# Course Syllabus Fall 2014

SW 530 – Introduction to Social Welfare Policy and Services

Section 002 – Tue 9am-12pm – 3752 SSWB
Section 005 – Tue 2-5pm – 3816 SSWB

Professor: Shawna J. Lee, Ph.D.
Office: 3849 SSWB
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12-2pm or by appointment
Telephone: 734-763-6565
Email: shawnal@umich.edu

## 1. Course Description:

This course surveys the history of social welfare policy, services, and the social work profession. It explores current social welfare issues in the context of their history and the underlying rationale and values that support different approaches. Emphasis is placed on major fields of social work service such as: income support, health care, mental health, child welfare, corrections, and services to the elderly. Analytic frameworks with regard to social welfare policies and services are presented. These frameworks identify strengths and weaknesses in the current social welfare system with respect to multiculturalism and diversity; social justice and social change; behavioral and social science theory and research; and social work relevant promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs and services in relation to diverse dimensions (including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation).

## 2. Course Content:

There are four main content areas for the course.

1. The philosophic and practical basis for social welfare provisions, including consideration of the respective roles and relationships of:

   - the individual
   - the family
   - the community, groups, educational settings, churches, and workplaces
   - the nonprofit sector
   - the government at various geographic levels.
2. The history of the social work profession:
   - from the altruistic philanthropist to the development of professional practice
   - the emergence of distinct methods of practice in their historical context
   - the influence of religious values, ethics, and social and political climates on the profession’s development
   - the emergence of specific policies and programs within their historical, social and political contexts.

3. A critical analysis of current social welfare policies, and programs, nationally and cross-nationally with attention to:
   - the strengths and weaknesses of various policies and programs
   - evolving population needs
   - the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation issues, and social justice/social change perspectives.

4. Descriptions and analyses using recent social science theory/research knowledge of major areas of social welfare provision and patterns of their delivery, including, but not limited to:
   - services for families, children, adolescents, adults, and the aging (including income support, protective services, health and mental health, corrections and criminal justice, and education) including those targeted toward promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation
   - community service programs.

3. Course Competencies and Practice Behaviors

This course addresses the following competencies and practice behaviors:

COMPETENCY 3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers

3.1 distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom

COMPETENCY 4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers
4.1 recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power

**COMPETENCY 5**—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers

5.1 understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination

5.3 engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

**COMPETENCY 6**—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.

Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers

6.2 use research evidence to inform practice.

**COMPETENCY 8**—Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.

Social work practitioners understand that policy affects service delivery, and they actively engage in policy practice. Social workers know the history and current structures of social policies and services; the role of policy in service delivery; and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers

8.1 analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being

**COMPETENCY 9**—Respond to contexts that shape practice.

Social workers are informed, resourceful, and proactive in responding to evolving organizational, community, and societal contexts at all levels of practice. Social workers recognize that the context of practice is dynamic, and use knowledge and skill to respond proactively. Social workers

9.1 continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological developments, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services
4. **Course Objectives:**

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

1. Describe the historical basis for the current U.S. social welfare system, including the history and role of the social work profession. (Practice Behaviors 4.1, 5.1, 9.1)

2. Describe and critically analyze current social welfare policies, procedures, and programs including the role of behavioral and social science research and theory in their evolution. (Practice Behaviors 3.1, 4.1, 5.3, 9.1)

3. Discuss the strengths and limitations of the current social welfare system in terms of the functions of the provision of basic needs, protection of the vulnerable, prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation, protection of society, and provision of social control. This discussion will incorporate state, national, and cross-national analyses. (Practice Behaviors 4.1, 5.1, 6.2, 9.1)

4. Describe and critically analyze major fields of social welfare service provision from a multicultural perspective, such as income security, health and mental health services, child welfare, educational practices, services to the elderly, and corrections. (Practice Behaviors 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.2, 8.1, 9.1)

5. Discuss and critically analyze current debates, trends, and ethical issues in some of the specific fields of service presented in the course including the implications for social work practice and promoting social justice and social change. (Practice Behaviors 4.1, 5.1, 5.3, 6.2, 8.1, 9.1)

5. **Course Design:**

It is anticipated that the multiple sections of this course will be coordinated and lectures, assignments, readings, class exercises, and examinations will be shared across instructors. Various classroom teaching strategies may be used, including lecture, multimedia presentations, video documentaries, small and large group discussion, and presentations by students and guest lecturers.

6. **Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:**

- Multiculturalism and Diversity. The course examines how the diverse dimensions (such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation) of individuals and groups influence their perspectives of and experiences with social welfare policies and practices. Specific fields of service are critically analyzed from multicultural, historical, and/or cross-national perspectives.

- Social Justice and Social Change. The course critically analyzes current trends and ethical issues and their implications for promoting social justice and social change.
• Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation. The course gives attention to the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

• Behavioral and Social Science Research. Analytic frameworks drawn from behavioral and social science literature and research are presented for each field of service.

7. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:

The historical overview in this course includes an analysis of the value base of the profession. Ethical responsibilities of social workers within fields of service will be reviewed. Differences among codes of ethics for several social work professional organizations will also be explored.

8. Intensive Focus Statement on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice (PODS):

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.


Students are required to read the textbook and assigned supplemental readings prior to each week’s discussion. The wider the review of the materials each student has prepared, the richer the class discussion can be.

Required Textbook:


**Six copies of this textbook (call number YY 5 .B7106) are available for checkout in the Askwith Media Library (Room 2002 Shapiro) on the second floor of the Shapiro Undergraduate Library.**
Additional Required Readings:

Available through the course CTools site (SW 530 002 & 005 F14) in the Resources section of CTools, organized by class session # as listed in the syllabus.

Important, Supplementary Media:

The best way to keep current on policy issues is to regularly read a major newspaper, such as the New York Times (www.nytimes.com) or The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com). The Wall Street Journal, although focused on business issues, often has very good feature articles on domestic policy. As with all newspapers, one should be careful to distinguish between the news reports and the editorial commentary. The NYT also offers a student discount rate on student subscriptions to hard copy editions.

News reports and feature shows (such as on NPR, MSNBC, CNN or ABC Nightline) are another source of information about current policy issues. The PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer on Public Television is an excellent source of more in-depth discussion of ongoing and emerging policy issues.

Additional Recommended Media:

- Local Newspapers (Ann Arbor, Detroit);
- CNN News and Policy discussions;
- All Things Considered and/or Morning Edition on National Public Radio. This can be accessed locally via WKAR-FM (90.5) or WUOM-FM (91.7).
- Evening Network News - (CBS, ABC, NBC).

10. Assignments and Grading

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<tr>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>HOT TOPICS ASSIGNMENTS</td>
<td>Sept. 23, Oct. 7, and Nov. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>HISTORICAL CONTEXT PAPER</td>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>POLICY MEMO</td>
<td>Nov. 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM</td>
<td>Dec. 12 by 5:00 PM</td>
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Class attendance and participation
Student attendance is required at every class session, and attendance will be taken. Each student is expected to sign in each week. More than 2 absences – including leaving early/arriving late to class – will negatively impact your final grade. Generally, this includes but is not limited to a decrease in one letter grade (e.g., if you were to receive a final grade of an “A” based on your course work, more than 2 absences would be grounds for the instructor to assign you a “B” for your final grade). Students are responsible for securing lecture notes and handouts when circumstances require them to be absent.
Hot Topics, Historical Context and Policy Memo
A detailed description of these assignments is available on Ctools.

Final Essay Exam
The final is a take-home exam in essay question format. The exam will be short answer essays, covering material in readings and emphasized in class lectures, handouts and discussion. It will review material from the whole semester and there will be choices in which essays you answer. Essay exam questions will be distributed ONLY in class on December 2nd.

Grades
The criteria for each grade are as follows:

A+, A, A-
Superlative mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which excellence in these skills are demonstrated.

B+
Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

B
Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations

B-
Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.

C or C-
Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.

F
Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Notes on Grading
1. Class attendance and class participation are considered essential for this course. Therefore you are expected to attend, to be prepared, and to make reasonable contributions to enhance the class discussion. It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to be in class.

2. It is best not to assume you will receive an “A” in this course. The instructor grades on a relative, not absolute, grading scale. Since many of you were “A” students as undergraduates there will be a natural and necessary redistribution at the graduate level.

3. In general, I do accept challenges to grades. However, challenges must be in writing (not verbal); must be specific, and must be based on substantive arguments not on nebulous references to “fairness.” The instructor reserves the right to re-read, and re-grade, the work in its entirety in the case of a challenge. The grade may be adjusted up or down.
4. Course Incompletes are only given in extreme circumstances whereupon a serious, extenuating circumstance has prevented the student from completing a limited amount of coursework. The instructor must be notified of the circumstances that prohibit the student from completing course assignments that are outlined in the syllabus. **These situations must be discussed well in advance of the end of the semester.** The instructor reserves the right to determine if the circumstances are sufficient to justify an incomplete in the course.

**General Expectations for Written Work**

Written work will be evaluated based on how well it addresses the topic and the clarity of writing. It is important to follow assignment instructions carefully and to read and re-read work before turning it in. If possible, you should have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you submit it. Ask them to read for clarity of your writing, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful, but not as reliable as a human reader. Students are expected to avoid “language that might imply sexual, ethnic, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias.” *(Health and Social Work, 11:3, Summer 1986.)*

**Writing Assistance**

Sweetland Writing Center

One of the benefits of being a student at the University of Michigan is the range and depth of resources to which you have access. The Sweetland Writing Center is one such resource. Graduate students are eligible for seven sessions per semester. For help with your paper, please free to consult them for writing support. They can help you develop your argument, improve your paper organization, correct grammar mistakes, and craft effective prose. SWC is located at 1310 North Quad (corner of W. Washington and State St.) You can register with them on line and schedule an appointment: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/)

School of Social Work

Please contact Betsy Williams, Writing and Study Skills Coordinator, through the Career Services Office. Email [betsywil@umich.edu](mailto:betsywil@umich.edu) or [ssw-cso@umich.edu](mailto:ssw-cso@umich.edu). Betsy is located in Room 1696 SSWB.

Another resource is the English Language Institute: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli)

**Plagiarism/ Cheating**

Representing someone else’s words, statements, ideas or works as one’s own without proper acknowledgement or citation is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be grounds for failure on an assignment and may also be ground for failing the course as well as other disciplinary action as described under the School’s policies on academic and professional conduct:

Plagiarism/ cheating includes plagiarism on written work and presentations (e.g., presenting content from the internet as your own work, failing to properly cite material, presenting others’ ideas as your own without proper citation, presenting other students’ work as your own) and cheating on quizzes or exams (e.g., working with other students on quizzes when not allowed, using materials other than the course textbook for open-book quizzes). Also included in the definition of plagiarism is self-plagiarism, that is, reusing one’s own work without acknowledgement that the text appears elsewhere (e.g., in a paper for another current or previous class).

Another helpful resource can be found at:
http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students

Note that using Web resources increases the risk of “accidental plagiarism.” Do not let that happen.

**Any evidence of plagiarism will result in action by the instructor, including but not limited to a decrease in course grade and possibility of failing the class.**

**Students with Disabilities**

The School of Social Work has policies and services to provide equitable educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities in all programs and activities. Students with disabilities who require academic adjustments are encouraged to contact their instructors at the beginning of the semester to discuss their specific needs.

To find out more about services, register for services, or volunteer as a reader, note taker, or tutor, contact the University’s Services for Students with Disabilities, G664 Haven Hall, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045, 734-763-3000. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students with disabilities may also contact Nyshourn Price, LMSW (ndp@umich.edu) or Lauren Davis, LMSW (laurdavi@umich.edu) at the School of Social Work, 734-936-0961.

**Health and Wellness Services**

Health and wellness situations or circumstances may impede student success within the program. Students should feel free to contact the School’s Health and Wellness Advocates, Lauren Davis or Nyshourn Price, listed above.
# 11. Schedule of Class Sessions & Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING – ALL READINGS ARE REQUIRED UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Sept 2</td>
<td>COURSE OVERVIEW, ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, EXPECTATIONS, ETC. <strong>WHY SHOULD SOCIAL WORKERS CARE ABOUT SOCIAL POLICY AND HISTORY? DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY, INEQUALITY, AND OTHER TERMS.</strong></td>
<td>TEXT READING: Stern Ch. 9, The Challenge of Social Justice</td>
<td>Allocation exercise</td>
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</table>
| 2: Sept 9 | WHAT IS SOCIAL WELFARE? WHAT IS SOCIAL JUSTICE? DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL POLICY AND THEORIES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE. | CTOOLS READING:  
- United States Constitution and Amendments to the Constitution.  
OPTIONAL READING:  
| 3: Sept 16 | FEDERAL BUDGET, FEDERAL DEFICIT, FUNDING PRIORITIES. THE ROLE OF THE TAX CODE IN SOCIAL WELFARE (REDEMPTION OF | CTOOLS READING:  
- Testimony of John B. Taylor to the House Committee on Financial Services |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>WEALTH AND INCENTIVES)</th>
<th>Optional Reading:</th>
<th>Text Reading:</th>
<th>CTools Reading:</th>
<th>Hot Topics Assignment #1 Due and Group Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• Fox, C. (2012). Race, immigration, and the American welfare state (Chap. 1). From: *Three Worlds of Relief: Race, Immigration, and the American Welfare State from the*
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text Reading:</th>
<th>Optional Reading:</th>
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2014 National Kids Count Data Book from Annie E. Casey Foundation: |
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text Reading</th>
<th>Optional Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>FALL STUDY BREAK</td>
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<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Work, Welfare, and Family: Current Policy Dilemmas</td>
<td>TEXT READING: Stern Ch. 8, Employment, Public Assistance, and Job Training</td>
<td>CTOOLS READING:</td>
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<td>OPTIONAL READING:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 28</td>
<td>Meeting Basic Needs through Policy and Practice – Food and Nutrition, Homelessness and Housing Policy</td>
<td>TEXT READING: Stern Ch. 5, Food and Nutrition; Ch. 6, Housing and Community Development</td>
<td>CTOOLS READING:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Gallagher, J. (2010). Detroit Today (Ch. 2) and Potential and Problems in Urban Agriculture (Ch. 3). In: Reimaging Detroit: Opportunities for Redefining an American City, pp 21-72.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>→ [This book is available through the UM library electronic holdings. You can read it online. Go to lib.umich.edu and search the Mirlyn catalog for the author and book title. Look for the listing that says “electronic resource” in the title. You will need to be logged in the umich library system (upper right hand corner of the lib.umich.edu webpage). If you have any problems accessing this book, go back to the library main page (lib.umich.edu) and click on “Ask a Librarian.” You can instant message with a librarian to walk you through the process.]</td>
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| 9 Nov 4 | **Health and Mental Health Services Policy** | **TEXT READING**: Stern Chs. 7, Physical and Behavioral Health                | **CTOOLS READING**:  
**ASSIGNMENT #3**  
**DUE** |
| 10 Nov 11 | **Social Policy for Older Americans**       | **TEXT READING**: Stern Ch. 10, Providing Income and Services to Older Americans | **CTOOLS READING**:  
  - Wacker, R.R., & Roberto, K.A. (2014). On the Threshold of a New Era (Ch.1) and Legislative Foundations for Programs, Services, and Benefits Supporting Older Adults (Ch.2). In: *Community Resources for Older Adults*.  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11: Nov 18</th>
<th><strong>POLICIES AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN</strong></th>
<th><strong>TEXT READING:</strong> Stern Ch. 11, The Next Generation</th>
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<td><strong>CTOOLS READING:</strong></td>
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<td>Chapters 1 – 3 (pp. 7 – 81) in: The Children’s Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood. Published by the Children’s Bureau, U.S. Department of Health &amp; Human Services.</td>
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<tr>
<th>12: Nov 25</th>
<th><strong>SOCIAL POLICY CHALLENGES: HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND IMMIGRATION POLICY</strong></th>
<th><strong>CTOOLS READING:</strong></th>
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<td><strong>OPTIONAL READING:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Carlson, B.E., Caccurate, J., &amp; Klimek, B. (2012). A risk and resilience perspective on</td>
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*POLICY MEMO DUE*
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Social Policy Challenges: Detroit, Democracy, and the Continuing Challenge of Social Justice;</th>
<th>CTOOLS Reading:</th>
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<tr>
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<td>OTHER READINGS TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>14: DEC 9</td>
<td>SOCIAL POLICY CHALLENGES: LGBTQ RIGHTS; COURSE SUMMARY</td>
<td>TEXT READING: Stern Ch. 12, Social Workers’ Role in Social Welfare Policy</td>
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<td>OTHER READINGS TBA</td>
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<td>** Reminder: Final Exams due 12/12 by 5pm**</td>
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