

# USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck

School of Social Work

**Social Work 790a**

**Section #67714**

**Course Title**

**3 Units**

**Fall 2021**

“It isn’t that they cannot find the solution.  
It is that they cannot see the problem.”—G. K. Chesterton

“If you are unable to understand the cause of a problem,  
it is impossible to solve it.”—Naoto Kan

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<b>Office Hours</b>	Mondays, 7:00pm - 7:30pm PT and by appointment
<b>Course Day(s)</b>	Monday
<b>Course Time(s)</b>	5pm - 7pm PT
<b>Course Location(s)</b>	VAC

**IT Help:** Please contact VAC Support for issues with assignment submissions and/or technology issues related to the VAC or accessing the live sessions.

**Contact Info:** 877-455-4679 or chat through the VAC.

### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and Concurrent Enrollment**

Students will enter SOWK 790a having completed SOWK 704, 706, 711, 705, 721, and 723. Students in the Accelerated Track will have concurrent enrollment with SOWK 720 and 713. Students in the Standard Track will have concurrent enrollment with SOWK 713.

### **Catalogue Description**

Research leading to a doctorate.

### **Course Description**

This course will prepare students to meet the DSW Capstone Project Standards Areas 2 and 3. Students will explore existing information (academic, nonacademic) to build a strong understanding of the problem and solution landscape for the specific social problem they are interested in solving. In learning pods (teams), students will deeply explore and analyze a social problem and existing solutions within the context of a Grand Challenge area.

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### Course Objectives

1. Course will provide students with opportunities to apply theoretical frameworks and methodological perspectives to Grand Challenges to increase understanding of the problem and solution landscape.
2. Course will provide students with opportunities to collaborate with other students, using a team approach, to build a knowledge network.
3. Course will employ a team approach to examine social problems and solutions through various theoretical frameworks and methodologies.
4. Course will prepare students to produce products that could be of benefit to a variety of stakeholders within their knowledge network.
5. Course will ask students to consider whose voice is missing from the literature and prepare for community-based participatory research in the following semester.

### Course Format / Instructional Methods

The course format will consist of class discussions derived from readings and asynchronous content, independent and group work, and collaboration. Because the exchange of ideas is an integral part of the learning process, students are required to come to class ready to discuss assigned readings and asynchronous content. Students will do considerable research outside of class, including review of academic research and other sources of information. Students will have opportunities to process and discuss this research during the live sessions.

### Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will present, define, and describe the social problem within the context of a specific Grand Challenge for Social Work; specify the target population; and include data about the scope of the problem (e.g., incidence, prevalence, trends, and outcomes).
2. Students will analyze causes of the social problem, including a critical summary and synthesis of evidence that speaks to the reasons that the problem exists, including the system issues and norms that contribute to and maintain the problem. Students will draw from a variety of sources of evidence that involve careful analysis, including in peer-reviewed publications, historical analysis, professional literature, and popular media.
3. Students will consider the problem through theoretical and/or explanatory models that may suggest root causes for the specified problem. They will examine the problem through multiple frameworks and methodologies (e.g., human-centered design, person in environment, social justice theories, and community-based participatory research).
4. Students will collaborate with others to build a knowledge network to inform their research and the field of study. Students will consider various stakeholders and their influence/perspective on the problem.
5. Students will provide a thorough and critical assessment of efforts to address the problem, including a critical synthesis of evidence relevant to existing and potential solutions to the

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specified social problem, including evidence-based interventions, practice-based evidence, and promising, innovative, or disruptive approaches.

- Students will identify gaps and opportunities in the solution space. They will discuss attempts by others to address the social problem and the status of those attempts, including a discussion of what has worked, what has not, and why.

See **Appendix A** for an expanded table, which details the competencies and dimensions of competence highlighted in this course. The table also shows the course objective(s), behaviors/indicators of competence, and course content and assignments related to each competency highlighted in the course.

### Course Assignments, Due Dates, and Grading

Assignment	Due Date	% of Final Grade
Group Grand Challenge Problem Statement and Individual Problem Statement	*9/7/21	10%
Reference Page, Outline and Mini-literature Review	10/11/21	25%
Problem and Solution Landscape Paper (Version 1)	11/22/21	30%
Group / Individual Presentations	11/22/21 & 11/29/21	25%
Class Participation	On-going	10%

Each of the major assignments is described below.

### Assignment 1

#### Group Grand Challenge Problem Statement and Individual Problem Statement

**Due: 9/7/21 (one day later due to holiday) by 11:59pm PT**

Students will develop a group problem statement focused on the Grand Challenge that the learning pod was formed around (e.g., a paragraph or two detailing the Grand Challenge of ending homelessness). Students will document an individual problem statement detailing their Wicked Problem of focus and how it connects to the larger Grand Challenge (e.g., housing insecurity in returning veteran populations).

Students will submit individual assignments that include both the group and individual problem statements in a single document on the VAC.

Assignments will be 2–3 pages in length and must adhere to APA guidelines (7th edition).

This assignment comprises 10% of the course grade.

*This assignment relates to course objective 3 and DSW program competency 2.*

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### Assignment 2

#### Reference Page, Outline and Mini-literature Review

**Due: 10/11/21 by 11:59pm PT**

This assignment is due midway through the semester as a progress report on student's Wicked Problem landscape analyses. This assignment comprises the following three parts:

- Brief review of the literature found thus far. This mini review will be 2–3 pages in length and will capture information learned thus far on the Wicked Problem.
- Completion of diagram depicting factors associated with the Wicked Problem (e.g., systematic racism, policies, and stigma) and existing solutions.
- Reference page that includes a minimum of 20 contemporary sources (15 must have been published within the last 8 years; five sources may be historical).

Assignments should be 3–5 pages excluding title and reference page. Papers must comply with APA (7th edition) guidelines.

This assignment comprises 25% of course grade.

*This assignment relates course objectives 1 and 3 and DSW program competencies 1 - 3.*

### Assignment 3

#### Problem and Solution Landscape Paper (Version 1)

**Due: 11/22/21 by 11:59pm PT**

Using their knowledge of academic and nonacademic literature reviewed thus far, students will craft a document that has seven sections, detailed below. Authors should consider interdisciplinary perspectives of the problem as well as history, relevant theory, and potential policies that have played a role in perpetuating this problem. Sections include:

- Section 1: Grand Challenge
- Section 2: Wicked Problem (with data to demonstrate prevalence)
- Section 3: Impacts of the problem
- Section 4: Analysis of existing solutions to the problem and their effectiveness
- Section 5: Stakeholder analysis
- Section 6: Whose voice is missing from this literature?
- Section 7: Plans for next semester to fill knowledge gap
- Appendices:
  - Note-taking matrix
  - Stakeholder mapping

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Assignments will be 16–20 pages excluding title and reference page. Papers must comply with APA (7th edition) guidelines.

This assignment comprises 30% of course grade.

*This assignment relates to course objectives 1-5 and DSW program competencies 1 and 2.*

### Assignment 4

#### Group / Individual Presentations

**Due: In-class, 11/22/21 & 11/29/21, as assigned by faculty**

In their learning pods, students will give a 30-minute presentation on the work accomplished over the course of the semester. The team will

- Introduce the Grand Challenge.
- Introduce Wicked Problems on which each team member is focused.
- Share lessons learned and any unexpected findings, such as the role that diversity, equity, and inclusion play.
- Whose voice is missing from the published literature?
- Plans for knowledge dissemination.

Presentations should be no longer than 30 minutes and can include PowerPoint slides and/or other visuals. In addition to any visuals used, students should submit a complete reference page in accordance with APA (7th edition) guidelines.

Assignments will be 16-20 pages excluding title and reference page. Papers must comply with APA (7<sup>th</sup> edition) guidelines.

This assignment comprises 25% of course grade.

*This assignment relates to course objective 2-4 and DSW program competencies 1 and 2.*

### Class Participation (10% of Course Grade)

#### All Weeks

Given the group-learning format of this course, class participation is critical to the success of each student and their learning pods. Students are expected to come to live sessions prepared to actively engage in thoughtful dialogue with their learning pods and classroom colleagues. Excellent class participation includes insightful questions and comments, use of literature and other sources to support ideas when relevant, and regular feedback that helps to advance the work of their learning pods.

This assignment comprises 10% of course grade.

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SOWK 790a is graded as a Credit (CR) / No-credit (NC) course. The final grade in this course will either be a Credit (CR) or No-credit (NC). To receive a CR in this course, a student's final grade must be an 83 (B) or higher. Students who score 82 or below, will receive a NC in this course.

Individual assignments will be based on the following:

Grade Points		Letter Grades	
3.85 – 4.00	A	93 – 100	A
3.60 – 3.84	A-	90 – 92	A-
3.25 – 3.59	B+	87 – 89	B+
2.90 – 3.24	B	83 – 86	B
2.60 – 2.89	B-	80 – 82	B-
2.25 – 2.59	C+	77 – 79	C+
1.90 – 2.24	C	73 – 76	C
		70 – 72	C-

See **Appendix B** for additional details regarding the definitions of grades and standards established by faculty of the School.

### Attendance and Participation

Students' active involvement in the class is considered essential to their growth as practitioners. Consistent attendance, preparation for and participation in class discussions and activities, timely completion of coursework and assignments, and personal conduct that fosters a respectful, collegial, and professional learning environment are expected. Having more than 2 unexcused absences in class may result in the lowering of the grade. For VAC and remote/hybrid Ground courses, substantive participation includes maintaining an active screen in live sessions and completing all asynchronous content and activities prior to the scheduled live class discussion. Failure to complete 2 or more asynchronous units before the live class, without prior instructor permission, also may result in a lowered grade.

#### **Class participation will be assessed according to the following criteria:**

“A” grade range: Very Good to Outstanding Participation: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation, and participation is substantial. Ideas offered are always substantive. Regularly provides one or more major insights and comments that provoke deeper thought. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion and class activities would be diminished markedly.

“B” grade range: Good Participation: Contributions in class reflect solid preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, and participation is regular. Provides generally useful insights and some comments that provoke thought. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat.

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“C+” or “C”: **Adequate Participation:** Contributions in class reflect some preparation. Ideas offered are somewhat substantive. Provides some insights, but seldom offers comments that provoke deeper thought. Participation is somewhat regular. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished slightly. Please note: The minimum passing grade at the graduate level is “C”.

“C-” or “D”: **Inadequate Participation:** Says little in class and does not adequately participate in activities or present insights or ideas. Does not appear to be engaged. Submits late work. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not be affected.

“F”: **Nonparticipant/Unsatisfactory Participation:** Misses class. When present, contributions in class, if any, reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, and behavior may be inappropriate and/or disrespectful. Unable to work effectively on in-class assignments/activities and detracts from the learning process. Regularly misses assignment deadlines, if work is submitted at all.

### **Required Instructional Materials and Resources**

#### ***Required Textbooks***

In addition to the required and recommended readings below, students will be required to do significant research throughout the semester on their problem of interest. Students will be required to read about the problem and solution landscape each week.

- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner.
- Friedman, B. (2021). *Community-Based Participation Action Research: It's all about the community*. Cognella Academic Publishing
- <https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/>
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association: The official guide to APA style*. (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

#### ***Course Reader***

All other readings will be available through ARES by searching under SOWK 790a, unless indicated by your professor.

#### ***Notes:***

- Additional required and recommended readings may be assigned by the instructor throughout the course.
- See **Appendix C** for recommended instructional materials and resources

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## Course Overview

Unit/Week #	Date	Topics	Assignments
1	8/23/21	Course Introduction and Learning Pod Formation	
2	8/30/21	Narrow Focus of Inquiry	
3	No Class	Information Search Strategy, Part I	Assignment 1 due
4	9/13/21	Information Search Strategy, Part II	
5	9/20/21	Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), Part I	
6	9/27/21	Initial Knowledge Network, Part I	
7	10/4/21	Initial Knowledge Network, Part II	
8	10/11/21	Stakeholder Mapping	Assignment 2 due
9	10/18/21	Audience for Knowledge Dissemination	
10	10/25/21	Community Based Participatory Research, Part II	
11	11/1/21	Connecting CBPR, Human-Centered Design and Stakeholder Mapping	
12	11/8/21	Semester Recap	
13	11/15/21	Preparing for Next Steps	
14	11/22/21	Presentations, Part I	Assignment 3 due Assignment 4 in class
15	11/29/21	Presentations, Part II	Assignment 4 in class

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### Course Schedule—Detailed Description

#### Unit 1 – 8/23/21

##### *Topics – Course Introduction and Learning Pod Formation*

- Introductions
- Syllabus overview, course goals and objectives
- Introduction to research centers
- Learning pods formed and team interviews

This unit relates to course objective(s) 2 and 3.

##### *Required Readings*

- Read syllabus; prepare questions
- <https://research.usc.edu/centers/>
- Gillies, R. M. (2019). Promoting academically productive student dialogue during collaborative learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 97, 200–209. Doi: 10.1016/j.ijer.2017.07.014

#### Unit 2 – 8/30/21

##### *Topics – Narrow Focus of Inquiry*

- Problem and solution landscape
- Why is this important?
- Perspectives from the field
- Problem statements
- Learning pods identify initial focal scope for their area of inquiry

This unit relates to course objective(s) 1 and 2.

##### *Required Readings*

- Social work library resources: <https://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=234952&p=1559385>
- Gehlert, S., Hall, K. L., & Palinkas, L. A. (2017). Preparing our next-generation scientific workforce to address the grand challenges for social work. *Journal for the Society for Social Work and Research*, 8(1), 119–136.
- Nurius et al. (2017). Preparing professional degree students to tackle grand challenges: A framework for aligning social work curricula. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 8(1), 2234–2315.
- Repenning, N., Kieffer, D., & Astor, T. (2017). The most underrated skill in management. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/the-most-underrated-skill-in-management/>

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### Unit 3 – 9/6/21 (No Class)

#### *Topics – Information Search Strategy, Part I*

- Refresh on conducting literature reviews with social work librarian
- Note-taking matrix
- Students will begin / continue reviewing the literature using the note-taking matrix
- Assignment 1 Due 9/7/21

This unit relates to course objective(s) 1 and 3.

#### *Required Readings*

- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333–339.
- <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/fieldnotes>
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapters 1 and 2.

### Unit 4 – 9/13/21

#### *Topics – Information Search Strategy, Part II*

- Development of a strategic information-gathering plan
- Information search strategies
- Interdisciplinary approach to knowledge-building
- Perspectives from the field
- Continue literature review
- Information-gathering plan

This unit relates to course objective(s) 2.

#### *Required Readings*

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- Joo-Castro, L., & Emerson, A. (2020). Understanding historical trauma for the holistic care of indigenous populations. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to Change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 3.

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### Unit 5 – 9/20/21

#### **Topics – Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR), Part I**

- Community-based participatory research
- Person-in-environment
- Understanding community
- Difference between community engagement and community outreach
- Continue literature review

This unit relates to course objective(s) 3.

#### **Required Readings**

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- Friedman, B. D. (2021). *Community-based participatory action research: It's all about the community*. Cognella. Preface; Chapter 1: Participatory Action Research: It's All About Community; and Chapter 2 (pp. 1–7).
- Akesson, B., Burns, V., & Hordyk, S.-R. (2017). The place of place in social work: Rethinking the person-in-environment model in social work education and practice. *Social Work Education*, 53(3), 372–383.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 4.

### Unit 6 – 9/27/21

#### **Topics – Initial Knowledge Network, Part I**

- Building a knowledge network
- Asking the right questions
- Continue literature review
- Begin writing on problem / solution landscape

This unit relates to course objective(s) 2 and 4.

#### **Required Readings**

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 5.
- Okech, D., Choi, Y. J., Elkinson, J., & Burns, A. C. (2017). Seventeen years of human trafficking research in social work: A review of the literature. *Journal of Evidence-Informed social Work*. doi; 10.1080/23761407.2017.1415177

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### Unit 7 – 10/4/21

#### *Topics – Initial Knowledge Network, Part II*

- Building a knowledge network: DSW alumni perspectives
- Learning pods present initial knowledge network in class for feedback
- Continue literature review and writing

This unit relates to course objective(s) 2 and 4.

#### *Required Readings*

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 6

### Unit 8 – 10/11/21

#### *Topics – Stakeholder Mapping*

- How to identify key stakeholders?
- Recap on stakeholder mapping
- Design justice
- Perspectives from the field
- Continue literature review and writing
- Assignment 2 Due

This unit relates to course objective(s) 2 and 4.

#### *Required Readings*

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- Elia, G., & Alessandro, M. (2018). Can we solve wicked problems? A conceptual framework and collective intelligence system to support problem analysis and solution design for complex social issues. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 133, 279–286.
- Author Talk: Sasha Costanza talking about the book, *Design Justice*. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/blog/watch-mit-press-live-author-talk-sasha-costanza-chock>
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 6.

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### Unit 9 – 10/18/21

#### *Topics – Audience for Knowledge Dissemination*

- Turning capstone research into products
- Research and practice perspectives
- Finding common ground
- Learning pods identify audiences and products for knowledge dissemination
- Continue literature review and writing

This unit relates to course objective(s) 2 and 4.

#### *Required Readings*

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- *Progress and plans for the Grand Challenges: An impact report at year 5 of the 10-year initiative.*  
<https://grandchallengesforsocialwork.org/publications/grand-challenges-5-year-impact-report/>
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America.* Mariner, Chapter 7.

#### *Examples of Knowledge Dissemination*

- The role of On the Move and Upvalley Family Centers in the local response to the 2017 Napa County wildfires: Lessons in disaster recovery.
- Reed, S., Kurlaender, M., & Cooper, S. (March 2021). A portrait of student parents in the California community colleges. *UC Davis Wheelhouse research brief*, 6(2).
- The People Concern newsroom. <https://www.thepeopleconcern.org/newsroom/>
- Public Sector Committee Report: A call to action: The precarious state of the board and care system serving residents living with mental illness in Los Angeles County.  
[http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/1036005\\_BoardandCareFacilitiesreport.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/1036005_BoardandCareFacilitiesreport.pdf)

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### Unit 10 – 10/25/21

#### **Topics – Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), Part II**

- CBPR in practice
- Benefits, weaknesses and ethical considerations
- Learning pods discuss key findings, gaps, and inconsistencies from the literature
- Learning pods consider types of interview they may do next semester
- Continue literature review and writing

This unit relates to course objective(s) 1 and 3.

#### **Required Readings**

- Two or three journal articles or other readings on area of interest.
- Erete, S., Israni, A., & Dillahunt, T. (2018). An intersectional approach to designing in the margins. *Interactions*, May–June.
- Friedman, B. D. (2021). *Community-based participatory action research: It's all about the community*. Cognella.  
Chapter 2, Historical Development of Community-Based Participatory Research (pp. 9–12); and Chapter 7, Ethical Considerations (p. 41).
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 8.

### Unit 11 – 11/1/21

#### **Topics – Connecting CBPR, Human-Centered Design and Stakeholder Mapping**

- Whose voice is missing?
- Strategies for incorporating other voices
- Qualitative inquiry—strategies for capturing missing voices
- Continue literature review and writing
- Consider perspectives and voices missing from current literature reviewed

This unit relates to course objective(s) 5.

#### **Required Readings**

- Frerichs, L., Hassmiller, K., Gaurav, D., & Corbie-Smith, G. (2016). Integrating systems science and community based participatory research to achieve health equity. *American Journal of Public Health*, 106, 215–222.
- Hunting, G. (2014). *Intersectionality-informed qualitative research: A primer*. The Institute for Intersectional Research and Policy, SFU.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 9.

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### Unit 12 – 11/8/21

#### *Topics – Semester Recap*

- Recap key findings
- Continue literature review and writing

This unit relates to course objective(s) 1-5.

#### *Required Readings*

- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 10.

### Unit 13 – 11/15/21

#### *Topics – Preparing for Next Steps*

- Perspectives from the field
- Problem evolution
- Whose voice is missing? How to incorporate missing voices?
- Finalize writing
- Discussion of Harlem Children's Zone: Past and future.

This unit relates to course objective(s) 1-5.

#### *Required Readings*

- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Mariner, Chapter 11.
- Watch: Amanpour and Company: *Harlem Children's Zone leaders: It will take a decade to make up for 2020*:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-eiGwDRxcY>
- Diallo, A. (2020). As Harlem Children's Zone moves to export its model nationwide, other city programs offer cautionary tales. *The Washington Post*.
- Explore: <https://hcz.org/>

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## Unit 14 – 11/22/21

### *Topics – Presentations, Part I*

- In-class presentations
- Assignment 3 Due
- Assignment 4 Due in class

This unit relates to course objective(s) 3.

### *Required Readings*

- None

## Unit 15 – 11/29/21

### *Topics – Presentations, Part I*

- In-class presentations
- Assignment 4 Due in class

This unit relates to course objective(s) 3.

### *Required Readings*

- None

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## List of Appendices

- A. Detailed Descriptions of Social Work Core Competencies Highlighted in this Course
- B. Definitions of Grades and Standards Established by Faculty of the School
- C. Recommended Instructional Materials and Resources
- D. Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work DEI Statement
- E. Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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### Appendix A: Detailed Description of DSW Program Competencies Highlighted in this Course

#### DSW PROGRAM GOALS AND COMPETENCIES

##### *Goals*

1. The foundation for the DSW curriculum and student academic products rests on three pillars: (1) problem definition within the Grand Challenges for Social Work; (2) innovative design; and (3) executive leadership in human service organizations and community contexts.
2. Student academic work will culminate in a substantive advance in practice or policy related to one of the Grand Challenges for Social Work.
3. Aligned with the goals for a science of social work, curricula will be multi- and interdisciplinary and reflect diverse public and private sector perspectives on social innovation and organizational problem-solving in complex systems.
4. Courses will emphasize bold action leading to scaling of programs, disruption, or other changes that promote social justice and human potential.
5. Graduates will emerge as effective leaders in social work or allied fields, prepared to excel in executive management roles.
6. Graduates will emerge as capable public intellectuals who exemplify the core values, ethical principles, and standards of the NASW Code of Ethics.

##### *Program Competencies/Student Learning Outcome Objectives*

1. Confront, evaluate, and use large ideas grounded in the Grand Challenges for Social Work as defined by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW).
2. Leverage strategies to assess the existing social and practice landscape as a basis for designing new responses to complex social problems.
3. Apply relevant social work and social science theories of problem causation to develop ideas for change, program or policy implementation, and evaluation.
4. Master creative, expansive, and rigorous design principles that advance innovation and invention in social solutions.
5. Effectively lead others in future efforts to brainstorm, refine, and implement forward-thinking solutions to complex social problems across organizational boundaries.
6. Accurately map the organizational and policy environment affecting options for social change.
7. Use logic models to carefully plan for and maximize impact with proposed interventions.
8. Organize financial and program data for decision-making, communication, and evaluation to improve program and policy outcomes in human service organizations.
9. Confidently employ a variety of media and methods to influence and communicate with professional, political, academic, and general public audiences.
10. Create positive social impact in complex systems and at scale.

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DSW Program Competency	Objective(s)	Behavior(s)	Content
#1 and 2	SOWK 790a Student Learning Objective (SLO) #1	Students will present, define, and describe the social problem within the context of a specific Grand Challenge for Social Work; specify the target population; and include data about the scope of the problem (e.g., incidence, prevalence, trends, and outcomes).	Assignments 1 – 4  Learning Pod  In-class discussions
#1 - 3	SOWK 790a SLO #2	Students will analyze causes of the social problem, including a critical summary and synthesis of evidence that speaks to the reasons that the problem exists, including the system issues and norms that contribute to and maintain the problem. Students will draw from a variety of sources of evidence that involve careful analysis, including in peer-reviewed publications, historical analysis, professional literature, and popular media.	Assignments 3-4  Learning Pod  In-class discussions
#3	SOWK 790a SLO #3	Students will consider the problem through theoretical and/or explanatory models that may suggest root causes for the specified problem. They will examine the problem through multiple frameworks and methodologies (e.g., human-centered design, person in environment, social justice theories, and community-based participatory research).	Assignment 3  Learning Pod  In-class discussions
#2, 3 and 6	SOWK 790a SLO #4	Students will collaborate with others to build a knowledge network to inform their research and the field of study. Students will consider various stakeholders and their influence/perspective on the problem.	Assignment 4  Learning Pod  In-class discussions
#2	SOWK 790a SLO #5	Students will provide a thorough and critical assessment of efforts to address the problem, including a critical synthesis of evidence relevant to existing and potential solutions to the specified social problem, including evidence-based interventions, practice-based evidence, and promising, innovative, or disruptive approaches.	Assignments 1 – 4  Learning Pod  In-class discussions
#2	SOWK 790a SLO #6	Students will identify gaps and opportunities in the solution space. They will discuss attempts by others to address the social problem and the status of those attempts, including a discussion of what has worked, what has not, and why.	Assignments 1 – 4  Learning Pod In-class discussions

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### **Appendix B: Definitions of Grades and Standards Established by Faculty of the School**

Within the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, grades are determined in each class based on the following standards which have been established by the faculty of the School:

1. Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates very good mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student.
2. A grade of B+ will be given to work which is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment.
3. A grade of B will be given to student work which meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done adequate work on the assignment and meets basic course expectations.
4. A grade of B- will denote that a student's performance was less than adequate on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations.
5. A grade of C would reflect a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement.
6. Grades between C- and F will be applied to denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student's performance on the assignment.

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## **Appendix C: Recommended Instructional Materials and Resources**

### *Recommended Guidebook for APA Style Formatting*

Students are required to use APA (7th edition) formatting on all assignments.

### *Recommended Websites*

- USC Library: <https://libguides.usc.edu/APA7th#s-lg-box-22622216>
- Owl Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- <https://research.usc.edu/centers/>
- <https://libguides.usc.edu/DSW>

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### **Appendix D: Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

At the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, we aspire to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in our courses and professional practice. We value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives that our students bring into the classroom as strengths and resources that enrich the academic and learning experience. We offer and value inclusive learning in the classroom and beyond. We integrate readings, materials and activities that are respectful of diversity in all forms, including race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ability and disability, socioeconomic status, religion, and political perspectives. Collectively, we aspire to co-create a brave space with students and instructors to critically examine individual and collective sources of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and systematic oppression that affect the ability of people and communities to thrive. In this way, we fulfill our professional responsibility to practice the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), abide by the [CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#), and address the [American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, Grand Challenges for Social Work](#).

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### **Appendix E: University Policies and Guidelines**

#### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the unit. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email ([fatouros@usc.edu](mailto:fatouros@usc.edu)) of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students' observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to [SCampus](#) and to the [USC School of Social Work Policies and Procedures](#) for additional information on attendance policies.

#### **Statement on Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and an announcement to the class, as well as distributing or using recordings of university lectures or classes without the express permission of the instructor, for purposes other than individual or group study, also constitute violations of the USC Student Conduct Code.

Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism, unauthorized recording of university classes, and other forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct in SCampus, Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards," as well as information in SCampus and in the university policies on scientific misconduct.

#### **Statement about Incompletes**

The Grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if there is work not completed because of a documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to be the instructor and reported on the official "Incomplete Completion Form."

#### **Policy on Late or Make-up Work**

Papers are due on the day and time specified. Extensions will be granted only for extenuating circumstances. If the paper is late without permission, the grade will be affected.

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### **Policy on Changes to the Syllabus and/or Course Requirements**

It may be necessary to make some adjustments in the syllabus during the semester in order to respond to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Adjustments that are made will be communicated to students both verbally and in writing.

### **Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (Optional)**

*Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly*  
<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>

#### **Preamble**

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

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### **Academic Dishonesty Sanction Guidelines**

Some lecture slides, notes, or exercises used in this course may be the property of the textbook publisher or other third parties. All other course material, including but not limited to slides developed by the instructor(s), the syllabus, assignments, course notes, course recordings (whether audio or video) and examinations or quizzes are the property of the University or of the individual instructor who developed them. Students are free to use this material for study and learning, and for discussion with others, including those who may not be in this class, unless the instructor imposes more stringent requirements. Republishing or redistributing this material, including uploading it to web sites or linking to it through services like iTunes, violates the rights of the copyright holder and is prohibited. There are civil and criminal penalties for copyright violation. Publishing or redistributing this material in a way that might give others an unfair advantage in this or future courses may subject you to penalties for academic misconduct.

### **Complaints**

Please direct any concerns about the course with the instructor first. If you are unable to discuss your concerns with the instructor, please contact the faculty course lead. Any concerns unresolved with the course instructor or faculty course lead may be directed to the student's advisor and/or the Chair of your program.

### **Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Experience in this Course (Optional)**

- Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest and sleep!
- Come to class.
- Complete required readings and assignments BEFORE coming to class.
- BEFORE coming to class, review the materials from the previous Unit AND the current Unit, AND scan the topics to be covered in the next Unit.
- Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have.
- Participate in class discussions.
- AFTER you leave class, review the materials assigned for that Unit again, along with your notes from that Unit.
- If you don't understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
- Keep up with the assigned readings.

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### **Appendix F: Support Systems and Additional Resources**

#### **Counseling and Mental Health**

<https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling/>

Phone number (213) 740-9355

On call 24/7

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

#### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Phone number 1 (800) 273-8255

On call 24/7

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

#### **Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)**

<https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/>

Phone Number (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours

On call 24/7

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

#### **USC Office of Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX**

<https://eeotix.usc.edu/>

Phone number (213) 740-5086

Title IX Office (213) 821-8298

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

#### **Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment**

[https://usc-advocate.symplcity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid422659?](https://usc-advocate.symplcity.com/care_report/index.php/pid422659?)

Phone number (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

#### **The Office of Disability Services and Programs**

<https://dsp.usc.edu/>

Phone number (213) 740-0776

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

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### **USC Campus Support and Intervention**

<https://campussupport.usc.edu/>

Phone number (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

### **Diversity at USC**

<https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Phone number (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

### **USC Emergency**

<https://dps.usc.edu/>

UPC phone number (213) 740-4321

HSC phone number (323) 442-1000

On call 24/7

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

### **USC Department of Public Safety**

<https://dps.usc.edu/>

UPC phone number (213) 740-6000

HSC phone number (323) 442-120

On call 24/7

Non-emergency assistance or information.

### **Additional Resources**

Students enrolled in the Virtual Academic Center can access support services for themselves and their families by contacting Perspectives, Ltd., an independent student assistance program offering crisis services, short-term counseling, and referral 24/7. To access Perspectives, Ltd., call 800-456-6327.