



DEPARTMENT Humanities and Social Sciences

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2026

SW1000(A3): Introduction to the Practice of Social Work – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR: Shauna Livesey

PHONE: 780-539-2911

OFFICE: C415

E-MAIL: Slivesey@nwpolytech.ca

OFFICE HOURS:

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: An introduction to the methods and skills used in effective, ethical, and anti-oppressive social work practice. The historical and theoretical contexts of social work will be examined as well as the impact of marginalization and oppression on individuals, families, and communities. Appropriate use of communication, counselling, and effective interview methods will be applied to example scenarios as students develop awareness of the factors that shape the practice of social work.

PREREQUISITE(S):

None

COREQUISITE(S):

None

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

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



APA Style Guide (7th Edition). It is recommended students purchase this text or become familiar with helpful websites to learn how to write and structure academic papers.

* Additional readings may be distributed in class or be posted onto the MyClass site

DELIVERY MODE(S): On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the historical and theoretical contexts of social work.
- Identify and analyze the effects of marginalization and oppression on diverse populations.
- Apply anti-oppressive principles to social work practice.
- Utilize effective communication, counselling, and interview techniques in a professional context.
- Reflect on their own values and biases to foster ethical and inclusive practices.
- Collaborate effectively with peers to analyze case studies and propose solutions grounded in anti-oppressive frameworks.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.alberta.ca>

** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. **Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Assignment	Description	Grade	Due Date
Quizzes	Content Quizzes x2	30%	Feb 12 th & Mar 2 nd
Assignment 1	Values Analysis Written Paper	25%	Jan 27 th
Assignment 2	Application of theory to a Field of Practice Case Study	30%	Mar 17 th
Assignment 3	In Class Participation	15%	Apr 7 th

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit IF your grade is less than C-.

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72	F	0.0	00-49

Note: A minimum grade of C- in SW1000 is required as a prerequisite for SW1110, SW1120, SW1900, SW1910, SW2120, SW2130, SW2140, SW2200, SW2300, and SW2500. The Social Work Diploma program requires a minimum grade of C- in all SW courses to successfully complete the program.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week / Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Jan 6/8	Course Orientation / Introduction to Social Work		
Jan 13/15	History of Social Work and Social Welfare in Canada	Chapter 1	
Jan 20/22	Values – Personal & Professional / Ethics in Social Work	Chapter 2	
Jan 27/29	Theories and Practice Frameworks	Chapter 3	Assignment 1
Feb 3/5	Social Work with Individuals and Families	Chapter 4	
Feb 10/12	Social Work with Groups and Communities	Chapter 5	Quiz 1
Feb 17/19	Winter Break – No Classes	—	
Feb 24/26	Social Work and Health	Chapter 6	
Mar 3/5	Social Work with Children	Chapter 7	
Mar 10/12	Indigenous Peoples and Social Work	Chapter 8	
Mar 17/19	Social Work with Immigrants & Refugees / International Social Work	Chapters 9 & 13	Assignment 2
Mar 24/26	Social Work and Sexual & Gender Diversity / Social Work with People with Disabilities	Chapter 10 & 11	
Mar 31 / Apr 2	Social Work with Aging	Chapters 12	Quiz 2
Apr 7/9	Course Wrap-Up	—	Assignment 3

Assignment 1 –Content quizzes- 10% x 2 (30%)- students will complete 2 open book quizzes based on assigned readings and content presented in class. Quizzes will be posted to the MyClass site.

Assignment 2 Values Analysis Written Paper 25% 2^{1st} person, APA format (headings are strongly encouraged)

Reflect on personal values and ethical frameworks and examine how they influence social work practice. In this assignment, you will explore your own personal values, beliefs, and attitudes, and analyze how they may impact your practice as a future social worker. Consider how your cultural background, upbringing, and life experiences shape your perspectives on issues such as poverty, marginalization, and oppression. Reflect on how these personal values align with or conflict with the ethical guidelines and values of the social work profession. This assignment will contain the following:

- A written reflection (5-6 pages) addressing the following questions:
 - What are your core values (choose 3-4), and how are they shaped by your personal background?
 - How do your values align with the ethics of social work (e.g., respect for human dignity, social justice)?
 - In what ways can your personal values influence your practice in terms of client relationships and decision-making?
 - How will you ensure that your values do not interfere with providing anti-oppressive, client-centered care?
- Provide references to key ethical principles from the ACSW/CASW Code of Ethics or similar social work ethics frameworks.
- Use a minimum of 3 references
- APA format but can use first person language

Assignment 3 – Application of theory to a Field of Practice Case Study and Discussion Forum – 30% – Case Study to be submitted to Dropbox by 6 PM of due date.

Students will choose one social work theory as part of the course content and apply it to a case study representing one of the fields of social work practice presented in class. Students will choose one Case Study that is either non-fiction or fiction and provide thoughtful analysis to the case study. Students are expected to demonstrate academic writing skills in all answers and cite sources using APA format 7th ed. This assignment should be 6-7 pages in length. A minimum of 3 references is recommended.

Assignment 4: In-Class Participation 15% of final grade

Active participation is a key part of learning in this course. This grade reflects attendance and punctuality (5%), quality of contributions to discussions (5%), completion of short in-class tasks

(3%), and professionalism, including respectful engagement with peers (2%). Full credit requires regular attendance, consistent preparation (readings and tasks), thoughtful and relevant contributions that connect to course materials, and respectful collaboration. Participation will be tracked by the instructor, and final summaries will be provided by the student. Accommodation is available with proper documentation. At the end of the term you will grade yourself out of 15 and include your:

- Attendance & punctuality
- Quality of contributions (content & critical thinking)
- Preparation & completion of short in-class tasks
- Professionalism (respect, listening, etiquette)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students are expected to attend all classes and actively participate. Being prepared means completing assigned readings and tasks in advance and coming ready to contribute to meaningful discussions that value diverse perspectives and ideas.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is permitted, but it must be used responsibly. AI should be a tool to support and enhance your learning, not replace it. For example, AI may be used to help brainstorm, organize, or edit your work, but it must not be used to generate full assignments or bypass the learning process. Improper use of AI may have academic consequences.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>.

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Assignments submitted late may receive a late penalty of 5% for each day beyond the due date. Assignments are to be submitted via the Course myClass. No assignments will be accepted by email.