



School of Health Education and Human Services  
Bachelor of Social Work  
SW200

**Introduction to Social Work**

Term: Winter 2025

Number of Credits: 3 Credit Course

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**Course Outline**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Islai Rathlin  
**LOCATION:** Zoom  
**E-MAIL:** [irathlin@yukonu.ca](mailto:irathlin@yukonu.ca)

**OFFICE HOURS:** By Appointment  
**METHOD:** Synchronous – Via Zoom  
**TIME:** Thursdays - 4pm – 7pm  
**DATES:** Jan 9<sup>th</sup> – Apr 10<sup>th</sup>

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to the profession of social work, its theory and practice. Students examine the philosophy and practice of social work in Canada, both in First Nations and non-First Nations communities.

**DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Students will be provided with an overview of the historical, ideological, and theoretical perspectives that have shaped and continue to inform the models and means of contemporary Canadian social work practice.

Specific values and principles are at the very core of what social workers do and why we do it; these are expressed through professional conduct that is guided by the Social Work Code of Ethics. Throughout this course students will be asked to critically reflect upon and to compare their own values and perspectives with those of the social work profession, within the context of enhancing social welfare for diverse populations. Students will also learn about the specific issues and challenges for social workers practicing in Yukon. This course focuses on the contributions of research to effective social work practice and policy. Emphasis is placed on understanding and critically assessing social work research, and on how to employ a variety of quantitative, qualitative, and community-based research methodologies to advance social work knowledge and practice.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 100 (3 credits) and 6 credits of university studies

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course students will have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

- Ability to discuss the major influences in the development of social work and the social welfare system in Canadian Society.
- Understanding of the values, knowledge, and skills that distinguish social work from other professions.
- Familiarity with the more common social work theories and models of practice, and an increased capacity to think critically about the current practice of social work.
- Cognizance of the broad scope of practice with diverse populations. Students will be able to recognize and discuss the three levels or “targets” of social work intervention: large-scale systems, including whole communities, nations (macro); neighbourhoods, organizations, other small groups (mezzo); and, individuals and/or families (micro).
- Familiarity with Yukon First Nations’ initiatives through self-government to assume responsibility for the planning and delivery of social welfare programs and services.
- Greater awareness of their personal suitability and/or readiness for choosing social work as a profession.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

### **Delivery Format**

This course blends synchronous and asynchronous delivery of content. Each week students will first be required to prepare for class by watching pre-recorded video lectures that have been uploaded to Moodle by the instructor. Next, students will attend weekly class meetings via Zoom that will focus on discussion of content and learning activities.

### **Weekly Breakdown of Hours**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Estimated Time</b>
<b>Synchronous Class Activities &amp; Discussion via Zoom</b>	110 minutes
<b>Asynchronous Video Instruction via Moodle</b>	45 minutes
<b>Weekly Readings (2 to 3 per week)</b>	100 minutes
<b>Assignments (varies week to week)</b>	120 minutes
<b>Total</b>	375 minutes (approx. 6.5 hours)

It is important to note that the time required will vary by individual.

## EVALUATION

Assignments	60%
Participation Assessment	10%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

**\*All Assignments (except Assignment 2) are to be uploaded to Moodle at 11:59am on the Sunday following the class of the week that they are due\***

### **Assignment 1 – In-Class Baseline Assessment (5%)**

In class students will write four to five paragraphs on a social work-related topic of their choosing. Students will be graded on their participation and effort.

### **Assignment 2 – Diverse Perspectives on Social Issues (35%)**

For this assignment students will select a social issue relevant to the local context (Yukon/Community). Using their own perspectives, the perspectives of community members and the academic literature students will be asked to explain why they feel that this issue qualifies as a social problem.

### **Assignment 2 – PRACTICE PRESENTATION – Social Work in the Yukon (20%)**

In small groups students will select an area of social work practice in the Yukon and produce a 15–20-minute video describing how those services are delivered, the policy frameworks governing those services, the social issues service users are impacted by, and the ethical issues related to that area of practice.

### **Final Exam (30%)**

Students will complete both a final exam with both take-home and in-class components to assess their knowledge of the course material. Questions will primarily be drawn from the material covered in the textbook.

### **Participation Assessment (10%)**

Both the student and instructor will evaluate the student's participation and assign a mark out of 10. Participation will be assessed on the student's attendance, activity, preparation and their contributions to the class in small groups, the larger classroom and in individual conversations with the instructor. Students are expected to assess their own participation through a participation assessment available on Moodle.

## **TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS**

### **Textbook**

Ives, N., Denov, M., & Sussman, T. (2020). Introduction to social work in Canada: Histories contexts and practices (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Oxford University Press.

**This text is available in the campus bookstore. An e-text is available online through the publisher. Copies of the text will be made available for short (1 hour) loans at the Yukon University library. There are likely multiple used copies of this text available from previous students.**

### **Moodle**

Alternative readings will be available on Moodle

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

## **ATTENDANCE**

While this class is online, it is not self-directed or 'go at your own pace'. You are expected to attend class through Zoom each week, as this is where we will apply our learnings into real-life scenarios. After 3 missed classes, each missed class will result in a 5% reduction in your mark, or the submission of an additional assignment based on that week's content.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Plagiarism occurs when a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, without citing the source from which the material is taken. Plagiarism can be the deliberate use of a whole piece of work, but more frequently it occurs when students fail to acknowledge and document sources from which they have taken material according to an accepted manuscript style (e.g., APA, CSE, MLA, etc.). Students may use sources which are public domain or licensed under Creative Commons; however, academic documentation standards must still be followed. Except with explicit

permission of the instructor, resubmitting work which has previously received credit is also considered plagiarism. Students who plagiarize material for assignments will receive a mark of zero (F) on the assignment and may fail the course. Plagiarism may also result in dismissal from a program of study or the University.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures for further details about academic standing and student rights and responsibilities.

### **GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Submissions that use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) for the creation of new content or the modification of existing content are not allowed and will be considered a violation of the Academic Regulations and treated the same as an act of plagiarism (see above). The use of GAI for activities like studying for exams, brainstorming ideas, or searching for content are permitted, but students include a declaration (statement) somewhere within the submission stating that they have used GAI and indicating where and how they have used it.

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon University Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon University website). It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations by contacting the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC): [LearningAssistanceCentre@yukonu.ca](mailto:LearningAssistanceCentre@yukonu.ca).

***Weeks 1-6***

**Foundations of Social Work, Social Welfare and Social Justice**

***Week 1***

***January 9***

**Introduction to SW200**

This first week will be a shortened class with responsibility for asynchronous learning after class is over. Students will introduce themselves to their colleagues and be given an overview of the course (themes, structure and assignments).

**Required Reading**

None

**Recommended Readings**

None

**Week 2**

**January 16**

**Perspectives on Social Work**

**History of Social Work in Canada and the Yukon & In-Class Baseline Assessment**

Students will be introduced to the profession of social work - the values, knowledge, and standards which inform and shape practice. Particular attention will be paid to the influence of indigenous perspectives on social work practice as well as the historical impacts of social policy and social work on diverse groups in Canada.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Social Work Scope of Practice, Sites of Social Work Practice, Personal and Professional Values, Critical Self-Reflection, Reflexivity, Social Location, Intersectionality, Cultural Safety, Self-Care, Colonialism, English Poor Laws, Charity, Settlement Houses, Jane Addams, Mary Richmond*

**Required Reading**

Textbook

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 1

**Recommended Readings**

DiAngelo & Sensoy (2014) *Leaning In: A Student's Guide to Engaging Constructively with Social Justice Content*

**Week 3**  
**January 23**  
**Social Work Practice Theories**

A selection of more common social work theories will be highlighted. Class activities and discussion are designed to foster critical thinking in the application of these theories within the current practice of social work.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Person-in-Environment, Structural Social Work, Eclectic Approach, Anti-Oppressive Practice, Feminist Social Work, Eco-Systems Theory, Faulty-Engine, Onion Peeling, Narrative Practices, Storytelling, Postmodernism*

**Required Reading**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 2

**Moodle**

Baskin, C. (2011) Strong Helpers' Teachings: The value of indigenous knowledges in the helping professions, (25-32) (Toronto, On: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc.  
Chapter 2: The Self is always First in the Circle



**Week 4**  
**January 30**

**Social Work Ethics and Values**

This week will examine social work values and ethics in research, policy, and practice. Group activities and discussion will explore the intersection of personal values with those of the social work profession, within the context of the Social Work Code of Ethics.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Ethics, Values, Professionalism, Codes of Conduct, Policies and Procedures, Canadian Association of Social Workers*

**Required Reading**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 3

**Moodle**

Canadian Association of Social Workers (2005). Guidelines for ethical practice. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Association of Social Workers.

**Week 5**  
**February 6**

*Assignment 1 Due This Week*

**Social Work Perspectives on Issues of Social Justice**  
**Theories of Oppression & Marginalization**

The concepts of oppression and marginalization are central to modern social work. This class will be used to discuss and investigate current theories of oppression and how oppression manifests itself in Canada and the world. Students will also examine how the concept of social justice informs the practice of social work and how social problems are defined in Canadian society. Specific attention will be given to how students can engage constructively in concepts that may challenge their own personal beliefs and values.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Social Issues, Social Problems, Social Justice, Inequality, Self-Determination, Oppression, Marginalization, Stigma, Power, Privilege, Levels of Oppression, Structural Social Work, Radical Social Work, Internalized Domination, Intersectionality*

**Required Readings**

**Moodle**

Dumbrill, G.C. & Yee, J.Y. (2019) . Whiteness: What It Is and Why We Have To Understand It. In G. Dumbrill and J. Yee (Eds.), *Anti-Oppressive Social Work: Ways of Knowing, Talking, and Doing* (Ch. 4). Oxford University Press

Marion-Young, I. (1990). Five Faces of Oppression - Overview

**Recommended Readings**

Yee, J.Y., & Dumbrill, G.C. (2015). Whiteout: Still looking for race in Canadian social work practice. In A. Al-Krenawi, J.R. Graham and N. Habibov (Eds.), *Diversity and Social Work in Canada* (13-37). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

**Week 6**

**February 13**

**Indigenous Perspectives on Social Work and Social Welfare**

The lecture and assigned readings for this class examine the historical foundations of Canada's "Indian Policy" that has fueled the emergence of self-government initiatives amongst many Yukon First Nations. Students will consider the role of social work in colonization and explicate the current challenges and opportunities for social work practice with and by Indigenous peoples.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Indian Act, Colonialism, The White and Red Papers, Aboriginal Worldviews, Indigenous Social Work Theory and Practice, Settler, Helper, Ally, Decolonization, Intergenerational Trauma, Truth and Reconciliation*

**Required Reading**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov, & Sussman – Chapter 8

**Weeks 7-11**

**Social Work Practice – Skills, Interventions & Sites of Practice**

**Week 7**

**February 27**

**Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals and Families**

Social Work practice takes place primarily at three levels: micro, mezzo and macro. Students will learn about the different approaches to practice and interventions at the three different levels as well as an overview of the fundamental skills involved in generalist social work practice.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Macro, Micro, Meso/Mezzo, Generalist Practice, Assessment, Interviewing, Empathy, Genuineness, Collaboration, Care and Concern, Common Factors, Evaluating Risk*

**Required Readings**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 4

***Week 8***

***March 6***

***Assignment 3 Due This Week***  
**Assignment 2 Videos and Discussion**

***\*Asynchronous Class Only This Week***

During Week 9 students will work independently to review and provide feedback on the group presentation videos required for Assignment 2.

**Week 9**  
**March 13**

**Generalist Social Work Practice with Communities**

Social Work practice takes place primarily at three levels: micro, mezzo and macro. Students will learn about the different approaches to practice and interventions at the three different levels as well as an overview of the fundamental skills involved in generalist social work practice.

*Macro, Micro, Meso/Mezzo, Generalist Practice, Community Organizing, Empowerment, Advocacy, Self-Determination, Alliance Building, Public Education*

**Required Readings**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 5

***Week 10***

***March 20***

**Social Work Practice in Healthcare Contexts**

The profession of social work encompasses a broad scope of practice with diverse populations. This scope is greatly influenced by the nature and direction of social policy, and the implementation of policy through the provision of social welfare services. For this class, students will be introduced to the stages of social welfare policy development and the role intersection between social policy and social work practice.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Social Welfare, Canada Health and Social Transfer, Housing, Poverty, Food Security, Social Determinants of Health*

**Required Readings**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 6

**Week 11**

**March 27**

**Generalist Social Work Practice with Children and Families**

Social Work practice takes place primarily at three levels: micro, mezzo and macro. Students will learn about the different approaches to practice and interventions at the three different levels as well as an overview of the fundamental skills involved in generalist social work practice.

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov & Sussman – Chapter 7

**Moodle**

(Group 1)

Yuen, A. (2011). History re-authored: Young men responding to anger, trouble, and hopelessness in urban schools. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 3.

(Group 2)

Yuen, A. (2007). Discovering children's responses to trauma: a response-based narrative practice. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 4.



**Weeks 12-13**

**Diverse Perspectives on Social Work and Social Welfare**

**Week 12**

**April 3**

**Feminist Social Work**

**LGBTQueer Perspectives on Social Work**

Feminism has greatly contributed to the development of social work practice and theory as well as social welfare policy analysis. In the first part of this class students will learn about the historical development and evolving practice of feminist social work using interventions around inter-partner violence as a practice example. The second part of this class is concerned with how concepts of gender and sexual diversity and the LGBTQueer communities have impacted the pursuit of social justice and the practice of social work.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & Postmodern Wave Feminism, Intersectionality, Patriarchy, Sexism, Misogyny, Queer, Trans, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Sexual Diversity, Gender Diversity, Homophobia, Social Constructionism, Queer Theories*

**Required Reading**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov, & Sussman – Chapter 10

**Moodle**

Hyde, C. A. (2013). Feminist Social Work Practice. In The Encyclopaedia of Social Work. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.

**Week 13**

**April 10**

*Participation Assessment Due this Week*

**Disability Perspectives on Social Work**

Disability communities have been pioneers in debates around self-determination and self-advocacy. These concepts and political positions have gradually been incorporated into modern social work practice. The first part of this class traces the historical importance of Disability perspectives to social work theory and practice and also discusses the role of social workers in helping to further the cause of self-determination and emancipation.

**Key Concepts & Terms**

*Disability, Impairment, Social Model, Medical Model, Institutionalization, Critical Disability Theory, Paternalism*

**Required Reading**

**Textbook**

Ives, Denov, & Sussman – Chapter 9

**Moodle**

TBA

***Final Exam  
April 14 to April 24***

***Exam Accommodations will be made for students living outside of Whitehorse***