International Social Work: Practicing in the Global South
SWRK 755 Fall 2017
University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Practice

Instructor:  
Email:  
Schedule:  
Office Hours:  

Course Description
This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to societal problems in the developing world; familiarize them with global professions in social work, education, public health, and more; and help prepare them for overseas/cross-cultural practice. Through the course students will identify numerous strategies and skills social workers and other professionals have used to collaboratively build interventions within the human rights, social welfare, education, healthcare and sustainable community development arenas.

The course will expose students to theories of development and a human rights framework. Students will research a specific global problem; explore local and international response; and compare/contrast interventions & strategies responding to the issue.

Course Objectives
1. Develop a constructive sensitivity to human rights and societal problems in the Global South
2. Understand human rights, social development theories and other theories, frameworks, and perspectives for assessing global problems and their solutions
3. Acquire introductory knowledge of the role of IGOs/NGOs/GROs, faith-based institutions and government programs
4. Be able to make comparisons in examining responses to global issues
5. Introduce students to the international forces that influence development
6. Become familiar with international social work and other professions
7. Prepare for overseas/cross-cultural practice

Attendance and participation
Each student is expected to come to class prepared, having read and contemplated the readings, and ready to share his or her perspectives, questions, and insights. The success of the class depends largely on the extent to which students engage in active discussion and debate around the issues posed in lectures, readings, and by guest speakers. Students are expected to complete all required readings and assignments as scheduled. Late assignments will result in the lowering of a student’s grade (half a grade per day).

**APA style**
All assignments should utilize APA style as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. APA style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)

**Ethical practices**
Since the University is an academic community, its fundamental purpose is the pursuit of knowledge. Essential to the success of this educational mission is a commitment to the principles of academic integrity. Every member of the University community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are also responsible for adhering to the principles and spirit of the following Code of Academic Integrity. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication will not be tolerated and will be addressed according to University policy. Consequences for academic dishonesty include failing the course, notification on your permanent record or transcript of the violation, and/or suspension or expulsion from the program. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of information, wording, organization, or ideas. Whether the original source is public (e.g., newspaper or journal article) or private (e.g., a classmate’s paper), you need to provide appropriate attribution. [http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html](http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html)

**Special needs**
A student with a documented disability or any other special need who wishes to discuss academic accommodations should contact the instructor as soon as possible. The University is obligated, whenever possible, to provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Students who have questions about their rights or accommodations may contact the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunities at 215.898.6993 or the Office of Learning Disabilities Specialist at 215.573.8459.

**Religious holidays**
Students will not be penalized because of their religious beliefs and observances. Whenever possible, students will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. Students should inform the instructor of any conflicts between the course schedule and religious observances as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

**Use of Email**
Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course related information and announcements. Students should check email frequently.

**Cell phones and computers are not to be used regularly in class.** Phones should not ring and you should not text or check Facebook.
**Instructor responsibilities**
- Be prepared for class, read and return students’ work in a timely manner, and be interested and engaged in students’ projects, background, experience, and perspective;
- Learn from the students;
- Meet with students individually or in groups upon request and be available by e-mail or phone; and
- Work hard, have fun, and empower students to pursue a global career

**Required Texts:**
- International Social Work: Issues, Strategies, and Programs by David Cox & Manohar Pawar
  Available at Penn Bookstore 34th and Walnut
- Optional: 100 under 100: One Hundred Tools for Empowering Global Women by Betsy Teutsch
  [http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00OF8FE04/ref=dp kindle-redirect?ie=UTF8&btkr=1](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00OF8FE04/ref=dp kindle-redirect?ie=UTF8&btkr=1)

**Assignments**

1. **Preparation for and participation in class (15%)**
   Every class we will engage in discussions around “real questions.” Students are expected to generate real questions each week from the readings, previous class discussions, current world events and guest speaker presentations. Each student will be expected to post a real question under “Discussions” on canvas on a designated Sunday by 12:00pm and classmates are expected to respond in class that following Wednesday.
   Real Questions:
   - often have no obviously right or wrong answer
   - grow out of your own reading and thinking about the material
   - cannot usually be answered with a “yes,” “no,” or “maybe”
   - cannot be answered with a definition or number
   - cannot usually be answered with a laundry list
   - generate creative & critical thinking on an issue or idea
   - generate discussion or controversy on a topic that interests you

2. **Attend a Global Event (10%)**
   Each student must attend at least 1 global event during the fall semester. Examples: film screenings, cultural festivals, academic and public lectures, performances, fundraisers, etc. Instructor will periodically send emails about events in the area, but students are encouraged to find out about events and share with the class. Credit will also be given to organizers/hosts of a global event. Prior to the event, email the instructor for approval and after the event, turn in a 2-page reflection paper*. Accepted on a rolling basis anytime before Nov. 29th, submission:

   *A reflection paper is not a summary of the event. A reflection paper is your identification of the main themes of the readings and class discussions integrated with your experience at the event. A reflection paper is your chance to add your thoughts and analysis to what you have read and experienced. Use the first person singular (“I”) and relate the readings, class discussions and your previous knowledge to the event. Consider if and how what you have experienced or learned at the event might affect your practice in future professional situations. Give your reflection paper structure with an opening paragraph, main body, and conclusion.
3. **Midterm (25%)**
   Half way through the class a take-home exam covering the readings, lectures, guest presentations and class discussions will be given. **Midterm will become available on canvas Oct 11th and must be completed by class on Oct 18th HARD COPY & canvas.**

4. **Organization Profile & Presentation (25%)**
   Each student will profile one organization that responds to the social issue discussed in the research paper. The profile should include:
   - Programmatic information (e.g., contact information, mission, example of programs, geopolitical scope of service).
   - Financial information (How are they funded, What is their tax status, What will their financial health look like in 25 years, etc.)
   - A brief discussion of their successes, limitations, failures, and challenges in regard to their problem-solving efforts. Be sure to search for praise and also critical reactions to their work.
   - Educational backgrounds and professional experiences of the employees.
   - Potential employment, internship, fellowship, or volunteer opportunities.
   - **DUE IN CLASS NOV 15th HARD COPY, GOOGLE DOC & CANVAS**

5. **Research Paper (25%)**
   Each student will identify a social issue of interest in a country considered to be part of the Global South and develop a 10 page paper (not including supporting docs/appendices) that addresses the issue. **Each student will submit a 1-page preliminary paper (ungraded) that identifies the issue to be discussed by the beginning of class September 20th, HARD COPY.** Issues must be approved by the instructor.

   The research paper should show a thorough understanding of the issue. At minimum, your paper must include the following:
   - What is the impact of this problem on people? How does it impede their development?
   - An assessment of the problem using a theory, framework and perspective, i.e., human rights, social development, sustainable development perspective, etc.
   - How does culture affect the issue and how do the different systems that comprise culture respond to it? (e.g., religion, ethnicity, gender roles)
   - What is the local government response to the issue?
   - What is the international response to it?
   - A comparative discussion of types of interventions and strategies used in responding to the issue. Give concrete examples from a variety of actors: the state, NGOs, faith-based entities, IGOs, etc.
   - At least 10 references, including a media source i.e. film AND an interview with a person from the country or a professional working on the issue.
   - **DUE IN CLASS DEC 6th HARD COPY & CANVAS**

**Each student will present** in the last few weeks of class as part of a thematic group.

*Presentation Directions*: You are professionals/experts attending a UN symposium on implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Your presentation is to advise on best practices related to your topic. Each person in your group may create 2 slides and use 5 minutes to present.
Course Outline and Readings

**Aug. 30**
Week 1. Welcome, class introductions, course overview

http://vote.myworld2015.org/

Estes, R. United States-Based Conceptualization of International Social Work Education.

**Sept. 6**
Week 2. Introduction to International Social Work: History, Definitions & Debates

Cox & Pawar: 1, 3


**Sept. 13**
Week 3. International Perspectives, Theories and Concepts

Cox & Pawar: 2

Projet Accompagnement Solidarité Colombie. (2014). Decolonizing Our Solidarity Project. (Intro & Chapter 1)


Visvanathan, N. Introduction to Part 1: Theories of Women, Gender, and Development. In *The Women, Gender, & Development Reader*. 17-32

**Sept. 20**
Week 4. International Social Work Practice: Programs & Strategies
*1-page preliminary paper due
*Guest lecture with Michelle Breslauer @ Perry World House, 3903 Locust Walk 5:00

Cox & Pawar: 4-10

Projet Accompagnement Solidarité Colombie. (2014). Decolonizing Our Solidarity Project. (Intro & Chapters 2)


Sept. 27
Week 5. Governmental Response, Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)/UN System

*Guest lecture/discussion with Lauren Ferreira Cardoso

Cox & Pawar: 5, 9, 11-13

Projet Accompagnement Solidarité Colombie. (2014). Decolonizing Our Solidarity Project. (Intro & Chapters 3)


Oct. 4
Week 6. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)/Grassroots Organizations (GROs)

*Class will meet at 3901 Walnut Street, Suite 400 Office of Government and Community Affairs, Panel discussion on female empowerment and local/global strategy


Oct. 11
Week 7: Faith-based Perspectives


Oct. 18  
Week 8. Film screening  
*Midterm due in class HARD COPY & E-COPY

Oct. 25  
Week 9. Corporate Response

*Class will meet at 3901 Walnut Street, Suite 400 Office of Government and Community Affairs, Panel discussion on corporate social good projects


Nov. 1  
Week 10. Careers and Future Directions

Cox & Pawar: 15-16


Glusker, A. A Student’s Guide to Planning a Career in International Social Work


- International Federation of Social Workers website at: [http://www.ifsw.org](http://www.ifsw.org)

**Nov. 8**  
Week 11. Final Presentations

**Nov. 15**  
Week 12. Final Presentations  
*Organization Profile due in class HARD COPY & Canvas*

**Nov. 22**  
NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break

**Nov. 29**  
Week 13: Final Presentations  
*Global Event Reflection Paper Due, Canvas*

**Dec. 6**  
Week 14. Semester Wrap-Up Happy Hour Location TBD  
*Research Paper Due in class, HARD COPY & Canvas*