



Texas A & M University - Commerce

School of Social Work

SWK 492/592: Social Work in Costa Rica (*tentative syllabus*)

May Mini Syllabus 2022 (travel dates May 17th – 24th)

INSTRUCTOR	Rebecca G. Judd, Ph.D., LCDC, LMSW_IPR Instructor of record
OFFICE LOCATION	Henderson
OFFICE HOURS	TBD
VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS	TBD
CONTACT INFORMATION	Office Number: 903-468-8190 Rebecca.Judd@tamuc.edu
COURSE DESCRIPTION	This course explores the evolution and current development of social work practice in Costa Rica through building knowledge links between political processes, economic constraints and the actual implementation of public policies. Focusing on how modern and evolving bureaucracies along with cultural and institutional frameworks of a given political system dictate the ways in which governments work and interact with the public/private sector.
COURSE RATIONAL	A significant shift has been occurring in the United States over the past several decade and according to the State Comptroller's Office of Texas, the Hispanic population in 2006 constituted 35.7% of Texans. By 2020 the Texas Hispanic population is expected to outnumber the White population. Through this experience, the students will learn about social work and the welfare system in Costa Rica. In the United States, the course will provide the cultural, historical and political context for preparation of the Costa Rica experience and upon return, provide the context for translating the Costa Rica cultural and language experience to work with other subpopulations of Latino immigrants in the United States.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to prepare students with knowledge, skills and abilities in social welfare practices for transnational work in the United States with individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Students will be provided with a general perspective on social work and social work policy in Costa Rica. Working in conjunction with Texas A & M Soltis Research & Education Center and site visits to various social service agencies in areas of health, mental health, aging, child welfare and criminal justice students will explore issues of political and economic development, environmental social movements, history and culture.

Upon Completion of this Course, all students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends and systems) within the following skill sets:

- **Communicate** their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences
- **Discuss** the extent to which a culture's structure and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, create or enhance privilege and power
- **Identify** the influence of personal bias and values in working with diverse groups
- **Engage** in practices that advance social and economic justice
- **Articulate** in-depth knowledge of strengths and challenges related to social issues in Costa Rica
- **Analyze** theoretical frameworks such as social development, globalization from below and human rights to welfare practice in a comparative format between Costa Rica and the United States

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Activity	Criteria
Reflection Journal	Travel journal that will include daily critical reflections on assigned readings, videos, individual and panel guest lecturers/presentation, active learning experiences and site visits to governmental and nongovernmental organizations	20% of grade (grading rubric to be provided)
Digital expression: <i>Word Press Blog</i> <i>(Graduate Students)</i>	MSW Students will create and maintain a blog that integrates readings on assigned topics and their experience in Costa Rica. <u><i>Topics may include:</i></u> Human Rights; Social Justice in the Educational System; Prison System; Evolving Capitalism and Corporate Social Responsibility; Comparative analysis of Marxist paradigm and influence on SW profession in Costa Rica and Western SW paradigms; Aging in Costa Rica - role of individual, family and government; Child Welfare: focus of family in children's rights; Comparative analysis of legal and illegal immigration in Costa Rica and the United States; critically analyze strategies - policies, programs, and social action - in terms of their ability to promote sustainable human development and human rights.	50% of grade (grading rubric to be provided)
Digital expression: <i>Power point poster</i> <i>(undergraduate students)</i>	Students will choose one topic (provided by instructor) and develop a power point poster presentation on the topic	50% of grade (grading rubric to be provided)
Photo-Voice Reception	Students will be assigned various topics to guide picture taking (i.e. examples of economic policies; religious representations; cultural experiences) throughout the trip. Each student will choose one photo that represents a significant experience/understanding for him/her and will write a brief essay about the meaning of the photo. Chosen photos and essays will be displayed at the Cultural reception held on June 1st for the campus community	30% of grade (grading rubric to be provided)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course MSW students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between social policy and social and economic justice
- Apply strength and empowerment strategies with diverse populations
- Articulate a self-awareness of bias and prejudices held towards individuals from diverse cultures

Upon completion of this course BSW students will be able to:

- Describe differences in social policy between the United States and Costa Rica
- Use self-reflection to identify and manage values for guiding practice
- Engage individuals from diverse cultures with dignity and respect

MSW PRACTICE BEHAVIORS/OPERATIONALIZATION/MEASUREMENT SCALE

COMPETENCY AGP 2.1.4									
DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO BUILD STRENGTHS BASED ON MUTUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS									
PRACTICE BEHAVIOR					PRACTICE BEHAVIOR				
AGP 4.1		Refrains from acting upon biases and values as they relate to a diverse group			AGP 4.3		Applies strengths and empowerment strategies as with diverse groups		
Aggregated Performance: Observation of behavior; written reflections in journals; peer evaluation; content of online blog					Aggregated Performance: Observation of behavior; written reflections in journals; peer evaluation; content of online blog				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met All Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence	Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met all Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence

COMPETENCY AGP 2.1.3									
DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT TO STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS DISCRIMINATION, REDUCE DISPARITIES AND PROMOTE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE									
PRACTICE BEHAVIOR									
AGP 2.1.5		Actively promotes opportunities and participation of diverse clients							
Aggregated Performance: Observation of behavior; written reflections in journals; peer evaluation; content of online blog									
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met All Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence	Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met All Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence

BSW PRACTICE BEHAVIORS/OPERATIONALIZATION/MEASUREMENT SCALE

COMPETENCY BSW 2.1.4

ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE

PRACTICE BEHAVIOR					PRACTICE BEHAVIOR				
BSW 4.1	Treats diverse clients with dignity and respect				AGP 4.5	Has sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups			
Aggregated Performance: Observation of behavior; written reflections in journals; peer evaluation; content in power point presentation assignment					Aggregated Performance: Observation of behavior; written reflections in journals; peer evaluation; content in power point presentation assignment				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met All Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence	Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met all Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence

COMPETENCY BSW 2.1.5

ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

PRACTICE BEHAVIOR									
BSW 5.2	Recognizes the global interconnections of oppression and is knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights								
Aggregated Performance: Observation of behavior; written reflections in journals; peer evaluation; content of online blog									
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met All Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence	Did not Meet Expectations	Met Minimal Expectations	Met All Expectations	Exceeded Expectations	Achieved Excellence

Tentative Course Schedule

<p>Social Work in Costa Rica embraces a Brazilian model with a Marxist paradigm. The focus is on human rights and social justice that differs from an individual, direct practice focus. The culture reflects the collective good for groups, as opposed to individual autonomy. The ability to experience this allows students to step out of the Western paradigm and recognize the strengths in this perspective. Experiential activities are designed to allow students to experience this culture, allowing them to work with and advocate for clients in Western society whose values and cultures are those that reflect a collective approach as opposed to individualistic.</p>			
Date	Venue	Topic/Activity & Assignments	Student Learning Outcomes
May 17 th	DEPART/ARRIVE COSTA RICA	<p>Group travel</p> <p>Arrive in San Jose and travel to the Soltis Center in La Fortuna</p>	<p>All students will be able to :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verbalize goal of comparative policy and cultural awareness for the trip. 2. Describe challenges and opportunities of international travel. <p>Describe and discuss safety issues related to international travel</p>
May 18th	CULTURAL EXPLORATION	Welcome Orientation to Soltis Center	<p>BSW Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe cultural traditions, market economy in Costa Rica within the context of emerging capitalism.
			<p>MSW Learning Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In addition to describing cultural traditions, market economy in Costa Rica within the context of emerging capitalism, MSW students will be able to articulate the impact of societal structures on human development.

May 19 th	VISIT LOCAL HIGHSCHOOL VISIT EBAIS SAN ISIDRO GUIDED HIKE INTO RAINFOREST AND WATER FALL	Visit AGECO, learn about services for the aging in Costa Rica	BSW Learning Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and discuss cultural differences in caring for the aged and disabled I Costa Rica that has a focus of family centered care with Western philosophy of again. 2. Compare and contrast physical facilities where aged and disabled receive care in Costa Rica with local facilities in Texas.
			MSW Learning Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In addition to being able to identify cultural differences in caring for the aged and disabled, and comparing/contrasting physical facilities where aged and disabled receive care, MSW students will articulate differing values and ethics exhibited regarding human rights.
May 20 th	VISIT PANI HOGAR DE ANCIANOS	Social Work in Costa Rica Social Work Education Evening: Group Discussions;	BSW Learning Objectives <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and contrast social work education from a Marxist perspective in Costa Rica with the Western Model. 2. Discuss cultural and values differences espoused in Costa Rica Social work Practice and Western Social Work
			MSW Learning Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1. In addition to comparing and contrasting social work education across cultures and discussing differences in cultural values, MSW students will

			be able to explain long term outcomes in the differing cultures in reference to social and economic justice.
May 21 st	TRAVEL TO SAN JOSE VISIT CENTRAL MARKET WALKING TOUR OF HISTORICAL SAN JOSE		BSW Learning Objectives: 2. 1. Discuss the economic and financial institutions and correlate with human services policy and sustainable development
			MSW Learning Objectives: 1. In addition to being able to discuss economic and financial institutions and correlate with human services policy and sustainable development, MSW students will be able to analyze variances and the impact on social and economic justice and human rights.
May 22 nd ,	SUSTAINABILITY POAS VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK DOKA COFFEE PLANTATION TOUR		BSW Learning Objectives 1. Link ecological theory and perspective with human development and sustainable social policy
			MSW Learning Objectives 2. In addition to being able to link ecological theory and perspective with human development and sustainable social policy, MSW students will be able to articulate evidence of sustainable policy to inform the Grand Challenge of Social Work
May 23 rd	VISIT SEMI-INSTITUTION		BSW Learning Objectives

	VISIT SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA	Evening: Group Discussions	<p>1. Students will be able to describe the philosophical underpinnings of human rights that inform criminal justice policy in Costa Rica</p> <p>MSW Learning Objectives</p> <p>2. In addition to being able to describe the philosophical underpinning of human rights that inform criminal justice policy in Costa Rica, MSW students will be able to compare and contrast decarceration processes and determine “smart” decarceration methods used to inform U.S. policy.</p>
May 24 th	VISIT IAFA VISIT AGECO		
May 25 th	DEPART/RETURN U.S.	Day of Travel	

**The schedule is dependent upon coordination with the Soltis Center and the various social service agencies

** Cultural activities will include experiencing the market place, agriculture/coffee production

** Each evening there will be group activities to process the experiences of the day