

AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM

SOCW 511: INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

2 Units

Fall 2011

Professor: Adria E. Navarro, PhD, LCSW

Class Day/Time: Thursday, 12:20-2:20 p.m.

Class Location: WYNN Academic Center, Room 201

Office Location: WYNN 208A

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He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. -Micah 6:8

“The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain...until it is secured for all of us and incorporated in our common life.” -Jane Addams

University Mission Statement: Azusa Pacific University is an evangelical Christian community of disciples and scholars who seek to advance the work of God in the world through academic excellence in liberal arts and professional programs in higher education that encourage students to develop a Christian perspective of truth and life.

MSW Mission Statement: The MSW Program in the Department of Social Work at Azusa Pacific University seeks to develop competent advanced social work practitioners who can integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of social work to advance social justice and provide services to assist individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Grounded in the profession’s Code of Ethics and sensitivity to diversity, the MSW Program is committed to excellence in our teaching and leadership, and the strengthening of communities in local, national, and international contexts.

Course Description: Content will focus on the history, identity, values, ethics, and knowledge base of the social work profession. Students will explore how their own backgrounds and beliefs are likely to influence professional activities; and examine specifically the relationship of faith perspectives to social welfare policy and practice. *Prerequisite: Admission to MSW Program*

Student Learning Outcomes: *(Each measurable learning outcome is followed by assignment or activity used to assess learning outcome.)*

Upon successful completion of the course, class participants will be able to:

1. Describe the history of the social work profession and identify historical influences on contemporary social welfare structures, issues, and professional commitments to social and economic justice. (foundational objective 1) *Activities/assignment: trends presentation, integrative final paper*
2. Demonstrate understanding of social work values, ethics, and principles of ethical decision making processes, and abilities to promote the values of the profession and integrate them in practice. (foundational objective 2) *Activities/assignment: text exercises, faith integration paper, interview assignment, integrative final paper*
3. Demonstrate critical thinking skills relevant to the relationships between social work, religious beliefs, and religious institutions. (foundational objective 4) *Activities/assignment: text exercises, faith integration paper, integrative final paper*
4. Articulate critical analysis of the development of professional social work activities in micro- and macro-level contexts. (foundational objective 4) *Activities/assignment: text exercises, interview assignment, trends presentation, integrative final paper*
5. Demonstrate understanding, affirmation, and respect for people from diverse backgrounds, the relevance of diversity to resource access, and ways practitioner's beliefs and backgrounds may influence social work with at-risk populations. (foundational objective 5) *Activities/assignment: text exercises, faith integration paper, interview assignment, trends presentation, integrative final paper*

Required Textbooks and Study Resources:

Berg-Weger, M. (2010). *Social work and social welfare* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Palmer, P. (2000). *Let your life speak*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher.

National Association of Social Workers. (2008). *Code of ethics*. Washington, DC: NASW.
Available at: <http://www.naswdc.org>

Course Requirements:

Attendance: Class attendance is required and will be in keeping with MSW attendance policy. Class attendance is important to the educational process. Participation and interactive learning are essential to the development of the core competencies in social work. Late arrival undermines the teaching-learning process and disrupts the class. The following standards are intended to clarify expectations and policies regarding absence and late arrival.

1. A sign-in sheet will be distributed to record attendance at the beginning of each class session.
2. Students who arrive late must contact the professor at the end of the class to sign-in; they will be tardy.

3. Two tardy arrivals are considered equivalent to one absence.
4. A maximum of two absences are allowed each semester for illness. Absences will only be excused with notes from the health center or a physician documenting the time at which medical services were sought. Field emergencies will not justify missed classes.
5. After two unexcused absences, 10 points will be deducted from the student's final point total. More than two unexcused absences could result in dismissal from the course.

Professional Behavior in Classroom: Students in the Department of Social Work are preparing to become Master's level social work professionals. In order to utilize class time well for student development, students are expected to conduct themselves as professionals in the education and training process. Students must come to class on time, fully prepared, and participate actively in discussions and exercises. Given our class size, private conversations can be distracting.

Use of cell phones or other electronic devices are not allowed in MSW courses; they must be turned off before class. If a pager or cell phone is required for clinical emergencies, it must be on the silent mode so that it does not interrupt the class.

Laptop computers may be utilized in class for note taking purposes at the discretion of the professor. Students may not send emails, IM, play computer games, or have any other computer related activity unconnected to this course during class. The instructor may ask to see the student's screen at any time to assure focus on class material. *Violation of this policy may result in a lower grade.*

Policy on Academic Dishonesty: An incident of academic dishonesty may result in grade reduction for the assignment, an F for the course, or more serious penalties depending upon the severity of the transgression. Academic dishonesty includes:

1. Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Fabrication: intentional falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. Facilitating academic dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.
4. Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

Use of Turnitin.com: If it is suspected that a paper may not be a student's original work, it will be submitted for review by Turnitin.com. Upon receipt of the Originality Report, the student may be asked to meet with the instructor to discuss the findings as reported by this system. Evidence of plagiarism is subject to the Academic Dishonesty Policy, as detailed above.

Policy on Late Papers: Each day a paper is late, 5-points will be deducted from the grade. Exceptions will be granted only under emergency circumstances, and require written student documentation of the need for an extension and identification of an alternate due date. Computer/printer problems do not constitute acceptable excuse for lateness. Written instructor approval of extension requests is required to avoid point deductions. No credit will be given for assignments turned in following the date identified on an extension request unless further

documentation of emergency circumstances can be provided by the student, and their physician or another emergency service provider.

Policy on Submitting Assignments: Assignments will be turned in using the eCompanion dropbox at <http://online.apu.edu>. Papers e-mailed to other addresses will not be accepted without pre-approval on a date prior to the paper deadline. Students accept all risks related to computer, server, and attachment problems. Papers received by e-mail following the due date are subject to the late paper policy. Likewise, papers submitted by mail or after hours (i.e., under the instructor's office door or other locations) require instructor permission and are subject to the late paper policy. Students accept all risks related to delayed mail delivery, custodian actions, and other circumstances of misplacement.

Policy on Incompletes: Course incompletes will only be assigned in medical emergency situations involving the student or a person with a close personal relationship to the student. Formal, signed documentation from a physician, nurse, or other emergency service provider will be required, and may be faxed if necessary. Both student and instructor must also fully complete and sign a contract for incomplete grade assignments; this may also be done by fax if necessary. Both formal documentation of the emergency situation and the contract must be provided by the date the final assignment is due for the student to receive an incomplete. If signed documents are not received, then the student will be graded according to assignments previously completed in the course. Assignments of failing grades will be permanent. In order to avoid this situation, students are strongly encouraged to complete assignments well in advance of due dates.

Assignments:

Exercises from the Berg-Weger textbook will be completed weekly. Key to success will be to keep current on weekly exercises. They are scheduled on the syllabus and should be completed PRIOR to the week they are indicated as due. They will be frequently utilized as points of discussion during the course, thus prior completion and preparation is essential. **Text exercises submitted weeks 5, 9, and 13.**

Faith Integration Paper will discuss your personal core values and beliefs and reflection on Parker Palmer's book *Let Your Life Speak- Listening to the Voice of Vocation*. Specific assignment details to be handed out in class. **Paper is due week 4.**

Interview Paper will result in an in-person interview with a graduate level social worker (MSW, LCSW, DSW, etc.) discussing service provision, job description, and professional insight. Specific assignment details to be handed out in class. **Paper is due week 8.**

Group Trends Presentation will address a current issue facing a population of interest or experience (e.g., bullying in school social work, grandparent raising grandchildren in gerontology, etc.). Each member of the group (approx. 3) will research the issue using a minimum of two (2) peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles each, and present: 1) the trend, 2) implications for social work practice, 3) and personal reflection. **Class Presentations (30 min each) week 10 and 11.**

Integrative Final Paper will: 1) trace the historical development of professional social work activities in a particular setting or arena (i.e., child welfare, schools, hospitals, criminal justice, mental health); 2) discuss contemporary practice and policy issues relevant to this setting; and, 3) discuss how social work ethics, values, commitments to social and economic justice, issues of diversity, at-risk populations, oppression and/or discrimination may inform this practice setting. Specific assignment details to be handed out in class. **Paper is due week 15.**

Evaluation/Assessment Rationale for Grade Determination

Text Exercises:	15 points (5 pts. per submission)
Faith Integration Paper:	20 points
Interview Assignment:	15 points
Trends Presentation:	20 points
Integrative Final Paper:	30 points

Meaning of Letter Grade - MSW Program

A =	Excellent, clearly exceeds expectations; especially strong
A- =	Exceeds expectations to a lesser degree than an A
B+ =	Meets expectations very well, but does not exceed them
B =	Meets expectations
B- =	Meets expectations to a lesser degree than a B

Criteria for Letter Grade

A	=	93-100%	C	=	73-77%
A-	=	90-92%	C-	=	70-72%
B+	=	88-89%	D+	=	68-69%
B	=	83-87%	D	=	63-67%
B-	=	80-82%	D-	=	60-62%
C+	=	78-79%	F	=	below 60%

Course Schedule – Reading and Assignments

Week 1: 09/08

Topics: The World of Social Work
 Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 1
 Palmer, P., *Let your life speak*.
 Assignment: Berg-Weger, page 19
 Exercise #3

Week 2: 09/15

Topics: History of Social Work
 Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 2
 Palmer, P., *Let your life speak*.
 Assignment: Berg-Weger, page 47
 Exercise #1

Week 3: 09/22

Topic for Integrative Final Paper Due

Topics: U.S. Poverty
 Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 3
 Palmer, P., *Let your life speak*.
 Assignment: Berg-Weger, page 74
 Exercise #4

Week 4: 09/29

Due at the Beginning of Class: Faith Integration Paper

Topics: The Social Work Environment
 Faith Integration Discussion
 Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 4
 Wagenfeld-Heintz, E. (2009). Faith and its application to the practice of social work. *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 21, 182-199.
 Assignment: Berg-Weger, page 93
 Exercise #7

Week 5: 10/6

Due at the Beginning of Class: Weeks 1-4 Exercises

Topics: Cultural Competency
 Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 5
 Assignment: Berg-Weger, pages 122-124
 Exercises #4, 5, 6, and 7

Week 6: 10/13

Topics: Values and Ethics in Social Work Practice

Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 6

National Association of Social Workers. (2008). *Code of ethics*. Washington, DC: NASW. Available at: <http://www.naswdc.org>

Assignment: Berg-Weger, page 149
Exercise #6

Week 7: 10/20

Topics: Theory

Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 7

Assignment: Berg-Weger pages 175-176
Exercises #1 and 2

Week 8: 10/27

Due at the Beginning of Class: Interview Assignment Paper

Topics: Fields of Social Work Practice

Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 8

Assignment: Berg-Weger page 219
Exercise #8

Week 9: 11/03

Due at the Beginning of Class: Weeks 5-8 Exercises

Topics: Practice with Individuals and Families

Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 9

Assignment: Berg-Weger pages 241-242
Exercises #2 and 4

Week 10: 11/10

Due during Class: Assigned Trends Presentations

Topics: Practice with Groups

Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 10

Assignment: Berg-Weger pages 263-265
Exercise #1

Week 11: 11/17

Due during Class: Assigned Trends Presentations

Topics: Practice with Organizations and Communities

Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 11

Assignment: Berg-Weger pages 290-292
Exercises #7

Week 12: 11/24

NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Day

Week 13: 12/01

Topics: The Social Work Profession
Reading: Berg-Weger, Chapter 12
Assignment: Berg-Weger, pages 316-319
Exercise #7

Week 14: 12/08

Due at the Beginning of Class: Weeks 9-13 Exercises
Guest Speakers - Social Work Vocation Forum

Week 15: 12/15

Due at the Beginning of Class: Integrative Final Paper

Bibliography

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