

Introduction to Social Work BSWC 2011 (5 ETCTS)

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Course Description

This course gives students a general understanding of the social work profession. Specifically, it covers issues like the current definition of social work, basic terms and concepts, historical development of the profession, and the major focal areas of social work including different paradigms of the profession and their underlining assumptions. It also discusses about the roles of social workers and the ethical issues they have to follow. The course also presents the development of social work education and practice in Ethiopia.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- 1- Tell their knowledge or understanding about the salient essences, purposes and features of the social work profession
- 2- Describe a familiarity of basic concepts, terms, theories and paradigms in the social work profession
- 3- Make an account of the growth and development of the profession worldwide
- 4- Identify and demonstrate the roles and functions of social workers
- 5- Identify social work practices with various client populations and in diverse contexts

Course content

Session 1-What is Social Work? Definition of social work; social work and other disciplines; goals of social work

Farley, O. Williams et al (2003). *Introduction to social work* (9th Ed.).

Boston: Pearson Education. (pp.1-14).

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), (July 2018). *Global social work statement of ethical principles*. Available online at:

<https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/>

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2017). *Introduction to social work and social welfare: Critical thinking perspectives*. (pp.3-6, 16-18).

Segal, E.A., Gerdes, K.E. & Steiner, S. (2019). *An introduction to the profession of social work: Becoming a change agent*. (pp.1-6).

Session 2: History of social Work and social welfare

Healy, L. M. (2008). *International social work: Professional action in an interdependent world* (2nd Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 6, pp.135-163).

Johnson, L. C. & Yanca, S. J. (2007). *Social work practice: A generalist approach*. (Chapter 2, "The Development of Social Work as a Profession", pp.17-37).

Wassie, K. (2014). Social work education in Ethiopia: Celebrating the re-birth of the profession. In H. Spitzer, J. Twikirize & G. Wairire (Eds.). *Professional social work in East Africa: Towards social development, poverty reduction and gender equality*, pp.161-172. Kampala: Foundation Publishers.

Wassie, K. (2019). Social work education in Ethiopia: Past, present and future. *International Journal of Social Work*, 6(1).

Session 3: The common base of social work: The knowledge, skills, and values of social work

Engelbrecht, L.K. (1999). *Introduction to social work*. (Chapter 4, "Values in social work", pp.49-60).

Johnson, L. C. & Yanca, S. J. (2007). *Social work practice: A generalist approach*. (Chapter 3, "Social Work as a Creative Blending of Knowledge, Values, and Skills", pp.38-56).

Segal, E.A., Gerdes, K.E. & Steiner, S. (2019). *An introduction to the profession of social work: Becoming a change agent*. (pp.18-19).

Session 4-5: Basic concepts in social work

Defining Social Welfare:

Ambrosino et al., (2016). *Social work and social welfare: An introduction*. (pp.5-6).

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2017). *Introduction to social work and social welfare: Critical thinking perspectives*. (p.6).

Defining Human Rights:

Mapp, S.C. (2008). *Human rights and social justice in a global perspective: An introduction to international social work*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. (pp.17-28).

Defining Social and Economic Justice:

Segal, E.A., Gerdes, K.E. & Steiner, S. (2019). *An introduction to the profession of social work: Becoming a change agent*. (pp.97-120).

Defining Diversity:

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2017). *Introduction to social work and social welfare: Critical thinking perspectives*. (pp.66-68, 72-73).

Defining strength and empowerment:

Miley, K.K., O'Melia, M.W. & DuBois, B.L. (2017). *Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach* (8th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education. (chapter 4 "Strengths and Empowerment", pp.69-92).

Defining advocacy:

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. & Hull, G.H. (2009). *Understanding generalist practice* (5th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning. (Chapter 14, "Advocacy", pp.480-503).

Defining person-in-environment:

Segal, E.A., Gerdes, K.E. & Steiner, S. (2019). *An introduction to the profession of social work: Becoming a change agent*. (pp.1-3, 7-12).

Defining generalist social work practice:

Miley, K.K., O'Melia, M.W. & DuBois, B.L. (2017). *Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach* (8th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education. (pp.7-9).

Session 6-7: Theoretical perspectives in social work: Introduction; psychological perspectives (Psychodynamic perspectives and cognitive

behavioral theories); structural theories (from radical to critical theories); systems and ecological perspectives

Ambrosino et al., (2016). *Social work and social welfare: An introduction*. (Chapter 3, "The Ecological/Systems Perspective", pp.53-80.).

Engelbrecht, L.K. (1999). *Introduction to social work*. (Chapter 7, The theoretical and practice paradigm of social work", pp.86-102; Chapter 8, Approaches in social work, pp.103-117).

Hutchison, E.D. (2018). *Dimensions of human behavior: Person and environment*. (Chapter 2, "Theoretical Perspectives on Human Behavior", pp.95-160).

Session 8: The scope of social work practice I: casework, social work practice with groups and communities

Engelbrecht, L.K. (1999). *Introduction to social work*. (Chapter 9, "The intervention process in social work", pp.118-129).

Segal, E.A., Gerdes, K.E. & Steiner, S. (2019). *An introduction to the profession of social work: Becoming a change agent*. (Chapter 6, "Generalist Social Work Practice", pp.155-190).

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2017). *Introduction to social work and social welfare: Critical thinking perspectives*. (Chapter 4, "The Process of Generalist Practice", pp.113-138).

Session 9: The scope of social work practice II: agency administration, research, and policy practice

Ambrosino et al., (2016). *Social work and social welfare: An introduction*. (pp.149-160).

Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2017). *Introduction to social work and social welfare: Critical thinking perspectives*. (Chapter 7, "Policy, Policy Analysis, Policy Practice, and Policy Advocacy: Foundations for Service Provision", pp.219-244).

Session 10: Core competencies of social workers; ethical principles and dilemmas in social work

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), (2015). *Educational policy and accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's social work programs*. CSWE. Available online at:

https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Accreditation-Process/2015-EPAS/2015EPAS_Web_FINAL.pdf.aspx

Engelbrecht, L.K. (1999). *Introduction to social work*. (Chapter 1, "The competent social worker", pp.1-11).

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), (July 2018). Global social work statement of ethical principles. Available online at:

<https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/>
Session 11: Group presentations

Fields of practice and populations served by social workers will be covered by students. These include, among other topics: social work and services for children and families; social work and services for people with disabilities; social work practice with the elderly; social work in health care and mental health; school social work; Social Work and services in the criminal justice system.

Teaching method

The main teaching method will be lecture followed by discussion or vice versa. Pair or group activity will be given in the class to raise the participation of students.

Assessment

1-	Quizzes	20%
2-	Final exam	45%
3-	Individual assignment	10%
4-	Group assignment	25%

In the group assignment, students

1. identify a field of practice or populations that social workers serve, and define the field/population, describe common problems experienced in the field or by the population (will have ten points);
2. identify and discuss common possible social work interventions in the field or with the population (ten points); and
3. make oral presentation to the class (will have five points).

Potential area of topics for the group assignment might include: social work and services for children and families; social work and services for people with disabilities; social work practice with the elderly; social work in health care and mental health; school social work; Social Work and services in the criminal justice system; etc. No topic could be addressed by more than one group and a group shouldn't have more than six members. The final paper should be completed within 4-7 pages, with double space and 12 font size. The due date for submitting the paper will be one week before the semester ends. The final session will be devoted for the group presentations.

Ground rules (roles and requirements)

- 1- Attendance will be taken in every class
- 2- Students are expected to be present each day for the entire class sessions
- 3- Students are expected to show greater participation in the class
- 4- Students are expected to do the readings assigned for the class
- 5- Students are encouraged to consult the instructor in case of difficulties
- 6- Each student works the assignments given by the instructor and submits on the due dates
- 7- Any misconduct/misbehavior in the class and in the teaching learning process will be penalized in accordance with rules and regulations of the University.
- 8- The instructor is responsible to create conducive teaching and learning environment by providing adequate material for discussion and by initiating and encouraging students to participate.

References

- Ambrosino, R., Ambrosino, R., Heffernan, J. & Shuttlesworth, G. (2016). *Social work and social welfare: An introduction* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Engelbrecht, L.K. (1999). *Introduction to social work*. Wellington: Lanzo.
- Hutchison, E.D. (2018). *Dimensions of human behavior: Person and environment* (6th Ed.). Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.
- Johnson, L. C. &Yanca, S. J. (2007). *Social work practice: A generalist approach* (9th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education. (Chapter 3, "Social Work as a Creative Blending of Knowledge, Values, and Skills", pp.38-56).
- Kirst-Ashman, K.K. (2017). *Introduction to social work and social welfare: Critical thinking perspectives* (5th Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Miley, K.K., O'Melia, M.W. & DuBois, B.L. (2017). *Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach* (8th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Segal, E.A., Gerdes, K.E. & Steiner, S. (2019). *An introduction to the profession of social work: Becoming a change agent* (6th Ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.