



Course title:	Foundational Topics in Social Work: Real World Perspectives on Poverty Solutions
Course #/term:	SWK 503, 001. Fall 2022
Time and place:	Friday, 12 noon, in person
Credit hours:	1
Prerequisites:	none
Instructor:	Trevor Bechtel
Pronouns:	he/his
Contact info:	Email: betrevor@umich.edu Phone: 734-615-0216 You may expect a response to emails within 12 hours
Office:	Ford School 5115
Office hours:	by appointment

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This course is taught by various members of the program faculty. Each version of the course has its own subtitle, some being offered one time only while others are repeated and may evolve into regular courses with their own course number and title. This is an appropriate selection for upper-level undergraduate students.

Real World Perspectives on Poverty Solutions introduces the key issues regarding the causes and consequences of poverty through a lecture series featuring experts in policy and practice from across the nation. The course explores interdisciplinary, real-world poverty solutions from a wide variety of perspectives and encourages the formation of a community of learners at U-M committed to engaging these issues together.

b. Course objectives

This lecture series course features different guest speakers each week. Speakers are national and global experts drawn from university, business and community contexts who explore interdisciplinary real-world poverty solutions from a wide variety of perspectives. Lectures will be recorded and made available on-line to engage the community regarding strategies and programs for poverty prevention and alleviation. Lectures will be free and available to the community as space permits.

Specific student learning objectives are to:

1. gain an understanding the key issues regarding the causes and consequences of poverty
2. explore a wide variety of approaches to understanding and providing solutions for poverty
3. learn from a diverse group of experts from university, business and community contexts
4. participate as a member of a multidisciplinary learning community linking scholars and practitioners from both the university and the community.
5. practice communicating ideas about poverty solutions in an online discussion forum and through written reflections.
6. explore the dynamics of commitment to social change and providing solutions to poverty.

c. **Course Competencies**

Social Work curriculum follows the competency based education framework adopted by the Council on Social Work Education. This course engages the following competencies:

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice

2. **Class Requirements**

a. **Text and class materials**

The lectures in the speaker series Real World Perspectives on Poverty Solutions compose the complete materials for this course. This semester these lectures offered in person and will be streamed to YouTube using the StreamYard platform. Students should attend in person, and record attendance using classquestion.com. The class code is: **DHJHX**

Lectures will be recorded and made available at poverty.umich.edu/speakers on Fridays a few hours after the lectures happen.

b. Class schedule

Date	Speaker	Topic
9/30/2022	Trevor Bechtel	Introduction
10/7/2022	Louise Seamster	In Deep Water: The Role of Municipal Debt in Environmental Crises and Racial Disparities
10/14/2022	Eli Savit and Victoria Burton Harris	Pursuing Justice in the Prosecutor's Office: Racial and Economic Equity in a Stratified Community
10/21/2022	Rep. Rashida Tlaib	Politics, Policy, and Poverty: Medical Debt and Other Financial Reforms
10/28/2022	Ivette Perfecto	Biodiversity, Coffee Production, and Dignified Livelihoods Under a Globalized Economy
11/4/2022	Nyron Crawford	Lost Boys, Invisible Men: Policy Feedback After Marijuana Legalization
11/11/2022	Mara Ostfeld	The Color of Power: The Evolving Relationship Between Race, Skin Color and American Politics
11/18/2022	Norma Rey-Alicea	Ensuring that Postsecondary Credentials Pay Off for Low-Income Students

c. Assignments

Canvas discussion postings

For six lectures, write a paragraph (at least 100 words) about an important idea from the Friday presentation and Q&A. I will provide a couple sample questions based on the presentation to get you started. The discussion for each week will be available starting on Friday afternoon (4 pm) after each class meeting until the next Tuesday evening (11 pm).

Reflective essays

Initial Essay: By the conclusion of the 2nd week of class students will write an essay reflecting on their current understanding of poverty.

Students should attend to questions like: What experiences with poverty does the student have? What are the causes and consequences of poverty? What social dynamics effect poverty? What is involved in providing a solution to poverty?

Final Essay: By two weeks after the last day of class students will write an essay reflecting on: A) their initial essay. B) at least four ideas from the lectures given during the semester.

This essay should detail any changes in thinking for the student about the causes and consequences of poverty. What has the student learned about the dynamics of commitment to social change and providing solutions to poverty?

Students should make explicit reference to their initial essay and to at least four lectures in crafting their final essay. Reusing writing from the initial essay and the discussion postings is appropriate for this assignment.

d. **Attendance and class participation**

You should attend six sessions from October 7th-November 18th are required. You are allowed to miss one session. If you need to participate virtually due to illness or for other reasons let the instructor know ahead of class.

Students are expected to attend 6 lectures, write responses and participate class discussion. All class sessions will be recorded and made available.

This is the MSW [Policy on Class Attendance](#).

e. **Grading**

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A 93-100%

A- 90-92.9%

B+ 87-89.9%

B 83-86.9%

B- 80-82.9%

C+ 77-79.9%

C 73-76.9%

C- 70-72.9%

Participation, attendance: 12 points

Summaries: 48 points (8 points per summary for 6 lectures)

Reflective essays (2): 40 points (15 points for initial essay, 25 points for final essay)

Total points possible: 100 points

Late essays will immediately lose 10% of their total point value and will lose an additional 10% for each day the assignment is late.

Is important to submit your own responses in discussion postings and essays.

Intentional plagiarism carries serious consequences within the class and the Dean's office.

f. **Class Recording and Course Materials**

The lectures in the speaker series Real World Perspectives on Poverty Solutions compose the complete materials for this course. They will be recorded and made available at poverty.umich.edu/speakers and on Canvas on Fridays a few hours after the lectures happen.

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. Applicable safety measures may be described in the Wolverine Culture of Care and the University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19. 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. 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. 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. 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*