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.
Course Syllabus

SW 825 Historical and Contemporary Issues in Social Work and Social Welfare
Fall Term 2022

Tuesdays 2:00-5:00

Instructor: Karen M. Staller, Ph.D., J.D.
Pronouns: She, her, hers

Email: (kstaller@umich.edu)
Phone and Voicemail: 763-5769
Virtual or In Person Chats: By appointment

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 Books:**


**Recommended Books:**

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

**Course Organization/Assignments/Overview:**

**Course Organization:** This course will be conducted as a seminar that combines lectures by the instructor, student-led class discussions on weekly readings, and student presentations on book review essay and 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. (2-3 pages) Due: Sept. 6**
   Ungraded and performed. Please bring a hard copy to class for submission (and submit online through Canvas). Write your own professional lifetime achievement award or retirement statements. (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) **Original Historical Research Paper (or equivalent) and Presentation (See separate handout). Updates/Outlines due (Sept 13th, Oct. 4th, Nov. 1st) and presentations (Nov 22, Nov 29, and Dec 6th).** 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. (Sign up schedule for final presentations on Canvas.)

3) **Book Discussion and Question Submission. Discussion Dates: Sept 20, Oct 4, Oct 25, Nov 8 or Nov 15.** We will be reading 5 books on some aspect of social work history written (or compiled) by contemporary, preeminent scholars in the field. *All students are responsible for reading all books (selections will be determined by students preferences).* 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 thread questions to the presenting student(s) no later than the prior Sunday at 6pm for each book.

   The presenting student will a) organize the discussion questions; and b) lead the class discussion using some, all, or none of suggested questions. 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?)

   See a list of book options below. Note that the titles reflect diverse topics and subjects. On the list you will find titles that focus on macro practice, direct practice, and community organizing. Some are written by social work scholars, others are about social work but written by authors outside the profession (history, sociology). Some take a critical race perspective, some a radical view, and others not. Some focus on agencies, others are population-based. A few are autobiographical or biographical. Some are classics, others are newcomers to the list. As you contemplate your choices, you might also consider the date of publication. They span the 20th and 21st century. You may select other books with the approval of the instructor. Proposed titles must: a) arguably be connected to social work and b) be historical in nature.


Margolin, Leslie (1997). *Under the Cover of Kindness: The invention of social work.* University of Virginia.


# SW 825 Course Overview in Brief, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic in brief</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Date and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTIONS AND HISTORICAL PLACEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Acknowledgements, Legacies, &amp; Introductions Why this Course? Course Business</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aug 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>“Intellectual DNA’ And Historical Overview</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sept 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; \ Lifetime Achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **SECTION TWO – TOPICAL THEMES AND RECURRING TENSIONS SOCIAL WELFARE FRAMEWORKS** | | | |
| Three | Humanitarians or Agents of Social Control? Othering, Sorting, and Policing the Poor | | Sept 13<sup>th</sup> \ Project Proposals |
| Four | Colonizing and 'Indigenous’ Social Work Practices: Help from Whose Perspective? | | Sept 20th \ Book Discussion (1) Simon (Olivia) |
| Five | Missionaries, Proselytizers, & Charity Workers Morality and “Civilization” Projects | | Sept 27th \ Simon Discussion (2) (Olivia) |

| **SECTION THREE – PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PHILANTHROPY & CHARITY WORK: EDUCATION, PRACTICE & KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT** | | | |
| Six | The Professionalization Project: Scientific Philanthropy & the Birth of Social Work Education / Gender & Race | | October 4<sup>th</sup> \ Book Discussion Road Not Taken (Nico-1) |
| Seven  | Social Work Practice Models  
Indoor-Outdoor  
Urban League, COS, Settlements,  
Race, Ethnicity, Nativity, and Social Class | October 11th  
Book Discussion  
Road Not Taken  
(Nico-2) |
|---|---|---|
|     | FALL BREAK  
OCTOBER 17 AND 18 |   |
| Eight | Social Work Knowledge:  
“Science” and Practical Wisdom  
Enduring Controversies and Critiques of Epistemological Debates | October 25th  
Book Discussion  
AA Leadership  
(Stephen-1) |
|   | SECTION FOUR  
STATE BUILDING, ORGANIZING AND NEOLIBERAL AGENDAS |   |
| Nine | Social Work and State Building  
Creation to Retraction of the U.S. Welfare State | November 1st  
Book Discussion  
AA Leadership 2  
(Stephen-2) |
| Ten  | Social Movements, Protests, and Community Organization:  
Seeking Justice | November 8th  
Book Discussion  
4 Civility,  
Philanthropy  
Charmaine (1) |
| Eleven | Neoliberalism, Markets, Privatization  
In the Academy and Profession | November 15th  
Civility,  
Philanthropy  
Charmaine (2) |
| Twelve | Presentations  ---REMOTE | November 22nd  
Olivia & Stephen |
| Thirteen | Presentations | November 29th  
Charmaine & Nico |
| Fourteen | TBD | December 6th  
Final Research Papers |
Class Topics and Reading

SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTIONS AND HISTORICAL PLACEMENT

Session 1
Introductions: Acknowledgements, Legacies & Introductions
Why this Course?


Reading:


- Shaping Discourse

Session 2
Considering Social Workers & Their Contributions

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? 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?

Readings:


Recommended Reading:

- Historical Overviews: Skeleton Frameworks
SECTION TWO – TOPICAL THEMES AND RECURRING TENSIONS
SOCIAL WELFARE FRAMEWORKS

Session 3

Humanitarians or Agents of Social Control?
Othering, Sorting and Policing the Poor

Abstract: These reading cluster around questions of how to characterize the actions of charity workers, reformers, and social workers. Are they benevolent humanitarians? Are they agents of social control and perpetrators of state violence? Historians have tackled questions about these tensions in scholarship using images such as “unfaithful angels,” “altruistic imagination” and “under the cover of kindness.” As you engage with these readings grapple with that core tension in preparing for our discussion.

Some additional questions include: Who qualifies for relief, aid, or help and why? What and whose values control? How has social participated in “othering”? Who is worthy and who is unworthy. How do we handle the employed, the unemployment, and the “dependent”. What about those who are ‘settled’ or unsettled. Able-bodied, differently-abled and dis-abled. What are the implications of us and them politics of inclusion, exclusion, settlement, and migration? Where should boundaries be drawn? Political or social inclusion and exclusion: citizenship, refugees, immigration, and emigration. The role of social Darwinism, eugenics and cultural genocide.

Reading

Overview


Othering and Social Work

- 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

Othering, Sorting and Humanitarian Impulses


Othering and policing: Able-bodied and “ugliness”


• Buckley, N. (2020, Jan 9). How John Harvey Kellogg was wrong on race. Battle Creek Enquirer.
• Watch and Listen: Ugly Laws PBS https://www.pbs.org/video/why-it-was-illegal-to-be-ugly-c8ps4i/

Recommended Reading

• History and Humanitarianism: A conversation. The Past and Present, 241 (Nov 2018)

Session 4
“Colonizing” and “Indigenous” (or local) Social Work Practices:
Help from Whose Perspective?

Book Discussion : Simon (Olivia -1)

The broader question to consider for this set of readings is who controls, defines, and organizes the “helping” agenda and for whose benefit? We look at the tension among colonial, self help or mutual aid and “foreign aid.” In short, how should we think about those “helping” or “giving” on the one hand and those being “helped” or “receiving” on the other? Are the agendas aligned? Who controls and who imposes? Colonizing tactics and indigenous (local) practices. Some special populations you might take note of: “dependents, delinquents, defectives, idiots and epileptics.”

Reading

“Help” imposed on community

• Pratt, Richard H. (1852). The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites. Annual Conference of Charities and Corrections, Denver, Co

“Help” within community

Outside/Foreign Aid


Recommended Skim Reading

- International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy, (1893). Commitment, Detention, Care and Treatment of the Insane. (Skim table of contents)
- International Congress of Charities and Correction and Philanthropy, 1894. The Care of dependent, neglected, and wayward children: being a report of the second section. (Skim table of contents).

Session 5
Missionaries, Proselytizers, & Charity Workers
Morality and “Civilization” Projects

Book Discussion: Simon (Olivia -2)

The broader questions for this discussion consider social work as a moral project. Where are the boundaries between religion, faith, secular philanthropy, and social work? How has religion between intertwined with social justice work? Where might be the boundaries between ministering, proselytizing, saving others, and charity work? Consider the role of Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Quaker, Mormon, and Muslim.

Also consider the role of social work policing morality: alcohol, substances, gambling, “low” theater attendance and sexuality.

Required Reading:

Jewish Philanthropy


Catholic Philanthropy


Mormon (review from above)

**Indigenous or Native**


**Salvation Army**


**Recommended Reading:**


---

**SECTION THREE – PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PHILANTHROPY & CHARITY WORK: EDUCATION, PRACTICE & KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT**

**Session 6**

The Professionalization Project: Scientific Philanthropy
The Birth of Social Work Education
Gender & Race

**Book Discussion: Reisch & Andrews (Nicholas-1)**

The progressive era and traditionally recognized roots of social work. We will spend three class sessions looking at aspects of that history in social work education, in competing practice models and in competing knowledge claims. Some mark the start of a quest for professional legitimacy with Abraham Flexner’s 1915 address to the Conference of Charities and Corrections. We will briefly look at this commonly cited starting point before turning to the gendered and racialized nature of social work education. In subsequent weeks we turn to social work services and practice models. This is followed by an examination of social work's knowledge base. Through each week we consider 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.

**Reading:**

**Professionalization and the Flexner Factor**

• Flexner, A. (1915). Is social work a profession?

**Social Work Education Overviews**
• Bruno, Frank J. (1944). Twenty-five years of schools of social work. Social Service Review, 18(2):152-164
• Austin. The Institutional Development of Social Work Education: The first 100 years—and beyond.

• Race Considered
  o Hopps, Lowe & Clayton. From ‘Friendly Visitor’ to Professional Social Worker: The Atlanta Story

• Gender Considered

Recommended Reading:

• Costin, L. (1983). Edith Abbott and the Chicago influence on social work education. Social Services Review, 57 (1)
• Abbott, Andrew (1995). Boundaries of social work or social work of boundaries? Social Services Review.

Session 7
Social Work Practice Models
Indoor and Outdoor Relief: Asylums, COS, and Settlements
Ethnicity, Nativity, Race and Social Class

Book Discussion: Reisch & Andrews (Nicholas-2)

Abstract: Social needs and services during the progressive era. Immigration, Industrialization, Urbanization and the Great Migration. Charitable organization societies (COS), Settlement House, Urban League, Mutual Aid, and other organizations. The role of private philanthropy and public
monies. Case work and case recording. Role of race, gender, ethnicity, nativity, and social class in social work development charities and corrections

**Required Reading**


**Indoor or Outdoor Relief: Asylums and Placing Out: Charity and/or Correction**

- Overview- Staller (2022). Indoor and Outdoor Debate

**Service Models: National Urban League, COS, and Social Settlements**


**COS Case Work, Case Record and Controversies**


**Social Settlements**

- Carlton-LaNey (1994). The career of Birdye Henrietta Haynes, a Pioneer Settlement House Worker

**Recommended Reading**

- Staller, K.M. (2020) Introduction in *New York Newsboys*
- Sears, The Charity Worker: A handbook for beginners. (Skim contents).

**African American Charity Workers**

Session 8  
Social Work Knowledge: “Science” and Practical Wisdom  
Enduring Controversies and Critiques of Epistemological Debates  

Book Discussion: LaNey (Stephen-1)  

Abstract: Role of science in “applied philanthropy” The relationship of social work to “science” and/or knowledge development. For what purpose and for 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 is 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:

Empiricism, Postmodern/Critical, Decolonizing


“Empiricism”


Postmodern/Critical


References:


Recommended


Progressive Era “Science”

• Kelly, (1895). Hull House Maps and Papers
• DuBois (1899). Philadelphia Negro
• Kellogg (1909). Pittsburgh Survey
• Richmond (1917). Social Diagnosis

SECTION THREE – SOCIAL WELFARE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS
SOCIAL WELFARE MOVEMENTS

Session 9
Social Work and State Building
Creation to Retraction of the U.S. Welfare State

Book Discussion: LaNey (Stephen-2)

Abstract: The New Deals (Native Nation and U.S.) and the Creation, Expansion and Contraction of the Welfare State: The Creation of the U.S. Welfare State during the Great Depression including the Social Security Act: Structure, implications, legacy and future. Who was included? Who was excluded? Consider the context of Mexican “repatriation” and the anti-Asian immigration policy. The expansion of the welfare state in the 1960s and 1970s including the War on Poverty and multiple civil rights movements.

Finally, the retraction of the welfare state beginning in the 1980s including the Reagan Revolution and “New Federalism”. Devolution of federal public responsibility to state government, faith-based, “charitable choice” and non-profit sector. Leading to today’s complicated welfare state. The neoliberal turn and conservative agendas.

Required Reading:

• Barrow, Frederica (2007). Forrester Blanchard Washington and His Advocacy for African Americans in the New Deal

Welfare Reform

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

**Social Workers and Japanese Internment**


**Health**


**Movement, Immigration and Social Citizenship**


---

**Session 10**

**Social Movements, Protests, and Community Organization:**

**Seeking Justice**

**Book Discussion: Friedman & MacGarvie (Charmaine -1)**

**Abstract:** Community organizing, social and political movements. The role of civil rights, voting rights, labor rights, feminist, gay rights disability rights, Native and environmental activism, among others. Community organizing in the 1960 and 1970s. What are the implications for today?

**Required Reading:**

**Protests**

• Boulding, K.E. (1960). Toward a theory of protest

• King, M.L. *Letter from Birmingham Jail.*

• History of GEO at Michigan

**Poverty Organizing**


• *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.

**Black Panther**


• *How the Black Panther Breakfast Program Inspired and Threatened Government*

**Native Activism**
Cooper, Lauren (undated). Native American Activism: 1960s to Present. Teaching a People’s History.

**Mexican-American, Chicano, Latinx Activism**

- Fernández, Delia (2016). Rethinking the urban and rural divide in Latino labor, recreation, and activism in West Michigan, 1940-1970s. Labor History, 57:4, 482-503.
- Opie, Frederick (2014). Upsetting the Apple Cart: Black-Latino Coalitions in New York City from Protest to Public Office

**Gay Rights Movement**


**Recommended**

- Labor Organizing resources at UM

---

**Session 11**

**Neoliberalism, Markets, Privatization**

**In the Academy and Profession**

**Book Discussion: Friedman & MacGarvie (Charmaine -1)**

The Neoliberal Turn in the Academy, Nonprofits and Social Welfare. Accountability, outcome measures and the audit society. The corporatization and branding movements. Who should deliver "social welfare" and "social services"? The role of the marketplace. Public responsibility, private response, privatization of public responsibility?

**Required Reading**

- Zunz, Olivier (2011). Ch. 8 "In Search of a Non-profit Sector.”

**Recommended**


---

Presentations Nov 22: REMOTE -Olivia & Stephen
Presentation Nov 29: Charmaine & Nicholas
Dec 6: TBD
HAVE A GREAT BREAK!!