

SOW 3203

Intro to Social Work

Fall 2023

Course Number: SOW 3203
Course Credit Hours: 3
Course Modality: Primarily Classroom
Building 86, Room 129
Meeting Times and Locations: Tuesdays 9:00am-11:45am
Prerequisites or Corequisites: none

Instructor Information

Matthew Knierim, PhD, MSW, MPA, LMSW
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Office Location: Building 85, Room 143
Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am-1:00pm and by appointment

Office Hours

Office hours are held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:30am-12:30pm. Students are welcome to stop by the office, or they can call ahead or email to make an appointment during that time. I'll also stick around after our scheduled class time to answer any questions, work to provide additional clarity, discuss schedules and assignment, etc. If you need to meet outside of those times, please let me know and we can schedule an in-person or Zoom meeting at a mutually agreeable time. Please know that I am here to be a resource for you, so please reach out if I can be of any assistance to you.

Course Information

Course Description (From the Course Catalog)

Survey of the social work profession from its roots to contemporary practice with a descriptive focus on its values, knowledge bases, skills, and fields of practice. Emphasis is on generalist social work and social policy structures which sustain society. Introduces the relationship of social problems to social policy and to social service delivery systems.

Course Description (What It Actually Means)

In this course, we'll be exploring the field of social work by learning what social workers do, where they work, what their values are, and what makes an effective social worker.

Course Structure

This face-to-face course will utilize a variety of teaching modalities in an effort to create a learning environment that facilitates student learning. These may include lectures, class discussions, student projects, writing assignments, and presentations. While this is a face-to-face course, some class elements will be made available on the course Canvas page such the syllabus, class communications and announcements, assignment descriptions, reading materials, and other course content.

Prerequisites

This course does not have any listed prerequisites.

Major/minor requirements

This course (SOW 4403) serves as a prerequisite for the following courses:

- SOW 4232 Introductory Analysis of Social Service Policy
- SOW 4233 Human Diversity and Social Justice
- SOW 4510 Social Work Field Instruction
- SOW 4522 Senior Seminar

Required Materials and Resources

Required texts:

Dubious, B. & Miley, K. (2019). Social work: An empowering profession (9th ed.). Pearson.

Helpful Materials and Resources

Some students may find it helpful to purchase/rent/check out the APA Style Manual (7th ed.). While much of this info is available for free on the Purdue OWL website, the manual provides more detailed and comprehensive information.

Course Goals and/or Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this semester, you will be able to:

- Learn core theories and perspectives that undergird the profession of social work (Competency 1)
- Recognize the values of the social work profession (Competency 1)
- Identify career paths in the profession of social work (Competency 1)
- Understand the social problems that professional social worker address in practice (Competencies 2 & 3)
- Utilize evidence-based research to shape practice (Competency 4)
- Advocate for diverse groups at the local, state, and national levels (Competency 5)
- Develop basic skills employed in the profession to engage with and assess individuals, families, groups and organizations (Competencies 6 & 7)

Teaching Philosophy

My approach to classroom instruction is rooted in my desire to develop thoughtful problem solvers who think critically, act ethically, and pursue personal and professional excellence. To do so, I strive to empower and equip students with the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful practitioners while encouraging them to explore and pursue their unique passions. At the heart of this mission is the need for, and the value of, meaningful and relevant classroom instruction. I do this by drawing on my own practice experience and by seeking out, and developing, course content that adds real world value to my students' future practice. By pairing the academic with the practical, I aim to provide students with a richer understanding of empirically tested best practices and their applications in the field.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity

The Student Code of Academic Conduct defines various forms of academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, and describes the process for addressing these types of allegations. All students are expected to read the Student Code of Academic Conduct and comply with the expectations. Students can find more information and links to the University regulation governing academic conduct on the Dean of Students website listed under Student Rights and Responsibilities.

If you have any doubts about what constitutes a violation of the Student Code of Academic Conduct or any other issue related to academic integrity, please ask me. Ultimately, if you do your own, best work, you'll be in good shape in the course.

Attendance Policy

In this course, each class session will involve continuing discussions with your colleagues. Therefore, students are expected to attend every class session. Because we only meet once a week, each absence represents a great deal of content that is missed. We will be doing a number of in-class activities and having group discussions throughout the term, so a missed class not only impacts your learning, but the learning of your classmates. With that said, I understand that there are things that come up from time to time. If you know that you will miss a class session due to a university-related activity, family obligation, or some other life event, please reach out ahead of time and let me know so we can discuss what materials will be missed or what work will need to be made up. If something unexpected arises (illness, family emergency, etc.) please reach out as soon as possible following the missed class session.

In an effort to be respectful of your time, I intend to start each class session right on time, so please allow yourself enough time to get settled and ready to go (maybe even a couple of minutes early). Also, as a courtesy to your classmates, please try to avoid causing any distractions or engaging in behaviors that might inhibit the learning of others (talking, texting, other phone use, etc.). Finally, failure to actively participate in the class, or causing repeated distractions will result in an "absence" for that class session.

A sign in sheet will be passed around at the beginning of each class session, so be sure to sign in. Please don't sign in for anyone other than yourself. If you come in late, please see me afterwards to sign in and document your attendance.

You are allowed 2 non-excused absences before your grade is affected. For each absence after the second, 5 points will be deducted from your final grade. Again, the reason for this is that if a student misses more than two classes, that represents at least 20% of the available class sessions. It is hard to learn when you aren't there, so please make every effort to attend, and participate in, each class session.

Respect and Self-Disclosure Policy

Students are expected to show respect for one another in both words and writings and interact with classmates as future colleagues. Even in instances where a significant difference in ideas and values exists, civility and mutual respect is expected. It is perfectly fine, and even productive, to have differences of opinions, but disagreements should never become personal, disrespectful, or hostile.

Additionally, some topics discussed within the discipline can be sensitive, so please be thoughtful about how you respond to one another. Also, please also be thoughtful about what, and how much, information you choose to share about yourself and/or others. All discussions should be constructive and should be relevant to the course.

Grading Practices and Policies

- Individual assignment descriptions and due dates will be provided in Canvas.
- If you are unclear about some aspect of an assignment, please reach out to me early on so we can ensure you have the information and time you need to be successful. Please don't wait until the last minute. That's not great for either of us.
- Students are expected to complete their own, best work for each assignment.
- Extensions will only be available when unavoidable, extenuating circumstances are discussed with the instructor prior to the due date but are not guaranteed. Think, "I went into labor," not "I have a lot going on."
- Students should expect to receive personalized feedback on each assignment.
- Typically, graded assignments will be returned to students within a week of the due date.
- Students should use Canvas to track how they are performing in the course.

Grade Distribution

Below is the grade distribution for the course:

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Response Papers (x3)	45% or 45 pts.
Interview Assignment	25% or 25 pts.
Poverty Simulation	10% or 10 pts.
In-Class Activities (x5)	20% or 20 pts.
Total	100 % or 100 pts.

Grading Scale

Below is the grading scale for this course:

Letter Grade	Range
A	94% to 100%
A-	90% to 93.9%
B+	87% to 89.9%
B	84% to 86.9%
B-	80% to 83.9%
C+	77% to 79.9%
C	74% to 76.9%
C-	70% to 73.9%
D	61% to 69.9%
F	0% to 60.9%

Assignments and Assessment Methods

Each assignment is designed to provide students with an opportunity to learn, grow and develop. Various modalities will be used to offer students with a diverse and meaningful array of learning

opportunities. Full descriptions and instructions will be provided in Canvas. Each assignment is a stand-alone item, yet all items will complement one another to achieve the specified student learning outcomes. Personalized, constructive feedback will be provided for all assignments, and this feedback should be viewed as an extension of the learning opportunity, thus it should be read and incorporated in future assignments when applicable.

Student Use of Generative AI Tools in this Course

Acceptable and Unacceptable Use of AI

The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is not permitted in this course. Therefore, any use of AI tools for work in this class may be considered academic misconduct since the work is not yours. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools will be scored as a 0. Examples of AI use include, but are not limited to:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or content that you put into a Zoom chat.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

Important Information and Updates

Faculty members must sometimes make changes to update course elements such as schedules or assignment details in response to student needs and external events (e.g., severe weather or public health emergencies). If updates become necessary as the course progresses, students will be notified through [faculty member should specify the means of communication they will use (i.e., emails, Canvas announcement, etc.)]. Additional information regarding key policies and processes relevant to all courses at UWF are listed below. They can also be found on the [Additional Syllabus Statements](#) page.

UWF Policy Statements

Course Modality

The University of West Florida operations may be disrupted occasionally by weather, pandemics, and other events outside our control. Faculty and students must plan for contingencies that may affect individual course sections. With this in mind, faculty may opt to hold some class meetings in a modality other than that initially planned to ensure that the class continues in the best manner possible, given the immediate circumstances. It is essential to be flexible and understand that we operate in a dynamic environment.

Recording in Class

Without prior notice, students may record video or audio of a class lecture for a class they are enrolled in for their own personal, educational use. A class lecture is an academic presentation delivered by faculty or guest lecturer as part of a University of West Florida course intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. The following actions are prohibited: recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between

a student and the faculty member. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of UWF-REG 3.010 Student Code of Conduct and may be a violation of the law. More details can be found in the [UWF Student Handbook](#).

Turnitin

UWF maintains a university license agreement for an online text-matching service called Turnitin. Instructors may use the Turnitin service to evaluate the originality of student papers at their discretion. Instructors can employ other services and techniques to assess your work for evidence of appropriate authorship practices as needed.

Sexual Discrimination or Harassment Reporting

University of West Florida faculty members are committed to supporting students and upholding the University's non-discrimination and harassment policies. Under Title IX, discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender (including sexual violence and sexual misconduct) are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination or harassment, you do not have to go through the experience alone. Know that while you may talk to a faculty member, as a "Responsible Employee" of the University, the faculty are required to notify the University's Title IX Coordinator so that support services can be provided to you. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, you may schedule an appointment with the UWF's Counseling and Psychological Services at (850) 474-2420. This service is free for students. Faculty can also help direct you to, or you may independently access, the [University's Title IX website](#).

Civil Discourse

At the University of West Florida, learning involves a variety of ideas, theories, and evidence. Presentation of these ideas does not represent an endorsement of any one idea or perspective. It is vital to the UWF academic mission that we foster an environment that allows for the open exchange of ideas and perspectives to advance the learning objectives for each course. Civil discourse within and outside the classroom is a vital component of the UWF academic environment and is expected of everyone who belongs to the UWF community. Students and faculty may engage with complex ideas in class, and students will often be asked to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding an idea, concept, or theory does not require endorsing or agreeing with it but rather hearing and considering its strengths and weaknesses. More information about civil discourse can be found on the [Dean of Students webpage](#).

Student Support Resources

Your success is the number one priority at UWF! Here are just a few of the many student support resources that can help you succeed.

Dean of Students

The Dean of Students Office works to create a culture of care by helping students experiencing challenging or difficult life circumstances which might impede academic success. The Dean of Students Office can assist you with academic, financial, medical, or other extenuating circumstances. Please contact the Dean of Students Office at (850) 474-2384 or email deanofstudents@uwf.edu.

Student Accessibility Resources

The University of West Florida supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If aspects of this course's instruction or design hinder your full participation, such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or using non-captioned videos and podcasts, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must [register with Student Accessibility Resources](#) and submit a semester request each semester. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the individual. For information regarding the registration process, visit [the SAR website](#), e-mail sar@uwf.edu, or call 850.474.2387.

Military & Veterans Resource Center

The [UWF Military & Veterans Resource Center \(MVRC\)](#) serves as a leading campus advocate for all military-affiliated students (Active Duty, Veterans, Reservists, Guardsman, and Spouses/Dependents of those above), working to ensure the needs of these individuals are met through coordinating with multiple university offices and services. The MVRC assists with the following: GI Bill® education benefits, Active Duty Tuition Assistance, EDD, out-of-state fee waiver, tutoring, mentoring, disability accommodation assistance, coordinating academic advising, and referral to state /federal resources and services. The MVRC is located in Building 38, Room 147. For more information on MVRC services, call 850-474-2550.

Physical Health

All enrolled students have access to The Student Health Clinic, which is a primary care clinic where students can receive medical care or advice. Contact [Student Health Services](#) at (850) 474-2172 for health concerns.

Mental Health Support

UWF resources are here to help you thrive, learn, and flourish. Please take advantage of the free resources online or on campus. Contact [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) at (850) 474-2420 for concerns about mental health or substance use. For 24/7 crisis counseling, call (850) 474-2420 and press option 6.

Therapy Assistance Online (TAO)

All students are encouraged to use Therapy Assistance Online (TAO) to strengthen their interpersonal and coping skills, learn more about sleep and wellness, and better cope with anxiety, depression, stress management, and more. TAO is an interactive web-based self-help

program that is available 24/7 and has video courses on mindfulness, relationships, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns. Access TAO anonymously at uwf.edu/tao.

TogetherAll

If you feel like you need somewhere to talk anonymously to others who can support you, peer support is available to all students 24/7 via TogetherAll. TogetherAll is an online community monitored by trained clinicians to keep it safe. Members are anonymous and can share how they are feeling and support each other. It is an asynchronous platform where you can respond to other's posts and share your posts if you like. Learn more and join TogetherAll at uwf.edu/togetherall.

ArgoWell

Mental Health is one aspect of holistic health that encompasses all eight wellness dimensions. The eight dimensions do not have to be equally balanced. Instead, you should strive to achieve your own authentic personal harmony. You have unique goals, priorities, and aspirations. You determine how to live your best life. ArgoWell is a UWF campus-wide initiative that brings student wellness to the forefront. Learn how ArgoWell can help you make the healthy choice the easy choice and support you in your wellness journey at uwf.edu/argowell.

Ask-a-Librarian

UWF Library staff are available for help through our [Ask-a-Librarian Live Chat](#), monitored from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm Monday through Thursday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on Friday, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on Saturday, and 9:00 am to 11:00 pm on Sunday. You can also email a librarian using the left-hand navigation in Canvas under Help or Library Tools or text a librarian at 850-483-0225.

Emergency Information

In the case of severe weather or another emergency, the campus might be closed and classes canceled. UWF uses a variety of communication methods to alert the campus community about emergency situations and safety threats. [Learn more about Emergency Communications from the UWF Police](#).

Official closures and delays are announced on the UWF website, Mobile Alert, and broadcast on WUWF-FM (88.1MHz).

- Mobile Alert is a broadcasting messaging system utilized by the university in emergency situations. To find more information regarding Mobile Alert, visit the [Enroll in Mobile Alert page](#) or locate the application in MyUWF by searching Mobile Alert.
- WUWF-FM (88.1MHz) is the official information source for the University. Any pertinent information regarding closings, cancellations, and the re-opening of campus will be broadcast.

If hurricane preparation procedures are initiated, the UWF Home Web Page and MyUWF will provide current information regarding hurricane preparation procedures, the status of classes, and the closing of the University. All students are encouraged to review the [Emergency Procedures Guide from UWF Police](#) as a quick reference for effective and timely action in the event of an emergency.

Writing Lab

[The Writing Lab](#) can help with the projects in this course. Graduate and undergraduate Writing Lab assistants are available to review the mechanics of writing with you and help you upgrade the quality of your papers before you submit assignments.

Paper reading services are offered online and face-to-face by appointment (through Navigate or 850-474-2229) or as walk-ins at the Main Lab (51/157). These services include face-to-face and online Interactive paper reading sessions and paper reading via the OWL/Online Writing Lab in Canvas.

Paper reading services, one-on-one and interactive group tutoring, Editing Workshops, the Grammar Hotline (850-474-2129), and Real-Time Writing Assistance are available during the Writing Lab's regular hours of operation from 10 to 5 daily and occasional weekends.

Visit our webpage at www.uwf.edu/writelab, or email us at writelab@uwf.edu

Note: It may take up to 48 hours or more to receive your work back from the Writing Lab. It is your responsibility to turn your assignment in on time. Take this into consideration when utilizing the Writing Lab.

Tutoring and Learning Resources

Tutoring and Learning Resources offers free services designed to help you improve your academic performance. Available services include Course-Based Tutoring, Study Skills Assistance, Academic Coaching, Academic Success Workshops, Smartpen Loans, and more. Services are available in Building 52 and on the 2nd Floor of Pace Library. For more information, visit www.uwf.edu/tlr, email tutoring@uwf.edu, or call (850) 474-3176.

Technical Support

ITS offers support to online students via phone (850.474.2075), online request form, and email (helpdesk@uwf.edu) for non-Canvas (eLearning) questions or problems. Visit the [Help Desk website](#) to learn more about their resources and services.

Helpful support links

- [New to UWF?](#)
- [Computer Specifications for eLearning \(Canvas\)](#)
- [MyUWF & ArgoNet](#)
- [Computer Security](#)
- [Files Storage](#)
- [Google Apps](#)
- [Internet Access](#)
- [Software](#)
- [Student Guide](#) (helpful links to various technology support topics organized by tool)

Instructors may also use third-party learning tools from other vendors, like Pearson. Your instructor should be able to provide information about customer support for those tools separately.

eLearning (Canvas)

UWF's online courses are made available through eLearning, hosted by Canvas, one of the leaders in online learning. UWF instructors must use the eLearning platform for fully online courses and often supplement traditional courses with online content. Visit the [eLearning Help for Students](#) page to get started and find support for Canvas. **Canvas Support is available 24/7 at the Canvas Support Hotline for Students: 1-844-866-3349.**

Course Schedule

* Note: The Schedule is subject to revision in regard to both dates and topics

Week	Dates	Topic	Readings & Assignments
Week 1	8/21-8/27	Introductions, Syllabus Review & Goals	
Week 2	8/28-9/3	Social Work Values & Code of Ethics	Chapter 5 & NASW Code of Ethics (C) *In Class Activity*
Week 3	9/4-9/10	History of Social Work	Chapter 2 *Response 1 Due*
Week 4	9/11-9/17	Theories & Perspectives of Social Work Practice	Chapters 1 & 3
Week 5	9/18-9/24	Social Work in Context	Chapters 4 & 9 *Response 2 Due*
Week 6	9/25-10/1	Fields of Practice	To Be Assigned (Canvas)
Week 7	10/2-10/8	Fields of Practice	To Be Assigned (Canvas)
Week 8	10/9-10/15	Fields of Practice	To Be Assigned (Canvas)
Week 9	10/16-10/22	Understanding Social Issues	Chapter 6 *Interview Assignment Due*
Week 10	10/23-10/29	Social Welfare Policy and Advocacy	Chapter 10 *In Class Activity*
Week 11	10/30-11/5	Social Work Skills Lab 1	*In Class Activity*
Week 12	11/6-11/12	Social Work Skills Lab 2	*In Class Activity*
Week 13	11/13-11/19	Social Work Skills Lab 3	*In Class Activity*
Week 14	11/20-11/26	What's Next for Social Work?	Chapter 11 & The End of Social Work (Canvas) *Response 3 Due*
Week 15	11/27-12/3	Course Review and Wrap Up	
-Dates for the Poverty Simulation Assignment will be provided			