

Course Syllabus: Introduction to Social Work

Social work is an applied science designed to empower individuals, families, groups, communities and nations to improve their condition and well being in their specific contexts. As such, it is often called the “empowering profession” as social workers build upon the strengths of the client systems, identify gaps in resources, and partner in making the changes self-determined by the client system. In this course, we examine the values and standards, the history and current range of social work practices, leading theories and conceptual frameworks, and how social work is similar to, or different from, other social/behavioral sciences. We also learn about the various sub-fields of social work, and readings/video lectures are supplemented by volunteer experience in an agency, interviews with practicing social workers, and exams. This course is designed for undergraduate students who 1) want to increase their general understanding about the social work profession; and 2) have a professional interest in social work and wish to prepare to work in this field. This course fulfills the University GE Social Science requirement and is a prerequisite for the MSW program at Brigham Young University.

This course is designed to introduce students to the knowledge, values, and skills involved in the practice of social work as a profession and to gain a broad view of social work practice. Students will become better acquainted with the history and values/ethics of the social work profession, learn of its development into professional status, become familiar with educational and licensure requirements for various types of practice, learn firsthand how social work agencies serve clients, and learn about the various sub-fields in the social work profession. Special emphasis is placed on concepts of social and economic justice and empowerment of those who are disenfranchised in society. Students completing this GE social science course will also have explicit knowledge and experience of both the strengths and the weaknesses of applying the scientific method to a particular set of problems and issues within a social work context.

Through participation in this course, you will be prepared to:

- define the term “social work” and understand the role played by the social work profession in today's complex society;
- describe historical developments of the social work profession and its relationship to the evolution of social welfare in the U.S. and around the world;

- demonstrate a beginning understanding of the knowledge base of social work;
 - describe the value base of social work, its philosophy, methods, and client systems;
 - demonstrate an understanding of the contents of the NASW Code of Ethics and the profession's commitment to diversity and social justice;
 - identify the basic helping skills used in social work;
 - identify specific social work services and specific oppressed and at-risk populations;
 - identify specific approaches used with various special populations and show a working understanding of the need for social and economic justice;
 - describe why and how the social work profession prepares students for advocacy and where that advocacy is deemed to be most needed (i.e. populations at-risk, discrimination, economic and social injustice);
 - examine the methodology and approach of social work within the social/behavioral sciences;
 - identify the assumptions about human nature used by social work; and
 - know the basic theories or evidences supporting or contradicting these theories and explanations, as well as the implications of social work's approach and findings for individuals, families, society, and public policies.
-
- DuBois, B. L., & Miley, K. K. (2019). *Social work: An empowering profession*(9th ed.) New York: Pearson. ISBN: 0134695798

Note: While the course has been set up using the 9th edition, students are permitted to use the 8th edition of this textbook.

[\(Back to top\)](#)

You will take a brief quiz each week. All quizzes are in objective, multiple-choice, matching, true/false format. They cover material from the chapters from the textbook and other reading and viewing assignments listed in each lesson.

Quizzes will generally include 10 questions, and you will have 15 minutes after opening the quiz to complete it. Quizzes typically open on Mondays and need to be completed by Wednesday at 11:59pm. You will not be allowed to take the quiz after that due date. While you may reference your notes and assigned course materials while taking the quiz,

it will be important to read, watch, and understand the material before taking the quiz in order to complete the quizzes on time.

Quizzes include the same kinds of questions as the final exam.

Note: you will be given the choice to change the grade on one of the quizzes, so you can 1) either not take one quiz during a week and still get full credit, or 2) take all the quizzes and turn your lowest quiz to a 10. Please let the TA know sometime during the semester what you decide so she can enter that into your grade.

Each week you will have the opportunity to discuss course concepts and your reflections with other students and the instructor. You are expected to actively participate in the discussion. Your comments must be substantive and reflect critical thinking and professional judgment. For example, if you're agreeing or disagreeing with someone's comment, you should explain why and share your own experience and reasoning. A typical question will require at least 5 sentences of response and then another 5 sentences to respond to. Respond to at least 2 classmates' posts. Participation in the discussions will be assessed as your class participation and counted toward your class participation grade.

Note: you will be given the choice to 1) either not complete one of the discussions or replies during one week and still get full credit, or 2) complete all the discussions and replies and turn your lowest score to a 10. Please let the TA know sometime during the semester what you decide so she can enter that into your grade.

This assignment will be completed by each student three times throughout the semester.

The first time you complete the assignment it will be worth five points and will be graded strictly on if it was turned in. The remaining two submissions will be graded based on the criteria outlined in the rubric. To complete the assignment each student should do the following:

1. Identify a topic within the course materials that you would like to learn more about and find a peer-reviewed research article on that topic.
 1. This can be anything we have or will talk about that is in Canvas or your textbook.

2. Print off the peer-reviewed research article and read it, or read the article online. As you read the article write questions and comments in the columns, and highlight parts of interest.
3. Write a **one page single-spaced paper** (the only thing on the second page should be the references).
 - Paragraph 1: Briefly summarize the main points of the chapter and explain why the topic you chose to learn more about interested you.
 - Paragraph 2: Summarize the main points of the article you found.
 - Paragraph 3: Explain the application for us as social workers. What is the take-home message?
 - **Submit the marked-up article and your 1-page summary**
4. Give a 2-3 minute video presentation to the class about the article you found. You only have 2-3 minutes so quickly capture our interest, share a couple key items you learned, and provide the class members with something they can use as they go into the field of social work (a take-home message).
 - Post your video in the RSP Discussion

The journal article report should be taken from a scholarly, peer-reviewed social work journal (or social work related journal). If you have difficulty locating journals that offer information on social work issues or subjects in which you are interested, please feel free to contact the BYU Lee Library FHSS consultant, Quinn Galbraith (1223 HBLL or 801-422-4482), or a librarian in a library near you. It also may be helpful to look online for journal articles with *social work* in the title. I would recommend an article in a social work area that you may eventually consider working in.

Here is an example video:

And please read this example of the written portion of the RSP assignment:

[RSP Example](#)[Download RSP Example](#)

Consult these APA Writing Helps for details about how to use APA style.

- [APA Formatting Handout](#)[Download APA Formatting Handout](#)
- [APA Style Explained](#)[Download APA Style Explained](#)
- [Annotated Paper in APA Format](#)[Download Annotated Paper in APA Format](#)

Volunteer or Book Project

You have two options for completing this assignment this semester.

Option 1. Volunteer experience and report

A minimum of 20 hours of social work volunteer work is required. This must be in a setting or agency where social workers are employed. It is not necessary that you work directly under/for a social worker. Here is a list of possible [agencies and opportunities](#).

Please keep in mind that you need to start early in the course to complete this on time as some agencies hold training infrequently and/or have limited hours available (as you will need to get their prior permission and undergo any checks or training they require).

You will submit the agency you plan to interview with in module 3. You cannot count hours prior to the semester or prior to instructor approval. If your agency does not provide you with a form to track your hours, please use this [volunteer tracking form](#) [Links to an external site.](#) found and upload it with your assignment submission during module 14.

Upon completion of your hours, please submit a 1-2 page Volunteer Report summarizing your experience and learning. The report should include:

- a summary of what you did,
- a summary of what you learned (e.g., new skills/perspective, ideas, etc.), and
- how your experience connects with what you've been learning in class.

The hours count for 80% of your grade, and the report counts for 20%.

Option 2. Book report and presentation

Read a book on what social workers do and then complete the following two activities after finishing the book:

1. Create a 10 slide powerpoint or prezi that:

- goes over the main points of the book
- details connections between the book and social work in general
- connections between what you read and are learning in class (e.g., social work values)

2. Give your presentation to a friend, family member, roommate, etc. This can be done online and should be about 10 minutes total.

3. Submit your powerpoint/prezi to the TA with the note that includes to whom you gave the presentation

Reading the book will count as 50% of the grade, creating the powerpoint will count as 25% and giving the presentation will count as 25% of your grade for this assignment.

Here are some website with book options. Please note that I have not read all these books so please review them for appropriate content before reading. You can also propose a different book for approval as well.

<http://shop.whitehatcommunications.com/days-in-the-lives-of-social-workers-5th-edition/> (Links to an external site.)

<https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/10-social-work-books-every-social-worker-should-read/> (Links to an external site.)

<https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/10-more-social-work-books-every-social-worker-should-read/>

You will interview an MSW (CSW or LCSW) who is currently in practice.

During week 3, along with your volunteer agency approval, you will submit your MSW interview approval

At the interview, explore the social worker's

- educational background.
- professional training.
- why he/she went into social work.
- why he/she chose to work in the current setting/with a certain population.
- particular knowledge/skills required for that setting/population.
- what he/she does day to day.
- challenges faced and most satisfying parts of job.
- advice he/she might give to someone who is interested in entering into social work.

Your paper will explore all of the above topics. You will also need to infuse some of ***your own insights and impressions*** throughout the paper. Please use the following style and format for the MSW interview:

- The write up should be 4–5 pages.
- Your write up must follow APA format and be in *Times New Roman* 12-point font, with 1-inch margins and double-line spacing. Headings for the different sections are recommended.
- Include at least two references in the text and include the full reference citation at the end.

This assignment is due in Module 10.

Here is an example paper if you are needing help with formatting: [MSWInterviewProject.SOCW200.ExamplePaper.docxDownload](#)
[MSWInterviewProject.SOCW200.ExamplePaper.docx](#)

Content Guidelines:

1. Discuss the values and **ethical standards** of the social work profession, reflecting upon their compatibility with your own values and perspectives of life and people (highlight two or three particular values that you identify or struggle with, and tie them to some of the ethical standards);
2. Explore whether social work is a profession that you might consider as a future career option (why and why not); and
3. Examine one or two areas of social work that you might like to focus on in the future (e.g. juvenile delinquency, mental health, child welfare, etc.), and the reasons for your interest.

Each of the three major areas of the paper should receive about equal space. A rubric is provided for this paper.

Please use the following style and format for the Integration Paper:

- The paper should be 5–6 pages.
- Your paper must follow APA format and be in *Times New Roman* 12-point font, with 1-inch margins and double-line spacing. Headings for the different sections are recommended.
- Include at least two references in the text and include the full reference citation at the end.

[\(Back to top\)](#)

The comprehensive final exam follows the same format as the quizzes, covering material from the textbook, the NASW code of ethics, and other reading and viewing assignments listed in each lesson. The exam pulls questions from the same question bank as your quiz questions, however there may be some you have not seen so it will be important for you to understand the concepts and not just memorize the quiz questions. You will not be provided a study guide for your final.

The final exam is closed book and closed-notes, but does not have a time limit. All Online courses at BYU must be proctored. This exam is proctored over Examity, so it is

important for you to make sure you complete the [Setting up your Examiity Profile](#) and [Examiity Practice Quiz](#).

The final exam will open on December 15th and close December 21st.

Student Ratings

If you complete your [student ratings](#)[Links to an external site.](#) for the course, you will receive 5 points of extra credit.

Teaching Assistant (TA) Responsibilities:

In this course, the teaching assistant will be highly involved. Responsibilities of the TA include:

- Grading assignments
- Communicating with students regarding weekly assignments and readings
- Serving as a liaison between the students and instructor
- Responding to student inquiries via email, typically within two business days
- When appropriate, provide students with feedback on their assignments

Although the TA is available to respond to student inquiries and general clarifications, the TA is NOT permitted to grade assignments or review assignments (partially or fully completed) prior to the due date and time. If a student disagrees with a grade provided by the TA, she or he is permitted to discuss this with the instructor. In this case, the instructor reserves the right to provide a lower [or higher] grade than the TA provided.

Late Policy

Late assignments, including discussion responses and papers, will receive a 10% grade deduction each day they are late. For example, if an assignment that would have received a grade of 90% is submitted one day late, the student will receive an 80%. A submission of 12:00 AM (after the due date of 11:59pm) counts as one day late. Quizzes and tests cannot be taken after the due date. If a student has not completed a test or quiz by the due date/time, she or he will receive a 0.

[\(Back to top\)](#)

These are all the assignments and exams you will complete for this course.

Assignment/Exam	Point Value
Quizzes x 14 weeks (10 points each)	140
MSW Interview and Volunteer Experience Approvals	5
Discussions x 14 (10 points each)	140
Reading, Summary, and Presentations (5, 20, 20)	45
MSW Interview Report	100
Volunteer Experience and Report	100
Integration Paper	100
Final Exam	50
Total Points:	680

Grade Scale

Your letter grade will be calculated based on these percentages:

Grade	Scale
A	100-94
A-	93.9-90
B+	89.9-87
B	86.9-83
B-	82.9-80
C+	79.9-77
C	76.9-73
C-	72.9-70
D+	69.9-67
D	66.9-63
D-	62.9-60
E	59-0

[\(Back to top\)](#)

BYU Online Policies

Statement on Belonging

We are united by our common primary identity as children of God (Acts 17:29; Psalm 82:6) and our commitment to the truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ (BYU Mission Statement). We strive to create a community of belonging composed of students, faculty, and staff whose hearts are knit together in love (Mosiah 18:21) where

- all relationships reflect devout love of God and a loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor (BYU Mission Statement);
- we value and embrace the variety of individual characteristics, life experiences and circumstances, perspectives, talents, and gifts of each member of the community and the richness and strength they bring to our community (1 Corinthians 12:12–27);
- our interactions create and support an environment of belonging (Ephesians 2:19); and
- the full realization of each student's divine potential is our central focus (BYU Mission Statement).

Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at [801-422-2847](tel:801-422-2847) if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct

Brigham Young University prohibits all forms of sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking on the basis of sex—by its personnel and students and in all its education programs or activities. University policy requires all faculty members to promptly report incidents of sexual harassment that come to their attention in any way and encourages reports by students who experience or become aware of sexual harassment. Incidents should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at t9coordinator@byu.edu or [801-422-8692](tel:801-422-8692) or 1085 WSC. Reports may also be submitted online to the [Title IX Office](#)[Links to an external site.](#) or by calling [1-888-238-1062](tel:1-888-238-1062) (24 hours a day). BYU offers a number of resources and services for those affected by sexual harassment. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, BYU's Sexual Assault Survivor Advocacy Services (SASAS) can help. SASAS can provide information, support, and connection to the resources you may need. SASAS services are free and confidential.

SASAS Contact Information

- Phone: 801.422.9071
- Email: advocate@byu.edu
- Web: <https://advocates.byu.edu/>
- Location: 1500 WSC
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673

Additional information about sexual harassment, the university's Sexual Harassment Policy, reporting requirements, and resources can be found in the University Catalog, by visiting [the Title IX Office website](#)[Links to an external site.](#), or by contacting the university's Title IX Coordinator.

Student Disability

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC) located at 2170 WSC, or call [801-422-2767](tel:801-422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at [801-422-5895](tel:801-422-5895), D-285 ASB.

In this spirit, BYU Online aspires to improve web accessibility for users. While not required by law, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Levels A and AA provide a wide range of helpful recommendations to make web content more accessible. BYU Online strives to apply WCAG 2.0 recommendations where feasible but may deviate from any recommendations that would result in an undue hardship to BYU Online or alterations to program and course content and objectives. If you have questions about accessibility, or if you need to report problems with any accessibility features, please see our [Accessibilities and Accommodations Web Page](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

Academic Honesty

The first injunction of the Honor Code is the call to *be honest*. Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life's work, but also to build character. "President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education" ("The Aims of a BYU Education," p. 6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim. BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based on that work. They should avoid

academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

Plagiarism

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, which may not be a violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in their own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law. Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote. Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but non-deliberate, use of another's words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from an ignorant failure to follow established rules for documenting sources or from simply not being sufficiently careful in research and writing. Although not a violation of the Honor Code, inadvertent plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct for which an instructor can impose appropriate academic sanctions. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their instructor and obtain guidance. Examples of plagiarism include the following:

- Direct Plagiarism: The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source.
- Paraphrased Plagiarism: The paraphrasing, without acknowledgment, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for the author's own.
- Plagiarism Mosaic: The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one's own without acknowledging the source.
- Insufficient Acknowledgement: The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source.

Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

Respectful Environment

"Sadly, from time to time, we do hear reports of those who are at best insensitive and at worst insulting in their comments to and about others. . . . We hear derogatory and sometimes even defamatory comments about those with different political, athletic, or ethnic views or experiences. Such behavior is completely out of place at BYU, and I enlist

the aid of all to monitor carefully and, if necessary, correct any such that might occur here, however inadvertent or unintentional. I worry particularly about demeaning comments made about the career or major choices of women or men either directly or about members of the BYU community generally. We must remember that personal agency is a fundamental principle and that none of us has the right or option to criticize the lawful choices of another." –President Cecil O. Samuelson, Annual University Conference, August 24, 2010

"Occasionally, we . . . hear reports that our female faculty feel disrespected, especially by students, for choosing to work at BYU, even though each one has been approved by the BYU Board of Trustees. Brothers and sisters, these things ought not to be. Not here. Not at a university that shares a constitution with the School of the Prophets." –Vice President John S. Tanner, Annual University Conference, August 24, 2010

Mental Health Concerns

Mental health concerns and stressful life events can affect students' academic performance and quality of life. BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (1500 WSC, [801-422-3035](tel:801-422-3035)) provides individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as stress management services. These services are confidential and are provided by the university at no cost to full-time students. For general information please visit the [BYU Counseling and Psychological Services website](#)[Links to an external site.](#); for more immediate concerns please visit the [Helping Distressed Students at BYU web page](#)[Links to an external site.](#).

Inappropriate Use of Course Materials

All course materials (e.g., outlines, handouts, syllabi, exams, quizzes, PowerPoint presentations, lectures, or audio and video recordings) are proprietary. Students are prohibited from posting or selling any such course materials without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course. To do so is a violation of the Brigham Young University Honor Code.

The materials used in connection with this online course are only for the use of students enrolled in this course for purposes associated with this course and may not be retained or further disseminated. Any copying or further dissemination of these materials may be subject to applicable U.S. copyright laws. For questions or more information, please visit the [BYU Copyright Licensing Office](#)[Links to an external site.](#) website.

"Members of the BYU community who willfully disregard this Copyright Policy or the BYU Copyright Guidelines place themselves individually at risk of legal action and may incur personal liability for their conduct. The unauthorized use or distribution of copyrighted material, including unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing, may subject individuals to civil and criminal liabilities, including actual and statutory damages, costs and fees of litigation, fines, and imprisonment. . . .

Violations of the Copyright Policy may result in university disciplinary action including termination of university enrollment or employment" (Excerpt taken from the [BYU Copyright Policy](#)[Links to an external site.](#)).