

SOCIAL WORK 8900
Special Studies in Social Welfare
(3 Credit Hours)

SYLLABUS

1.0 Course Description Information

1.1 Catalog Description:

This course allows students to pursue a special selected area or topic within social welfare in order to deepen knowledge and/or skills in that particular area.

1.2 Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission of the School.

1.3 Overview of content and purpose of the course: The special studies course is designed to provide students with opportunities to study social work topics that are not included in the regular curriculum of the School of Social Work and to investigate a specific social work topic in greater depth than is facilitated by the regular curriculum of the School of Social Work.

1.4 For whom the course is intended: Graduate students in social work.

1.5 Unusual circumstances: Graduate students must take this course for 3 credit hours. The course content must meet standards for an advanced level social work course elective; the content cannot be an area or topic taught in depth in regular social work course offerings. Attached application for approval form must be completed and submitted before registration will be permitted.

2.0 Course Justification Information

2.1 Anticipated audience/demand: This course is an elective for graduate social work students.

2.2 Indicate how often this course will be offered and the anticipated enrollment:
The course is offered fall and spring semesters. Enrollment is anticipated to be limited.

2.3 If it is a significant change to an existing course, please explain why it is needed: This course syllabus has been updated to link MSW program objectives to course objectives in accordance with accreditation requirements.

3.0 Objectives

3.1 List of performance objectives stated in learning outcomes:

MSW Program Objectives:

MSW Program Objective #1: To apply critical thinking skills within the historical and contemporary contexts of professional social work practice.

MSW Program Objective #2: Apply and analyze social work values, ethical principles and legal mandates in professional social work practice.

MSW Program Objective #3: Demonstrate cultural competency in professional social work practice.

MSW Program Objective #4: Identify, serve, and advocate for vulnerable client systems and populations at risk.

MSW Program Objective #5: Work effectively in multidisciplinary teams and settings.

MSW Program Objective #6: Apply bio-psycho-social-spiritual-cultural factors to assess human behavior in the social and environmental context.

MSW Program Objective #7: Identify and use formal diagnostic classification systems.

MSW Program Objective #8: Identify, select and apply empirically supported methods for clinical and integrated social work practice.

MSW Program Objective #9: Identify and conduct multidimensional assessments with client systems.

MSW Program Objective #10: Communicate effectively in oral and written forms in professional social work practice.

MSW Program Objective #11: Use effective supervisory, consultative and administrative skills in professional social work practice.

MSW Program Objective #12: Function effectively within agency and community structures to deliver professional social work services.

MSW Program Objective #13: Apply research methods to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, services, policies and programs.

MSW Program Objective #14: Develop, implement, and analyze policies, practices, and administrative structures that promote socially just institutions and communities.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

8900 Course Objective	MSW Program Objective	Assignments
Describe the selected area of social welfare in regard to its relevance to social work professional roles, ethics, etc., e.g., genetic counseling, international adoptions, etc.	1, 2	Consult with 8900 Coordinator, other resource persons/tutors Prepare and submit 8900 application Discussion/tutorial sessions
Explain the major knowledge base and theoretical foundations for the topic and their empirical standing.	6, 13	Literature review Discussion/tutorial sessions Written report
Examine the major social work practice skills that apply to the topic.	8	Literature review Carry out specified proposed field activities Discussion/tutorial sessions Written report
Discuss the relevance of the topic with regard to services and policies that impact diverse, aging, vulnerable, and under-served populations.	3, 4, 11, 14	Literature review Carry out specified proposed field activities Discussion/tutorial sessions Written report
Evaluate the published literature, especially research reports on the subject matter under study.	13	Literature review Carry out specified proposed field activities Discussion/tutorial sessions Written report

4.0 Content and Organization Information

4.1 List of topics to be covered in chronological sequence:

- 4.1.1 Brief review of proposed topic, format, content, and learning tasks for special study proposal
- 4.1.2 Review of literature search and study materials/resources
- 4.1.3 Review of report writing and products required
- 4.1.4 Discussion of readings

5.0 Teaching Methodology Information

5.1 Methods to be used: Tutorial study: Discussion

5.2 Student role in the course: The student must take an active role in seeking out literature; reading and analyzing the material; discussing the material with the instructor; and writing a final report and/or/giving an equivalent presentation.

5.3 Contact hours: 45 hours during the semester

6.0 Evaluation Information

6.1 Types of student projects that will be the basis for evaluating student performance:

The extent of the study, in terms of breadth and depth will be based on the following: For 3 credit hours: Bibliography and quality discussion of readings and observations; a term paper of 12-15 pages or project report that adequately demonstrates the student's knowledge about the subject matter and full consideration of its implications for social work practice.

Project:

- Bibliography of literature review by the student.
- A term paper, project report, or equivalent presentation or project report

6.2 Basis for determining the final grade:

The student will be graded upon the following:

Planning/carrying out study	10%
Bibliography	10%
Discussion	20%
Formal term paper/ project report	60%

Total	100%
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6.3 Grading Type

A+ = 98% and above	B+ = 88-90.9	C+ = 78-80.9	D+ = 68-70.9
A = 94-97.9	B = 84-87.9	C = 74-77.9	D = 64-67.9
A- = 91-93.9	B- = 81-83.9	C- = 71-73.9	D- = 61-63.9
			F = 60.9 and below

7.0 Resource Material

7.1 Textbooks or other required readings used in course

Appropriate readings will be selected by the student with assistance from the instructor and other resource persons.

8.0 Other Information

8.1 Plagiarism

The Executive Body of the School of Social Work has passed a policy alerting students to, and emphasizing the importance of, the issue of plagiarism. The UNO policy on plagiarism is as follows:

"The prevention of plagiarism and the imposition of sanctions upon those who resort to plagiarism is necessary in any university that espouses the ideals embodied in the concept of academic freedom. Plagiarism is the appropriation of the work (be it ideas or words)

of another without crediting the source. Such a practice is particularly reprehensible in a community dedicated to the pursuit and advancement of knowledge."

The UNO policy on Academic Integrity reads as follows:

"The maintenance of academic honesty and integrity is a vital concern of the University community. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty shall be subject to both academic and disciplinary sanctions. Academic dishonesty definitions, procedures and sanctions are available on the current University of Nebraska at Omaha web-site.

8.2 Procedure Regarding Student Grades/Papers

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 requires that student grades not be published in a personally identifiable fashion. Therefore, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, students must provide a self-addressed adequately stamped envelope for papers, projects, or exams that were not returned to them in class. Any remaining papers, projects or exams will be kept by the instructor for 3 months after the semester ends, at which time they will be shredded.

8.3 Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations are provided for students with certified disabilities. For more information contact Services for Students with Disabilities, EAB 117 or 554.2872, TTY 554.3799.

8.4 Additional Assistance

Students who have concerns about their competence in writing papers or who have extreme anxiety in taking tests or giving class presentations should address these concerns by seeking professional counseling through the University Division Counseling Services.

EXPERIENTIAL

Approximate number of hours: _____

Description:

FIELD RESEARCH

Approximate number of hours: _____

Description:

OTHER SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Approximate number of hours: _____

Description:

PREPARATION OF FINAL PRODUCT

Approximate number of hours: _____

Description:

MONITORING PLANS

METHOD OF EVALUATION

SIGNATURES

I AGREE TO BEGIN THIS PROJECT

ON _____
Date

AND TO COMPLETE THIS PROJECT

BY _____
Date

Student Signature Date

Special Study Project Supervisor's Signature/Primary Tutor

Special Studies Coordinator's Signature

***** RETURN FORM TO MARY LEE TISDALE, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK *****

cc: Student File
 Office Special Studies File and Coordinator

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR SOWK 8900

REGISTER WITH THE REGISTRAR FOR THIS COURSE IN ADDITION TO COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM.*

1. OBJECTIVES

The special studies course is designed to provide students with opportunities to:

- 1.1 Study social work topics that are not included in the regular curriculum of the School of Social Work.
- 1.2 Penetrate a specific social work topic in greater depth than is facilitated by the regular curriculum of the School of Social Work.

2. EXPECTATIONS

2.1 TIME

Students who engage in Special Studies should expect to put in 45 hours of work, including 3 hours of instructor conference time, for each credit hour awarded. This graduate course is worth 3 credit hours.

2.2 REPORTS

Special Study projects will be culminated by a comprehensive project report and any other evaluative mechanism agreed upon by student and project supervisor. This will usually be in the form of a written paper and oral defense of the paper to the cooperating instructor. The usual School academic standards regarding papers apply to Special Study project reports. If approved, students may consider alternative forms such as an annotated bibliography and a media or oral presentation to a class or a colloquium. The form and scope of the report must be outlined in the study plan.

2.3 COMPLETION DATE

It is expected that projects will be completed by the conclusion of the semester or session for which registered. Usual School and University policies regarding Incompletes apply to Special Studies projects.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1 PERMISSION

Prior to meeting with the Coordinator of Special Studies, the student should:

- Determine a general study topic;
- Obtain the approval of her/his adviser;
- Obtain the approval of a qualified instructor/tutor. (Instructors may accept no more than one student per semester without special permission of the Director.)

The Special Studies Coordinator may advise students regarding the appropriateness of initial study topic ideas and the selection of a cooperating instructor.

- 3.2 The attached Application for Special Studies Approval Form contains the study plan and must be filled out and approved PRIOR TO REGISTRATION.
- 3.3 Unresolved disagreement between a student and the Coordinator of Special Studies about the appropriateness of a proposed study plan must be referred to the Director and if necessary to the Program Committee.

4. **GRADING**

- 4.1 The basis for the grade is specified in the course syllabus, and part of this is the student's planning and participation in carrying out the study plan.
- 4.2 The cooperating instructor/tutor will recommend a grade to the Coordinator of Special Studies.
- 4.3 The Coordinator of Special Studies has responsibility for assigning the grade. If the recommended grade is not accepted, the Coordinator will confer with the cooperating instructor and student before assigning the final grade. Usual grade appeal policies apply to this course.

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