

**SOCIAL WORK 4890-801**  
Special Studies in Social Welfare: Nicaragua Trip  
(3 Credit Hours)

1.0 COURSE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 Overview of content and purpose of the course: This course examines the history and challenges of social work and social welfare in a Third World country. This course is both experiential and academic. Written approval is required prior to enrollment.
- 1.2 For whom course is intended: Undergraduate students in social work
- 1.3 Prerequisites: Permission of the School
- 1.4 Special circumstances: Students will travel to Nicaragua and live in families during the 10 days they are in-country. Attached policies and procedures and approval form must be followed. Students must sign a waiver of claims form.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Understanding the history of Nicaragua's relationship to the US and how that history affects the economy of the country. Particular attention will be placed on understanding the roots of poverty and how the health care and the social service systems are organized.
- 2.2 Understanding the stress experienced by being in a foreign country by experiencing helplessness and feelings of being different.
- 2.3 Familiarity with the stress caused by being a foreigner in a strange environment (hot dusty weather, inconsistent electricity and water supply, lack of hot water, different food, and an inability to communicate).
- 2.4 Familiarity with the dynamics of family life in a Latino culture.
- 2.5 Understanding of the policies and treatment of handicapped children who are cared for in an institutional setting.
- 2.6 Familiarity with Nicaragua's public health strategies and the type of services offered in out-patient clinics.
- 2.7 Awareness of the art and culture of Nicaragua and its natural beauty.
- 2.8 Familiarity with the life styles lived by university students in Nicaragua
- 2.9 Substantial skill in doing an in-depth study of a selected area of social work in Nicaragua
- 2.10 Familiarity with published literature, especially research reports on the subject under study.
- 2.11 Substantial skill in integrating self-knowledge obtained by living in stressful conditions and reflecting on the experiences.

### 3.0 CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

- 3.1 Students will meet for four 3-hour sessions to prepare for the trip. Both books will be discussed in these sessions and the book reports will be finished before the trip.
- 3.2 Rich's stuff goes here.....
- 3.3 During the 10 day trip, students will journal daily about what they saw and how it affected them.
- 3.4 Each night during the trip, after dinner, the group will meet for 45 minutes to discuss what was done that day and to take part in learning activities planned by the instructor (s).
- 3.5 Students will get to know students at our sister university, UNAN-Leon.
- 3.6 Students will experience student life in Nicaragua by attending English and social work classes and by visiting museums, churches, and discos with Nicaraguan students who speak some English.
- 3.7 Students will experience the natural beauty of Nicaragua's lakes, rivers, volcanoes, and beaches.
- 3.8 A 10-12 page paper will cover a topic that will be researched while in Nicaragua and also researched from journal articles. It will be written about a topic of interest to the student and will be due before August 15<sup>th</sup>.

### 4.0 TEACHING METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Classroom discussions before the trip
- 4.2 Reading two assigned book and writing a 5-6 page book report on each
- 4.3 Travel to Nicaragua for 10 days to observe and discuss the history, culture, family life, health system, and social service system.
- 4.4 Experiential learning while in Nicaragua, coupled with instructor led activities to increase self-knowledge through reflection.
- 4.5 Students will choose a topic, seek out literature on how it is dealt with in Nicaragua, and read and analyze the material. The student will write a 10-12 page paper demonstrating knowledge of the subject matter and implications for social workers in Nicaragua.

### 5.0 EVALUATION

- 5.1 Assignments: There will be two books to read. Each student will write a 5-6 page book report on each book.

Each student will write a grammatically correct and APA referenced paper on a topic of interest about Nicaragua (10-12 pages).

Each student will journal daily and pass the journal in to show that it has been done (confidential material can be blacked out).

Students will be assigned to families and will attempt to establish a relationship with these Nicaraguans.

Students will attend all functions planned by the instructor (unless ill).

Students' behavior in country will be graded on their

- a. Openness to experiencing a new culture and trying new things
- b. Ability to reflect on their experiences during the daily sharing time
- c. Respect they show for Nicaraguan hosts (including being clean and tidy while in a Nicaraguan home)
- d. Willingness to cooperate with one another and taking other students' needs and wants into account
- e. Being on time for activities
- f. Being able to tolerate stress without whining

5.2 The final grade will be calculated as follows:

Read two books and write a book report on each.....	20%
Attendance at the 4 pre-trip discussions .....	20%
Attendance at the daily reflection sessions.....	10%
Cooperative and respectful behavior in Nicaragua .....	20%
Daily journal .....	10%
Final paper .....	20%

5.3 Grading Scale

A+ .....	96-100
A .....	93-95
A- .....	90-92
B+ .....	87-89
B .....	83-86
B- .....	80-82
C+ .....	77-79
C .....	73-76
C- .....	70-72
D+ .....	67-69
D .....	63-66
F .....	62 or below

## 6.0 RESOURCE MATERIAL

- 6.1 Textbooks and other required readings: The following or similar updated texts

LaFeber, Walter (199?). *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*. Second Edition. ????, NY

Donahue, John M. (1986). *The Nicaraguan Revolution in Health: From Somoza to the Sandinistas*. Bergin & Garvey Publishers, NY

- 6.2 The instructor will make all arrangements for transportation, housing, and food during the 10 day trip.

- 6.3 Other readings:

Handouts

- 6.4 Journal Resources:

Rich....Any suggestions??????

- 6.5 Bibliography::

Rich????????

## 7.0 OTHER

- 7.1 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 are 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 printed in the University of Nebraska at Omaha student handbook.

## 7.2 Procedure regarding student grades/papers

Student grades in this course will not be published in a “personally identifiable” fashion. However, final papers will be made available at the School of Social Work in an open file under the instructor’s name for you to pick up after the course is completed. If final papers have not been claimed as of two months after the semester ends, the School will no longer be responsible for keeping them.

If this procedure is not acceptable you must write a letter to me stating that you do not waive your right for privacy and that you want your papers mailed to you. You must also provide a self-addressed adequately stamped envelope for this purpose. If you do not provide me with a self addressed envelope to mail your paper to you, I will assume that you are waiving your rights under the “Privacy Rights of Parents and Students Act of 1974” and will put your paper in the open file for pick up.

## 7.3 Statement regarding students with disabilities

Students who have a documented disability and need academic accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss their special needs. Any special medical needs must be handled before we leave for Nicaragua.

## 7.4 Health issues

Students must receive Hepatitis A immunizations before leaving for Nicaragua and are encouraged to take chloroquine while in Nicaragua and for a month after returning to prevent malaria. All immunizations must be up to date (tetanus, measles, polio, diphtheria, etc.). Hepatitis B immunization is not required, since you will not be providing medical care or be in contact with blood borne pathogens.

Students are strongly encouraged to obtain an International Student Identity Card from International Studies at UNMC (Annex 4, 38<sup>th</sup> & Leavenworth). This card provides insurance for emergency evacuation, lost passport, medical care, and a number of other disasters while traveling abroad. In case of accident or serious illness, you need to come home.