



Course Syllabus: International Social Work
College of Health Sciences and Human Services
Social Work Department
SOWK 3603- X20
Spring 2026

Contact Information

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 Fridays: 3.30-4.30 p.m.

COURSE RATIONALE

With the increase in globalization and technological advancements, the need for interdependence among nations is felt much more strongly now than ever before. Such interdependence has narrowed down the distance between Global North and Global South, and enhanced the exchange of ideas, services and expertise. This interdependence among nations has also brought about the challenge of dealing with war, conflict, terrorism, forced migration, AIDS, human rights and social and economic justice issues, at the domestic level and at the global level. The decision and action of one country in dealing with these challenges, affects other countries either directly or indirectly. In this global context, social work, being a helping profession, cannot be contained within borders but should extend beyond. Therefore, international knowledge is no longer an option for social workers but an ethical obligation and this course will provide opportunities to students to realize and attempt to fulfill that obligation.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Grounded in the principles of human rights and social justice which are fundamental to social work, this course will examine the need for international social work, given the global context and concerns. Students will explore global issues such as human trafficking,

war and conflict, AIDS, and child labor and how each of these issues is a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This course will also explore how social work students could be a part of developing solutions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, the students will be able to:

Knowledge dimension:

1. Understand the issues affecting Global South and the need for social workers in dealing with those issues (EPAS 2 & 7).

Values dimension:

2. Analyze the forms of oppression and discrimination and engage in practices that advance social and economic justice (EPAS 2, 7 & 8).

Skills dimensions:

3. Utilize the perspectives for international social work practice both at the local level and at the international level (EPAS 2, 7 & 8).
4. Demonstrate a beginning competence in researching social issues impacting both the Global South and the Global North (EPAS 2, 7 & 8).

Cognitive and affective dimensions:

5. Examine the implications of globalization for international social work practice, with particular attention to the roles of World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Universal Declaration of Human rights, and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (EPAS 2, 7 & 8).
6. Explain the significance of international social work, past and present (EPAS 2, 7 & 8).

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Mapp, S. C. (2014). *Human Rights and Social Justice in a Global Perspective: An Introduction to International Social Work* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

AI-Generated Submissions:

Writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are core learning outcomes of this course. Accordingly, all writing assignments must be completed independently by the student. The use of AI-generated content (including, but not limited to, tools such as ChatGPT) is not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism, in accordance with college academic integrity policies.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Exams: There will be two exams, each worth 30 points. Exam questions will be based on the assigned chapters. Students are responsible for reading all assigned material thoroughly to ensure adequate preparation. Each exam will include multiple-choice questions and true/false statements.

Assignment # 1: Global South Country Assessment (100 points) (Meets EPAS 2 & 7):

Select a country from the Global South (you may use an online search to identify eligible countries). To avoid duplication, post the name of your chosen country in the D2L Discussion Thread.

Suggested guidelines for the assignment include the following:

- **Country overview and learning objectives:** Identify the country and explain what you hope to learn about it. (You may include a map or other visual materials;

however, these should be placed in the appendix, not in the body of the paper.)

- **Geographic information:** Borders, major rivers, access to roads and motorized transportation, and other relevant geographic features.
- **Demographic information:** Population size; rural vs. urban distribution; key population variables such as birth rate, sex ratio, and life expectancy.
- **Economic indicators:** Employment patterns, income and earnings distribution, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), poverty rates, and related measures.
- **Social indicators:** Health care systems, social structure, and major social issues.
- **Political information:** Political parties, governance structure (e.g., centralized vs. decentralized), and related political factors.
- **Vulnerable populations:** Officially designated vulnerable groups; indicators related to children, women, and other populations; and public perceptions of vulnerability

Note: These items are provided as guidelines only. You may include any additional information you believe is relevant to understanding the selected country.

Requirements: The assignment must meet the following requirements:

1. Include a title page, and a references page.
2. Abstract is NOT required.
3. Double-space throughout, leaving a one-inch margin on all sides.
4. As permitted by APA, use an easily readable font such as, Times New Roman (12-point), or Calibri (11-point), or Arial (11-point), or Lucida Sans Unicode (10-point), or Georgia (11-point). Whichever font you choose, you should use the same font and font size throughout the assignment.
5. Provide relevant section headings.
6. The required writing style is that of the *American Psychological Association (APA) Publications Manual (7th ed.)*.
7. The assignment **should not exceed 5-7 pages**, including the cover page and the references page(s).
8. Refer to as many sources as possible. Refer official websites and scholarly sources. Don't use "Wikipedia" as a source for this assignment.
9. Review carefully the RUBRIC given below:

Rubric for the Assignment

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Clarity	0-3 Ideas confusing, disconnected, and purpose is unclear.	3-6 Ideas somewhat clear, somewhat connected, and purpose is somewhat clear.	6-10 Ideas fairly clear, fairly connected, and purpose is fairly clear.	10-15 Ideas clear, well connected, and purpose is clear.
Content	0-5 Less adequate or inadequate; citations are not connected or connected poorly	5-10 Somewhat adequate; citations are connected somewhat well	10-20 Adequate; citations are connected well	20-30 Comprehensive; citations are connected very well
Relevance	0-5 Sources are not relevant. Poor connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	5-10 Relevance of the sources is not obvious. Fair connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	10-15 Relevance of the sources is somewhat obvious; good connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	15-20 Peer-reviewed journal articles are within the last 5 years; relevance of the sources is obvious; excellent connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).
Logic	0-5 The transition between ideas is extremely weak.	5-10 There are several weak transitions between ideas.	10-15 There are very few weak transitions between ideas.	15-20 There are clear and effective transitions between ideas.

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Writing Mechanics	0-3 4 or more violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	3-6 No more than 3 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	6-10 No more than 2 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	10-15 Appropriate use of APA formatting and appropriate use of grammar and punctuation.

**Assignment # 2: World Social Work Day Event Collaboration Project (100 Points)
(Meets EPAS 2, 7 & 8):**

The purpose of this assignment is to promote global awareness, cultural humility, and collaborative practice by actively participating in the planning and execution of a World Social Work Day event.

As part of this course, students will collaborate with student organizations such as SWAT and Phi-Alpha, international faculty, and international students to plan and participate in a **World Social Work Day** celebration. This experiential learning assignment is designed to deepen your understanding of global social issues, cultural diversity, and international perspectives in social work practice.

Student responsibilities include:

- Assisting with event planning and coordination
- Preparing an informational poster about a participating country (culture, key social issues, and relevance to social work)
- Supporting a potluck dinner featuring dishes or snacks representing different countries
- Actively participating in the event

The event will include a potluck dinner, cultural performances, informational posters, and brief presentations by international faculty, providing students with opportunities to engage with international participants. Students, in collaboration with student organizations such as SWAT and Phi-Alpha, are responsible for ensuring that food items are stored and transported safely to maintain freshness (e.g., using insulated containers for hot foods and coolers or ice packs for cold items).

Reflective Summary:

Following the event, each student will submit a **reflective summary** addressing the following:

- Your specific roles in the event
- What you learned about international social work and global social issues
- Insights gained from interactions with international faculty and students
- How culture influences social work practice
- How this experience contributes to your development as a future social worker
- Reflections on aspects of the event that could have been improved or handled differently

Requirements: The assignment must meet the following requirements:

1. Include a title page, and a references page.
2. No abstract.
3. Double-space throughout, leaving a one-inch margin on all sides.
4. As permitted by APA, use an easily readable font such as, Times New Roman (12-point), or Calibri (11-point), or Arial (11-point), or Lucida Sans Unicode (10-point), or Georgia (11-point). Whichever font you choose, you should use the same font and font size throughout the assignment.
5. Provide relevant section headings.
6. The required writing style is that of the *American Psychological Association (APA) Publications Manual (7th ed.)*.
7. At least one citation *MUST be based on articles published in a peer-reviewed journal, and within the last five years.
8. Do not list Wikipedia.
9. The **assignment** should not exceed **4-5 pages**, including the cover page and the reference page.
10. Review carefully the RUBRIC given below:

Rubric for the Assignment

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Clarity	0-3 Ideas confusing, disconnected, and purpose is unclear.	3-6 Ideas somewhat clear, somewhat connected, and purpose is somewhat clear.	6-10 Ideas fairly clear, fairly connected, and purpose is fairly clear.	10-15 Ideas clear, well connected, and purpose is clear.
Content	0-5 Less adequate or inadequate; citations are not connected or connected poorly	5-10 Somewhat adequate; citations are connected somewhat well	10-20 Adequate; citations are connected well	20-30 Comprehensive; citations are connected very well
Relevance	0-5 Sources are not relevant. Poor connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	5-10 Relevance of the sources is not obvious. Fair connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	10-15 Relevance of the sources is somewhat obvious; good connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	15-20 Peer-reviewed journal articles are within the last 5 years; relevance of the sources is obvious; excellent connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).
Logic	0-5 The transition between ideas is extremely weak.	5-10 There are several weak transitions between ideas.	10-15 There are very few weak transitions between ideas.	15-20 There are clear and effective transitions between ideas.

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Writing Mechanics	0-3 4 or more violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	3-6 No more than 3 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	6-10 No more than 2 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	10-15 Appropriate use of APA formatting and appropriate use of grammar and punctuation.

Assignment # 3 (Group Assignment): Global Human Rights/Social and Economic Justice Issue (100 points) (Meets EPAS 2, 7 & 8):

This assignment will be completed in groups of **two or three students**, depending on class size. Groups will be assigned based on the class roster. If you experience any difficulty working within your group, please notify the instructor immediately.

- **Select a global human rights or social and economic justice issue** (e.g., war, displacement, poverty) that affects both the Global South and the Global North. To avoid duplication, one group member must post a brief description (two to three sentences) of the selected issue—including at least one country where the issue is prevalent—on the D2L Discussion Board. If more than one group chooses the same issue in different countries, assignments must clearly demonstrate distinct perspectives and avoid duplication of ideas.
- **Provide a clear statement of the chosen issue**, including its background, scope, and impact, and explain the rationale for your concern about the issue.
- **Conduct thorough research** using peer-reviewed journal articles and reputable web-based sources (Wikipedia is not permitted).
- **Discuss the role of international organizations** in addressing the issue. These may include, but are not limited to, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), United Nations, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see *Appendix A* in the textbook), as well as any other relevant organizations.
- **Propose and discuss intervention strategies** you would formulate as social workers, explaining how these strategies differ from those of international organizations and outlining the expected outcomes (*refer to Appendix B in the textbook*). Integrate relevant concepts, theories, or perspectives learned in other courses where appropriate.

Note: The assignment must be submitted to the D2L Drop Box. Each group member must submit the same group paper individually.

Requirements: The assignment must meet the following requirements:

1. Include a title page, and a references page.
2. No abstract.
3. Double-space throughout, leaving a one-inch margin on all sides.
4. As permitted by APA, use an easily readable font such as, Times New Roman (12-point), or Calibri (11-point), or Arial (11-point), or Lucida Sans Unicode (10-point), or Georgia (11-point). Whichever font you choose, you should use the same font and font size throughout the assignment.
5. Provide relevant section headings.
6. The required writing style is that of the *American Psychological Association (APA) Publications Manual (7th ed.)*.
7. Beside the textbook, at least 4 different citations should be included in your assignment. At least 3 citations ***MUST** be based on articles published in peer-reviewed journals, and within the last 5 years. If a direct quote is used, it should be less than 40 words. At least 5 sources should be on your final references page. In other words, if you list five sources on the references page, three must be from peer-reviewed journals, one from a reputable source (for example government website; do not list Wikipedia) and one would be the textbook.
8. The **assignment** should not exceed **6-8 pages**, including the cover page and the reference page(s).
9. Review carefully the RUBRIC given below

Rubric for the Assignment

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Clarity	0-3 Ideas confusing, disconnected, and purpose is unclear.	3-6 Ideas somewhat clear, somewhat connected, and purpose is somewhat clear.	6-10 Ideas fairly clear, fairly connected, and purpose is fairly clear.	10-15 Ideas clear, well connected, and purpose is clear.
Content	0-5 Less adequate or inadequate; citations are not connected or connected poorly	5-10 Somewhat adequate; citations are connected somewhat well	10-20 Adequate; citations are connected well	20-30 Comprehensive; citations are connected very well
Relevance	0-5 Sources are not relevant. Poor connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	5-10 Relevance of the sources is not obvious. Fair connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	10-15 Relevance of the sources is somewhat obvious; good connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).	15-20 Peer-reviewed journal articles are within the last 5 years; relevance of the sources is obvious; excellent connection has been made between the sources and the points made by the writer(s).
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Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Struggling	Good	Proficient
Writing Mechanics	0-3 4 or more violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	3-6 No more than 3 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	6-10 No more than 2 violations of APA format, grammar or punctuation.	10-15 Appropriate use of APA formatting and appropriate use of grammar and punctuation.

EVALUATION OF COURSE OUTCOMES:

A student may earn points as shown in the following table:

Grade Item	Points
Assignment 1	100
Assignment 2	100
Assignment 3	100
Exam 1	30
Final Exam	30
Weekly Discussions (8 x 100)	800
Total Points	1160

GRADING SCALE

The total grade for the course is an accumulation of the points earned on each assignment.

The following letter grades are used:

- A=90% of available points
- B=80-89% of available points
- C=70-79 % of available points
- D=60-69% of available points
- F=0-59% of available points

Social Work Program Grade Policy (this is ONLY for social work majors)

A course grade of **below a C** or an average of below 70% will be considered a **failing grade**. Students ***must repeat** social work **courses** in which they receive a grade of **D or F**.
Note: This grade policy is in effect since the Fall of 2020.

Homework

For **eight weeks**, weekly discussions will be posted on the D2L Discussion Board. Participation in the discussion board is a **mandatory component** of the course. Students are expected to actively engage in the discussions each week during this period.

All discussion posts must be written in a **formal academic style** (no shorthand or text-message abbreviations) and should follow **APA format**, including appropriate citations and references where applicable. Students are expected to provide thoughtful initial posts, offer constructive and respectful responses to classmates, and demonstrate meaningful engagement with course content.

Please note that the discussion board is a **formal graded assignment**. **Students who fail to complete the initial post and peer responses for any two weeks during the course will be dropped from the course.**

Late Work

Late assignments (including discussion posts) will negatively affect the final grade. **Only assignments submitted through D2L will be accepted and graded.** Late submissions will incur a penalty of **5 points per day**.

Students are encouraged to begin assignments early to avoid issues related to technology, printing, or personal emergencies. Students who need assistance with writing are strongly encouraged to seek support from the **University Writing Center**.

Weather Closure Practice:

During inclement weather, notification occurs through official campus channels and in communication with the local news networks. MSU channels include MSU Alert, MSU Safety app, Postmaster, and website headers. MSU Police and the Office of Marketing and Public Information. As this is an online class, there will be no cancellation of the course assignments due to inclement weather. In case of difficulties arising as a result of inclement weather, students should request the instructor for an extension on the course assignments. Nevertheless, the instructor reserves the right to provide or not provide extension.

Important Dates

Final Deadline for May graduates to file for graduation: February 26, 2026

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 29, 2026

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ***Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ***Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

In weekly discussions, students are expected to respect one another's perspectives. Any feedback provided on classmates' posts should be constructive, professional, and respectful.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. **HOWEVER**, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with

disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Student Life - Disability](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Weeks	Chapters	Assignments
Week 1- Week 4 January 20, Tuesday- February 15, Sunday, 2026	Read chapters 1-3: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• International social development• Human rights• Human trafficking	Assignment # 1 due by 11.59 p.m. on February 7 , Saturday (to be submitted in D2L DropBox)

Weeks	Chapters	Assignments
Week 5- Week 9 February 16, Monday- March 22, Sunday, 2026 Spring Break- March 9-14, 2026	Read chapters 4-6: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International child welfare • War and conflict • AIDS 	First Exam (Chapters 1-3) February 20-21, Friday-Saturday (exam will open at 12.01 a.m. on Friday and will close at 11.59 p.m. on Saturday) Assignment # 2 due by 11.59 p.m. on March 21, Saturday (to be submitted in D2L DropBox)
Week 10- Week 15 March 23, Monday- May 8, Friday, 2026 Holiday Break- April 2-4, 2026	Read chapters 7-10: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues particularly affecting women • Social work and the physical development • Millennium development goals and beyond • A call to action 	Assignment # 3 due by 11.59 p.m. on May 9, Saturday (to be submitted in D2L DropBox) Final Exam- (Chapters 4-6) May 8-9, Friday-Saturday (exam will open at 12.01 a.m. on Friday and will close at 11.59 p.m. on Saturday)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Healy, L. M. (2007). Universalism and cultural relativism in social work ethics. *International Social Work*, 50 (1), 11-26.

Isbister, J. (2006). *Promises not kept: Poverty and the betrayal of the third world development.* (7th ed.) Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.

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UNICEF. (2009). [*The state of the world's children: Executives summary*](#). New York: UNICEF.

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UNIFEM. (2009). [*Together we must...End violence against women and girls and HIV and AIDS.*](#) NY: UNIFEM.

United States Department of State (2010). *Trafficking in persons: 10th report*. Washington, DC:
United States Department of State.

Internet-Based Research Websites:

[United National Development Program](#)

[Freedom House](#)

[Transparency International](#)

[World Bank](#)

[World Bank – You Think](#)

[UNICEF](#)

[UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[United Nations Development Fund for Women East and South East Asia Region](#)

[UN Women](#)

[Human Rights Watch](#)

[Development Research Center on Migration, Globalization and Poverty](#)

[Resource on Human Trafficking](#)

[International Labor Organization](#)

[UN Office on Drugs and Crime](#)

[Interaction: A Voice for Global Change](#)

[Ethica: An Independent Voice for Ethical Adoption](#)

[Mary Robinson Foundation Climate Justice](#)