



Course Syllabus: Social Welfare Policy
College of Health Sciences and Human Services
SOWK 3944 TR 2:30-3:50PM Centennial Hall 302
Spring 2025, January 21-May 9, 2025
3 credits

Contact Information

Instructor: Sarah Olson

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Course Description

This course involves the study of state and national social welfare policies and systems with emphasis on their relationships with social problems, such as poverty, insecurity, and unequal opportunity to social, economic, and political systems. It will prepare students to effectively utilize social policy as a generalist social worker. The course incorporates an integrative approach to social work practice. Attention is directed toward historic and pan-national precedents for the social policies affecting oppressed groups and women.

This course will be taught through small group discussions, audiovisual presentations, and lectures. Students are expected to attend classes and to actively participate in discussions. The expectation is that students will have read the assigned reading to facilitate class dialogue and interactions.

There is a significant, applied, macro-level field research and writing component at the heart of the course. Conducted individually or in small groups, and in consultation with the professor, it is an opportunity to apply theory. Students may, with faculty approval, select a project designed to influence policy development at the legislative, the executive, or the judicial level.

Generalist Social Work

A generalist social worker is prepared for entry-level social work practice. A generalist social worker is able to apply multi-level, multi-method approaches that are transferable between diverse practice settings. Generalist social work practice emphasizes the integration of social work knowledge, values and skills together with a strong commitment to social and economic justice. Guided by systems theory and strengths perspective, we focus on meeting human needs through the empowerment of diverse, vulnerable, and oppressed people locally, nationally, and globally.

Course Delivery

This course has been planned as a fully face-to-face course. The class will meet in its regularly scheduled room on all scheduled class days.

Students with health concerns or any symptoms of illness should not attend in person but rather **communicate with the professor in advance** so that they may attend live classes via zoom. **Students attending by Zoom must appear on video for the entire duration of the class.**

If Midwestern State University campus operations are required to change because of health concerns, it is possible course delivery or course format will change. Should that be necessary, students will be advised of the changes.

Course Objectives

The knowledge, values, and skills expected of a student who completes this course are:

Knowledge:

1. Comprehend and explain social policy from an analytical perspective. *(Knowledge & Skills)*
2. Describe how the policy-making process works at the macro level. *(Knowledge)*
3. Analyze social systems and legislation in relation to their expected impact upon oppressed groups, including women, ethnic and cultural minorities, and sexual minorities. *(Knowledge, Values, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*
4. Critique and influence social policy in the context of history and current dynamics. *(Knowledge, Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*
5. Understand the structure and functions of organizations and service delivery systems and engage in advocacy for structural change when appropriate. *(Knowledge, Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*
6. Apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice. *(Knowledge, Values, & Skills)*
7. Connect social research with policy and program assessment. *(Knowledge)*
8. Describe how macro level policy-making impacts clients and professionals at the micro and mezzo levels. *(Knowledge)*
9. Value diversity in the policy and planning processes. *(Values)*
10. Assess the value conflicts involved in social policy issues. *(Knowledge & Values)*
11. Clarify one's own commitment to social justice and social change without prejudice based upon age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender marital status, national origin, race religion, sex and sexual orientation. *(Values)*
12. Commit to accountability and excellence in generalist social work practice in social policy. *(Values)*

13. Respect self-determination and support the strengths of individuals, groups and communities. *(Knowledge & Values)*
14. Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policy change to advance social and economic justice. *(Skills)*
15. Practice in accordance with social work values and ethics in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of policies. *(Knowledge, Values, & Skills)*
16. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in relation to assessing the validity and utility of professional literature. *(Knowledge, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*
17. Utilize various means of communication (letter writing, petitions, etc.) to facilitate the involvement of all people, especially oppressed groups and women, in all stages of the policy process to advance the strengths perspective. *(Knowledge, Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*
18. Identify a current social policy issue. *(Knowledge & Values)*
19. Assess the pros and cons of alternative policy solutions. *(Knowledge, Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*
20. Utilize social research to assess policy proposals and policy advocacy. *(Knowledge, Values, Skills, Cognitive & Affective Processes)*

Core Competencies	Course Objectives	Practice Behaviors	Assignments
Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior	All the course objectives	Practice personal reflection and self-correction; attend to professional roles and boundaries	All the assignments and class exercises
Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice	All the course objectives	Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple-sources of knowledge; analyze models of assessment	All the assignments, reading quizzes, final exam, class exercises, and class presentations
Engage in Policy Practice	All the course objectives	Prepare for action with groups, organizations, and communities; collect, organize, and interpret client data; select appropriate intervention strategies; implement prevention interventions; critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate interventions	Social Work Advocacy Day, Applied Policy Project

Textbooks & Instructional Materials

Barusch, A.S. (2018). *Foundations of social policy: Social justice in human perspective (6th ed.)*. Cengage Learning.

- **List price: \$173.95** (prices may vary depending on the vendor)

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

- **List price: \$31.99** (prices may vary depending on the vendor)

Class Participation

It is expected that students will contribute to the maintenance of a healthy learning environment, by paying attention to lectures, to fellow students' contributions in the class and by not being disruptive in class. It is expected that students actively participate in class discussions and exercises. It is also expected that everyone who shares ideas/views is respectful of others' time and ideas/views. **We can agree to disagree, but we ought not to be disagreeable.**

Class participation is expected not only at the time of class discussions but also during lectures by raising pertinent questions, by contributing relevant ideas and by sharing relevant examples. Students will be expected to read all the assigned materials prior to class and be prepared to engage in class discussions related to the class topics.

Laptop and Cell Phone regulation

No Photographing, recording, text messaging is allowed without the permission of the instructor. Please turn off or set cell phones on vibrate. Please do not surf the internet or listen to music while in class. Please note that using electronic devices during class time will have an adverse impact on participation grade.

Writing Assistance

Begin drafting papers as early as possible and take advantage of the [Tutoring & Academic Support Programs](#), located off the first floor of the Moffett Library. The MSU TASP Learning Center offers drop-in tutoring support for most general subject areas including but not limited to Writing, Math, Science, Business, and Foreign Languages. Students check in to work one-on-one with a tutor typically for an hour regarding specific concepts.

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 Rights and Responsibilities.

Grading

Table 1: The student's achievement will be evaluated on the basis of written assignments, class exams, class participation, and class presentation.

Assignments	Weight
Class Participation	10%
Quizzes (13 grades averaged for total)	20%
Applied Policy Project	50%
Final Exam	20%

Table 2: Weighted average will be used to calculate final grade.

Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	Less than 60

Social Work Program Grade Policy

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.***

Homework

Questions may be assigned for selected chapters to be answered and handed in at the next class.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be completed outside of class through D2L. Students will complete weekly quizzes by 11:30 pm on Fridays based on the required book chapters and lectures as indicated in the class schedule. Assigned reading should be completed before beginning each quiz. The **quizzes are open book and notes**, but there will be limited time to complete them. **Thirteen quizzes will be required. Fourteen quizzes will be available and students completing all 14 will have their lowest quiz grade dropped. No requests for late access will be considered** unless the student has submitted documentation through the Dean of Student's office proving incapacitation for the entire week that the quiz was available.

Anything presented via assigned readings or in class may be included in quizzes.

Final Exam

There will be a final exam that is **closed book and note**. The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, true or false statements, and short answer or essay questions. Since class instruction will be based on the text as well as materials from other sources, what is presented in class will be included in the final exam. **Students have to put their cell phones away and turned off, along with no smart watches and headphones, that will be up at the front of the classroom against the wall or on the front desk.**

Projects Required

APA style formatting is required for all written work in this course. Be sure to use appropriate APA style citations for any information you take from the textbook, handouts, lectures, reference materials, websites, or other outside sources while completing written assignments.

1. Social Work Advocacy Day

The class requires a policy-related field visit. Class members are expected to attend NASW Advocacy day on Friday March 7, 2025. Social Work Advocacy Day will allow students an opportunity to lobby their own state representatives so that the Lobbying Analysis can be completed. The event is at the Capitol Building in Austin. This is required, unless there is a valid excuse for missing this event. It is an all-day commitment of leaving very early that morning and then arriving back to campus late that evening. If you are unable to attend, please let Professor Olson know as soon as possible and an assignment will be given in lieu of attendance, only with valid excuse for missing the event.

It is lots of walking and time on the bus, so we will plan accordingly. Can bring blankets, change of clothes (as business casual will be the dress requirements), change of shoes, portable chargers, extra money for lunch and dinner (some will be covered) and souvenirs. We will go into much more detail as the time gets closer, but this is to get you all prepared as students have lots of questions about the event. It is a wonderful, exciting and fun time to learn more about Policy, see the Capitol building and bond with classmates.

2. Applied macro-level group policy project:

Table 3: **Applied Policy Project Phases**. These are subject to change to benefit students. PLEASE pick a topic ASAP. With the exception of Assignment V, all of these are to be done as a group. Groups will be 3-4 people no more.

Grade	Points
I. *Preliminary statement of topic is due. (Team)	2 nd week
II. *Historical Context Analysis due. (Team)	4 th week
III. *Selection of lobbying target and rationale is due. (Team)	8 th week
IV. *Briefs are due (Team)	11th week
V. * Follow-up letter is due (Individual)	13 th week
VI. * Applied Policy Presentations & Discussion (Team)	15 th -16 th weeks

I. Preliminary Statement of Topic (Team Assignment) (1-2 pages)

The first portion of your assignment is the one in which you are to identify a social policy issue that currently is being considered by actual legislative, administrative, or judicial decision-makers (or, as a matter of measurable human need, ought to be). While the selection of an issue associated with your field placement service area is most convenient, the selection of an issue of special interest to you in another area is appropriate as well. Any issue selected must involve a bill either being developed or in the process of legislative consideration: a rule of regulation being developed for proposal or already proposed: the development of a new service or service organization: or a question of social policy before the courts so that you could contribute expert testimony.

Selection of your topic is subject to instructor approval. Your statement should include:

- a. A brief statement of the need or problem involved.
- a. Those that are felt by some to be primarily in need or to be the primary sufferers of the problem.
- b. Special impact upon women, children, families and specific minorities of the status quo and of the proposed action, as viewed by proponents.
- c. Branches and levels of government, lobbying or other organizations involved in the process.

II. Historical Context Analysis (Team Assignment)

In a 4-5 page paper, answer the following questions about your topic selected for study in #1.

1. What is the social policy area or question?
2. Who are the key people and key organizations that hold a stake in the policy?
3. How does each of these key individuals or groups define the problem(s)?
4. Is this a new problem?
5. Why is it being debated at this juncture in history?
6. What event(s) seem to have stimulated this debate?
7. What ideologies and research finds are supporting the sides of this debate?
8. What views are present regarding personal vs. social responsibility?
9. Are these arguments new or old? If old, from where do they come?
10. If solutions to this problem have been attempted before, what are the similarities and differences in how it was and now being dealt with? Are the relationships different among the contending parties than they had been?
11. How have women, children, families, and specific minorities been impacted by the conditions related to this social policy issue during the period leading to the present? e.g. Elder abuse, job equity (equal pay for equal work), taxing methods for schools, social security retirement age, national health care.

III. Lobbying Target and Rationale (Team Assignment)

(2-3 pages)

It is important in planning to lobby, to analyze your quarry thoroughly in advance. If your lobbying target is a state representative, find out all you can about the person and about their constituency, so you will know the best arguments to use. Your written report should cover the following questions:

1. Identify the target person and his/her position in the decision-making system.
2. Analysis of the person and his/her constituency (party affiliation; known views of person and constituency on this or related questions; length of time in office; style of decision-making; known areas of expertise.
3. Type of approach to this person you anticipate.

If members of your team represent multiple constituencies, write one team paper that includes discussion of considerations for all targets. Reasonable allowances will be made for length.

IV. The Brief (Team Assignment)

(12 pages minimum)

The brief is a comprehensive statement of the arguments regarding a policy question, with documentation, organized around a series of issues (questions at issue). You must cite all relevant issues. Make sure your documentation gives full citations using the APA method of citation. A brief is not a term paper, and you do not have to be concerned about narrative style, although spelling and grammar are expected to be correct. In some cases, very brief answers are given. However, you should include all the relevant arguments so that a person can evaluate the quality of your case on the basis of reading the brief alone. More important than style in the brief is adequate evidence to support your case. For example, it is not enough to say that reduction of welfare benefits will cause ill health in children. Cite sources to support your contention. The better the evidence (e.g. scientific studies versus opinion of an author) the stronger your case, and current sources are generally better than old ones. But opinions from authoritative sources are better than your opinion alone.

Note that the brief includes the arguments on both sides. You are expected to document both, your own case and that of your opponent. Do not set up “straw man” arguments against your position; the opposing arguments should be the very best you can muster.

Your group will **present your brief to the class**. Everyone in the group is expected to participate in the oral presentation. Be mindful of the use of time. Please do not read your presentation notes, handout, or PowerPoint or Canva slides. Grading will be based on your visual support (either Handout or PowerPoint), critical analysis, reflectiveness, engagement of class, relevance to social work values, originality (of argument), and effective use of time (15-20 minutes).

While students may alter the format within which the data, analyses, and conclusions are presented in the written brief, **answers to the following questions are required** and **the following structure is suggested**:

1. Title and abstract of the brief.
2. Detailed presentation of the “proponents” analysis and arguments related to the following questions:
 - a. What is the status quo related to this area of policy?
 - b. Is the status quo harmful? Why?
 - c. Is action to change the status quo urgent? Why? What plan is proposed to change the status quo?
 - d. Will this plan effectively and adequately meet the need for change? How?
 - e. Is this plan feasible economically, politically, and administratively?
 - f. What are the potential positive consequences of this change?

g. What are the potential negative consequences of this change?

3. Detailed presentation of the "opponents" **analysis and arguments for or related to all the same questions listed above (a-g).**

4. The groups' analysis, conclusions and reasons after considering all of the above.

(Note: There may be dissenting statements to all or parts of this group brief. In order for a better written brief, a dissention should be included.)

V. Follow-Up Letter (Individual)

In this final section, you are to provide a copy of your one or two -page follow-up letter to the person you lobbied. Your letter should be formatted as a business letter and include a brief summary of the main points of your lobbying research. Your letter should use the three models of persuasion: Ethos, Pathos, & Logos.

If you cannot or did not attend the event, you must also write a 2-4 page APA style analysis to answer the following questions:

1. The target person and his or her position.
2. The time and place of the meeting.
3. Description of the circumstances involved in securing the meeting including people and positions necessarily dealt with.
4. The points you made as well as those you did not make in light of your knowledge of the target and your rationale for these choices.
5. Your analysis of your effectiveness in reaching your goals.
6. Lessons you learned about the process

Last year we visited Rep. Frank's office and spoke with staffers. It was a good experience for all of us.

Late Work

All assignments must be submitted on time. Students who need additional time to complete assignments must meet with the instructor at least one class session prior to the assignment due date to discuss the accommodations that need to be made. It is the student's responsibility to request this meeting.

Late work will be penalized ½ letter grade per 24-hour time period. Failure to submit any assignment within 7 calendar days of the due date will result in a failing grade for the assignment. You should get with the instructor as soon as possible if an emergency occurs interfering with your ability to meet a due date.

Make Up Work/Tests

Make up work will only be considered in cases of university excused absences or verifiable emergencies. Students will not be allowed to take make up exams after the original exam has been given. If you cannot take the exam on the required day and time, you must make arrangements in advance to take it PRIOR to the scheduled administration of the exam.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: January 24, 2025

Deadline for May graduates to file for graduation: February 17, 2025

Last Day to Drop with a grade of "W:" March 24, 2025

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

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

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 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.

Social Work Program Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all meetings of this class. If unable to attend class, please inform the instructor directly via email or office phone before the class start time. If unable to attend class due to an emergency, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Please note that ***for each "uninformed class absence" a 0 will be assigned for the class period participation grade. Coming late to class, inattentive or disruptive behavior during class (including inappropriate cellphone use), and leaving early from class will have an adverse impact on attendance and participation grade.***

Students are allowed three excused absences as defined by MSU absence policy. For an absence to be excused the ***student must inform the instructor of the reason for the absence*** and provide documentation supporting the need for the class absence. Please note that ***for each absence beyond the 4th, 5 points will be taken off from the student's final course (average) grade.*** A ***student who has missed five classes*** (including the three excused absences) will ***receive a full lower letter grade. After six absences the student will be dropped from the class.***

Authorized absences due to required participation in university-sponsored activities must be approved by the college dean or Athletic Director and the Provost. These absences will not count against the student when the student presents a signed letter to the instructor at least two class days prior to the date of the absence. Only prior notification can guarantee lack of penalty for these absences. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with the instructor to make up all work missed during an authorized absence. Academically-related activities (class field trips, attendance at conferences, etc.) which result in absences require the cooperation of individual faculty members. Even though such activities are educational in nature, they do not qualify as university-sponsored activities.

Authorized absences due to required participation in university-sponsored activities must be approved by the college dean or Athletic Director and the Provost. These absences will not count against the student when the student presents a signed letter to the instructor at least two class days prior to the date of the absence. Only prior notification can guarantee lack of penalty for these absences. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with the instructor to make up all work missed during an authorized absence. Academically-related activities (class field trips, attendance at conferences, etc.) which result in absences require the cooperation of individual faculty members. Even though such activities are educational in nature, they do not qualify as university-sponsored activities.

Instructor Class Policies

All students registered for courses in the Social Work Department are expected to adhere to the responsibilities, and behavior as articulated in both the [Student Handbook](#) and the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) [Code of Ethics](#). An essential feature of these codes is a commitment to maintaining intellectual integrity and academic honesty. I generally have a **zero-tolerance policy for cheating or plagiarism**, and violations will result in substantial penalties including a failing grade on the assignment with no make-up opportunity and/or a referral to the Dean of Students.

This means that the following constitute violations of academic honesty: a student has another person/entity do the work of any portion of a graded assignment for them, which includes using the work of another student as a template, purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, and/or **using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, QuillBot, or any generative AI assistance such as GrammarlyGO, Grammarly Premium, etc.)**. I have a **zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, or collusion** and violations will result in substantial penalties including a failing grade (zero) on the assignment with no make-up opportunity and/or a referral to the Dean of Students.

The use of TurnItIn plagiarism and AI checker will be assisting in grading to assure the plagiarism and AI policies are followed appropriately.

Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a 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 in the Academic Success Center.

Repeated **accidental or willful cheating or use of someone else's words, ideas, or evidence without attribution will be met with a failing grade in the course and a referral to the Dean of Students**, regardless of whether the first occurrence was in this course. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Students are expected to display professional decorum at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, respecting classmates and the instructor. In this regard, it is expected that students will not hold side conversations, use cell phones, or engage in other types of unprofessional behaviors once class has begun.

Professional Expectations of Student Behavior

Midwestern State University Department of Social Work is mandated by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to foster and evaluate professional behavioral development for all students in the social work program. The Department of Social Work also bears a responsibility to the community at large to produce fully trained professional social workers who consciously exhibit the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession of social work. The values of the profession are codified in the NASW Code of Ethics. Given this context, all students in the social work program will be expected to exhibit the following ethical standards of behavior.

1. **Accountability:** Attend class, arrive on time, and return from break in a timely manner.

Participate in group activities and assignments at a comparable level to peers.

Complete work in a timely fashion and according to directions provided. Come to class prepared, with readings and other homework completed.

2. **Respect:** Treat all your peers, your instructors and all those you come in contact with, with dignity and respect at all times.

Listen while others are speaking.

Give feedback to peers in a constructive manner.

Approach conflict with peers or instructors in a cooperative manner.

Use positive and nonjudgmental language.

3. **Confidentiality:** Treat any personal information that you hear about a peer or an instructor as strictly confidential.

Maintain any information shared in class, dyads or smaller groups within that unit.

Use judgment in self-disclosing information of a very personal nature in the classroom. (Class time should not be used as therapy or treatment. If students feel the need to talk about issues they are struggling with, they may consult with their instructor to receive a referral for counseling.)

Never use names of clients or disclose other identifying information in the classroom.

4. **Competence:** Apply yourself to all your academic pursuits with seriousness and conscientiousness, meeting all deadlines as given by your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.

Come to class with books, handouts, syllabus, and pens

Seek out appropriate support when having difficulties to ensure success in completing course requirements.

Take responsibility for the quality of completed tests and assignment.

Strive to work toward greater awareness of personal issues that may impede your effectiveness with clients.

5. **Integrity:** Practice honesty with yourself, your peers, and your instructors. Constantly strive to improve your abilities.

Academic: Commit yourself to learning the rules of citing other's work properly.

Do your own work and take credit only for your own work.

Acknowledge areas where improvement is needed.

Accept and benefit from constructive feedback

Submission of Papers: *Students will submit their written assignments on paper and electronically. Electronic copies will be subject to plagiarism analysis and will be kept in electronic file for future reference. A student may not submit the same paper, or essentially the same, paper, project, assignment, or finished project to an instructor, which has been submitted to another instructor, unless specifically authorized by both instructors to do so.*

6. **Diversity:** Strive to become more open to people, ideas, and creeds that you are not familiar with. Embrace diversity.

Maintain speech free of racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, or stereotyping.

Exhibit a willingness to serve diverse groups of persons.

Demonstrate an understanding of how values and culture interact.

7. **Communication:** Strive to improve both verbal and written communication skills as these skills are used heavily in interactions with clients and peers and also with creating client records.

Demonstrate assertive communication with peers and instructors.

Practice positive, constructive, respectful and professional communications skills with peers and instructor: (body language, empathy, listening)

8. **Social Justice:** Strive to deepen your commitment to social justice for all populations at risk.

Demonstrate an understanding of how institutional and personal oppression impede the experience of social justice for individuals and groups.

Strive to learn about methods of empowering populations and enhancing social justice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Writing Assistance Help. Highly recommended.

Begin drafting assignments as early as possible and take advantage of the [TASP Learning Center](#). Located in Moffett Library, The Office of Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) offers a variety of resources designed to help students meet the demands of the college classroom. Their mission is to provide the necessary support to help students achieve academic success. Students are invited to bring any kind of writing to a session with a writing tutor. They do not provide an editing service; instead, they offer feedback and support to help writers develop into more effective communicators.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

The Department of Social Work may terminate a student's participation in the program on the basis of professional non-suitability if the Department's faculty members determine that a student's behavior has constituted a significant violation or pattern of violations of the NASW Code of Ethics, the MSU of Social Work Student Manual, or the MSU Academic Policies and Regulations. Examples of violations that may lead to termination include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Failure to meet or maintain academic grade point requirements as established by the University and the Social Work program.
2. Academic cheating, lying, or plagiarism (turnitin.com will be used to check the originality of the text).
3. Behavior judged to be in violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
4. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity, or emotional stability requisite for professional practice.
5. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, or staff (at the department or in the field placement).
6. Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional relationships (for example, unable to demonstrate nonjudgmental attitude or unable to allow client self-determination).
7. Documented evidence of criminal activity occurring during the course of study.

For additional university-wide policies and regulations, see the MSU [Undergraduate Catalog](#). This web site contains information on grading, incomplete grades, cheating on exams, plagiarism, and expectations of student behavior.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

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. Two formulas (federal and state) exist 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 [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. **The law does NOT allow open carry on campus.** For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

Midwestern State University seeks to provide a safe, healthy, pleasant environment for its faculty, staff, and students. To this end, the use of tobacco products, including smoke and smokeless tobacco, and the advertising, sale, free distribution, and discarding of tobacco products shall be prohibited in all indoor and outdoor facilities and in all university vehicles. The policy extends to faculty, staff, students, vendors, guests, and visitors.

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.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

To support the academic success of pregnant and parenting students and students with pregnancy related conditions, the University offers reasonable modifications based on the student's particular needs. Any student who is pregnant or parenting a child up to age 18 or has conditions related to pregnancy, may contact MSU's designated Pregnancy and Parenting Liaison to discuss support available through the University. The Liaison can be reached by emailing ruby.garrett@msutexas.edu or calling 940-397-4500. Should a student communicate with me that they are pregnant or have a pregnancy related condition or may need additional resources related to pregnancy or parenting, I will communicate that student's information to the Title IX Coordinator, who will work with the student and others, as needed, to ensure equal access to the University's education program or activity.

A pregnant student, a parenting student, or a student with pregnancy related conditions may be provided with supportive measures, based on the student's individualized needs, analogous to those provided to a student with a temporary medical condition, and provided such supportive measures do not fundamentally alter the nature of an education program or activity. Such supportive measures may include, but are not limited to:

For pregnant students:

- (1) Providing breaks during class to express breast milk, breastfeed, or attend to health needs associated with pregnancy or related conditions, including eating, drinking, or using the restroom;
- (2) Excusing intermittent absences to attend medical appointments;
- (3) Providing access to online or homebound education, including the providing of access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures (to the extent such materials, recordings are made available to any student with an excused absence);
- (4) Facilitating changes in schedule or course sequence, including extensions of time for coursework and rescheduling of tests and examinations and/or providing opportunity to make up missed assignments/assessments (such time extensions shall be applied in the same manner as the University grants and provides ADA/504 accommodations for additional time);
- (5) Allowing a student to sit or stand, or carry or keep water nearby;
- (6) Offering counseling;

(7) Facilitating changes in physical space or supplies (for example, access to a larger desk or a footrest);

(8) Allowing the student to maintain a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals or unborn children;

(9) Providing elevator access;

(10) Facilitating a voluntary leave of absence from the University if the student is in good academic standing at the time the student takes a leave of absence, and facilitating a return to the student's degree or certificate program without being required to reapply for admission if the student remains in good academic standing; or

(11) Making other necessary changes to policies, practices, or procedures.

For Parenting Students:

(1) Facilitating priority registration to the extent the University provides early registration for any other group of students; or

(2) Facilitating a voluntary leave of absence from the University if the student is in good academic standing at the time the student takes a leave of absence and facilitating a return to the student's degree or certificate program without being required to reapply for admission.

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick

Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213

laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MSUTexas&layout_id=6

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit <https://msutexas.edu/titleix/>

Grade Appeal Process

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

Course Changes

Although much thought, study, and research has gone into designing the course and learning opportunities, often the most significant learning comes in unexpected moments. The instructor cannot predict these times but respond to them. Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Group Work Spiel

While it may not seem obvious, there is a reason the Social Work Department has students work in groups. It is to prepare students for internships, field placements and the work-force. Many models in social work have a team-approach, whether it be mental health, child welfare, geriatrics, etc. This is the reason for group work mostly. If you are having struggles in your group, I do not want to hear about it after the fact. **We need to address the issues before they become large issues.** Please come and talk to me, send me an email, or leave a message at the Department. I will listen to what is going on. The next step will be to meet as a group. If there are ongoing issues of students not contributing to the project, the non-contributing students will get different grades from the students who are contributing to the team. Please be aware of this, as this is taken seriously.

Social Welfare Policy Course Schedule

(The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus schedule as needed.)

Week & Dates	Chapters	Assignments
Week 1 January 21 – January 26, 2025	Course Introduction Discussion of course assignments - Ch. 1: Part I Policy Analysis: Frameworks and Tools Social Justice and Social Workers	- Quiz 1, due on Sunday, January 26, 11:30pm
Week 2 January 27 – February 2, 2025	- Ch. 2: The Government’s Role	- Quiz 2, due on Sunday, February 2, 11:30pm Feb.2 Preliminary Statement of Topic due
Week 3 February 3-9, 2025	- Ch. 3: Policy Analysis and Policy Practice	- Quiz 3, due on Sunday, February 9, 11:30pm
Week 4 February 10 – 16, 2025	- Ch. 4: Part II Collective Responses to Social Problems The Social Security Act	- Quiz 4, due on Sunday, February 16, 11:30pm Feb 16– Historical Context Analysis is due
Week 5 February 17-23, 2025	Ch. 5 Poverty and Inequality	
Week 6 February 24 – March 2, 2025	- Ch. 6: Health	- Quiz 5, due by Sunday, February 23, by 11:30pm

Week & Dates	Chapters	Assignments
Week 7 March 3-9, 2025	- Ch. 7: Mental Health SWAD DAY Friday, March 7, 2025	- Quiz 7, due on Sunday, March 9, 11:30pm
March 10-16, 2025	Spring Break	NO classes! Be safe!
Week 8 March 17-23, 2025	- Ch. 8 Disability We jump over Ch. 9	Quiz 8, due on Sunday, March 23 at 11:30pm Lobbying Target and Rationale due

Week 9 March 24-30, 2025	Ch. 10 People of Color	Quiz 9, due on Sunday March 30 at 11:30pm
Week 10 March 31-April 6, 2025	- Ch. 11: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Trans Individuals	- Quiz 10, due on Sunday, April 6, 11:30pm
Week 11 April 7 – 13, 2025	- Ch. 12: Children	- Quiz 11, due on Sunday, April 13, 11:30pm Lobbying brief due April 13, 11:30pm
Week 12 April 14 – 20, 2025	- Ch. 13: Women April 17 no classes.	- Quiz 12, due on Sunday, April 20, 11:30pm

Week 13 April 21-27, 2025	- Ch. 14: Older Adults	- Quiz 13, due on Sunday, April 27. 11:30pm (Individual) Lobbying Letter due
Week 14 April 28 – May 4, 2025	- Ch. 15: Working Americans Start Presentations on Briefs start on Thursday, May 1. We will draw names for order of presentations.	- Quiz 14, due on May 4 by 11:30pm Presentations start
Week 15 May 5-11, 2025	Finish up Presentations on Briefs	- Presentations and Discussion of Briefs
Week 16 FINAL EXAMS WEEK May 12-16, 2025	Final Exam, closed note and book. Taken in class on laptop. Please see details in syllabus about other stipulations.	-Tuesday May 13, 2025 at 3:30pm

STUDENT COURSE AGREEMENT

Please review the course syllabus. Once you have read and understand the syllabus and all faculty expectations, please sign and return this agreement. Please pay special attention to attendance and late/make-up work policies as well as the Instructor Class Policies and Professional Expectations of Student Behavior sections. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at sarah.olson@msutexas.edu

This agreement of understanding should be completed only after thoroughly reading the course syllabus. Sign, date & return this document to Instructor Olson prior to the second class session.

_____ Printed Student Name

_____ Semester

I have read and understand the syllabus and faculty expectations for this course. I agree to come to class prepared and to participate fully in this course.

_____ Date

_____ Signature