Joint Doctoral Program in Social Work and Social Science

SW 800: Proseminar in Social Work and Social Science  Professor Sandra Danziger
Fall 2013  Room 2710  T, Th 1-3
Wednesdays, 5:30 – 7:30 pm  sandrakd@umich.edu
Room 1794 SSWB  764-5254

Course Description
This seminar is an introduction to the Joint Doctoral Program in Social Work and Social Science. The focus of the course concerns the nature, place and practice of interdisciplinary scholarship that can emphasize learning and developing basic knowledge as an end in itself, and develop the means to use that knowledge to help solve problems that impinge on, or directly disrupt the quality of peoples’ lives. A central assumption is that expertise in interdisciplinary scholarship is not automatic, but involves the acquisition of habits, skills and attitudes that enable people to contribute to professional and academic advances in their chosen field. This seminar focuses on the early stages of this development. It seeks to establish an orientation to the development of scholarship that will continue once the seminar is over and to engage students in an examination of the practices, styles and domains of scholarship in social work, social welfare, and social science so that they may begin to evolve an approach to scholarship suited to their own interests, inclinations and capabilities.

Course Design
This course is designed as a seminar that emphasizes discussion and exchange of ideas and information. Each class will require reading from the assigned texts or articles. Throughout this term we will examine topics pertinent to making explicit the requirements and practices of scholarship and meet with a number of faculty and advanced doctoral students from the School of Social Work who will discuss their own work and the research domain in which their research is located. These guest participants will describe their own research, how it was conceived, executed and disseminated, so as to give students a direct sense of different styles of scholarship and varying domains of research with which they may wish to be associated in the future. Students will take an active role in framing our discussions and introducing our faculty speakers. This year, we focus in particular on three aspects of social work scholarship: the science of social work research and how integrative of the social sciences; biographical influences on one’s scholarship trajectory; addressing and managing ethical issues in one’s scholarship.
Readings
All readings for the course will be available on the course CTools site: SW 800 001 F13

Also recommended but not required: Kirk, Stuart & Reid, William (2001). Science and Social Work: A Critical Appraisal. New York: Columbia University Press. This text has been used in the proseminar in the past and may be helpful in delving deeper into the framing and debates about social work as a social science and in relation to other social sciences.

Research Ethics Training
We will have two sessions on the responsible conduct of research, led by Professor Jorge Delva.

Written Assignments
Two essays will be due over the semester. Please upload your assignments to CTools by the due date (see below) for each assignment.

Essay One (Taking a Historical Perspective): Due October 23 (5-6 pages)
In this essay, the focus is on our readings and discussions of social work scholarship. For this assignment, each of you are to identify two articles written on your area of interest and published in a social work/social welfare policy journal the year you were born, and two articles on the same or a similar topic in current issues of these journals. The following journals are examples suggested for this assignment: Social Work, Social Work Research (or Social Work Research and Abstracts); Social Service Review; Social Casework, Families in Society; Social Work and Sociology, Child Welfare, Children and Youth Services Review, and Journal of Gerontological Social Work. Your essay should address the following questions: What do these four articles say about social work scholarship and its development over time? How do they reflect an interdisciplinary approach and a particular approach to scholarship? To what degree do they reflect the approaches to scholarship discussed in our readings on the science of social work? What are the tensions involved in this kind of scholarship? How might you approach these challenges and tensions in your own research and scholarship?

Essay Two (Understanding the Research of Social Work Faculty): Due December 4 (5-6 pages)
For this paper each of you will identify and meet with two social work faculty members whose research is of interest to you (excluding the four faculty who are guest lecturing on their scholarship in class). Read at least three publications by each faculty member. After reviewing their work, meet with each faculty member for about an hour to learn more about his or her scholarship and the work they are doing currently. In particular, discuss how they
(a) see their research situated in the “science” of social work;
(b) how they draw from their life experiences as an influence in their scholarship and
(c) address ethical dilemmas/issues that come up in their work.

In your paper discuss why you chose these faculty members, what you learned about their scholarship, and what you learned about the process of scholarship from reading their work and talking with them.

Class Participation
Each week we will engage in group discussion and will frequently have invited presentations from social work faculty, therefore attendance is essential. All students are expected to attend every class session and participate in discussions.

Grading
The overall grade for the course will be based on the completion of two written assignments (40% for each assignment), and class participation/facilitation (i.e., each student will be expected to introduce a faculty speaker or facilitate the discussion of readings for a class, and participate in weekly general class discussions 20%).

An A grade is given for exceptional individual performance. Grades in the B range reflect satisfactory completion of course requirements (competent performance). C grades reflect less than satisfactory work and D grades indicate deficient performance; neither is acceptable at the graduate level.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office.

Religious Observances
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance, community participation or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.
Course Schedule

September 4: Navigating through the Joint Doctoral Program

Readings

Doctoral Guidelines Fall 2013

September 11: Readings on the Science of Social Work

Readings


Brekke, J. S. (2012). Shaping a science of social work. Research on social work practice (on line)

Soydan, H. (2012) Understanding social work in the history of ideas. . Research on social work practice (on line)


September 18: Scholarly trajectories, biographical reflections

Readings

Staller, K.M. (2013). Epistemological boot camp: The politics of science and what every qualitative researcher needs to know to survive the academy. Qualitative social work 12, 4: 395-413.

Jung, C. 2010. Professor Zolberg goes to Africa. Social research 77 399-404.


September 25: Mentoring Dinner NOTE ROOM CHANGE 1840 SSWB Educational Conference Room. Guests: Amy Krings, Professor Lorraine Gutierrez, Professor Greg Markus

Readings


October 2 & 9: Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship training with Professor Jorge Delva

Readings
Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship powerpoint slides through Topic 4 (slide 51)
October 9:
Readings
Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship powerpoint slides Topics 5-7

October 16: Faculty Guest speaker: Professor Richard Tolman
Readings


(optional)

(optional)


[First Written Assignment Due: Taking a Historical Perspective. Please post them in your CTools drop box and I will move them for sharing into Oct. 30 Readings]
Readings


Suggested writings from the advanced students

October 30: Read & Discuss papers from first assignment

Readings

Papers from your classmates

November 6: Dinner Discussion with Student Buddies, organized by Adriana Aldana and Sandhya Narayanan (Danziger out of town)

November 13: Faculty Guest speaker: Assistant Professor Desmond Patton

Readings


November 20: Faculty Guest speaker: Professor Barry Checkoway

Readings

Checkoway, B. (2009). Youth civic engagement for dialogue and diversity at the metropolitan level. *Foundation review* 1 ,2, 41-50.

Checkoway, B. & Aldana, A. Four forms of youth civic engagement for diverse democracy.

November 27: NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 4: Faculty Guest speaker: Assistant Professor Kristin Seefeldt

[Second Written Assignment Due: Please post them in your CTools drop box and I will move them for sharing into Dec. 11 Readings]

**Readings**


December 11: Discussion of Papers from Second Assignment

**Readings**

Papers from your classmates