Course title: Introduction to Social Welfare Policy and Services
Course #/term: SW 530, Section 010, Fall 2020
Time and place: Wednesdays, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm EST:
   ❖ Online sessions: https://umich.zoom.us/j/91094705794
   ❖ In person sessions (9/9,9/30,10/21,11/11): Room 1636 SSWB
Credit hours: 3
Instructor: Sean J. de Four, LMSW
Pronouns: He / him / his
Contact info: *Email: seafour@umich.edu  *Phone: (734) 846 – 1814
             *You may expect a response within 48 hours
Office: 3768 SSWB
Office hours: By appointment only (online or in person)

1. Course Statement

a. 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 maintenance, 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 relations to the 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).

**b. 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 maintenance, protective services, health and mental health, corrections and criminal justice, and education) including those targeted toward promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation; and, community service programs.

**c. Course objectives and competencies**

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, including but not limited to 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 each specific field of service presented in the course including the implications for social work practice and promoting social justice and social change. (Practice Behaviors 2.3, 4.1, 5.1, 5.3, 6.2, 8.1, 9.1)

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

d. 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.

e. Curricular themes

- **Relation to 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.

- **Relation to Social Justice:** The course critically analyzes current trends and ethical issues and their implications for promoting social justice and social change.

- **Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation:** The course gives attention to the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.
Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research: Analytic frameworks drawn from behavioral and social science literature and research are presented for each field of service.

f. Relationship 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.

g. Intensive focus 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.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

Canvas Readings: All required reading will be uploaded onto the Canvas course site (SW 530 010 FA 2020), organized by class session- as listed in the syllabus. (If you have problems with the Canvas site, please call 844-329-3130).

With the exception of the first week, students are required to read all of the Canvas readings prior to each week’s class. Please always consult the syllabus to make sure you have completed all of the assigned readings for the week. We may not always discuss each reading in class; however, each student is responsible for the material covered by the readings. Students will need to draw upon the readings in order to complete the final exam.
**Recommended (but not required) Textbooks**


Several copies of the recommended (but not required) textbooks are also on reserve for SW 530 in the Shapiro Library.

**b. Class schedule**

**Course Modules:** This class is organized into weekly instructional modules. Each class module will consist of *asynchronous work* (done outside of and prior to class) plus *synchronous gatherings* (online or in person class meetings conducted during our weekly scheduled time). Each module is structured using the same general format:

- **Read** (asynchronous) - weekly assigned readings
- **Watch or listen** (asynchronous) - recorded lecture, video or podcast material(s)
- **Do** (synchronous) – in class discussion, activity or worksheet

Asynchronous work is to be completed before our synchronous class sessions. All assigned synchronous material can be found on the class Canvas site under the weekly modules.

Synchronous sessions will occur during our scheduled weekly class time (Wednesdays 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, EST). As this is a hybrid course, some class sessions will occur in person and some will occur online. **Please note that all in-person sessions will be structured so that students can participate remotely (using the class zoom link) if they are unable to attend in person.** The following class sessions have been designated to occur in person, and will be held in our assigned classroom, room 1636 SSWB:

- **Wednesday September 9th, 2020**
- **Wednesday September 30th, 2020**
- **Wednesday October 21st, 2020**
Wednesday November 11th, 2020

All other scheduled class sessions will occur via Zoom at the following link: https://umich.zoom.us/j/91094705794, or, meeting ID: 910 9470 5794

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Class #1 – September 2nd (Online)</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Introductions and course overview; setting the context for studying social welfare policy and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Review syllabus and course materials on Canvas site</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Watch / Listen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• James Giordina Lecture- How to identify fake news (10 min.)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Do</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Icebreaker</td>
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<td>• How to identify fake news</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Class #2 – September 9th (In person)</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Social welfare policy basics; the constitution, rights and justice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Read</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Staller (2020) Chapter 3 Founding Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>• United States Constitution</td>
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<td>• Amendments to the Constitution</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Watch / Listen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Weaver, What is social welfare policy and why do social workers care (20 min)</td>
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<td><strong>Do</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Allocation Activity</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Class #3 – September 16th (Online)</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Federal Budget: Expenditures and receipts, deficit, surplus, funding priorities; The role of the tax code in social welfare (redistribution of wealth, incentives); State Tax System</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Read</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Watch / Listen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Seefeldt, Budget Lecture (8 min)</td>
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### Class #4 – September 23rd (Online)

**Topic:** Social welfare in historical context: From the poorhouse to progressive eras

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Fix the debt activity</th>
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<tr>
<th>Watch / Listen</th>
<th>Fix the debt activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>documentary: Jane Addams Hull-House: an experiment in democracy (20 min)</td>
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### Class #5 – September 30th (In person)

**Topic:** Historical Context: From the great depression through the Great Society

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<tr>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Fix the debt activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staller (2020) Chapter 4 Creation of Welfare State &amp; Social Security Net</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Watch / Listen</th>
<th>Fix the debt activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>documentary: Harry Hopkins: at FDR’s Side (40 min)</td>
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### Class #6 – October 7th (Online)

**Topic:** Poverty, Inequality, and the Changing Labor Market

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<tr>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Fix the debt activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gilson,D., Rios, E.,</strong> (2016). “11 Charts That Show Income Inequality Isn’t Getting Better Anytime Soon” Mother Jones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Class #7 – October 14th (Online)

**Topic:** Work, Welfare, and Family: Current Policy Dilemmas

**Read**
- Edin & Sheaffer (2015) Welfare is Dead. (Chapter 1) In $2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America.
- Desmond, Matthew (2018). Americans want to believe jobs are the solution to poverty. They’re not. New York Times

**Watch / Listen**
- Reveal Podcast: A welfare check (15 min.)

**Do**
- EITC Activity

### Class #8 – October 21st (In person)

**Topic:** Meeting Basic Needs: Food, Housing, etc. through Policy and Practice

**Read**

**Watch / Listen**
- Explained: The Racial Wealth Gap (15 min.)

**Do**
- Benefit eligibility and enrollment exploration
### Class #9 – October 28th (Online)

**Topic:** Elections, Voting, Gerrymandering, and Related Topics

| Read | • The souls of poor folks: A preliminary report: Auditing America 50 years after the Poor People’s Campaign challenged systemic racism, poverty, the war economy/militarism and our national morality. (2017). Institute for Policy Studies  
| Watch / Listen | • Supreme Court: LGBTQ Employment Discrimination Is Illegal: An episode of The NPR Politics Podcast from NPR. (2017) (14 min) |
| Do | • Election Jeopardy  
• ASSIGNMENT #1- POLICY REPORT WORKSHEET DUE |

### Class #10 – November 4th (Online)

**Topic:** Health and Mental Health Services and Policy

| Watch / Listen | • Weaver, Policy Frameworks (5 min)  
• Weaver, Health & Mental Health Policy (8 min)  
• Weaver, Reform in Action (15 min)  
• Weaver, Current Debates (4 min) |
| Do | • Design a better system activity |
Class #11 – November 11th (In person)

**Topic:** Lifespan focus: Polices and Services for Children and Older Americans

**Read**
- Lepore, J. (2016) “Baby Doe” The New Yorker **note that this article contains descriptions of child abuse**

**Watch / Listen**
- Interview with Dr. Lydia Li (older adults & policy) (17 min)
- Lee, Social Welfare Policies & Services for Children & Families (26 min)

**Do**
- TBD

Class #12 – November 18th (Online)

**Topic:** Social Justice Challenges / the Challenge of Social Justice

**Read**

**Watch / Listen**
- Doin' the Work: Frontline Stories of Social Change- Podcast: White Supremacy in Social Work - Charla Cannon Yearwood, LSW and Laura Hoge, LCSW (43 min)

**Do**
- TBD
- **ASSIGNMENT #2 - PUBLIC TESTIMONY ASSIGNMENT DUE**

Class #13 – December 2nd (Online)

**Topic:** Semester wrap up: social welfare policy analysis & advocacy for social work

**Read**
- NASW Code of Ethics

**Watch / Listen**
- Interview with Mina Hong (policy advocacy) (8 min)

**Do**
- Final Exam Review
- **FINAL EXAM DUE DECEMBER 11TH, BY 5:00 PM.**
c. Assignments

This course has four graded components. A small portion of your grade will be based on class attendance and engagement with the remainder being based on three written assignments, all of which are designed to help you develop practical skills you are likely to employee in your social work career. Detailed descriptions of these assignments are posted on Canvas, under the “Assignments” link. Completed assignments are to be submitted online through the class Canvas site, prior the start of class the day on which they are due.

1) **Class Engagement** – expected weekly (graded, 10% of final grade). Class attendance is imperative for both your own learning and the learning of your peers. I expect students to attend class. If you need to miss a class, please contact me in advance to let me know. I expect students to be engaged in all in-class activities, including contributing comments and questions in class discussions. Some people naturally speak up in class more than others. I recommend that if you are someone who is comfortable talking a lot, you consider “stepping back,” and if you are less comfortable talking a lot, you consider “stepping up.” However, your engagement score is not predicated on the number of times you speak in class; rather I will focus on your participation in activities, whether it is obvious that you are engaged during class and have done the class preparation work.

2) **Policy Report Worksheet** - due **October 28**th (graded, 30% of final grade).

3) **Public Testimony** - due **Nov 18**th (graded, 20% of final grade).

4) **Final Take-home Exam** - due **Dec 11**th (graded, 40% of final grade). The final exam is a take-home exam in essay format. The exam will include a combination of short answer and longer essay questions, covering material from the readings, in class lectures, handouts and discussions. It will review material from the whole semester. The final will be made available on December 2nd with a due date of **Friday, December 11**th by 5:00 pm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Percent of overall grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class Engagement</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</table>
### d. Attendance and class participation

Attendance is expected for all class sessions, whether you are attending in person or remotely, via zoom. Weekly lectures will highlight important themes and information from the readings, as well as provide additional content, all of which may be reflected on the final exam.

It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to attend a class. While a portion of the course will include material presented through lecture, much of your learning will come from in-class discussion around the readings, lectures and assignments. As such, it is important that students in this class come prepared to express and exchange ideas related to the topics discussed. This will require both reflection on your part, prior to entering class, and respect for ideas and perspectives different from your own while in class. Please keep in mind that effective advocacy (a cornerstone of social work practice) requires the ability to understand and appreciate opposing perspectives and competing self-interests.

To maximize learning and engagement during synchronous class sessions, I request that students adhere to the following etiquette when participating remotely:
- Cameras on (with some exceptions)
- Microphones muted (unless speaking!)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Policy Report Worksheet</th>
<th><strong>October 28th, 2020</strong></th>
<th>Completed assignments are to be submitted online through the class Canvas site, prior to the start of class the day on which they are due.</th>
<th>30%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Public Testimony</td>
<td><strong>November 18th, 2020</strong></td>
<td>Completed assignments are to be submitted online through the class Canvas site, prior to the start of class the day on which they are due.</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Final Take-home Exam</td>
<td><strong>December 11th, 2020 by 5:00 pm.</strong></td>
<td>Completed exams are to be submitted online through the class Canvas site, prior the deadline.</td>
<td>40%</td>
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e. Grading

Written work will be evaluated in relation to how well it addresses the topic and the clarity of presentation. It is important to follow assignment instructions carefully and to read and re-read work before its submission. 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.

Grades of A are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of A+, A, and A– distinguishes degrees of superior mastery. B grades are given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material: B+ is used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner; B– is used for students just below the mastery level. C grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal. A C– is the lowest grade which carries credit. D grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit. E grades indicate failure and carry no credit.

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<th>Grading Scale:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ = 99-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A = 95% – 98%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A– = 90%-94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+ = 88%-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B = 85%-87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B– = 80%-84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+ = 78%-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C = 75%-77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C– = 70%-74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+ - E = BELOW 70% (NO CREDIT)</td>
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Late assignments: If you must turn in late work, you need to have communicated with me in advance about an alternative due date and reason, in order to be eligible for full credit.

Challenges to grades: 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 based 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. For more information on SSW policies regarding grading and grievances, please see the MSW Student Guide policies on Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction, Student Grievance procedures and the policy for grading in special circumstances.

f. Class Recording and Course Materials
Note that sessions will not be recorded as the goal of these sessions is to make them as live and interactive as possible; however, all of my lectures are accompanied by PowerPoint presentations, which will be uploaded into canvas one-day prior to each class.

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

g. COVID-19 Statement
For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the Wolverine Culture of Care and the University’s Face Covering Policy for COVID-19. Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related
to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity. If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

h. Health-Related Class Absences
Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor’s note) for medical excuses is not required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources.

They include:

- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Mental health and well-being
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns
- Accommodations for students with disabilities
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Writing skills and expectations
- Academic integrity and plagiarism