Course Syllabus

SW 825 Historical and Contemporary Issues in Social Work and Social Welfare
Fall Term 2018

Tuesday 9:00-noon
Location: SSWB 1794

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“Progress in human affairs, whether in science or in history or in society, has come mainly through the bold readiness of human beings not to confine themselves to seeking piecemeal improvements in the way things are done, but to present fundamental challenges in the name of reason to the current way of doing things and to the avowed or hidden assumptions on which it rests. I look forward to a time when the historians and sociologists and political thinkers of the English-speaking world will regain their courage for that task.”

- Edward Hallet Carr, Historian

Preliminary Note:

The course was designed as a required course for the joint doctoral students in social work and social sciences. As such it has three major objectives: 1) to provide a sound grounding in the history of the profession of social work; 2) to provide an equally sound grounding in the history and philosophy of social welfare policy and services in the U.S.; and 3) to introduce and apply comparative frameworks for examining domestic, cross-national and/or global social work, social welfare policy, and/or program or service interventions.

Course Abstract

This course centers on the examination of the purposes of social welfare and social work and how they have reflected different philosophical and ideological positions, diverse class, racial, ethnic, and cultural perspectives, and the particular historical contexts in which they emerged. It covers long standing conflicts and tensions in the field such as the role of social responsibility vs. social control, how needs are recognized and determined, the nature of helping, perspectives on social justice and charity, the professional role of social workers, and organizational arrangements for social work and social welfare. The focus of this course is on the development of U.S. social welfare and social work with a comparative, cross-national and multicultural lens.

Course Objectives

• Demonstrate an ability to explain and critique the emergence and transformation of the U.S. welfare state;
• Distinguish between different theoretical, philosophical, and practice assumptions throughout the history of U.S. social welfare. Critically apply these assumptions in comparative work;
• Demonstrate an ability to explain and critique the development of social services in the U.S. from a multicultural perspective assessing the influence of racial, gender, class, religious and cultural factors;
• Develop an understanding of the evolution of the social work profession in the U.S. and its relationship to the "scientific" and/or "research" enterprise (including the role of movements: scientific charity, empirical practice, the evidence-based practice movement and the historical roles of methods: such as case study, social surveys, intervention, single-subject design, etc);
• Develop a sense of your own place in the history and future development of social welfare, social work and knowledge production and/or scholarship;
• Demonstrate an ability to differentiate between the public, nonprofit, and for profit sectors and critique the relative benefits and limitations of their contributions to social welfare and social justice agendas;
• Demonstrate an ability to utilize historical research methods to analyze the emergence of professional social work, the generation of social work knowledge, and/or social welfare policies or programs;
• Demonstrate an understanding of how historical conflicts and tensions have shaped the development and contemporary landscape of social welfare policy and the profession of social work;
• Demonstrate an ability to identify and analyze various conceptual frameworks (including differing ideological positions, cultural norms and values, political tensions, economic systems, and social goals) and assess their impact on the evolving definitions of social problems and the range of alternatives (programs, services, and policies) proposed to address them. In particular be able to critically assess these frameworks in cross-national contexts;
• Demonstrate an ability to recognize and explain the recurring nature of themes, conflicts, and debates in U.S. social welfare and interpret the ways in which they were shaped by their historical context. Be prepared to evaluate these basic ideas in a global context;
• Demonstrate an ability to identify a variety of policies and strategies in global interventions (such as the world bank, micro enterprises, the role of non governmental agencies, disaster relief, private philanthropy, and world aid projects).

**Required Reading:**

• Articles. Required articles are posted on Canvas, alphabetized by the last name of the author in “file” folder.

**The Book Discussion Assignments and Discussion Dates (6 total):**

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<th>Book Title (TBD)</th>
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<th>Questions Submission Dates</th>
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Possible Book Choices:

- Addams, Jane (1910) *Twenty years at Hull House* (online).
- Brace, Charles Loring (1872). *The dangerous classes of New York and twenty years work among them*. (online)
- Others?

Recommended Books and “Deleted” Readings:

- Fellin, Phil (undated). The history of the University of Michigan School of Social Work (on Canvas).

Articles. Recommended articles are posted on Canvas. We will talk about these but these lists are primarily there for your reference. Also, I have deleted scores of articles used in prior semesters from this syllabus. You will find a list of “deleted” articles as well as all the articles on Canvas. You might find some of interest.

Course Organization/Assignments:

**Course Organization:** This course will be conducted as a seminar that combines lectures by the instructor, student-led class discussions on 6 major readings (selections determined by students), and student presentations on individual original research projects. To be successful, a seminar requires the full participation of all members in all aspects of this course. This includes active and critical engagement with the assigned readings, preparation for class, and thoughtful and respectful participation in class.

**Assignments and Grading:** There are 3 basic assignments for this course. Detailed instructions for the original research assignment will be distributed under separate cover. In brief, these assignments are:
1) **Lifetime Achievement Award or Retirement Statement. (1-2 pages) Due: Sept. 11th**

Ungraded, performed, and submitted in hard copy. Write your own professional life time achievement award or retirement statement. (In essence it should speak to what you hope to accomplish in your professional life as social worker, researcher, scholar, teacher etc. What intellectual and/or practice “footprint” or legacy do you wish to leave on the social work profession and how might it connect to what’s already been done? How does it relate to your social science?)

2) **Book Discussion and Question Submission. Discussion Dates: Sept 18, Oct 2, Oct 9, Oct 23, Nov 6 and Nov 20.** We will be reading six books on some aspect of social work history written (or complied) by contemporary, preeminent scholars in the field. **All students are responsible for reading all six books (selections will be determined by students in the class).** The totality of this assignment will reflect 40% of your final grade. Each student will lead (or co-lead) a 1-1/2 hour discussion on one of the books. All other students will submit a list of 2-3 discussion questions to the presenting student(s) no later than the prior Sunday at 6pm for each book.

The presenting student will a) compile and organize the discussion questions; b) lead the class discussion using some, all, or none of suggested questions; and c) submit the compiled list of question to the professor at the end of their presentation. During the presentation, consider providing a concise summary of the content of the book, offer a critical assessment (what was its significance? how did it enhance or inform your views about social work? What are its contributions? Does it contribute to your development as a social work scholar?)

3) **Original Historical Research Paper and Presentation (See separate handout). (Updates/Outlines due (Sept 18, Oct 2, Oct 30 and presentations: Nov 27, Dec 4, Dec 11).** The assignment requires researching and writing an original historical paper and presenting your findings. It is critical to start early. Historical research takes time, including identifying a topic and finding original sources. This will reflect 60% of your final grade.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

**Session 1 - Tuesday September 4th**

**Introductions: Why Historical, Why Comparative, Why this Course?**

“But, we all know, the present has no more than a notional existence as an imaginary dividing line between the past and the future.”

*Edward Hallett Carr*

**Abstract:** Introductions. Course background, content, and expectations. The first, of several comparative frameworks: generic concepts to consider through time and space. Freeing up the idea of historical associations. How do meanings change with different contexts? What are the implications? Social Welfare History: who owns it? What is historical evidence? How is it used? Narrator and reader: what are the implications? Interpretation and reinterpretation: should we view the past with a present-day lens?

**In Class Exercise:** Historic Evidence and the Hull House: “Labeling Project”

- Jane Addams, Mary Rozet Smith and The Hull-House Alternative Labeling Project.
- Exercise: A definitional exercise: What is social work?
Reading Required:


Session 2 - Tuesday September 11th
Considering Social Workers & Their Contributions,

Lifetime Achievement Assignments Due

**Abstract**: Discussion of influential social workers or social welfare history from biographical perspective. Considering the significance of the joint doctoral program. How will your work be read and interpreted 100 years from now? Social welfare history in the future: what evidence? Implications for your use of evidence and construction of scholarship. Intellectual and professional DNA. Where did you come from? What will you find here? What will that mean for Social Work? How are your social sciences important? Use of historical and contemporary evidence in constructing and reconstructing meaning.

In Class Exercise: “Perform” the “life achievement” assignment.

**Required Readings  (on Canvas):**


**Recommended Reading:**


Session 3 -- Tuesday September 18th


Social Welfare frameworks

*Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore.*

*Send these, the homeless tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.*

*Emma Lazarus*
Know-Nothing Political Platform, 1856

- Repeal all naturalization laws,
- American Constitution and American Sentiments
- More stringent & effective emigration laws
- The sending back of all foreign paupers
- Formation of societies to protect American interests
- Our country, our whole country, and nothing but our Country
- American Laws, and American legislation, and death to all foreign influence

Book Discussion
Preliminary Project Plan due


In Class Documents:

- Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601
- Law of Settlement
- United States Constitution

Recommended Reading:

Selected Book

Recommended Reading
- Chambon, Adrienne (2013). Recognising the Other, understanding the Other: A brief history of social work and Otherness. Nordic Social Work Research, 3 (2): 120-129
Session 4 - Tuesday September 25th
Social Welfare History an Historical Overview
Antebellum Charity Work

“True meaning becomes synonymous with authoritative interpretations, and authoritative interpretations are based on conferred power within particular contexts.” - Stanley Witkin


In Class Documents:

• Dix, Memorial to the Honorable The Senate and the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey
• Franklin Pierce Veto Message, An Act Making a Grant of Public Lands to the Several States for the Benefit of Indigent Insane Persons, 1854. Compared with Johnson veto of Freedman’s Bureau legislation

Recommended Reading:


Session 5 - Tuesday October 2nd
Progressive Era and History of Social Work: Education, Practice and Research

Charity is no substitute for justice withheld.
- St Augustine

Book Discussion
Project Update Due

Abstract: The progressive era and traditionally recognized roots of social work. We will consider: the inception of social work education, competing models of social work practice (specifically the Charitable Organization Societies [COS] and the Settlement House models), public and private philanthropy; the role of professional organizations and conferences and social work knowledge (research and practice base). Overview of the history of social work education; education for what purpose? Training schools or academic endeavor? These topics will occupy class discussion/lectures for the next few weeks.
Session 6 -- Tuesday October 9th
Introduction to Applied Philanthropy and the Birth of Social Work Education in the Progressive Era

**Book Discussion**

**Abstract:** Early roots of social work; the role of class, gender, race and religion; paternalism, social control, benevolence, philanthropy, charity, and corrections. What are the implications? The professionalization project; is social work a profession? Was it a profession? Should it be a profession? Is it a social science? Can it be a profession and a social science? Social Work’s relationship to sociology, psychology, economics, and other social sciences. Professional organizations, scholarship and journals, practice. The implications of “social” in social work. Early Social Work Education and Comparative Current Practices

**Required Readings:**

- **Selected Book**
  - Abbott, Andrew (1995). *Boundaries of social work or social work of boundaries?* Social Services Review.

- **Required Reading**
**Tuesday Oct 16th FALL BREAK – NO CLASSES**

**Session 7 -- Tuesday Oct 23rd**

**Social Work Knowledge—Enduring Controversies and Critiques**

“Breaking rules entails risk. In my view, if social work is to carry out its responsibilities of providing leadership, raising important questions, addressing important issues, and encouraging knowledge development that will support social workers’ professional mission, it must not shy away from controversy.”

- Stanley Witkin, Social Worker Scholar

**Book Discussion**

**Abstract:** Early Social Work Practice: Charitable Organization Societies (COS) and Settlement Houses: Methods, Models and Comparative Threads (Hull House and CAS) (Hull House and Wheatley House) Social services in the progressive era. Social needs in the progressive era. Immigration, Industrialization, Urbanization. The role of the state in social welfare? Charitable organization societies (COS), Settlement House, Mutual Aid, Public or private responsibility? The role of philanthropy. Case work and social welfare societies. Role of race, gender and social class in social work development Mothers Pensions. Maternalist movement.

**Required Reading:**

- **Selected Book**

**Session 8 -- Tuesday October 30th**

**Progressive Era and Beyond**

**Epistemological Debates in Historical Perspective**

**Project Outline Due**

**Abstract:** Surveys, community-based social indicators, and case investigation. Role of science in “applied philanthropy” The relationship of social work to “science” and/or knowledge development. For what and whom? Tensions among micro, mezzo and macro practices. Science, social science, practice wisdom, scholarship, research, knowledge. What informs social work practice? What is social work research? Who conducts it? Who utilizes it? How is it conveyed and to whom? What it
the relationship of social work knowledge to that of the disciplines? How does a joint doctoral student at the University of Michigan make sense of this?

**Required Reading (Pick your own 'hefty" selection):**


**Session 9 -- Tuesday Nov 6th**

**Creation of the Welfare State and Exclusionary Practice**

**Book Discussion**


**Required Reading:**

- **Selected Book**

Recommended Reading:


Session 10 -- Tuesday Nov 13th
Social Movements and Retraction of the Welfare State


Required Reading:

• Edin & Shaefer (2015) Welfare is Dead. (Chapter 1) In $2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America.

Session 11 -- Tuesday Nov 20th
Current Confusion of the Welfare State: Putting it all together:
Immigration and Affordable Care Act

Book Discussion


• Selected Book

Recommended Reading:

Session 12 -- Tuesday Nov 27th
Session 13 -- Tuesday December 4th
Session 14-- Tuesday Dec 11th

CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Three presentations by students on their historical research projects
Readings: Students will suggest based on their historical research.

HAVE A GREAT BREAK!!