Course Syllabus

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SOSC 3503

Advanced Social Problems

Course Description

An analysis of the major social problems of contemporary society resulting from technological and social change, population pressure and resources, urbanization, poverty, and minority groups. Special reference is given to conflicts regarding social values and goals, and social disorganization as related to the family, economic, religious, and other institutional relationships.

The course includes subjects that some may regard as sensitive. Students seeking careers in the community services, including counseling, criminal justice, early childhood development, and human services will need to be able to deal with these issues.

This course is a fully online course: it requires independent study, online quizzes and discussion, and one on-one telephone conferences with the instructor each week during class. The syllabus defines weekly sessions that highlight general information on specific social problems that all students are expected to know and include issues related to socio-economic status, public health, women and family, and cumulative social distress. We draw on many online resources available to Southern Wesleyan students to locate books and articles helping us understand these issues.

"If it is true that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, isn't it also true a society is only as healthy as its sickest citizen and only as wealthy as its most deprived?" (Angelou, 1997, 108) Angelou, M. (1997). Even the stars look lonesome. New York: Random House.

Course Prerequisites

An introductory course in social science.

Required Materials

There is no required commercial text. Course materials are taken from online sources, or are drawn from materials used in previous courses. Course materials are provided in the Session Overviews in Canvas.

Supplemental Reading

In addition to the required readings, there are supplemental materials included in the course. These readings are intended to round out the information presented in the required readings and provide an additional reference resource. Content from supplemental readings will not be including in the reading quizzes.

Accreditation

Southern Wesleyan University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate, baccalaureate, and masters degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Southern Wesleyan University.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will understand that

- The human services professional must have an understanding of the structure and dynamics of organizations, communities, and society as well as the nature of individuals and groups.
- The demand for services and the funding of educational programs has been closely related to identifiable human conditions including, among others: aging, delinquency, crime, poverty, mental illness, physical illness, chemical dependency, and developmental disabilities. The needs that arise in these conditions provide the focus for the human services profession.
- Human services professionals function as change agents and must therefore attain and develop a core of intervention knowledge, theory, and skills.
- There are values and ethics intrinsic to the human services profession that have been agreed to as governing principles of professional practice.

Students will be able to :

CLO#1	Explain the differences between individual and social problems.
CLO#2	Summarize debates over the causes of specific social problems.
CLO#3	Describe trends and demographics of specific social problems.
CLO#4	Apply & utilize library and web-based resources discussing social problems
CLO#5	Examine and write introductory policy papers that address specific social problems

Course Learning Assignments and Assessments

Grading

Weekly on-line quizzes (six-6 @ 5% each)	30%
Discussion Thoughts (6 discussions @ 3% each)	18%
Topic & Reference List	6%
Progress summary	4%
Final Policy Proposal Paper	25%
Oral Presentation & power point	10%
Attendance and Participation	7%
Total	**100%**

Weekly On-line Quizzes – 30%

In each session of the course, there will be an online quiz on the articles and chapters that you are expected to read for each session. The online quiz questions may be comprised of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and matching questions. If a student has read all of the required material, he/she should do well on the quizzes. Quizzes are open book, which means that students may refer to material to complete a quiz. All quizzes will be available and must be completed in Canvas. Quizzes not submitted in this manner will not receive credit. In order to receive credit, quizzes must be completed by designated due dates/times.

Discussion Thoughts – 18%

The discussion thoughts are an opportunity for students to share candidly about the discussion topic listed. Discussions are also an integral part of this course where much of our class integration will take place. Essentially, this is where we will have our class discussions. In a face-to-face course, if someone asked a question, everyone would benefit from hearing the response. Similarly, in the Discussions, our responses to each other will prove useful to all of us. Each student is required to submit an initial posting, and at least 2 responses. Please note you are welcome to post and respond to as many peers as you like, but you are only required to respond to at least 2 peers for credit. As a part of all Discussions, participants are expected to post an original response as well as a response to at least two other contributors. Please avoid responses like, "I agree," or "This was really good." Instead, push yourself to engage in a meaningful dialogue with your peers, providing well-thought-out points instead of "shoot from the hip" answers. For example, if you agree, explain why. As a resource, I have provided a grading rubric as well as guidelines for posting in the discussion rubric.

Keep in mind that the perceptions of other members of the class toward you will be almost entirely driven by your postings; consider the perception that you want others to have of you. All your online communications should be composed with fairness, honesty and tact. Spelling and grammar are very important in an online course

Topic & References List – 6%

During Session 2, each student will issue an individual policy proposal topic from the social problems topics list in Canvas. You are free to select a topic that is not on the list, however it must be approved by the professor first so simply send a Canvas email for approval. This topic and reference list is for your final policy proposal paper (which is due in Session 7). Please submit an MS Word document containing your topic, a brief (i.e., approximately ½ page – no more than 1 page, Times New Roman, 12-point font

size, double spaced) description of the topic, any central points, and a brief list of at least 4 references/sources, written in APA style. The references must be from professional literature (i.e., from the library databases) and MUST be used and cited in your final policy proposal paper…. therefore, the reference list that you submit will be included in your final policy proposal paper list of references. This topic, brief description and 4 references submission is due on the second session/week of the course (i.e., Saturday, at 11:59pm).

Progress summary – 4%

During Session 5, each student will talk briefly with the instructor to discuss progress on the policy proposal. As part of the contact meeting, students should prepare a brief (i.e., approximately ½ page – Times New Roman, 12-point font size, double spaced) description of substantive work on their topic. The description does not need to be a separate, written summary of progress on the policy proposal. Rather, a copy of a rough draft of the proposal, an outline of the paper, a list of the major points/policy proposals of the paper ("cut and pasted" from the original document) would all serve as summaries of the student's progress. The intent of this summary is not to have the student do additional work summarizing their progress, but to show the instructor what the student has accomplished to this point. You will be required to email your instructor to schedule a phone contact time to discuss your progress on your policy proposal.

Final written policy proposal – 25%

For the final policy proposal, you are to select a social problem, conduct a review of a social problem (including references to the literature, and to current policies in the field), and the development of 2-6 recommendations for continuance of, or changes in policy with regard to the social issue. The focus of the paper may be at an agency level (e.g., local agency policies & procedures, such as a non-profit food bank), a local (e.g., municipal or county) level, a state level, a national level, or at an international level. Be sure to consider the audience for your proposal in your writing. The focus and topic of the paper will be discussed with, and approved by the instructor.

The final proposal should be at least 8-10 pages in length (approximately 2400 – 3000 words), not including title page, abstract or executive summary, tables, graphs, references, and appendices. The proposal should be word processed, double-spaced, front side only, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and written in literate English, APA style.

The structure for the proposal should follow (you may use subheadings, if you wish):

Title page

Abstract/Executive summary

Main body of the paper (8-10 pages)

Background to the proposal (e.g., What is the current situation? What is the current policy? Why is it being conducted this way?)

Analysis (Why is the policy not working? Why is it necessary to find an alternative?)

Policy options (Discuss a few alternatives and their options)

Recommendations (Provide 2-6 recommendations, along with suggestions, and suggestions for implementing the recommendations)

Conclusion (summarize your analysis and recommendations)

References

Appendices (relevant tables, figures, maps, graphics)

For the policy proposal, you are expected to use at least 8 sources relevant to the topic of the paper; these sources may be professional literature, material from relevant websites (e.g., governmental websites, NPO websites, focused websites (that address a particular social problem), or other material, as long as the material is relevant to the topic. Be sure to include the four (4) you listed from your assignment "Topic & References List"

A rubric for marking the final paper may be found in Canvas.

Final Oral & PowerPoint Presentation – 10%

Students are expected to give a final oral presentation of their proposal. The presentation will be in the form of a recording that will be submitted to the instructor and for all students to see on the discussion board. Keep in mind that your goal in the presentation is to convince your colleagues of the merits of your proposal.   The presentation should be approximately 10-12 minutes long. Please submit a PowerPoint that also explains your presentation with a minimum of 5 slides not including the title slide and reference slide. A grading rubric is included in the discussion submission area.

Attendance and Participation – 7%

Seven percent of your overall grade will be assigned for attendance and participation. Each unexcused absence will result in a reduction of 1 percent to your grade. Limited or marginal participation in discussions early will result in a half-percent reduction in grade. Completion of the quizzes, active and relevant participation in discussions, email and meeting dialog with professor, and assignment submissions are components of "attendance and participation".

GRADE EQUIVALENCY TABLE

All grades are reported in a system of eleven letter grades designated as "A" through "F" with appropriate plus and minus additions reflecting the following scheme:

Percentage Value	Letter Grade	Numeric Value for GPA
95-100	A	4.0
90-94	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.4
84-86	B	3.0
80-83	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.4
74-76	C	2.0
70-73	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.4
60-66	D	1.0

<60	F	0.0

Work Expectations

SOSC 3503 is 3 credit course. In accordance with SACS accreditation standards, a 3 credit hour course reflects 120 semester hours of work over the duration of the course. The chart below contains a proposed breakdown of work expectations for this course.

Activity	Number of activities	Time per activity	Semester hours
Accessing and studying course material weekly (i.e. syllabus, syllabus quiz, contact info. - for wk. 1)	4 (i.e., 1 set of course materials each week) Except week 1 (6) & 7	10.0 hours/week	60.0 hours
Weekly readings/article assignments	Average 3-5 peer reviewed articles weekly- except wk. 7	5.0 hours/week	30.0 hours
Course discussion participation	6 (generally, one discussion each week)	1.0 hours/discussion	6.0 hours
Weekly Online Quizzes on readings	6 (generally one quiz online weekly)	1.0 hours	6.0 hours
Final Written Policy Proposal Project	1	10.0 hours	10.0 hours
Policy Proposal PowerPoint	1	1.0 hour	1.0 hours
Video presentation development of Policy Proposal _____	1	1.0 hours/presentation	2.0 hours

Ancillary Assignments			
	_____	_____	_____
	2	2.5 hours each	5.0 hours
Total			**120.0 hours**

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is a key to success in the course. Please refer to the Attendance Policy outlined in the Catalog for full details of the SWU policy on attendance.

Online attendance is based on completion of at least one designated assignment by the due date/time posted within the course site for each session. Online activities may include lecture, assignments, readings, discussion forums, and assessments (e.g. quizzes, tests).

Communication

The course site (Canvas) and SWU email are the primary tools for class communication, assignments, handouts, etc. All participants must have access to the course site and SWU e-mail and are expected to access them on a daily basis.

While it is important to maintain good communication with the instructor, Internet connectivity problems and home computer problems are not considered adequate excuses for missing assigned class work.

Technology Requirements

To be successful in this course, all participants are expected to ensure their technology equipment meets the **recommendations   (http://www.swu.edu/about-swu/technology-services/computer-recommendations/)** provided by SWU's Technology Services.

Students requiring technical support related to their courses or other SWU-provided technologies should send an e-mail to helpdesk@swu.edu or call 864.644.5050.

Academic Honesty

Honesty in all matters - including honesty in academic endeavors - is a valued principle at Southern Wesleyan University. It is the expectation of the university that all those joining the academic program

will act with integrity in all matters.

No forms of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Students are encouraged to help each other maintain these high standards. All academic dishonesty should be reported to the faculty directly. Faculty, upon evidence of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or misuse of another's intellectual property), either by voluntary confession, report of another student, or on the basis of work submitted, must follow he procedure outlined in the Catalog (under *Academic Honesty*). This includes but is not limited to a zero for the work involved, 10% course grade reduction, or a failing grade for the course. Unresolved cases may be appealed using the Appeal Process outlined in the Catalog (under *Academic Honesty*).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Southern Wesleyan University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Accommodations can be made for students with disabilities, as outlined in "Services for Students with Disabilities," found in mySWU's Student tab under The Learning Center. Any student desiring accommodations must send the request and all documentation to the Academic Coordinator at the learning site where he/she attends classes. The Academic Coordinator will forward the materials to the Student Success Coordinator for Southern Wesleyan University.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
	📝 **1.2 Session 1 Quiz (https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156348)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jan 17, 2021	📝 **1.3 Discussion: Session 1 - Poverty (https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156357)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **2.2 Session 2 Quiz (https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156347)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jan 24, 2021	📝 **2.3 Discussion: Session 2 - Homelessness (https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156356)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **2.4 Session 2 Assignment: Topic and Resources (https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156363)**	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Sun Jan 31, 2021	📝 **3.2 Session 3 Quiz** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156350)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **3.3 Discussion: Session 3 Mental Health** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156355)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 7, 2021	📝 **4.2 Session 4 Quiz** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156352)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **4.3 Discussion: Session 4 - Child Maltreatment** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156354)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 14, 2021	📝 **5.2 Session 5 Quiz** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156349)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **5.3 Discussion: Session 5 - Women's Issues** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156353)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **5.4 Progress Summary** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156362)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 21, 2021	📝 **6.1 Session 6 Quiz** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156351)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **6.2 Discussion: Session 6 - Human Trafficking** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156358)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Feb 28, 2021	📝 **7.1 Oral Presentation** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156359)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **7.2 Final Policy Proposal** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156361)**	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **Attendance and Participation** **(https://swu.instructure.com/courses/3012630/assignments/30156360)**	