsey 208

**University Bulletin Description:**

A general survey course with an introduction to history, knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. Designed for social work majors, people working in related fields, and students undecided about a major. Informed sensitivity to all aspects of human diversity is emphasized, along with the importance of social work's responsibility to act as advocates on behalf of those who suffer discrimination, devaluing, and oppression. (3 credits) Prerequisites: None.

**Course objectives:**

The primary goal of this course is for students to understand what social work is and what it is that professional social workers do. Becoming familiar with the broader community context including the political, social, and economic forces, which impact upon the practice situation, augments this understanding. This class will be a model of this primary goal.

Students considering social work as a profession may decide if this is the career for them. For those who have already declared a major in social work, this course is the beginning step in building their professional knowledge base. Although this is primarily a knowledge-generating course, problem identification, strengths perspective and analytic skills that are employed by social workers, will be introduced.

In the world today we are exposed to many differences with respect to culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and age; it is extremely important that we each learn to understand, respect, and value diversity. This course will actively seek to expand the student's knowledge of and empathy with all persons who might be referred to as a minority, or through circumstances have become disenfranchised from the main stream of society.

Through completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of social work as a profession within the social welfare system
2. Become familiar with the variety of settings of social work practice
3. Examine the function of the social worker as a generalist practitioner: (a) the knowledge base of the profession, (b) the values guiding practice, and (c) the skills demanded in practice
4. Identify personal values and examine them in relation to societal and professional values
5. Demonstrate increased sensitivity to and awareness of human diversity
6. Stimulate and develop interest in taking actions towards social justice
7. Stimulate and increase the desire to care for those in need

### **Required text(s):**

DuBois, B. & Krogsrud Miley, K. (2008). *Social work: An empowering profession* (6<sup>th</sup> ed). Pearson: Boston.

*Student Handbook*, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Department of Social Work, 2004 Ed. (Downloadable on-line at [www.uwosh.edu/social\\_work/home.htm](http://www.uwosh.edu/social_work/home.htm))

Additional readings will be made available to the class as needed.

This is an introductory course in which you will learn about the generalist practice of social work.

### **Definition of social work practice**

The generalist approach to social work practice supported by concepts drawn from social systems theory and utilizing ecosystems prospective, is attentive to person and environment and their interactions. Generalist practice is based on research-guided knowledge and uses a planned change process to determine the level or levels of intervention – individuals, family, group, organization, and/or community – appropriate to addressing the issues presented. It recognizes the profession's dual purpose and responsibility to influence social as well as individual change. Particular attention is given to work with diverse populations incorporating ideologies of democracy, humanism and social justice. Overarching and influencing the generalist approach are the values and ethics of the profession.

### **Expectations of students**

To create an atmosphere for learning, active involvement with the material is needed. To accomplish this active involvement, classes will include time for demonstrations, lecture/discussion/questions and answers, in-class activities and/or presentations from professionals in the field of social work.

Because a large percentage of your learning for this course will take place in class, attendance will be taken regularly and will strongly impact your grade. You must be present, on time, prepared to discuss assigned readings and/or to participate in other classroom activities. The class participation portion of your grade (10 points) will take into consideration your attendance record, the *degree of your active participation* in class discussion and the *quality* of your comments, questions and contribution to classroom activities. Absences will be excused under the following conditions: (1) a note from a physician excusing you from class or (2) pre-arrangement with the instructor at least one class period prior to the absence.

It is important to test learning. There will be three examinations. There will be a project and presentation that will be done in a group. There will also be a paper. You will be graded on the exams, project, presentation and paper. All formal assignments are to be typed, double-spaced, using correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Times New Roman, 12 pt, is the preferred font.

### **Additional course policies**

- **Academic Misconduct:** Plagiarism, cheating, and all other forms of academic misconduct are not only considered a violation of university regulations, but are also a serious breach of the ethical code of conduct for the social work profession. Students are expected to abide by the ethical standards of the profession. The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics is available on the NASW website ([www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org)). The University Academic Dishonesty policies (from the Student Disciplinary Code) will be followed.
- Opportunities for make-up exams or assignments will only be authorized by the professor if proof of family or personal emergency is provided (doctor's note, death certificate, etc.).
- The instructor reserves the right to alter the course syllabus in order to meet student learning needs.
- The instructor reserves the right to provide an individual grade rather than a group grade for a student if the situation warrants.

- The SOS (Student Opinion Survey) will be conducted at the end of the semester to gather information from students about the value of the course and the effectiveness of the teaching.

### **Special Needs/Accommodations Requests:**

Students with special needs/accommodations should notify the instructor immediately at the beginning of the semester so that available needs/accommodations can be made. Requests for special accommodations are handled through the Coordinator of Disabilities, Dean of Students Office, and must be based on appropriate documentation concerning the nature of the disability and demonstrated educational need. Instructors are not obligated to make special accommodations without having advanced information from the student about services they will be requesting during the semester.

NOTE: In addition to the instructional (course) policies contained in this syllabus, please refer to the Department of Social Work Student Handbook for more specific information about the instructional policies regarding academic dishonesty (including plagiarism), attendance and course participation, changing course sections, grievance and appeal, disclosure and confidentiality in class discussion, and special accommodations requests. The Handbook may be viewed by visiting the Social Work Department's Home Page at: [http://www.uwosh.edu/social\\_work/BSW.htm](http://www.uwosh.edu/social_work/BSW.htm). (use link to "Student Handbook")

### **Assignments and Projects**

1. **Agency Visit Project:** A major tenet of being a social worker is being aware of agencies and organizations that may assist you in your practice. Additionally, as potential students in the BSW program, you are required to have a certain number of volunteer hours completed prior to application. This assignment will assist you in both ways.

You will work in **groups of two** for this project (you may pick your own partner). You will be required to discover where there are opportunities for volunteers to help others in the area (including the Fox Cities). Your assignment is to locate a not-for-profit agency that utilizes volunteers in their day-to-day operations. You will research what a volunteer could do to help out at that agency. You might consider volunteering there as part of your requirement for admission to the major. If you do volunteer during the current semester *for a minimum of 25 hours*, you will receive extra credit for the course (10% extra will be added to your total accumulated percentage at the end of the semester). Please discuss with the instructor whether a current volunteer position you may be in will qualify for the extra credit.

Agency visit project presentation dates are scheduled for **September 24 (groups 1-5); October 24 (groups 6-10); October 31 (groups 11-15) and November 12 (groups 16-20)**. You will have **10 minutes** for the presentation.

**As a team**, you will present the class (and hand in a one page summary **due on the day you present**) with the following information:

1. Name and address of the place and the person that you contacted at the program
2. What are the goals and purpose of this organization – bring in a brochure of the program
3. Who are the population they serve; how they get referred; what are the services they provide
4. What skills are needed for a volunteer; content and length of volunteer training provided or required
5. What length of time should a volunteer be there
6. Why is this a good social work experience
7. Who is the contact person to talk with if you wish to volunteer

You are encouraged to do this presentation using PowerPoint; however, creating a poster will also be okay. It must be apparent to the instructor that both team members participated equally in the research and presentation of the project.

**TOTAL POINTS: 10**

2. **Diversity Group Term Paper and Presentation:** An important focus of this course is to explore diversity. For this paper, you will work in **groups of approximately five** (you may pick your own group). You are to decide on a certain population that is diverse from your own, that you have limited knowledge about, and are not of the dominant culture. Your assignment is to learn as much about this group as possible concentrating on the information that would be helpful to social workers working with this group. Information used in this paper must be from **all** of the following sources:
1. Personal interview with at least **two** members of the selected group.
  2. Library research (must cite at least 2 academic/research journal articles)
  3. Internet research (information gained on Wikipedia will not be accepted)
  4. Visit to the UW Oshkosh Multicultural Center if applicable
  5. Visit to Project Success if applicable

**AS A GROUP, you will submit a 4 – 5 page paper (due on the day you present)**, typed, double-spaced, and free from spelling and grammatical errors. This paper must be cited with information from all sources used, both within the text and at the end of the paper. Citations need not follow a specific format but **MUST** be consistent and contain all pertinent information. Be sure to list the names of all group members on the cover sheet.

There will be approximately five students in each group. The group will have 25 minutes to present the findings to the class (use of PowerPoint is highly recommended). Points will be deducted for either taking too little or too much time. This is a group project. It must be apparent to the instructor that all team members participated equally in the research and presentation of the project.

Presentations will be scheduled on **November 19 (groups 1 & 2); December 3 (groups 3 & 4); December 5 (groups 5 & 6); and December 8 (groups 7 & 8)**. Each group will have **25 minutes** for the presentation—be sure you practice it so you stay within the time limit!

Your paper and presentation must include:

- A historical background of the minority group (if you selected a non-minority group, then the historical background of how this group experienced difficulty)
- Discussion of the culture, religion, and traditions. How are these issues relevant to social work practice?
- What are some of the social issues that social workers should be aware of when working with this population, and what can social workers do to resolve these issues?
- Where can social workers obtain more information about this minority group?
- Why should social workers be concerned about serving this minority population?
- Areas recommended for further research
- Include in your presentation a video clip of some aspect of the culture. Your group may also include props such as an example of cultural music, art, clothing, food, etc.

Each group will pick one broad minority/ethnic group in the U.S. and then select one or two groups within that broad category. You may not select a group that has already been chosen by another group of your classmates. Some suggestions include:

1. Gay/Lesbian/Transgendered
2. Developmentally Disabled
3. Deaf/Hard of Hearing
4. Visually Impaired
5. African origins (African American, Jamaican, Haitian)
6. Latino (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central American)
7. Slavic (Polish, Russian, Czech)
8. Middle Eastern (Arab American, Iranian, Lebanese, Armenian)
9. Native American (pick two tribes) and Alaskan Natives
10. Asian (Chinese, Hmong, Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean)

**TOTAL POINTS: 20**

- 3. Exams:** There will be three exams. These will consist of multiple-choice and true/false questions with some fill in the blanks and short answers. The material in the text, other readings and information discussed in class will be on these exams. There will be no opportunity for make up exams unless the student has discussed with the professor in advance. Only serious medical or immediate family emergencies will be considered. **Exam dates are scheduled on October 3, November 7 and December 12.**

**TOTAL POINTS: 60**

**Grading and Evaluation**


Students will be evaluated on the basis of the diversity paper and presentation, agency paper and presentation, three (3) exams and attendance/participation as follows:




Agency Paper.....	5 points
Agency Presentation.....	5 points
Diversity Paper .....	10 points
Diversity Presentation .....	10 points
Exam 1.....	20 points
Exam 2.....	20 points
Exam 3.....	20 points
Attendance/participation.....	10 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

A	93-100
A/B	92-88
B	83-87
B/C	78-82
C	73-77
C/D	68-72
D	63-67
F	00 – 62

**COURSE OUTLINE – 167 Introduction to Social Work**

<b>DATES:</b>	<b>LECTURE:</b>	<b>IN-CLASS ACTIVITY</b>	<b>CLASS PREPARATION:</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS DUE:</b>
<b>Week 1</b> 9/3 9/5	Course introduction: Syllabus review  The job of a social worker		Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 1 - <i>Social Work: A helping profession</i>	
<b>Week 2</b> 9/8 9/10 9/12	What is social work?	Get in groups for Agency Visits and Diversity Project presentations	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 2 - <i>Social Work: An evolving profession</i>	9/10 & 12 = Current Event: Bring in newspaper, magazine, or online article that features an aspect of social work, especially an ethical dilemma.
<b>Week 3</b> 9/15 9/17 9/19	Ecosystems perspective; client systems	9/15 Lecture and explanation of assignments  9/17 <b>Class will not meet</b> , but assignment due to my office no later than 4:00 pm (place in envelope in my mailbox) →  9/19 = Group Study (Agency Paper) <b>Class will not meet</b>	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 3 - <i>Social work &amp; social systems</i>	9/17 Group 1: Case Study utilizing microlevel intervention  Group 2: Case Study utilizing midlevel (mezzo) intervention  Group 3: Case Study utilizing macrolevel intervention  Group 4: Project based on Box 3.2, p. 68
<b>Week 4</b> 9/22 9/24 9/26	How the social system works (State & County systems of care)		Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 4 - <i>The social services delivery system</i>	9/24 Agency Visit Presentations: Groups 1 - 5
<b>Week 5</b> 9/29 10/1 10/3	Social Work Values & Ethics  NASW Code of Ethics	9/29 Ethical Dilemma Activity  10/1 Video: <i>American Justice: The Death Penalty</i>	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 5 - <i>Values &amp; ethics in social work</i>	<b>10/3 - Exam 1 – Chapters 1-4</b> No lecture following exam

<b>Week 6</b> 10/6 10/8 10/10	Social justice		Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch 6 – <i>Social Work and Social Justice</i>	
<b>Week 7</b> 10/13 10/15 10/17	Diversity	10/13 Video: <i>Transgender Revolution</i>  10/15 = Group Study... <b>Class will not meet</b>	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 7 - <i>Diversity &amp; social work</i>	10/17 “Unpacking the White Knapsack” assignment
<b>Week 8</b> 10/20 10/22 10/24		10/22 = Group Study... <b>Class will not meet</b>	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch.8 - <i>Empowering processes for social work practice</i>	10/24 Agency Visit Presentations: Groups 6 - 10
<b>Week 9</b> 10/27 10/29 10/31	The role of the social worker in social policy	10/29 Video: <i>“The Beginnings of CIT”</i>	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 10 - <i>Social work &amp; social policy</i>	10/31 Agency Visit Presentations: Groups 11 - 15
<b>Week 10</b> 11/3 11/5 11/7	Issues of poverty	11/3 Exercise: “Have’s vs Have Not’s”  11/5 Speaker: Emergency Shelter	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch. 11 - <i>Social work and poverty: Homelessness, unemployment &amp; criminal justice</i>	<b>11/7 = Exam 2 – Chapters 5-9</b> No lecture following exam
<b>Week 11</b> 11/10 11/12 11/14	Health & mental health	11/10 Video: <i>The Andrea Yates Story</i>  11/14 NAMI’s “In Our Own Voice” presentation	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch 12 – <i>Social work in health, rehabilitation, and mental health</i>	11/12 Agency Visit Presentations: Groups 15 - 20
<b>Week 12</b> 11/17 11/19 11/21	Families & youth	11/17 Speaker: Child Protection Services	Reading: DuBois & Miley Ch 13 – <i>Social work with families and youths</i>	11/19 Diversity Presentations: Groups 1 & 2
<b>Week 13</b> 11/24 11/26 (holiday) 11/28 (holiday)	Special issues related to youth	11/24 Video: <i>Juvenile Justice</i>		11/26 & 11/28 Happy Thanksgiving!! 

<b>Week 14</b> 12/1 12/3 12/5	Developmental & cognitive disabilities	12/1 = Activity “Mirrors”	Reading: DuBois & Miley <i>Ch. 14 - Adult &amp;  aging services</i>	12/3 Diversity Presentations: Groups 3 & 4  12/5 Diversity Presentations: Groups 5 & 6
<b>Week 15</b> 12/8 12/10 12/12	Wrap up & review			12/8 Diversity Presentations: Groups 7 & 8  <b>12/12 = Exam 3 -  Chapters 10-14</b>
				

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