

University of Texas at El Paso
Social Work Program



SOWK 2310 - INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Instructor: Arturo Acosta

Office: Health Sciences 306

Term: Summer 2009



I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the human service delivery system in the United States with an emphasis on the social work profession: its mission, philosophy, ethics, values, diverse fields, and ethno-cultural perspectives. Observations of social service agencies and guest speakers provide a career orientation to the social work profession. Volunteer experience required.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

Knowledge:

- Identify key historical trends and philosophies that influence the development of social welfare institutions.
- Identify and discuss key historical trends and philosophies that influenced the development of the social work profession.
- Understand basic elements of social welfare policies and laws in the United States
- Know about the economic and social environment of the US Border Region
- Understand diversity in the US Mexico Border Region.
- Appreciate the many cause of violence and social discord in the El Paso Juarez metropolis.
- Become familiar with the NASW Code of Ethics.
- Gain a preliminary understanding of social welfare in a Global Context.
- Understand the principles of universal human rights and distributive justice.

Values:

- Recognize the NASW Code of Ethics as the basis for ethical conduct in social welfare policy formulation
- Develop a commitment to social and economic justice.
- Recognize the dignity and worth of individuals in need.
- Appreciate the diversity of people with respect to nationality, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability, illness and gender.

Skills:

- To demonstrate the ability to analyze current social welfare policies against the backdrop of historical and contemporary social and political forces.

- Develop familiarity with the basic skills of Generalist Social Work Practice and the Problem Solving Method
- Demonstrate an understanding of Biestek's Principles of Casework in application to practice
- Be able to apply the NASW Code of Ethics to social work practice scenarios

III. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare
Charles Zastrow (9th edition) Thomson Press, 2008

Violence and Activism at the Border: Gender, Fear and Everyday Life in Ciudad Juarez.
Kathleen Staudt. University of Texas Press, 2008

Additional handouts/readings will also be provided and films will be shown.

IV. COURSE TOPICS

- 1) Social welfare: Its history and future
- 2) The social work profession and social work values
- 3) Generalist social work practice – Skills and values
- 4) Poverty, public welfare, unemployment, and the working poor
- 5) Emotional & behavioral problems and casework
- 6) Families – family diversity, family problems, and families on the US Mexico Border
- 7) Sexual orientation and services to GLBT individuals
- 8) Substance abuse and interventions
- 9) Crime, juvenile delinquency, and corrections
- 10) Violence, gender and crime on the US Mexico Border
- 11) Educational problems and school social work
- 12) Work-related problems, globalization and social work in the work place
- 13) Racism, ethnocentrism and social & economic justice
- 14) Sexism and gender
- 15) Aging and gerontology
- 16) Health care in the United States and abroad
- 17) Physical, developmental and mental disability
- 18) Globalization, population, and the environment

V. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING

Quiz One	20%
Quiz Two	20%
Quiz Three	20%
Book Report	20%
Drug Court Summary	20%

There will be three quizzes on the required readings (chapters and any additional handouts). Each quiz counts as 20% of the final grade.

Book Report:

Each student will complete a four page single-spaced summary and analysis of the 2nd Textbook *Violence and Activism on the Border: Gender Fear & Everyday Life in Ciudad Juarez*.

Community Assignment –El Paso Drug Court

Each student will attend one session at the El Paso Drug Court held downtown in the County Courthouse on the 9th floor at 9am or 6pm at the 243rd Court. Students will observe the court for the entire session – usually 2 hours – and write a two page single spaced summary of what they saw and what they learned. This writing assignment counts for 25% of the final grade.

Extra credit Assignment: Student whose grade in on the margin of an A,B,C or D can improve their prospects for the higher grade by attending dinner at the Salvation Army on Shelter Drive. Students are expected to mingle with people who are eating a free modest dinner at the shelter, engage them in conversation and to write up in a report what they observed and what they learned by meeting very poor people and in some cases, homeless people.