

SW 205 B: Social Welfare and Social Justice

Spring 2018
University of Portland
Dorothy Day Social Work Program

Dr. Alice Gates, L.M.S.W., M.A.
Associate Professor of Social Work
Office: Franz 110B, 503.943.7104
Email: gatesa@up.edu

Class meeting

T/Th 2:30-3:55 PM, Franz 006

Office hours

T 11:30-12:30; W 3:00-4:00 PM; Th. 4:00-5:00

Course Description: Social Work is the practice-based profession and academic discipline that promotes social change, human development, and the empowerment and liberation of people ([International Federation of Social Work, Global Definition of Social Work](#)). As the introductory course in the social work major, the course provides an overview of the conceptual foundations of social work, the settings in which social workers practice, the populations they encounter, the social problems they address, and the interventions they utilize. Students will develop an understanding of the historical underpinnings of the social work profession and features of the contemporary social welfare policies and programs in the United States. The course provides an introduction to the social scientific knowledge and social work values, ethics, and skills necessary for the effective practice with diverse populations. Emphasis will be placed on the social justice foundations of social work and the role of social workers in addressing unjust systems and structures that marginalize particular groups.

Course Objectives: By the conclusion of this course, students will understand and/or be able to

1. Describe the history and values that form the foundation for contemporary social work practice
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of the American social welfare system, and the history of various oppressed populations as it relates to their relationship with the social welfare system
3. Understand how social workers intervene to solve problems with individuals, families, small groups, communities and organizations and differentiate social work from other human services professions
4. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels (C2a)
5. Apply knowledge of the historical and contemporary dynamics of privilege and oppression in society (C2d)
6. Understand dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression, and learn about practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice (C3b)
7. Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services (C5b)
8. Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice in local and global contexts (C5c)
9. Understand how interpersonal skills such as empathy and active listening can be used to engage diverse clients and communities (C6b)
10. Demonstrate professional demeanor in oral, written, and electronic communication (C1c)

University Core: As part of the University of Portland core curriculum, Social Welfare and Social Justice addresses two *core questions*: (1) How do relationships and communities function? (2) What is the value of difference? The related core goal is to learn to live and contribute in a diverse society and interdependent world by attending to the *core value* of Diversity and Difference. Through this course, students develop understanding of concepts, principles, and implications of diversity and difference and will be able to recognize diversity and difference while also being able to explain and analyze how these differences impact their lives and the lives of others. By the completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Understand how privilege and oppression operate in society and describe how social systems have shaped the experiences of diverse groups, with specific attention to historically disadvantaged groups.
2. Provide examples of how to intervene (at individual, community, or societal levels) to address oppression in its various forms and affirm the dignity and worth of all human beings.

Text(s):

1. Finn, J. L. (2016). *Just practice: A social justice approach to social work*. Oxford University Press.
2. Edin, K. & Schaeffer, L. (2016 [2015]). *\$2.00 a day: Living on almost nothing in America*. Mariner Books.

Both texts will be on 4-hour reserve at the circulation desk at the Clark Library. Additional required readings are posted on Moodle under the corresponding topic/unit.

Course activities:

1. **Exams:** 3 exams will be given. Exams are generally non-cumulative and cover course materials from the text, lectures, class discussion, films, and guest presentations. (Course objectives 1,2,3,5,6,7,9,10)
2. **Reading exercises:** Reading exercises provide students with a chance to engage in structured reflection on course readings and prepare them for class discussion. Specific prompts will be provided. Submit on-line to Moodle before the beginning of class. There are 12 opportunities to submit reading exercises; students are expected to submit ten exercises over the course of the term (students may miss two without penalty). Note that even though there are 12 possible assignments, students may not earn more than 100 points total for these assignments. Full credit will be given for papers that demonstrate clear engagement with the question/prompt and reflect close reading of course material. Assignments that are poorly executed or fail to engage adequately with course material will receive partial credit. No late assignments accepted. (Course objectives 3,4,5,6,8,10)
3. **Analytical book review:** Students will analyze issues relating to poverty/inequality and social welfare systems in the U.S. based on a reading of *\$2.00 a day: Living on almost nothing in America*. Specific instructions will be posted on Moodle. (Course objectives 2,4,5,6,10)
4. **Service activities and written reflection:** Service is a core value of the social work profession. In this class, students will engage in an organized service/action or community-based learning activity and complete a written reflection analyzing their experience using perspectives and content from social work. Students should plan to complete a minimum of **six** hours of service outside of the classroom. Students will be provided with multiple opportunities to learn about and engage with different community-based organizations through the Moreau Center and beyond. ****Please Note:** Not all volunteer activities will fulfill this assignment. For these purposes, service should focus on a population that is marginalized or on an activity designed to increase full participation of all members of society. In general, this will involve leaving the UP campus. For the integrity of the experience as well as your own safety, this service must be connected to the work of a larger organization.** Service is broadly defined in the context of social justice work and may include direct service, policy advocacy, social and political action, or community organizing. You may use a fall or spring break service immersion to fulfill this assignment. (Course objectives 3,4,5,9,10)
5. **Participation:** Participation includes meaningful contributions to class discussion, in-class exercises, and functions outside the classroom. Occasionally ungraded assignments completed in class will be required and will count toward your participation grade for that day. More than 2 unexcused absences or a pattern of tardiness (arriving late) will affect your final grade. Students have the responsibility to provide documentation for excused absences; if no documentation is provided, absences are automatically counted as unexcused. ****Please read carefully the Professional Behavior statement below, which contains specific examples of how participation will be assessed.**** (Course objective 10)

Grading scale

94-100% = A	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C-	67-69% = D+
90-93% = A-	84-86% = B	74-76% = C	64-66% = D
	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-	60-63% = D-
			0-59% = F

Assignment	Points (%)
Exams	175 points
Reading Exercises (10 pts. ea. x 10)	100 points
Analytical book review	100 points
Service experience and reflection	75 points
Participation	50 points
TOTAL	500 points

COURSE AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

Professional behavior:

Throughout the semester, we will have discussions on course content, exercises, and readings, which include the book discussion. Participation allows students to develop their critical thinking skills and articulate, through using communication skills, how theory and employment of knowledge is utilized in generalist practice to conceptualize and intervene with individual and social problems. Since you are all preparing to become professionals in social work and other disciplines, it is expected that your behavior in the classroom will be as professional as it is in the workplace. And, every student is unique and brings contributions that no one else can make. Without each person's participation, the class as a whole loses opportunities to learn from one another. As such, it is expected that each one of us will be prepared for class; be present in class both in mind and body; act respectfully toward colleagues and the instructor; **turn off and put away all phones, computers, iPads, etc.** (unless you're doing something using technology that will contribute to class); and contribute to the learning process and environment by actively participating in class discussions. Should you need to use a computer in class, please ask for permission from the instructor. Showing up prepared is part of professional behavior; therefore, students who have more than one week's worth of unexcused absences and/or who act unprofessionally can expect a lower participation grade. Also, as part of the continuation policy for the SW major, students are expected to maintain good attendance/participation habits (SW majors refer to the Student Handbook).

Mutual respect and creating an anti-oppressive learning environment: In this course, each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute. To this end, we will spend time developing course ground rules to guide expectations for participation and promote an environment of mutual respect.

Clear and timely communication with the instructor: If you have concerns about something that happens in the classroom, please set up a time to meet with me as soon as possible. When I know about your concerns I am better able to respond.

Late work: Students will not be allowed to make up work unless arrangements are made ahead of time or a documented emergency has occurred which prevents students from completing work. In most cases, late work will be penalized (10% for each 24-hour period after due date) or not accepted at all. In cases of documented emergencies, students must contact the instructor as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

Email: Please check your email regularly. This is the way that faculty communicate with students, and these communications may include changes to readings and assignments. Please consult the course syllabus prior to emailing me with questions about readings and assignments. I respond promptly to emails that are professional, courteous, and concise.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

University of Portland's Code of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is openness and honesty in all scholarly endeavors. The University of Portland is a scholarly community dedicated to the discovery, investigation, and dissemination of truth, and to the development of the

whole person. Membership in this community is a privilege, requiring each person to practice academic integrity at its highest level, while expecting and promoting the same in others. Breaches of academic integrity will not be tolerated and will be addressed by the community with all due gravity. Please see the University Bulletin for policy: <http://up.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2016-2017/bulletin/University-Academic-Regulations/I-Code-of-Academic-Integrity>

Assessment Disclosure Statement

Student work products for this course may be used by the University for educational quality assurance purposes.

Accessible Education Services (AES)

Students who experience a disability and require an accommodation to fully participate in this class, contact the Accessible Education Services office, located in Buckley Center, Rm. 163 or call 503-943-8985. If you have an AES Accommodation Plan that includes academic accommodations that apply to this course, make an appointment to meet with your professor to discuss how your accommodation will be implemented. You are responsible for giving sufficient notice to your professor for timely implantation of your accommodation; therefore, it is recommended you speak with your professor in the first week of the semester or as soon as your accommodation plan is activated. Also, meet with the professor if you have an AES Safety Plan and/or wish to discuss emergency medical information or special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated. Requests for alternate location for exams and/or extended exam time should, when possible, be made two weeks in advance of an exam, and must be made at least one week in advance of an exam.

Shepard Academic Resource Center (SARC)

The Learning Resource Center, located on the first floor of Buckley Center within SARC (BC 163), provides peer assistance tutoring for writing, math, speech and presentations, languages, business and economics, sciences and nursing. For Writing. Go to www.up.edu/learningcommons/writing-center. You will need to register as a user the first time you go to the website. If you cannot make any of the posted office hours, you can arrange an appointment by emailing writing@up.edu. For Math. Math assistants are available on a walk-in basis. Please go to www.up.edu/learningcommons/math-resource-center for a current schedule of hours math assistants are available. For Speech and Presentations. Speech assistants from the Communication Studies Department are available by appointment only. Just send a request to: speech@up.edu. For International Languages. Language assistance is available by appointment; go to www.up.edu/learningcommons/language-assistance and send an email to the target language. For Biology and Chemistry. The Chemistry Department offers peer mentoring on a walk-in and appointment basis. The Biology Department offers peer mentoring on a walk-in and appointment basis. For Business and Economics. In collaboration with the Pamplin School of Business, the Learning Commons now offers peer learning support in Economic and Business Law by appointment only. Go to www.up.edu/learningcommons/Economics-and-Business for appointment information. Learning Assistance Counselor. Learning assistance counseling is also available in BC 163. The counselor teaches learning strategies and skills that enable students to become more successful in their studies and future professions. The counselor provides strategies to assist students with reading and comprehension, note-taking and study, time management, test-taking, and learning and remembering. Appointments can be made in the on-line scheduler available to all students in Moodle or during posted drop-in hours.

Mental Health Statement

As a college student, you may sometimes experience problems with your mental health that interfere with academic experiences and negatively impact daily life. If you or someone you know experiences mental health challenges at UP, please contact the University of Portland Health and Counseling Center in Orrico Hall (down the hill from Franz Hall and Mehling Hall) at <http://www.up.edu/healthcenter/> or at 503-943-7134. Their services are free and confidential, and if necessary they can provide same day appointments. Also know that the University of Portland Public Safety Department (503-943-4444) has personnel trained to respond sensitively to mental health emergencies at all hours. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do – for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you.

Non-Violent Community Statement

University of Portland Faculty, Staff, and Students are committed to creating a community free of interpersonal violence, in which all members feel safe and respected. Each of us has a personal responsibility to reject violence or intimidation of any kind. Resources for those experiencing or wishing to report violence can be found on our community against violence website: <http://www.up.edu/cav/>

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Schedule is subject to change. Consult electronic copy linked on Moodle/Office 365 for most up-to-date version. Readings should be completed prior to class. Films and discussion will occur in class unless otherwise specified. (RE = Reading Exercise)

Topic(s)	Dates	Readings & other materials	Assignments
Introduction to social work, social welfare			
Course overview	1/16		
Introductory concepts Social work Social welfare Social justice	1/18	Syllabus Finn, Ch. 1, pp. 1-13 <i>Choose one of the following popular press articles:</i> Aviv, R. (2012). “Netherland.” <i>The New Yorker</i> . **Content: Reference to sexual abuse of a minor. Jarvis, B. (2017). “Will they take me, too?” <i>New York Times Magazine</i> . 17 Dec. 2017. **Content: Description of migration-related trauma.	RE 1
History/Origins Social Work profession Social Welfare systems	1/23	Finn, Ch. 2, pp. 45-66 Carlton-LaNey, I. (1999). “African American Social Work Pioneers’ Response to Need.” <i>Social Work</i> , 44(4), 311-321. Film: <i>The Women of Hull House: Harnessing Statistics for Progressive Reform</i>	RE 2
	1/25	Finn, Ch. 2, pp. 67-92	RE 3
Perspectives on Social Justice			
Defining social justice Distributive justice Oppression/Privilege	1/30	Finn, Ch. 1, pp. 13-32 Reamer, F. (2015) “The challenge of distributive justice.” <i>Social Work Today</i> .	
Just Practice Framework	2/1	Finn, Ch. 1, pp. 32-44	RE 4
Social work values/Ethics	2/6	Finn, Ch. 3, pp. 94-120 U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching	
Values in global perspective Human rights	2/8	Finn, Ch. 3, pp. 120-138	EXAM 1 (50 points)
Generalist Social Work Practice: An overview of theories/methods of planned change			
Systems theory Ecological frameworks Strengths perspective Empowerment	2/13	Finn, Ch. 4, pp. 139-161 Saleeby, D. (2013). “The strengths approach to practice beginnings.” In Saleeby, D., <i>The Strengths Perspective in</i>	RE 5

		<i>Social Work practice</i> , pp. 97-111. Boston: Pearson.	
Critical theory	2/15	Finn, Ch. 4, pp. 168-175	RE 6
Steps in the planned change process			
Engagement	2/20	Finn, Ch. 5, pp. 188-236	
Assessment Teaching-Learning	2/22	Finn Ch. 6, pp. 237-286 Film: <i> Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street (Part 1)</i>	RE 7
Intervention Action-Accompaniment	2/27	Finn, Ch. 7, pp. 287-336	RE 8
	3/1	Film: <i> Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street (Part 2)</i>	
Evaluation/Termination	3/6	Finn, Ch. 8, pp. 337-343	EXAM 2 (50 points)
	3/8		

3/12-3/16: Spring Break

Social work practice: Issues, populations, and contexts			
Poverty & Inequality			
Poverty in the U.S. Social welfare programs Low-wage work	3/20	Edin & Shaefer, pp. 1-63 <i>Recommended:</i> On the Media podcast/transcript, Who deserves to be poor?	
Housing Food insecurity Social costs	3/22	Edin & Shaefer, pp. 65-156 *Segal, E. A., Gerdes, K. E., & Steiner, S. (2016). Poverty and economic disparity. In Segal, Gerdes, & Steiner, Eds., <i>Empowerment series: An introduction to the profession of social work</i> , pp. 69-88. Cengage.	
Programs, policies, and possibilities	3/27	Edin & Shaefer, pp. 157-174 How to fix poverty: Why not just give people money? #NoStringsCash series (National Public Radio)	
Children and families			
Child welfare Child maltreatment Family Violence	3/29	Film: <i>Are we crazy about our kids?</i> *Segal, E. A., Gerdes, K. E., Steiner, S., & Lietz, C. (2016). Child welfare [excerpts]. In Segal, Gerdes, & Steiner, Eds., <i>Empowerment series: An introduction to the profession of social work</i> , pp. 191-212. Cengage.	Analytical Paper
Interventions: Services, policies, programs	4/3	Zayas, L. & Bradlee, M. (2014). Exiling children, creating orphans: When immigration policies hurt children . <i>Social Work</i> , 59(2), 167-175	

		Recommended: Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count/Data Center	
Health and health care systems			
Social determinants Health disparities	4/5	Film: <i>In sickness and in wealth</i> from <i>Unnatural causes: Is inequality making us sick?</i> World Health Organization Social determinants of health (key concepts) & Evidence on social determinants of health	RE 9
4/10		Founders' Day: No class meeting	
Health care systems/policies Medical social work	4/12	*Segal, E. A., Gerdes, K. E., Steiner, S. (2016). Health care services [excerpts]. In Segal, Gerdes, & Steiner, Eds., <i>Empowerment series: An introduction to the profession of social work</i> , pp. 258-281. Cengage.	RE 10
Mental health and substance abuse			
Mental health/illness History	4/17	*Segal, E. A., Gerdes, K. E., Steiner, S., & Stromwall, L.K. (2016). Mental health services [excerpts]. In Segal, Gerdes, & Steiner, Eds., <i>Empowerment series: An introduction to the profession of social work</i> , pp. 287-317. Cengage.	Service reflection
Recovery and treatment	4/19	Invisibilia, The problem with the solution Community-based approaches to mental health in Geel, Belgium (audio podcast) Recommended: Why language matters when it comes to addiction , The Takeaway, Dec. 12, 2017	RE 11
Aging and older adults			
Perspectives on aging Ageism	4/24	Gawande, A. (2014). "Assistance," from <i>Being Mortal</i> .	RE 12
Policies/programs/services for older adults	4/26	*Segal, E. A., Gerdes, K. E., Steiner, S., & Bailey, K. (2016). Gerontology [excerpts]. In Segal, Gerdes, & Steiner, Eds., <i>Empowerment series: An introduction to the profession of social work</i> , pp. 219-235. Cengage.	
EXAM 3 (75 points)	5/3	10:30 AM-12:30 PM	

*Readings are recommended. These excerpts will provide more in-depth information on how social work engages with particular issues, populations, and in different contexts. Some information from lecture will draw directly on these readings.