Course Title: SW 648 Issues in Global Social Work Practice
Term: Winter 2014
Instructors: Katie Lopez (kalopez@umich.edu) & Lawrence Root (lroot@umich.edu)
Time: Mondays 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Dates: Jan 13; Jan 27; Feb 24; March 17; & April 21
Location: 1804 SSWB

Course Description
This course is designed to help prepare social work students for professional practice during a global social work experience, as well as to help integrate that experience into the broader educational experience at UM-SSW. It is for students who will be going abroad at the end of the Winter Term (i.e., students doing global field placements, global special studies, and Peace Corps Master’s International). Students will critically examine their assumptions, values, theories and practice models and begin to develop a practice framework that is ethical, relevant and effective in a global setting.

Course Content
The course will explore four main areas:

1) how national context (economics, political environment, culture, traditions, etc.) impacts how social problems are identified, understood, and addressed;

2) principles of global social work practice competencies and strategies for developing a framework and skills through self examination;

3) reflection on a global practice experience and strategies for integrating it into other social work courses; and

4) ethics of global social work practice.

It is too much to expect that a one-credit course will be able to provide comprehensive global knowledge and practice skills to students – so the focus will be on critically examining these themes so that students “know what they don’t know” and can begin to develop a framework and strategies for ethical and effective practice in a global setting.

Course Objectives
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of their assumptions, values, positionalities (aspects of one’s position—such as gender/gender expression, age, wealth, and nationality—that impact perceptions, reactions, etc.), theories and practice models on social work practice in a global setting;

2. Demonstrate awareness of the value of cultural humility in effective social work practice;

3. Demonstrate awareness of practice principles and processes that build on local knowledge and experience;
4. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the role cultural context plays in defining social issues and interventions
5. Articulate ethical issues in relation to global practice;
6. Explore strategies for integrating global practice experience in the larger social work curriculum.

**Course Design**

This one-credit course will meet in the Winter Term. A companion 2-credit course will be offered in the Fall Term, following the global experience. Class meeting time will generally be devoted to discussion. Presentations (by the instructor and/or students) and readings will provide the basis for the discussion. Students will be required to complete reflective written assignments as outlined below.

This course only meets five times so it is important that students not miss sessions.

There is a Ctools site (SW 648 W14) established for this course. Readings, lectures and other resources will be posted on this site. There is no required textbook for the course.

Students will be given a “Y” grade at the end of the Winter Term with final grades being assigned in the Fall Term. An initial “Y” grade is necessary as one of the course assignments is contributing to a blog during the Spring/Summer global experience. Ultimately this seminar will be graded as follows: S = Satisfactory or U = Unsatisfactory based on the course assignments and class participation.

**Assignments**

1. Funding proposal statements or critiques. Due **January 27th at 5pm** submitted via Ctools.
2. Country Report. Conduct an investigation of the country where your field placement, special study, or Peace Corps service will be conducted. Due **March 16th at 5pm** submitted via Ctools.
3. Professional blog. Keep a professional blog during your experience. Reflect on what you are experiencing, what you are feeling and what you are learning as you go through the process. Remember, that this is a professional blog and will be read by the instructors.

**Outline of Topics**

**January 13**

Topics
- Introductions and course overview
- Global social work and differences in “social work” as a profession
- Funding opportunities and writing your proposal

Readings:


January 27  Topics

- Discussion/review of funding proposals
- Cultural awareness and cross cultural communication
- Values, assumptions, and “positionalities”

Readings:


Kohls, L. Robert. “The values Americans live by” (manuscript)


Schmidt, Sara. “Tips for funding graduate international internships” (manuscript) and sample budget

February 24  Topics

- Interventions- short-term versus long-term and implications
- Program evaluation—an overview

Movie:

Sounds of Mumbai- screening to be arranged before February 24 class session

Readings:

[TBA]

March 17  Topics

- Stresses associated with global work
- Social work systems outside the U.S.
- Ethical considerations in global social work practice

Readings:

[TBA]

April 21  Topics

- Group discussions (field placements; Special Studies, Peace Corps)
- Entering a community
- Motivation for international work

Readings:

[TBA]