Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the University of Michigan, named for Michigami, the world’s largest freshwater system and located in the Huron River watershed, was formed and has grown through connections with the land stewarded by Niswi Ishkodewan Anishinaabeg: The Three Fires People who are Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi along with their neighbours the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot nations.

Legacies

As we live and learn on these territories, we must keep in mind the community struggles for self-determination and colonial legacies of scholarly practices. I use community struggles broadly to include indigenous peoples, enslaved peoples, and those peoples of the Mexico-Republic of Texas territories. I use colonial legacies to reflect our existing social structures, institutions, systems, and policies built from colonial domination.
1. Course Statement

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, 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).

a. Course objectives and competencies

- Understand historical context and its current applications within the profession and practice (Essential 6, EPAS 7)
- Recognize power dynamics; ensure voices are included (Essential 14; EPAS 6)
- Understanding the current legislative processes (Essential 28; EPAS 2)
- Assess strategies to advocate for social, economic and environmental justice and change, while protecting human rights (Essential 29; EPAS 2, 3)
- Recognize the extent to which structures, policies and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, create or enhance privilege and power (Essential 30; EPAS 1, 2, 5)
- Analyze policies that advance human rights and social, economic and/or environmental justice (Essential 34; EPAS 5)
- Understand the history of social work practice and social welfare delivery systems and current applications within the profession (including inherent ambiguity) (Essential 39; EPAS 1, 5)
- Understand major social welfare policy domains (eg: health, immigration, income support) (Essential 39; EPAS 1,5)
- Understand frameworks of ethical decision making and how to apply critical thinking to those frameworks in the social welfare policy arena (Essential 44; EPAS 1, 5)

Course design

The course will utilize a combination of lectures, discussion, and in-class exercises. 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.

**Intensive focus on PODS**

This course integrates Privilege, Oppression, Social Justice, and Diversity (P.O.D.S.) 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 P.O.D.S. learning.

**Additional Resources**

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

**Writing Assistance.** Social work students can receive individual writing assistance from Betsy Williams, Writing Skills and Study Skills Coordinator, through the U-M SSW Career Services office. Students may schedule a virtual appointment and supply a draft of their paper (at any stage). Email Betsy Williams at betsywil@umich.edu or call 734-647-6081 to leave a message. You can find helpful resources on writing linked from ssw.umich.edu/writing-help

In addition, the Sweetland Writing Center offers graduate students up to seven sessions per semester. They can help you develop your argument, improve your paper organization, correct grammar, and craft effective prose. You can register with them on line and schedule a virtual appointment at [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/)

And the English Language Institute focuses on serving international students: [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli)
Proper Use of Names and Pronouns

All students will be referred to by the names and pronouns they use (e.g. she, they, ze, he). If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform the instructor as soon as possible so that I can use your correct name and pronouns.

2. Class Requirements

a. Course materials

The course is organized by weekly modules. Each module is composed of several components and activities:

- **Read** - weekly reading assignments
- **Watch (or listen)** – recorded lecture or podcast materials
- **Post** – discussion post on weekly material. These posts be completed prior to each class. We will use them for discussion and application of material in class.
- **Supplemental (Extra) Material.** The extra material found in the supplemental folder might be reading, podcasts, YouTube videos, websites, etc. This is not required. The material will offer further information on the primary topic.

All required class material (reading, watching/listening, and discussion posts) is to be completed prior to our class. Links to all materials are found on Canvas.

b. Course format

This class uses both asynchronous and synchronous (in-person/residential) formats. Each week beginning at week one, you will be expected to complete several tasks prior to our meeting in person. Canvas will be used for all communication and information dissemination. Each week, you will see a list of asynchronous activities to complete prior to our Tuesday class period (see description above under a) Course materials.

I take it as a given that there will be times when you are unable to attend our class period synchronously due to constraints related to COVID-19. This is acceptable and understood. I would encourage you to obtain class notes from a classmate for missed classes.

Synchronous time together will be primarily spent in activities and discussion, with some interactive lectures.

There will be one class on **Tuesday October 26** when we will meet for class virtually via zoom as I will be out of town for a conference. I will provide you with a zoom link prior to this class.
**Important notes about assigned readings and media**

1. Students are required to complete the readings and other class material prior to each week’s class. Any readings filed under a “supplemental” folder in Canvas are completely optional and are for students who wish to learn more about a particular topic.

2. Please use the Canvas website to access all readings and other class materials. If changes or adjustments are made to weekly assigned materials and planned activities, these changes will be made directly on Canvas.

3. The readings reflect a diverse array of perspectives, including historical perspectives. Due to the age of some documents, language used may not be current. You may find some ideas expressed in certain readings to be controversial and not reflective of social work values. However, these ideas are part of the current political discourse in the United States, and as social workers, you need to be aware of these positions so that you are able to be a better advocate.

4. 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.

**Important Supplementary Media.** The best way to keep current on policy issues is to regularly read, watch and/or listen to legitimate sources of news coverage. Be careful to distinguish between news reports and editorial commentary or opinion pieces in all news sources.

- The *New York Times* offers a student discount rate on student subscriptions to hard copy editions, and it’s also accessible (with a day delay) through the library. Articles in *The Washington Post* can be freely accessed, and this paper covers the Congressional issues with great detail. *The Wall Street Journal*, although focused on business issues, often has very good feature articles on domestic policy. Many national newspapers are available free to students by logging into the university library website.
- Recommended local, national and international news sources include *PBS NewsHour*, *National Public Radio*, *MSNBC*, *CNN*, *BBC*, and *Al Jazeera*. *The PBS News Hour* is an excellent source of more in-depth discussion of ongoing and emerging policy issues and is available online at www. Pbs.org/newshour. *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition* on *National Public Radio (NPR)* are readily available online and can be accessed locally via WKAR-FM (90.5) or WUOM-FM (91.7). Local sources of news include the *Detroit Free Press* (https://www.freep.com) and *Mlive Michigan* (www.mlive.com).
- Online news magazines such as *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Time*, the *Economist*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *The New Republic* also cover many relevant local, national, and international policy issues.
## Graded Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Percent of overall grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Discussion Board Posts</td>
<td>Due every Monday night at 11:59pm prior to class at 9am on Tuesday On Canvas</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Worksheet</td>
<td>11:59pm 11/2 Upload to Canvas</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Distributed in class 12/7 Due at 11:59pm 12/17 Upload to Canvas</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are three graded assignments for the course: weekly discussion posts, a policy worksheet, and a final exam.

1) **Discussion Posts.** A total of 11 weekly discussion posts due prior to class (a few weeks there will not be a required discussion post due). Each discussion post is worth a maximum of 4 points. You can skip or drop 1 post of your choice during the semester. Points will be awarded to you as an individual for uploading a thoughtful and fully completed discussion post to Canvas prior to the start of class (Monday nights by 11:59pm). Points will be deducted for late or incomplete assignments. Together these weekly discussions constitute **40% of your final grade.** These discussion posts will be used as a basis for in-class activities.

2) **Policy Worksheet.** You will find the policy worksheet instructions at the bottom of the syllabus. The Policy Worksheet activity will take extended time to complete so please start early. This assignment is worth **20% of your final grade.**

3) **Final Take-home Exam.** The final “take-home” exam is in essay and short answer question format. The exam will be comprehensive and will cover material from the entire semester. Questions will be derived from material and content covered in class each week. The final exam is worth **40% of your final grade.**
b. Attendance and class participation

Learning takes place when you can engage with the material, and part of that engagement occurs in discussions with each other. Students are responsible for securing lecture notes and handouts when circumstances require them to be absent. I recognize that illness and other unforeseen emergencies may arise over the course of the term. Please contact me as soon as possible if you are ill or encounter an issue that would lead you to miss class. In the event of severe weather, I will try to make arrangements for an alternative forum for class (e.g., via Canvas or Google). The School’s Policy on Class Attendance can be found in the MSW Student Guide.

The success of any course depends on the full and active participation of all students. You will be graded for your participation in this class. The quality, not quantity, of participation is what matters. Ample opportunities will be given for students to participate in class discussions, small group work, and other in-class exercises. Students will complete a self-evaluation of their participation during the last class session which will be factored into your grade.

It is my hope that all students will work together to create and foster a learning environment that promotes professional socialization, respectfulness, and broadens our mutual awareness of human differences and diversity. Students will be encouraged in this class to examine how the structure of our current social welfare systems evolved from and still reflects biases and negative beliefs about certain populations. Questioning and disagreeing are all part of the learning process, and I would encourage all students to engage in these activities with thoughtfulness, openness, and respect.
c. Grading

Please see the following SSW Policies related to grading:

Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction
Student Grievance procedures
Policy for grading in special circumstances

In this unusual semester, it is understandable that some assignments will be late. Please email me if you have a concern about turning in an assignment on time. Assignments must be uploaded into the Canvas Dropbox.

Grades are assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. Class Recording and Course Materials

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.

e. 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. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including properly wearing a face covering in class and compliance with the University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the Campus Maize & Blueprint. Your ability to participate in this course 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 and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through Wolverine Access. 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.

f. 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.
### g. Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Material (discussion posts due 11:59pm the day before class on each Monday night)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>Welcome and course overview</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Course syllabus&lt;br&gt;• Common social welfare programs in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Watch</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Social Policy Crash Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Post</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Hello classmates! (see Canvas for instructions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Watch</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Seefeldt, What shapes U.S. social welfare policy: Beliefs, myths, and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Post</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Land and Legacies Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>U.S. Government Structures and Policymaking for Social Workers</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Staller Chapter 2 U.S. Government Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Watch</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Frameworks for Thinking About Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Post</strong>&lt;br&gt;• U.S. Governments Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 4</td>
<td>U.S. Constitution as Supreme Law and Historical Record for</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Staller Ch 3 U.S. Constitution for Social Workers&lt;br&gt;• Gordon et al. (2020). What Federalism Means for the US Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Material (discussion posts due 11:59pm the day before class on each Monday night)</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Social Workers | Watch                                    | • Seefeldt, K. The U.S. Constitution Part 1  
• Seefeldt, K. The U.S. Constitution Part 2 |
<p>|          | Post                                      | • U.S. Constitution Discussion                                                   |
|          | Supplemental/Reference                    | • United States Constitution and Amendments                                      |
| Class 5  | Government Budgets and Taxes for Social    | Read                                                                             |
|          | Watch                                     | • Seefeldt, Budget Lecture                                                       |
|          | Post                                      | • Budget discussion                                                             |
| Class 6  | Social Work and Welfare in Historical      | Read                                                                             |
|          | Watch (choose one)                         | • Heart of Bassett Place                                                        |
|          |                                            | • Women of Hull House                                                           |
|          | Post                                      | • History of Social Work                                                        |
| Class 7  | Creation of the Welfare State             | Read                                                                             |
| October 12 |                                            | • Staller. Creation of the Welfare State.                                      |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Material (discussion posts due 11:59pm the day before class on each Monday night)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Watch**  
• Film-Harry Hopkins  

**Post**  
• Creation of the Welfare State Discussion  

**FALL BREAK – NO CLASS OCTOBER 19**  

| ONLINE Class 8  
October 26 | The Safety Net Today - Contraction of the Welfare State | **Read**  

**Watch**  
• Vanishing Social Safety Net  

**Post**  
• Vanishing Welfare State Discussion  

**MEETING ON ZOOM THIS WEEK**  

| Class 9  
November 2 | How Do We Measure Poverty and Inequality? | **Read**  
• Cassidy, J. (2014) “Pickett’s Inequality Story in Six Charts.” *The New Yorker*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Material (discussion posts due 11:59pm the day before class on each Monday night)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No Discussion Post This Week</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>POLICY WORKSHEET DUE</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Class 10 | Understanding Poverty and Inequality: What are the Policies to Alleviate Poverty? | **Read:**  
• Gilson, D., Rios, E., (2016). “11 Charts That Show Income Inequality Isn’t Getting Better Anytime Soon” Mother Jones  
• Understanding poverty  
• Anti-poverty and income redistribution policies **Post**  
• Anti-poverty discussion |
| Class 11 | Equality, Opportunity, and Civil Rights | **Watch**  
• John Lewis Last Words **Watch – choose 1 of 4 options**  
• Latino Americans  
• Given a Chance  
• After Stonewall  
• ADA Now! **Post**  
• Equality and Civil Rights Discussion |

**TBD GUEST SPEAKER**

THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS NOVEMBER 23
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Material (discussion posts due 11:59pm the day before class on each Monday night)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Watch**<br>• Weaver – Frameworks  
• Weaver – Mental Health Policy  
• Weaver – Reform in Action  
• Weaver – Current Events  
**Post**<br>• Health Policy Discussion |
| November 30  |                                            |                                                                                  |
| Class 13     | Social Justice & Our Role as Policy Advocates | **Read**<br>• Fayyad, A. The Unfilled Promise of Fair Housing.  
**Listen**<br>• Doin’ the Work: Frontline Stories of Social Change-Podcast: White Supremacy in Social Work - Charla Cannon Yearwood, LSW and Laura Hoge, LCSW (43 min)  
• Racial wealth gap video  
**Post**<br>• Social justice discussion |
| December 7   |                                            |                                                                                  |