

SW 120 – Introduction to Social Work
Course Syllabus
San Diego State University School of Social Work
Spring 2008
Room WC230

Professor: Robert Bray
Class Times: Tuesday 4:00 PM
Phone: 619-283-1116
Email rlbray@rlbray.com
Office: HH 108
Office Hours: One half hour before and One half hour after class or by appointment

Course Description:

Social Work 120 uses a social problems approach to describe how poverty, child abuse, substance abuse, health and mental health issues, sexism, racism, other forms of discrimination, crime and other social issues affect people. It provides a framework for analyzing policy issues and for making informed civic decisions on social issues. As part of the course students are asked to complete 40 hours of volunteer work at a social service/community service agency, observing how social workers attempt to address social problems.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

A. Knowledge

1. Describe how social work as a profession differs from other helping professions;
2. Understand different perspectives on major issues confronting society in order to arrive at informed positions;
3. Identify existing services, merits and challenges of services and new programs needed to fill gaps in services.

B. Skills

1. Apply intervention approaches in working with people to facilitate positive change;
2. Develop critical thinking capacity;
3. Seek to achieve a more equitable distribution of resources and power among various groups in society;
4. Promote a strength-based approach to individuals, families and communities;
5. Identify with people and communities in need.

C. Values

1. Describe social work values and how they relate to and guide practice.
2. Describe how social values were developed, and how they differ from and are similar to those in the other helping professions.

Outcomes:

1. Introduce prospective social work majors to the field of social work.
2. Prepare students for career decisions and future social work education.
3. Provide students with a social work perspective regarding contemporary social issues.

Required Text:

Zastrow, Charles (2008). Social Work and Social Welfare. 9th Edition. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Course requirements and grading

Attendance is mandatory. Role will be taken at each class. Four (4) absences will result in an automatic reduction of your final grade in the course by *one full letter grade*. Missing more than 4 weeks of class may result in a failing grade in the course. Active participation in class discussions, exercises, and small group activities are expected and will be graded on quality of content and presentation. Professional standards are expected. Attendance and Participation = **10% of course grade**

Four written exams: The exams will be multiple choice or true/false using open book and notes in class. Material in the text will be used in the class lectures and discussions but there will be no formal review of the material and you are expected to read and understand this material independent of the class lectures. **Each exam will be 10% for a total of 40%** of course grade.

Social Policy Analysis / call to action. Each student will research a relevant and timely public policy issue write a persuasive call to action to classmates. This **letter will and oral presentation to class will be 20 % of course grade**. 5 extra credit points will be given to the two students with the greatest number of responses by their classmates.

Volunteer social work experience - 40 hours. Volunteer Experience Plan due fourth week of class.

Volunteer experience paper part 1 is 10% of course grade

Volunteer experience paper part 2 is 20% of course grade

The second paper will not be accepted without submission of the volunteer experience time sheet.

Course requirements and grading

Task	Points - Total 100	Due Date End of Class	Comments
Volunteer plan Waiver	0- failure to complete this task results in F grade for course	Week 4 – end of class	Waiver Form will be supplied. See required format for plan
Report on Volunteer Experience Part 1	10	Week 10	See required format
Report on Volunteer Experience Part 2	20	Week 16	See required format
Exam on Readings I Chapters 1-4	10	Week 3	
Exam on Readings II Chapters 5-8	10	Week 5	
Exam on Readings III Chapter 9-13	10	Week 7	
Exam on Readings IV Chapter 14-17	10	Week 9	
Social Policy Analysis Call to action-written & oral	20--5 pts extra credit to 2 students with most responses	Week 13	See required format
Attendance and Participation	10	Week 16	Based on small group and class interactions

Please Note: *Late assignments* will be accepted only with prior authorization of instructor and may be graded down by 10%. For example, if you turn in a late paper that would have received a 92% (A-), you would receive an 82% (B-) for being late.

Grades will be administered in accordance with the University system as described in the SDSU General Catalog. The system uses the following scale:

94-100	A	77-79	C+	60-62	D-
90-93	A-	73-76	C	<60	F
87-89	B+	70-72	C-		
83-86	B	67-69	D+		
80-82	B-	63-66	D		

Semester Schedule

Week Date	Assignments Due	Lecture / Activity
Week 1: Jan. 22		Introduction to semester and syllabus review: Recognizing a Social Worker- Finding a volunteer experience
Week 2: Jan. 29		Problem-solving finding a volunteer experience.
Week 3: Feb. 5	Exam on Readings I Chapters 1-4	Justice as the organizing principles of the profession.
Week 4: Feb. 12	Volunteer plan due	Staying Safe - Heeding the Collective Wisdom- Law and Ethics
Week 5: Feb. 19	Exam on Readings II Chapters 5-8	Making change big and small
Week 6: Feb. 26		Finding support- small group activity
Week 7: Mar. 4	Exam on Readings III Chapter 9-13	Laws and Governmental policies impacting you and your clients
Week 8: Mar. 11		Volunteer Agency Policies and procedures impacting you and your clients
Week 9: Mar. 18	Exam on Readings IV Chapter 14-17	DT Finding strength – small group activity
Week 10: Mar. 25	Volunteer paper part 1 due	Putting the pieces together Spring Break next week – No class
Week 11: April 8		Is this for you? - Small group activity
Week 12: April 15		Saying Goodbye to Clients, and co-workers- Three step process
Week 13: April 22	Call to action due	One minute pitches
Week 14: April 29		One minute pitches
Week 15: May 6		Last class activity- Evaluate volunteer setting. Evaluate Class – Call to actions results
Week 16 Mar. 13	Volunteer Paper Part 2 due with timecard	Finals Week – no meeting – paper due at SW office HH118 by 4 PM

****Volunteer Service REQUIREMENTS****

To successfully complete SW 120, each student must complete forty (40) hours of volunteer fieldwork in a human service agency.

Appropriate Agencies:

1. A list of agencies is attached to the syllabus.
2. Agencies not included on the list are not allowed unless approved by the instructor in advance.
3. You may not use a paid job to fulfill this requirement.

Volunteer Setting:

1. Student experience must include **direct service** with clients or **macro practice** with a community-organizing project (i.e., you cannot simply do 40 hours of clerical work).
2. **A social worker (BSW or MSW)**, employed by the agency, must provide supervision, training, orientation, or other interface with the student. Direct supervision may be provided by a professional other than a social worker (e.g., MFT or BA in Psychology), however the agency social worker must spend at least two (2) hours during the course of the semester supervising, training or interacting with the student. Hours must be spread out over a period of eight to ten weeks. Hours completed in less than this period will not be accepted.
3. A time sheet **signed by the agency supervisor or the social worker** must be submitted with the final paper.

Volunteer Experience Time Sheet:

Each student is required to keep a timesheet that lists the actual dates and hours that you worked to fulfill the 40 hours of field experience over a minimum of nine weeks. The completed timesheet is due the last day of regular class. **If you use a timesheet that is not printed on agency letterhead, it must be accompanied by a statement on agency letterhead from the supervisor affirming that the hours were worked.** Failure to submit an acceptable timesheet by the paper due date will result in a failing grade for the course.

Volunteer Experience Plan

Each student will complete a field experience plan which is due at the beginning of class **on due date in course schedule.** The plan will include:

1. Student name and contact phone numbers
2. Agency name, address and telephone number
3. Name and telephone number of volunteer supervisor. This is the person who will directly supervise you and sign your time sheets.
4. Brief description of your assignments, responsibilities and tasks

5. Your regularly scheduled hours of work
6. The signature of the agency supervisor following this statement:
"(Name of Agency) has agreed to serve as a volunteer service experience for (name of student) for forty (40) hours for fulfillment of requirements of Social Work 120. I will interact with (name of student)'s for two hours activities and verify the hours he/she has volunteered at the agency.
This must be signed by a person with a BSW or MSW (or LCWS).

WAIVER FOR VOLUNTEER FIELD EXPERIENCE

SW 120 requires a minimum of 40 of volunteer work in a community agency. This is considered an Off-campus activity. Participation in such activity may result in accidents or personal injury. Students volunteering in a community agency are aware of these risks, and agrees to hold harmless San Diego State University, the State of California, The Trustees of the California State University and Colleges and its officers, employees and agents against all claims, demands, suits, judgments, expense and costs of any kind on account of their participation in the activities. Students using their own vehicles to transport other students to such activities should have current automobile insurance.

Volunteer Field Experience Paper

The purpose of this assignment is to summarize and analyze your volunteer field experience.

Part 1. 10% of your grade.

Provide the following information:

1. Name of agency
2. Organizational mission statement
3. Specific Program or project objectives in which you are volunteering
4. Describe Program in which you are volunteering (include target population, and services provided)
5. Summary of funding amount and sources for Organization and for the program in which you are working. (how much and from whom)
6. Who is your supervisor (include organizational job title and list his/her academic background) and who is his/her supervisor (include organizational job title and list his/her academic background).
7. Summary of current tasks being performed. (Be specific)
8. What social problems are being addressed and how does this program and your work address the purposes and values of social work?

Format for Part 1:

This paper should be *approximately 2-4 pages, typed, double-spaced, using 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman) with 1" margins*. You may list the first 7 items. Item 8 should be in essay form and at least one full page.

Part 2:

Your paper must include the following information in an essay form This paper should be approximately 5-7, typed, double-spaced, using 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman) with 1" margins. No reference are required but you are expected to use Social Work terms and concepts from the class.

First section:

Describe **at least 2** specific experiences with staff, clients, or community groups that you felt were good learning experiences for you (at least one and one half pages in length). In each;

- Describe the relevant client background (do **not** use the clients' real name!)
- What was your role in the experiences?
- Were the clients' needs met?
- How does this volunteer experience relate to what you've learned in class?

Second Section: (minimum two pages long) what did you learn specifically about your strengths and challenges as a service provider? How has this volunteer experience changed or enhanced your understanding of social work as a profession?

Use Social work Terms and Concepts in this paper

Call to action

Each student will research a relevant and timely public policy issue. After determining a position congruent with Social Work Values/Ethics students will select a current legislative bill or regulatory standard being developed in support of his/her position.

Each student will write a persuasive email to their classmates asking them to support his/her position by sending a letter, email, or calling a policy maker. The letter should include: the social issue being addressed, name of bill or regulation of concern (federal, state, or local), importance to a social work student, how this is related to social work values, and rationale for being worth their time and energy.

The call to action should be at 200 to 400 words in length. Student will make a 1-2 minute appeal to the class to support his/her cause in a class session.

The student will supply a means (website, email address, postal address, or phone number) for students with which they can contact the policy maker (if you give a link it must work, if you give phone number it must be in service, if you give and email it must be active).

All students will be required to take one action suggested by another student and report this action to the instructor. The two students with the greatest number of actions taken by class mates will earn an extra credit of 5 points of course credit each. Student will forward their action to the instructor. Only responses sent after the due date of assignment will count.

Bibliography

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