INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL WORK
Thurs. 1:20-3:15, Rm.114 Social Work

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I. & II. Course Description and Overview
This course addresses international aspects of social work in the United States and in a global context. The course examines how human well-being is increasingly affected by global phenomena such as globalization, migration, refugees and displaced persons, environmental degradation, climate change and natural disaster, war and civil strife, terrorism and insecurity. The course will look at the types of groups or organizations doing humanitarian work and social development around the world, as well as working with international populations in the United States. The course will discuss the challenges of cross-cultural social work, critically analyze social development, and provide exemplary examples of how social workers, collaborating with others, may remediate problems, influence policies, and promote social well being. Interventions and strategies will emphasize community participation, sustainable development, addressing root causes of problems, solving for pattern, and promoting human rights and social justice.

III. Course Objectives

1. Increase student’s knowledge and understanding of cross national effects of globalization in the U.S. and the world.

2. Increase student’s awareness and knowledge of how gender, social class, race/ethnicity/north-south status, sexual orientation, disability, and other social categories influence privilege, resource access, income, employment, and mobility and how social work may address and alleviate these barriers.

3. Increase student’s cultural competency to work in the international context, promoting cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding, respect, and appreciation.

4. Examine the effects on well-being of U.S. and other nations’ policies, particularly those related to foreign aid, human rights, economic trade, social development, and immigration.

5. Increase student’s knowledge and understanding of issues of environmental justice and how global environmental degradation and climate change impact the health and well-being of various populations.
6. Examine the humanitarian impact of natural disasters, complex emergencies, war and civil strife.

7. Increase student’s knowledge of organizations and entities involved in international social work including international organizations, governmental, faith-based and other non-governmental organizations, and social entrepreneurs.

8. Expose students to best practices in sustainable social development and humanitarian response and the need for cross discipline and creative responses to social needs and problems.

9. Help students assess their own suitability for international work and to increase awareness of opportunities to engage in international social work.

IV. Instructional Methods
This class will utilize a variety of adult learning instructional methods and activities. These will include lectures, guest speakers, videos, internet podcasts, video-conferencing, written assignments, readings, related campus activities, student presentations, and small group collaborative learning.

Course Expectations
Students are expected to:
- Attend class and actively participate in discussion or classroom activities. You are allowed one unexcused absence. Absence of two or more classes may result in a demotion in your grade. Students who miss more than 4 classes (unless due to serious illness) will not pass.
- Complete course readings and assignments
- Be respectful of opinions, culture, and values of other students

The instructor is expected to:
- Be available to students to answer questions and to hear concerns
- Create a comfortable and open atmosphere conducive to learning
- Assure that course objectives are being met
- Assure that the class is accessible to all students

V. Course Content (see Course Outline)

VI. Reading Materials and Other Resources
The course readings are available at Learn @ UW. The readings are extensive as I tried to integrate thinking and knowledge from many sources, disciplines, and regions of the world. Some of the readings are required for class, others are resources for you to use in completing assignments or for personal interest. A few additional readings may be added during the course at Learn@UW course site.
In addition to course readings, choose one of these books to read:

Beah, Ishmael, *A Long Way Gone*, memoirs of a boy soldier (Sierra Leone)

Kidder, Tracy, *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, story of Dr. Paul Farmer’s quest to cure AIDS in Haiti, and tackle health disparities around the globe.

Kidder, Tracy, *Strength in What Remains*, a young Tutsi medical student traces his flight from the Rwandan genocide, to his struggle to live in New York city, and his return trips to his native land, “a journey of remembrance and forgiveness.”

Kristof, Nicholas and WuDunn, Sheryl, “Half the Sky”, heart wrenching stories of the oppression of women around the world and courageous actions to bring about change.

Nazario, Sonia, *Enrique’s Journey*, a boy’s difficult and courageous journey from Honduras to re-unite with his mother, an undocumented immigrant in the U.S.

Roy, Arudati, *The God of Small Things*, follows the childhood memories of two fraternal twins in India with themes of forbidden love, cultural loyalty, class relations.

St. John, Warren, *Outcasts United*, change is brought to an American community when a woman starts a youth soccer team to unify refugee children living in Clarkston, Georgia.

Wangari, Maathi, *UnBowed*, a heroic autobiography of the Kenyan grassroots organizer who won the Nobel Prize for her efforts in environmental justice and reforestation.

These are popular books so are available at many mainline bookstores and on-line and through UW Library. Avalon bookstore carries some of these books.

Students will be encouraged to integrate content from the books in class discussion and a discussion question about the book you read will be included on the take-home review.

**Media**

**Required Videos**

*A Closer Walk* – AIDS Documentary (view in class) – Social work Library

*The Lost Boys* – Sudanese orphans who migrate to the U.S. – Social Work Library

The course will also utilize several videos or movies on international issues and social problems as well as the DVD PBS series, *The New Heroes*, about social entrepreneurs addressing social problems around the world.

**Websites**

Students are encouraged to utilize and explore various websites and blogs of interest to international social workers. A list of websites will be posted on Learn@UW and on the Social Work Library website.
VII. Evaluation of Student Learning Outcomes

Assignments

**United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Assignment (20 points)**
Students will be placed in groups of 3-4 students, corresponding to the eight Millennium Development Goals. Students will research and report on 1) rationale for the goal, 2) progress toward the goal, 3) examples of positive strategies related to the goal and 4) barriers to achievement. Each group will then create a poster related to the goal, due Mar. 6, that will be displayed as part of our school’s celebration of International Social Work Day on March 26. We will do brief group reporting on the goals in class on Jan. 30. A primary resource for this assignment is [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)

**Written Assignment (30 points)** Papers should be 8-10 pages, double spaced (12 pt. font). Cite at least 6 references or sources of information and include bibliography. Based on your own preference and other tasks at hand, you can decide when to turn this paper in to me but must be turn in by April 10.

**Written Assignment - Choose one of these topics:**

A. Addressing a country/region specific problem or issue of global significance

1. Choose a country or region and choose a social problem issue in this country or region. (see attached list for suggestions of issues)
2. Complete a country/region profile which includes economic and social indicators and conditions.
3. Briefly discuss the country or region’s recent history and political situation, relevant current events, and US and other foreign nation involvement, if applicable.
4. Discuss the roots or causes of this problem, and the human, economic, and/or social impact of the problem. (Use handout Problem Tree Analysis)
5. Discuss current attitudes and responses to this issue, and give examples of individuals, projects, or programs that are addressing this issue or problem. Describe how interventions support community, sustainability, and human rights? Discuss cultural or value conflicts international workers may experience in engaging with the local community and implications for social work practice. Give examples of successful strategies or interventions, “solving for pattern”, and any “unintended consequences” of tried or current interventions.

Support your discussion with content from lectures, readings, and other course content, videos, speakers, readings, demographic reports, and personal experiences.

OR

B. Working with an immigrant population in the United States.
1. Choose an immigrant or refugee population in our state or local community and a problem or challenge they are facing.
2. Discuss the social history of the population, including conditions in the country of origin and reasons for coming to the US. Give examples of cultural norms, traditions, and beliefs.
3. Discuss a social problem experienced by this population, e.g. teen gangs, in the U.S., the roots of the problem and the impact on peoples well being. (Use handout Problem Tree Analysis).
4. Discuss how current policies impact the issue or problem; available services or supports, as well as unmet needs and services. Discuss cultural or value conflicts the group may experience in engaging with the local community and/or service providers, and implications for social work practice. Give examples of successful strategies or interventions, “solving for pattern”, and any “unintended consequences” of interventions.

Support your paper with content from class, interviews, readings, demographics, reports, newspaper articles, and any personal experiences with this population.

OR

C. Comparison of Social Policy/Services

1. Choose a social issue/problem or a social service policy/program and compare how it is addressed or responded to within the United States and in other industrialized or developing countries. Select 2 other countries.
2. Discuss current approaches or specific policies addressing the issue in each country, including strengths and weaknesses of the policy or program, budget allocations, etc.
3. Discuss values or circumstances (historical, cultural, or political) that influence the policy/program in each country.
4. Discuss similarities and differences in the policies or programs amongst the countries and considerations for trying to replicate a specific country’s policies in the other comparative countries.

Reaction Papers to speakers, panels, or videos (10 points).
This course utilizes a wide variety of speakers, panel discussions, and videos. Write 3 reaction papers (2 pages double space). Suggested topics for discussion may include new facts and knowledge, innovative strategies or practices you learned about, challenges in the field of practice, emotional responses you may have experienced during the presentation, and value conflicts or disagreements you may have with the presentation. Also discuss your own ideas about “entry points” for involvement or utilization of the information or perspectives presented. Reaction papers are due the week following the presentation. You may also write a reaction paper to another campus presentation relative to this class (ask permission of instructor).
Discussion Groups (10 points)
The class will be divided into small reading/discussion groups that will meet during class, five times, to review and discuss an assigned article or topic. Everyone will read/listen to the same article(s) or speech and respond to questions or discussion points designed by the group leader. Everyone will have a turn at being discussion group leader. The leader will post the questions by Sunday before the class that the article or topic will be discussed. The following week, the leader will turn in the questions and write a 2 page summary of the group’s discussion. **Discussion group dates: Feb. 13, Feb. 27, Mar. 13, Apr. 10, Apr. 17.**

Attendance and Class Participation (10 points)
This a relatively small class with activities designed for engagement. Your participation will be evaluated based on engagement with instructor, peers, speakers, small group discussions and projects, and demonstrated interest and enthusiasm. Since this class meets only once a week, attendance is very important. You may have one excused absence. More than 2 absences may result in a grade reduction. Four or more absences will result in failure of the course.

**Take home review (20 points) Due May 9.**
The take home review will consist of definitions and discussion questions.

**Total points: 100**
**Grading will be based on the following system:**

100-94 A, 89-93 AB, 84-88 B, 79-83 BC, 71-78 C, 63-70 D, <63 F

If anyone needs accommodation due to disability, please advise the instructor of your situation at the beginning of the semester (unless the need for accommodation is diagnosed during the semester) and provide verification of accommodation need from the UW McBurney Center.

**Important Dates**
Mar. 6 - MDG Posters Due
**Group Discussions: Feb. 13, Feb. 27, Mar. 13, Apr. 10, Apr. 17**
April 10 – Written assignment due
April 24 - Take home review passed out.
May 9 – Take home review due

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule if necessary.
COURSE CONTENT

This course emphasizes human rights, social justice, and cultural competence so content on these topics is infused throughout the course.

Week 1 – Jan. 23
Overview of Course and Global Context for International Social Work
United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
Activity: In small groups, students design plan of action for reports and posters on MDGs.

Week 2 – Jan. 30
Global Trends of Interest to Social Work
Activity: Brief group reports and discussion of the Millennium Development Goals
Assignments: 1) Research specific MDG and write a paragraph for group reporting.
  2) Subscribe to UW Global Happenings at: https://lists.wisc.edu/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=globalhappenings
Readings: Dugger, Goldstone, Watters, Global Trends 2030 report, Global Agenda for Social Work

Week 3 – Feb. 6
Global Health - HIV/AIDS epidemic
Video: A Closer Walk, a documentary about AIDS in the world and the disparities in health care.
Case study: Uganda
PEPFAR initiative
Readings: Garrett, Harvey, HIV/AIDS, gender, agency and empowerment issues in Africa, McNeil

Week 4 - Feb. 13
Protecting and Nurturing “Orphans” and other Vulnerable Children
Readings: Cluver, Liao, Seabrook, Sbardella, Liao, Niang
Article Discussion Groups: Seabrook

Week 5 – Feb. 20
Refugees/Displaced Persons and Migration
Lecture: People on the Move; definitions, numbers, and emerging issues
Video: The Lost Boys
Readings: Al-Qdah, Bloemraad, DeParle (2 articles), Guterres, Hall, Lacey, Nash, Tibi, Zuniga

Week 6 – Feb. 27
Immigration; Immigration Reform, Working with Immigrants and Advocating for Immigrant’s Rights and Culturally appropriate services
Readings: Bloemraad, Chomsky, DeParle, Fadiman, Jones, Vega, Zuniga
Discussion Groups: Immigration Policy

Week 7 – March 6
Humanitarian Response to Disasters and Complex Emergencies
Guest Speaker: Stephen Webster, Ph.D., Disaster Management Consultant to the United Nations and International Red Cross.
Readings: Bradt, Gunn, Grossrieder, Pittaway, Revkin, Levine, Irfanullah
MDG Posters Due

Week 8 – March 13
Can aid end poverty? and Utilizing Asset Based Community Development
Case study: Strategies being used in Nepal to improve education and health.
Readings: Mathie
“Ted Talks” Discussion Groups: Duflo and Sirolli

March 20 – Spring Break

Week 9 - March 27
Celebrating World Social Work Day: Supporting Women’s Empowerment and economic development through micro-enterprise
Case Study: Ecuador
Activity: Class will view and evaluate MDG posters
Readings: Parveen, Strier

Week 10 - April 3
Human Trafficking – Abroad and in Wisconsin
Speaker TBA
Readings: Kapstein, UN 2012 Report, UNODC website

Week 11 – April 10
Peer Perspectives on International Experiences and Cross Cultural Practice
Panel – Students in class with international experience will discuss where they went, what they did, cultural challenges, fundraising, etc.
Using Skype we will also”beam in a social work student who doing her field work abroad.
Readings: Coleman, Ife, Yunes, Skegg
Article Discussion Groups: Skegg, Ife
Assignment: Major Paper Due

Week 12 - April 17
Environmental Justice
Case study: Ceiba Foundation, Ecuador
Readings: Myers, Norton
Article Discussion Group: Reading TBA
Week 13 - April 24
Social Entrepreneurship as Social Change
Readings: Domminelli, Kristof, Saracostti, website: www.ashoka.org
Take home review passed out (definitions and discussion questions)

Week 14 – May 1
Promoting Gender Equity, Health and Human Rights for Women
Guest Speaker: Representative from Health on Motorbike Project, Kenya
Readings: Appiah, Drolet, Huda, Levison, Merry, Padgett, Steinglass

Week 15 – May 8
Course Summary and Wrap Up
Video: Power of Enterprise, Maria Teresa Leal, Brazil
Assignment: Take home review due