Northeastern Illinois University
Social Work Program
SWK-360(C): SOCIAL WORK AND THE LAW
Summer 2008

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Office Hours: T-R: 12:30 – 2:45 pm and by appointment.

PREREQUISTIES: Successful completion of SWK 200.

TEXTS:
Saltzman, A. & Furman, D. M., (1999) *Law in social work practice*. Belmont Grove, CA: Wadsworth Group.

Additional readings as assigned by the Instructor. These will be available either on Blackboard or on reserve in the library.

REFERENCE TEXTS:

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed). (2002). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Szuchman, L.T. & Thomlison, B. (2008). *Writing with style*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks Cole

COURSE DESCRIPTION

COURSE OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course students will have knowledge of

1. the historical intersections between legal systems and social work practice as it relates to issues of social justice,
2. the major sources of legal authority including constitutional law, statutory law, administrative law and regulations, and understand its relevance to social work,
3. the intersection of social work and law on issues of significance to social workers such as health and mental health, family law, juvenile justice, child welfare, immigration, and employment,
4. advocacy strategies involving the courts can be used for social change and social justice on behalf of clients, client groups, and populations,
5. the skills necessary to practice forensic social work including the role of expert witnesses, fact witnesses, writing court evaluations and reports.

Students will be able to identify the values:

6. that distinguish social work from the practice of law,
7. that strengthen their understanding of the remediation of social justice issues through the court system,

Students will be able to demonstrate:

8. critically analyzing legal regulations and court cases involving the practice of social work
9. skills in conducting legal research as it applies to issues related to social justice and client concerns

STUDENT CONDUCT

1. Punctual attendance, active and appropriate and authentic participation is **required**. Chronic tardiness will result in the lowering of a student's grade. Prior consent of the instructor is necessary for excused absences. Please see class participation under "Assignments" below for further information about class attendance.

2. Preparation for class includes reading the assigned material **prior** to coming to class. Healthy debate of issues is encouraged. The sharing of the student's thoughts, beliefs, and values is encouraged throughout this class. Respect for the opinions and the feelings of others is expected.

3. The assignment of the student's final grade (for both fall and spring semesters) is predicated on the student's submission of ALL required field practicum paperwork; monthly timesheets, field instructor's and student evaluations, and final portfolio assignment.

4. A hard copy and an electronic version of your paper must be submitted at the **beginning of class** on the assigned due date. Electronic copies should be sent to the instructor by e-mail as attached Word documents.

5. Papers are to be typed in a 12 point font, doubled spaced, and have 1" margins. A title page including your name, course number, date, and paper assignment title should be attached to each paper. Your paper should be written in the style consistent with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

6. Information, quotes and other factual material taken from other sources should be properly acknowledged, using APA standard formatting procedures. Appropriate grammar, sentence structure, spelling and word usage will be evaluated as a portion of the grade received for each assignment.

7. Late work will only be accepted with **prior** approval of the instructor. If accepted, the grade for the late paper will automatically be dropped one point per day late. Many of the assignments in this class rely on completion of work by your field supervisor. Although you may feel comfortable working at the last minute, your supervisor's schedule and work load may not allow for this. Ensure that your work is completed on time by working closely with your supervisor about assignment deadlines.

8. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct are taken seriously. These activities are not only a violation of University protocol, but are also a serious breach of ethical social work practice. If a paper is found to have been plagiarized, it will automatically receive a failing grade and the student will also receive a failing grade for the course. The student, the Department Chair, and the Office of the Dean of Students will be notified. Students are responsible

for understanding this policy, the University's policy, and the consequences for violating it. The University's policy may be found in the Student Conduct Code: http://www.neiu.edu/~ejhowens/plagiarism. More information on plagiarism may be found at http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html#plagiarized.

9. Participation in the class Blackboard site is required. Students must login to the site before the second class period with a valid e-mail address. If a student's e-mail address changes throughout the course of the semester, the student is responsible for changing the address on the site. Students are responsible for all information posted to the Blackboard site and must check their e-mail regularly.

10. Students with documented special needs should notify the instructor immediately. Students with disabilities should contact NEIU's Disability Services Program at 773-442-5496.

COURSE CONTENT:

Course Schedule

5/20/08 – 5/22/08
Class introduction, syllabus, assignments, student and course expectations, legal issue paper/presentation selection, and news article date selection.

5/27/08
An Overview of the Legal System and the Law
Basic Legal Concepts for Social Workers

Reading: Saltzman & Furman: Chapters 1 & 2

5/29/08
Locating and Using the Law
Constitutional Law

Reading: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 4 & 5

6/3/08 - 6/5/08
Juvenile Delinquency

Readings: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 7
The Juvenile Court Act
Alexander: Chapter 3: pp. 43-63

Assignments due: News article presentations on 6/5/08.

6/10/08 - 6/12/08
The Child, the Family, and the Law
Child Abuse and Neglect – Historical Perspective

Readings: Crosson-Tower: Chapter 1
Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 8

Assignments due: News article presentations on 6/12/08.

6/17/08 - 6/19/08
The Child, the Family, and the Law
Child Abuse and Neglect – Current Practices

Readings: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 8
The Juvenile Court Act

Assignments due: News article presentations

6/24/08 – 6/26/08
The Child, the Family, and the Law
Adoption

Readings: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 9
Alexander: Legal Aspects of Adoption Policy and Practices
Chapter 4, pp. 65-82

Assignments due: News article presentations on 6/26/08.

7/1/08 – 7/3/08
The Child, the Family, and the Law
Marriage, custody and support of children

Readings: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 10 & 11
710 ILCS 35 – Uniform Mediation Act
750 ILCS 5 – Illinois Marriage and dissolution of Marriage Act

Guest Speaker: Jan Lain, LCSW Supervisor
Marriage and Family Counseling Service, Domestic Relations Division, Circuit court of Cook County

Assignments due: News article presentations on 7/3/08.

7/8/08 – 7/10/08
The Child, the Family, and the Law
Domestic Violence

Readings: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 12

Guest Speaker: Patti Krivo, WINGS

Assignments due: News article presentations on 7/10/08.

7/15/08 – 7/17/08
The Child, the Family, and the Law
Incarcerated Parents

Guest Speaker: Gail T. Smith, Executive Director, Chicago Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers

Reading: Golden, Renny. (2005). *War on the Family.* New York: Routledge
Chapters 1, 4, 5

7/22/08 – 7/24/08
The professional of social work and the law

Readings: Saltzman & Furman: Chapter 17, 18, 19, 20

7/29/08 – 7/31/08

Class Presentations and distribution of final exam.

8/5/08

Final Exam is due to the instructor by 11:40 am.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

The class format will consist of lectures, small group discussion facilitated by both the instructor and the students of assigned materials, and presentations by guest speakers.

ASSIGNMENTS

As this is an intensive summer course, the student is expected to complete assignments promptly. It is equally important that the student comes to class prepared, having read the assigned material, in order to participate fully in the class discussion. The student is responsible for three kinds of written assignments, a class presentation, and a final exam.

Attendance (45 points)

If you attend class, participate authentically, and write every week you will receive a splendid grade, meaning receiving all of the points. As we have a small class, your presence each week is required, "missing class destroys the collective dialogue and weakens the learning community". If you miss more than three classes, your grade will be decreased by one letter grade, six classes – two letter grades. More than six classes will result in a failing grade in the class.

Written Reaction to Guest Speakers: (40 points – 10 points each)

Each student will write a reaction paper to each guest speaker. Each paper should be no more than two pages. It must include the following three items.

- Brief description of the material covered
- Your reaction to the material presented
- It's impact on your understanding of the practice area.

A hard copy of each paper must be submitted at the **beginning of class** on the assigned due date. Papers are to be typed in a 12 point font, doubled spaced, and have 1" margins. A title page including your name, course number, date, and guest speaker's name should be attached to each paper.

News Article: (15 points)

Each student will find and discuss a news article in class regarding a legal issue that has social work practice implications. The student will find at least one other resource to use in their presentation. The student will submit the news article and a copy of their resource(s) to the instructor on their assigned presentation date.

Legal Issue Paper: (40 points)

The student will prepare an eight to ten page paper based on a selected "NASW Legal Issue of the Month." The student will select their topic on 5/20/08 from those approved by the instructor. The student may access the information about their topic from the NASW website, www.socialworkers.org.

Introduction – description of the issue
Description of the facts of the case
Description of the legal/practice conflict involved
Understanding of the legislation/case law/procedures that frame the issue
Implications for practice

The student must have at least five outside resources, two of which must be case law decisions. All resources must be cited using APA standard formatting.

A hard copy and an electronic version of each paper must be submitted at the **beginning of class** on the assigned due date. Papers are to be typed in a 12 point font, doubled spaced, and have 1" margins. A title page including your name, course number, and date should be attached to each paper.

Class Presentation: (30 points)

The student will present their legal issue/paper to the class. The student will prepare three to four questions for class discussion. The student will be evaluated on the quality of their presentation, and their ability to stimulate/moderate class discussion.

Final Exam: (30 points)

The final exam will be a "take home" exam. Students will be given the final exam on 7/17/06 and will be due on 7/26/06. The final exam is focused on the assigned readings, class presentations, and lectures. Students may use the readings, their notes, or other reference material to answer the questions. Students are expected to complete the exam independently.

FINAL GRADING SCALE

Grade Scale:	A=	180	-	200
	B=	160	-	179
	C=	140	-	159
	D=	120	-	139
	F=	0	-	119