

**SOCIAL WORK/SOCIOLOGY 261—INTRODUCTION TO  
SOCIAL WORK AND THE SOCIAL SERVICES FIELD  
Fall 2023**

**SECTION 1: Mondays 5:00 PM-7:50 PM  
Science Building Room A113**

**INSTRUCTOR: Teresa Kovach, MSSW, APSW**

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OFFICE HOURS: Mondays 4:15-5:00 pm or by appointment.  
Science Building Room B349

**COURSE WEBSITE:** [https://uwstp.instructure.com/?login\\_success=1](https://uwstp.instructure.com/?login_success=1) (Canvas)

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** Suppes, M.A. & Wells, C.C. (2018). **The Social Work Experience: An Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, Seventh Edition.** Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This class is designed to help students learn about social work and social welfare and explore career choices in the social work field. The history of social work is discussed and used to place current issues such as poverty, racism, ageism, and sexism in the context of the society in which they exist. Social work programs and approaches that address these and other client issues are highlighted, as is the importance of research-informed practice. Areas of social work practice such as child welfare, schools, criminal justice, health, mental health, alcohol and drug abuse, aging, and developmental disabilities are examined. Social work theories, knowledge, skills, values, and approaches are investigated in a general sense and as applied to various areas of social work practice. Students are asked to evaluate their own and society's values in the areas studied.

**COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION CORE COMPETENCIES**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) identifies core competencies (measurable practice behaviors comprised of knowledge, values, and skills) that students must demonstrate and apply throughout their education and that social work programs must infuse into their curricula. This course was designed to provide exposure to these competencies and serve as a foundation for the further development that will take place should a student be admitted into the social work major. Students pursuing further education in social work should familiarize themselves with these competencies.

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.
4. Engage in Practice-Informed Research and Research-Informed Practice.
5. Engage in Policy Practice.
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the completion of the course, the student should:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of social work as a profession within the context of the broader social welfare system. (CSWE competency 1)
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the history, mission, theory base, values, and ethics of the social work profession. (CSWE competency 1)
3. Demonstrate familiarity with social welfare concepts frequently used in the discussion of social welfare institutions. (CSWE competency 3 and 5)
4. Demonstrate understanding of concepts related to generalist social work practice by examining the function of social workers as generalist practitioners in terms of knowledge base, roles, practice skills, and research-informed practice. (CSWE competencies 1, 4, & 5)
5. Demonstrate familiarity with the social work intervention process/planned change process. (CSWE competencies 6, 7, and 8)
6. Demonstrate knowledge of different fields of practice and variety of settings within the social work profession. (CSWE 1 and 2)
7. Identify personal values and examine them in relation to societal and professional values. (CSWE Competency 2)
8. Explain the commitment of social work to human diversity, social justice, and populations-at-risk. (CSWE competency 3)
9. Demonstrate skill in the use of the library indexes and databases and internet to locate peer-reviewed articles and books regarding social work practice and APA format. (CSWE competency 4)

## **CLASS FORMAT**

Classes include lecture, discussion, videos, individual and group exercises, and guest speakers.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Discussion Board	25 points
2. Internet Assignments	90 points
3. 1 <sup>st</sup> exam:	100 points
4. 2 <sup>nd</sup> exam	100 points
5. 3 <sup>rd</sup> exam	100 points
6. Research-Informed Practice Project	50 points
7. Participation	30 points

- ◆ Students are expected to attend class regularly and read all assignments before attending the class for which they are assigned. Students should be prepared to take part in discussion, experiential, and written assignments in class.
- ◆ Students are asked to post a reaction to each guest speaker in the Discussions area of Canvas. This will be reflected in the “discussion board” aspect of grading. Each reaction is worth 5 points. If you do not attend class when a guest speaker is scheduled, you may not make up this discussion post.
- ◆ All assignments are posted in the Assignments area in Canvas
- ◆ If extensions are needed on assignments, it is your responsibility to discuss this with me prior to the due date. If assignments are turned in late, partial credit will be given. No late assignments will be accepted two weeks past their due date.

**EXAMS**

There will be three exams in the course of the semester. These are scheduled for **10/9/23, 11/20/23, and 12/19/23**. Exams will include short answer and essay questions. Each exam is worth 100 pts. If possible, exam reviews will take place the class period prior to each scheduled exam.

**GRADING SCALE**

A	=	94-100
A-	=	91-93
B+	=	88-90
B	=	84-87
B-	=	81-83
C+	=	78-80
C	=	74-77
C-	=	71-73
D+	=	68-70
D	=	60-67
F	=	59 and below

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

- ◆ Papers will be graded on accuracy, breadth of content, consideration of social work principles, development of ideas, spelling, and grammar.
- ◆ Spelling and grammar should be checked prior to submitting assignments and discussion posts. Please do not rely on spell and grammar check as your only editorial tools.
- ◆ When outside sources are used, ALL references must appear in a reference list at the end of the paper in APA formatting.
- ◆ Students will lose points for assignments that are turned in late. No assignments will be accepted if they are turned in more than two weeks past their due date. If extensions are needed on assignments, this must be discussed with me prior to the due date.

**ASSISTANCE WITH ASSIGNMENTS**

I am happy to meet with you to discuss assignments. We can do this in person, or by e-mail. If you want to meet in person, you may stop in during office hours or we can schedule another time that works for both of us.

**LATE PAPERS/MISSED EXAMS/INCOMPLETES**

Students are expected to complete course work by the date that it is due. You are responsible to contact me to negotiate for any alternate dates. You must do this **BEFORE THE DUE DATE**. The same process is necessary to request an incomplete. Requesting an extension does not automatically mean that you will receive one.

**EXTRA CREDIT**

Students interested in completing extra credit are able to earn up to 20 points by attending cultural events or presentations on campus or in the community. Such opportunities will be discussed in class; however, if the student is aware of an upcoming event and would like to attend for extra credit, please see me. Following an approved event, students need to write a 1-2 page reaction about what they learned. Students also have the opportunity to engage in a volunteer activity and then write a reaction to this. This volunteer activity must be discussed with me ahead of time to count as extra credit.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism—using words or ideas of another person without citation—will result in a failing grade for the course and may lead to other disciplinary action. Any quotation, specific fact, or major idea taken from a book, article, or other source, must be cited in APA formatting with its page number within your paper, as well as being included in your reference list at the end of the paper. If you do not do this, it is plagiarism.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students who have special needs that affect their participation in the course may notify the instructor if she/he wishes to have special accommodations considered in either instruction or examinations. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss special needs.

Students may also seek assistance at the Disability Services office, which is located in room 609 of the Learning Resource Center. More information about disability services is available at their website: <http://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/students/studentInformation.aspx>

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In this course, we will be discussing case examples about real people. It is important that class members respect the confidentiality of the people who are discussed. Members of the class may wish to make comments that they do not want repeated outside of the classroom. The class is expected to respect the confidentiality of their fellow students.

## **GROUND RULES FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION**

We are working to develop knowledge, skills, and values that are consistent with the social work profession. Sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and heterosexism exist. We all have misinformation, and sometimes prejudices, about groups of people. One of the goals of this class is to learn accurate information that will help us change prejudice and discrimination--our own and that of others. In order to do this, we need to practice changing what we say after we have learned that we have misinformation. We need to practice not blaming people for their positions in life. We need to look for accurate information about all people and actively work against spreading myths and stereotypes that exist about people. Sometimes we need to take risks such as asking for information and expressing opinions. No one is expected to be perfect in this effort. Everyone is expected to try. My goal is to make this classroom a safe place to practice gathering and using new information. I hope that you will help with this.

Students are expected to attend class regularly and read all assignments before attending the class for which they are assigned. Students should be prepared to take part in discussion, experiential, and written assignments in class. **Cell phone use, including texting, is not allowed during class. Laptop use is not allowed on exam dates. Two participation points will be awarded per class in the course of the semester based on attendance and participation.**

\*If there is a specific reason why you need a laptop or phone during a particular class please see me to discuss this.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

For more information on rights and responsibilities associated with being a student at UWSP, please see the UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities at: [Community Rights and Responsibilities.pdf \(uwsp.edu\)](#)

**POLICY RELATED TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON THE UWSP CAMPUS:**

Our school is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. In the event that you choose to disclose about having survived sexual violence, including harassment, rape, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, and specify that this violence occurred while a student at UWSP, federal and state laws mandate that I, as your instructor, notify the Dean of Students, Troy Seppelt.

The Dean of Students or designee will contact you to let you know about accommodations and remedies available at UWSP and in our community. Please see the information on the Dean of Students webpage for information on making confidential reports of misconduct or interpersonal violence, as well as campus and community resources available to students.

<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/default.aspx>

\*If it is determined that an alleged perpetrator poses an imminent threat to the broader campus community or if person(s) under 18 years of age are involved, UWSP employees are required to notify the Title IX Coordinator, and/or law enforcement.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of a medical emergency call 911. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to a victim.

In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure. See [www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans.aspx](http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans.aspx) for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span rooms and buildings.

In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet at the Sun Dial. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.

In the event of an active shooter – Run/Escapes, Hide, Fight. If trapped hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Follow instructions of emergency responders. See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at

<https://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/default.aspx> for details on all emergency responses at UW-Stevens Point.

**Changes to the syllabus will be announced as far ahead of time as possible**

**CLASS TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS****I. Social Work and its Context****Week 1 (9/11/23)**

- **Topic:** Introductions, Course Expectations, and syllabus
- **Read:** Chapter 1 & Appendix: NASW Code of Ethics
- In class exercise: Assumptions about Social Work
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1 and 2

**Week 2 (9/18/23)**

- **Topic:** The Social Work Profession; Theoretical Perspectives for Social Workers
- **Read:** Chapter 2
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 1 (NASW Code of Ethics and website) due by 5 PM on Sunday, 9/24/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competency 1

**Week 3 (9/25/23)**

- **Topic:** Social Justice, Poverty, and Populations at Risk
- **Read:** Chapter 3
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 2 (Southern Poverty Law Center/Populations at Risk) due at 5 PM on Sunday, 10/1/23
- **Assignment:** Submit topic idea for “Annotated Bibliography” assignment to the Discussion area of Canvas by Wednesday, 9/27/23 at 5 PM.
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 2, 3, and 4

**Week 4 (10/2/23)**

- **Topic:** Historical Perspectives in Social Welfare
- **Read:** Chapter 4
- **Library Session on 10/2/23 with Troy Espe**
- Exam 1 Review on 10/2/23
- **No Internet Assignment**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 2, 4, and 5

**Week 5 (10/9/23)**

- **Topic:** Social Work Pioneers
- **Exam I: 10/9/23**
- Video following exam: **Legacies of Social Change**
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 3 (Pew Research Center/ Diversity and Social Trends) by 5 PM on Sunday, 10/15/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competency 4 and 5

**Week 6 (10/16/23)**

- **Topic:** Children and Family Services
- **Read:** Chapter 5
- **Guest: Tina Drinville-Big Brothers Big Sisters and Guest Big & Little**
- **Guest Speaker: CPS Social Worker from Portage County Health and Human Services**
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 4 (Casey Family Programs/Child Welfare) due at 5 PM on Sunday, 10/22/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9

**Week 7 (10/23/23)**

- **Topic:** Social Work in Mental Health
- **Read:** Chapter 6
- **Guest Speaker: To be announced**
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 5 (National Alliance on Mental Illness) due at 5 PM on Sunday, 10/29/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8

**Week 8 (10/30/23)**

- **Topic:** Social Work in Health Care
- **Read:** Chapter 7
- **Guest Speaker:** Rachel Schilling/Amy Parker- Health Care/Hospital Social Work
- **Assignment:** Annotated Bibliography Assignment due by 10 AM Thursday, 11/2/23
- **No Internet Assignment**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 2, 3, and 4

**Week 9 (11/6/23)**

- **Topic:** Social Work in the Schools
- **Read:** Chapter 8
- **Guest Speaker:** Nicole Natzke-School Social Worker/Wausau School District
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 6 (CDC Adolescent and School Health) due by 5 PM on Sunday, 11/12/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

**Week 10 (11/13/23)**

- **Topic:** Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders
- **Read:** Chapter 9
- **Guest Speaker:** To be announced
- **Exam II Review:** 11/13/23
- **No Internet Assignment**
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 4, 6, 7, and 8

**Week 11 (11/20/23)**

- **Exam II:** 11/20/23
- **Film:** Unbreakable Minds
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 7 (SAMHSA/ Substance and Abuse and Mental Health Administration) due at 5 PM on Sunday, 11/26/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9

**Week 12 (11/27/23)**

- **Topic:** Social Work with Older Adults
- **Read:** Chapter 10
- **Guest Speaker:** To be Announced
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 8 (National Institute on Aging) due at 5 PM on Sunday, 12/3/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9

**Week 13 (12/4/23)**

- **Topic:** Hospice and Medical Social Work
- **Read:** Chapter 11
- **Guest Speaker:** Rhonda Britz, Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice
- **Assignment:** Internet Assignment 9 (Urban Institute/Environmental and Social Justice) due at 5 PM on Sunday, 12/10/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9

**Week 14 (12/11/23)**

- **Topic:** Criminal Justice and Juvenile Justice

- **Read:** Chapter 12
- **Guest Speaker:** Amy Brogan, Youth Justice Social Worker
- **Exam III Review:** 12/11/23
- Content Focus: Social Work Competencies: 1, 2, 3, and 5

**Final Exam:**

**Monday 12/19/23 5:00-7:00 P.M.**

**Science Building Room A113**

**ASSIGNMENT DETAIL**

**Internet Assignments**

For several of the topics related to the text, students will be provided with an accompanying guided internet assignment. These assignments can be found in the Assignments area of Canvas. The purpose of these assignments is to help students further explore the issues being addressed in class, to gain confidence in locating social work resources and information on the internet, to develop reflective writing skills, and to allow opportunities for relating personal values and experiences to social work issues.

- Follow the instructions for each particular assignment, reviewing at least the information identified in the assignment and exploring further if you wish.
- Students are required to turn in a one to two page (double spaced) response to the 9 assignments provided (each worth 10 points).
- Responses must include your **personal feelings/ thoughts/ comments** in reaction to the internet material and **any questions** that you would like the instructor to address regarding the material. DO NOT simply summarize the content found on the website. Your response paper should display understanding of the material covered, but should mainly focus on your personal reaction.
- **It should be clear in your paper that you visited all assigned websites.**
- Each assignment is **due by Sunday at 5 p.m. during the week that its corresponding chapter is covered in class.** Assignments may be submitted late for reduced credit within two weeks that they are due.

Internet Assignment Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9

**Annotated Bibliography Research Project – Due Thursday, 11/2/23 at 10 A.M.**

This purpose of this assignment is to help students more deeply examine a specific client population of interest to them, to develop skill in using the library and internet to locate relevant information and resources, and to illustrate the importance of skill in accessing resources and in research-informed practice.

Each student will identify a **specific client population** that he or she would like to learn more about (e.g. gay/lesbian youth, children with autism, men who have experienced domestic violence, adults with schizophrenia, people experiencing cocaine addiction, children who have been sexually abused, etc.).

He/she will then identify information and resources relevant to that particular population **as it relates to social work practice and create an annotated bibliography in APA format.** An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and other documents. Each citation is then followed by a brief description that summarizes the identified resource.

- ✓ Identify a specific client population that you would like to know more about. Submit your topic idea to the Discussion Board on Canvas by 9/27/23 as indicated in your syllabus. Review your instructor's feedback once it is posted (5 points).



- ✓ Attend the Library Session to learn more about how to utilize the library to access relevant, peer reviewed resources on 10/2/23 (5 points).
- ✓ Submit your Annotated Bibliography to Canvas on 11/2/23 by 10 A.M. in APA format that includes the following (40 points):
  - Title (client population)
  - At least three current articles from academic/professional/peer reviewed journals on social work practice with your chosen client population. The articles must be published within the last five years.
  - At least one current book relevant to your chosen client population
  - At least two organizational websites from respectable sources that could be used by a social worker serving your chosen population
  - At least one local community program/organization that might be useful to your client population (for citing purposes, use their website or a brochure)
  - All sources must be published within the last five years.

Annotated Bibliography Content Focus: Social Work Competencies 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9