McGill University School of Social Work

SWRK 220: History and Philosophy of Social Work

COURSE INFORMATION: Mondays, 11:35-2:25

Section 1: Room 105, Wilson Hall

Instructor: Aline Bogossian
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Office Hours: By appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Purpose

This introductory course explores the development of social welfare and the evolution of the social work profession in Canada. Instructors and students will analyze the values and assumptions that form the foundation of existing welfare programs and institutions and explore the social, economic, political and cultural contexts in which they have developed. Through lectures and readings, students will examine unique aspects of Canadian social welfare development as well as those shared with other industrialized countries. Finally, the development of the social work profession will be analyzed from different perspectives.

The course will also explore the evolution of the welfare state in light of economic and social inequality, racism, and sexism. The view of “outsiders” in Canadian history allows us to gain perspective on the source of conflict and consensus. Instructors and students will work together to evaluate social work’s role in developing social policies and programs. We will explore the question: Has the profession been an advocate for those excluded from the “mainstream” or another societal mechanism of enforcing conformity and exclusion?

Course Objectives

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

- Identify and understand key concepts and issues of social work practice in Canada, the concepts and issues of social welfare, social policy, and social work and their relationships to one another.
- Trace the development of the Canadian welfare state.
- Appreciate the historical contributions of Indigenous, French, and English populations to social work philosophy and practice.
- Critically assess the relationship between social policies and the values/assumptions underlying several major ideological approaches to social welfare.
- Appreciate the professional values of social work including the responsibility to promote and support institutional and social change, and their relationship to broader social beliefs.
**Approach to Teaching and Learning**

Although this course is generally structured as an introductory course, participatory learning is emphasized. Individual and group exercises are an integral part of the course; your regular attendance and respectful contributions will support the development of a rich learning environment. Self-reflection, an open exchange of ideas, and critical analysis are encouraged throughout the course. Taking a critical perspective on the course material will allow us to question values, assumptions, and ways of seeing that are often taken for granted as well as the influence of social location and power dynamics.

**Method of Instruction**

This course will combine lectures, group discussions, guest speakers, and class exercises. Students are expected to participate actively in all aspects of learning.

**Textbook & Course Materials**

**Required Text**

- Course reader (available at the McGill Bookstore).

**Assignments and Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class Participation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In-class Quiz</td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Midterm Paper</td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Learning Module Response</td>
<td>November 26</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Final Exam</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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1. **Class Participation (10%)**

Classes will consist of lecture, video, discussion, individual activities, small-group activities, and a pop-quiz. There will also be guest speakers—experts working in the field who will come and share their knowledge and experience with the class and who will animate in-class activities. Students are expected to participate in all class activities, including pop quizzes on course material during the term. This participation will count towards 10% of the final grade.

2. **In-class Quiz (15%)**

Quiz questions will be drawn from the assigned required readings from Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 and Class 4. The quiz will consist of multiple choice and short-answer questions. The in-class quiz will be worth 15% of the final grade, and will be held at the beginning of class on October 15th.
3. **Midterm paper (30%)**

For this assignment, you will apply social work principles to a contemporary social work narrative. You will be provided with a brief story about social work practice (from Lecroy (2002) *A Call to Social Work*, in your course pack) and you will be required to address several questions about how this experience relates to your understanding of social work to date. Further paper details will be provided in class.

In addition to content, your grade will depend on the paper’s readability (spelling, grammar, clarity, organization, structure, length of the paper). The paper should be typed or word-processed, no more than 4-pages double spaced (12 point font, 1” margins on all sides) plus a reference page. The midterm paper will be worth 30% of the final grade, and is due at the beginning of class on **October 22th**.

4. **Learning Module Response (5%)**

For this assignment, students will (a) review learning modules on social work topics found on the course WebCT site and (b) respond to questions that are included at the end of the module. You are responsible for emailing your responses to the questions by **midnight on November 26th to the TA**. Questions are drawn from the material in the learning module as well as building upon material learned throughout the course. The learning module responses are worth 5% of the final grade.

5. **Final Exam (40%)**

A cumulative final exam based on Class 1 - 12 will consist of short answers and essay questions. The final date and location of the final exam will be announced toward the end of the term when received from the university.

**WebCT Access**

This course includes online material delivered through McGill’s course management system, WebCT. To access WebCT, you will need access to the Internet and a supported Web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari).

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance and Participation**

Students are expected to attend all classes listed on the course calendar and to participate in class and group discussions and exercises.

In accordance with McGill University’s Charter of Student Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

**Assignment Revisions**

In accordance with the Charter of Student Rights, students have a right to consult with the instructor regarding any written submission for which they have received a grade. If a student would like his or her assignment re-graded, an independent reviewer will assess the
appropriateness of the original grade based, for example, on the application of the grading key to the student’s work. If a grade is deemed unfair, it is changed, whether the new grade is higher or lower than the original (i.e., the reviewer’s grade takes precedence over the original grade.)

Reassessment of Final Exams

Students must apply in writing to the Student Affairs Office by March 31st; these deadlines are strictly enforced and no requests will be accepted past then. Students are assessed a fee of $35 for exam re-reads. However, it is strongly recommended (but not required) that students consult with the instructor of the course before requesting a re-read of a final exam. Grades may be lowered, raised or remain the same as a result of the re-read. The grade obtained on the re-read takes precedence over the original grade.

Note: For reassessments, the reviewer is asked to assess the fairness of the original grade, not to assess the assignment and grade it as s/he would have graded it.

Late Assignment Policy

Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor before the due date. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

Marks for the midterm paper will be reduced by one grade (e.g. B to B-) for every working day the assignment is late, except for extensions approved in advance or justified by a medical or other emergency.

Laptops and Cell phones in the Classroom

Laptops in the classroom are for note-taking purposes only. Using laptops for any other purpose is distracting to the instructor as well as students. All those who wish to use their laptops for note taking must receive prior approval from the instructor and must sit in the front row of the classroom. Cell phones should be turned off, and text messaging is not permitted during class time. Students are ONLY allowed to use their cell phones and check email during the class break.

Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

Communication with Instructors

Students are encouraged to ask questions during class time and request an appointment with the instructor or teaching assistant whenever further explanation is needed. However, please note, questions will NOT be answered via email.
Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 (online at http://www.mcgill.ca/osd), and then, if necessary, make arrangements with the instructor to discuss your situation.

Other Issues

If you have special needs or religious observances that require accommodation, please make an appointment to meet and discuss with the instructor. Information on McGill policies on accommodations is available online at http://www.mcgill.ca/student-records/dates/holydays/ and http://www.mcgill.ca/osd/.

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective social work professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that she can help you find a solution.

Improve Your Writing

Writing is an essential professional skill for social workers. Even those who are confident in their writing skills have room for improvement. In some cases, instructors may suggest that students seek out help with their writing. In other cases, students might decide on their own that professional help is needed. The Writing Centre (http://www.mcgill.ca/mwc/) has services for those who would like help with writing. There are also several resources posted on WebCT.

Writing Tips

- Use headings to guide your reader (check out social work journals for examples).
- Avoid short, journalistic paragraphs. Each paragraph is to be a unit of thought, and should develop an idea.
- Provide transitions between topics. Your paper should "hang together".
- Support or illustrate your assertions; be as specific and precise as possible.
- Avoid errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Double-space essay, leaving 1 inch margins on all sides to make room for comments.
- Quoted materials belong in quotation marks and should be cited (see below for an example). Words or passages that are paraphrased also need to be cited. Indeed, any reference to a specific text or lecture should be cited.
- Use APA model as follows (APA Style Manual (6th Edition) available at the Reference Library)

Reference Style


- Book Chapter: Last name, First Initial. (Year). Title. In First Initial., Last name, (ed.). Book (pgs. XX-XX). Place: Publisher.
• Book: Last name, First Initial. (Year). *Title* (pages). Place: Publisher.

**In-Text Citations**

• Paraphrased material: (Last name, Year).
• Direct quote: (Last name, Year, pgs. XX-XX).
• Double-indent and single-space all direct quotations of 40 words or more (and exclude quotation marks)

**Important Note:** This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to check his/her McGill email regularly for announcements regarding corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted via in-class announcements, McGill email, and posted in the course announcements section of WebCT.
COURSE OUTLINE

Class 1: Monday, September 10th

Introductions
- Review of course outline
- How does one define a social problem?
- Development of social work as a profession
- Philosophies of welfare, social change, and social justice

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 1 (pp. 2-15)
- Hick, Chapter 5 (pp. 76-93)

Class 2: Monday, September 17th

Social Welfare in Canada - Part 1
- Historical Foundations: French and English Traditions
- Origins and evolution of social welfare
- Definitions of social welfare
- Values and social context

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 3 (pp. 36-53)
- Course pack:

Class 3: Monday, September 24th

Social Welfare in Canada - Part 2
Guest speaker: Lisa Fazio
- Historical foundations – Indigenous communities
- Values and social context
- Social work meanings in Indigenous communities

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 11 (pp. 218-249)
- Course pack:
Native women’s writings of North America (pp. 175-186). New York: W. W. Norton.

Class 4: Monday, October 1\textsuperscript{st}

Theory and Approaches to Social Welfare Practice
- Philosophies underlying the social work profession
- Ideological approaches to social welfare

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 4 (pp. 54-75)
- Course pack:

NO CLASS: October 8\textsuperscript{th} (Thanksgiving)

Class 5: Monday, October 15\textsuperscript{th}

***In-class Quiz***

Mid-term Evaluation

Class 6: Monday, October 22\textsuperscript{th}

***Midterm Paper DUE at the beginning of class***

Social Work and Health
- Social determinants of health
- Class activity: Harm reduction exercise

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 9 (pp. 168-193)
- Course pack:

Recommended reading:
Class 7: Monday, October 29th

Changing Demographics in Canadian Society
Guest lecturer: Ilyan Ferrer
- Social work with aging populations

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 13 (pp. 270-291)
- Course pack:

Class 8: Monday, November 5th

Social Work With Children and Families
Guest lecturers: Lise Milne
- History of child welfare
- Child welfare in Canada today
- Changing conceptualizations of childhood

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 8 (pp. 134-167)
- Course pack:

Recommended reading:

Class 9: November 12th

The Role of Women in Social Welfare

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 10 (pp. 195-217)
- Course pack:
and the Canadian welfare state: Challenges and changes (pp. 91-115).
Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
  o Freedberg, S. (1993). The feminine ethic of care and the professionalization

Recommended reading:
Zawilski (Ed.), *Inequality in Canada: A reader on the intersections of gender,
race, and class* (pp. 84-99) (2nd edition). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University
Press.

**Class 10: Monday, November 19th**

**Social Work and Gender Diversity**
**Guest lecturer(s): Nora Butler Burke**
**ASTT(e)Q - Action Santé Travesti(e)s et Transsexuel(le)s du Québec (Un projet de Cactus Montréal)**

- Social work practice with LGBTTQ communities

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 14 (pp. 293-313)
- Course pack:
  - Brotman, S., Ryan, B., Jalbert, Y., & Rowe, B. (2002). Reclaiming space-
  Regaining health: The health care experiences of Two-Spirit people in

**Class 11: Monday, November 26th**

***Online Learning Module Questions DUE. Submit to your TA by midnight***

**Social Work with Persons with Disabilities**
**Guest speaker: Judith Sabetti**

- Constructions of disability and social work practice

Required reading:
- Hick, Chapter 15 (pp. 314-335)
- Course pack:
  - Rothman, J.C. (2010). The challenge of disability and access:
  Reconceptualizing the role of the medical model. *Journal of Social Work in
Disability & Rehabilitation, 9*(2), 194-222.
Disability Studies Reader* (pp. 197-204). New York: Routledge.

Recommended reading:
- Davis, L.J. (2006). Constructing normalcy: The bell curve, the novel, and the
invention of the disabled body in the nineteenth century. In L. Davis (Ed.),
*The Disability Studies Reader* (pp. 3-16). New York: Routledge.
Class 12: Monday, December 3\textsuperscript{th}

\textbf{International Social Work Practice}

\textbf{Guest speaker:} Bree Akesson

Required reading:
- Hick, \textit{Chapter 16} (pp. 336-355)
- Course pack:

\textbf{FINAL EXAM: TBA}