The University of Kansas
School of Social Welfare

Master Syllabus


I. COURSE RATIONALE:

This course introduces social work students to the philosophy, ideology, spirituality, and practice of social work and social welfare in the Republic of Korea. It also compares Korean perspectives with American concepts and approaches to social work and social welfare. The purpose is to increase students’ knowledge of Korean culture and social work so that they can engage in more effective service with Korean, Korean-American, and Asian-American communities in particular, and also with culturally diverse communities in general. As a “service-learning” course, the educational experience will prepare students to make contributions to the university and community by sharing insights from the course through field experience, practicum, volunteer service, and professional service.

This course emphasizes the importance of appreciation for cultural diversity, especially the importance of understanding cultural and historical contexts in different countries as they shape social work and social welfare. Students will be given an introduction to opportunities for strengths and empowerment oriented social work internationally.

Course learning includes Lawrence campus based meetings for cultural orientation during fall and spring semesters (approximately 7 meetings), a three week intensive study abroad experience in Korea hosted by Sung Kyun Kwan University in Seoul, and a debriefing session after return to the United States. In Lawrence, all lectures will be conducted in English. In Korea, educational activities will be conducted in English or in Korean language with interpretation and translation. See the concluding section of this syllabus for more information on sponsorship and student eligibility.

Assignments will be tailored to the degree level of the student.

More specifically, this course is intended to accomplish the following.
1. To provide a systematic overview of the theories, philosophies, spiritual perspectives, and ideologies in Korea that shape social work and social welfare regarding individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities from an international perspective (theoretical base).

2. To examine the methods, strategies, and principles of the multiple ways of intervening within the Korean cultural context (knowledge base).

3. To help students develop an understanding of the skills necessary to apply theory and knowledge to the needs of disadvantaged/minority populations from an international perspective (e.g. children, women, ethnic minorities, rural populations, people who are poor or experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, etc.) (skill base).

4. To allow students to explore a personal philosophy, beliefs about community, family and culture that is consistent with social work philosophy, ethnic/gender perspectives, values, and ethics (professional base).

II. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand general aspects of Korean history, culture, and language.
2. Identify and describe the major Korean philosophical, spiritual, theoretical, and ideological bases of traditional and contemporary approaches to social work and social welfare, including Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Shamanistic, and secular and governmental perspectives.
3. Identify and explain the impact of these Korean perspectives on the formation of Korean social work and social welfare regarding such fields of practice as child welfare, aging, mental health, and community empowerment.
4. Compare and contrast these Korean approaches to social work and social welfare with the philosophies and ideologies of social work common in the United States, including such issues as assessment, diagnosis, service planning, and evaluation of services.
5. Describe the ways that these Korean approaches shape the practice of social work and social welfare within Korean governmental and nongovernmental agencies.
6. Assess the ways in which Korean social policy and practice have been influenced by global social policies and practices.
7. Identify opportunities for strengths and empowerment oriented social work practice with culturally diverse communities in the United States and internationally, in particular with Korean, Asian, and Asian-American populations.
III. CURRICULUM THEMES:

1. Practice Centeredness

The overarching themes that guide the total curriculum of the School of Social Welfare are integrated throughout the practice-oriented curriculum. This course provides a venue for students to learn about social work practice through a cross-cultural lens. Participants will have the opportunity to observe culture-specific and internationally based approaches to social work practice in rural and urban community settings and agencies in the Republic of Korea.

2. Strengths

The strengths perspective is a humanistic, empowerment approach to social work practice that operates on the assumption that all persons have untapped mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional resources. Students are encouraged to extend their understanding of assessment, conceptualization of barriers, selection of social work practices, and client collaboration to assist in working with client systems. Specific cultural and historical experiences of Korean people will be investigated as capacity enhancing areas for social work practice.

3. Social Justice

Social justice is a key component in this social work practice course. Social justice influences student's definition of barriers, client systems and client strengths. Students will learn to integrate the experiences of vulnerable people to create and evaluate social work practices that expand opportunities for oppressed, stigmatized and marginalized populations. This course will highlight an international perspective on social justice including ways to successfully negotiate needed environmental resources, and that promote a more just, humane and responsive environment.

4. Diversity

Diversity includes the skills that show respect, sensitivity and appreciation for the contributions of diverse populations. In this course students will cultivate an appreciation for clients and colleagues who are differentiated by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, spirituality, class, sexual orientation, age, gender, and ability. Immersion in Korean culture will give a strong first hand experience of the importance of cultural diversity as it intersects with other forms of diversity. International comparison of social work approaches and critique of global system impacts on social welfare will heighten students' appreciation for diversity around the world.
5. Critical Perspective
Consistent with a critical perspective, students in this course raise questions about, reflect upon, and systematically evaluate and apply the divergent theories and knowledge claims upon which social work is based.

IV. LIBERAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE:
The course draws on the liberal arts as a vast and rich source of learning. As a practice course, the effort is to apply relevant knowledge and values from all sources that could illumine and guide actions to achieve the profession’s social welfare purpose. Thus students are supported and challenged to use their knowledge from courses on history, literature, social sciences and fine arts along with the knowledge gained from life experiences and the accumulating body of professional knowledge.

V. PROFESSIONAL PURPOSE AND VALUES:
A clear sense of professional purpose and the values embodied in social work’s value system and code of ethics provide a necessary focus for selecting and using knowledge and perspectives from a rich array of learning resources, not least from the diverse client populations served by the profession. This clarity is at the heart of the course’s fundamental task of translating broad statements of professional purpose and values as reflected in the school’s mission statement and curriculum themes into specific purposeful practice acts.

VI. TOPICS:

- History, Culture, and National Reality of Korea
- Korean Philosophical, Ideological, Theoretical, and Spiritual Perspectives on Social Work and Social Welfare
  - Religiously based perspectives (i.e. Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Shamanistic)
  - Secular perspectives (i.e. human behavior theories, political ideologies, governmental social welfare principles)
- Social Work Korean Style
  - Individual, family, group, and community based practices
  - Social management and administration
  - Poverty and marginalization in relation to rural and urban issues
  - Human rights
- Understanding Korean Social Services and Social Welfare
  - Health
  - Mental Health
  - Children and Adolescents
  - Women’s Issues
  - Globalization and Economic Issues
Community Empowerment
  - **Skills, Tactics & Techniques of Community Practice**
  - Culture Specific Assessment and Practices
  - Internationally Based Assessment and Practices

VIII. READINGS:

Recommended Readings

Texts:


Articles:


Additional reading materials may be provided by the instructor and guest speakers in Lawrence and Korea.

IX. ASSIGNMENTS:

A. **Journal (50%)**

Students are expected to keep a reflective learning journal throughout all phases of the course (i.e. orientation in Lawrence and study abroad in Korea). The journal will be used in conjunction with (but not limited to) guiding questions provided by the instructor and guest presenters about topics of interest. The journal must identify (1) a record of major learning activities, including required orientation meetings and group study abroad events as well as individualized learning activities and excursions undertaken for this course; (2) insights about Korean culture and approaches to social work that are of special interest to the student as gleaned from the activities; (3) comparison with American approaches to social work and social welfare; (4) reflection on major insights and practical plans for how to apply learning to social work practice and community service; (5) in a concluding section of this journal, the student must make a commitment to ways that learning can be applied within practicum/field experience, professional practice, or volunteer community service after the commencement of the course. This journal will be submitted to the instructor at the final debriefing meeting in Lawrence by July 15.
B. **Group Documentary Project (30%)**

Students will develop a multimedia documentary (including photographs, video, commentaries, cultural artifacts and records) that depicts the group’s learning experience in a way that can be shared with academic, professional, and community groups. All students will contribute materials and ideas for this project according to roles negotiated with the instructor. The graduate student/professional participants will take a leadership role in compiling this material for presentation purposes.

C. **Class Participation (20%)**

Students will be evaluated on the extent that they actively contribute toward making the class a collaborative learning group. This means that students will be evaluated on the extent that they contribute to class discussions with questions and comments based on their understanding of the material, treat the comments of fellow students with respect and interest, and are open to perspectives different from one’s own. Students will be expected to demonstrate respect for Korean culture and the Korean hosts. Attendance and timeliness are also very important. Students are expected to attend:

- all orientation sessions in Lawrence (approximately 7 sessions of 2 hours each on Korean culture, history, language, and social work, plus Office of Study Abroad orientation) which run from late Fall semester through Spring semester
- all required group study abroad activities in Korea during three weeks (approximately May 20-June 10)
- the final debriefing session in Lawrence in July

X. **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

If any member of the class feels that he or she has a disability, please advise the instructor of such disability and desired accommodation as soon as you have written documentation. The instructor will work with you and the Services for Students with Disabilities Office to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have a fair opportunity to perform in the class.

XI. **INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY:**

Instructor: Professor Edward R. Canda, Ph.D.
Phone: 785-864-8939, Office: 203 Twente Hall; email: edc@ku.edu
I am available by appointment, phone, or email while in Lawrence. In Korea, I will be traveling with the group and available by cell phone.

XII. **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:**

For events held on the Lawrence campus, the university policy applies. For example, “In the event of inclement weather students should call the University (864-SNOW) to determine if classes are called off. If the University is operating, I am expected to hold class, however, accommodation will be made for students who are unable to attend.
Students should contact the instructor if weather or driving conditions make it impossible for them to get to class.” For events in Korea, students will be notified of any impact of weather on planned activities.

**XII. COURSE SPONSORSHIP AND STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

This Korea-based study abroad program is part of the KU Kansas Asia Scholars program, which is funded by the Freeman Foundation via the KU Center for East Asian Studies. Professor William Tsutsui is the Director for the Kansas Asia Scholars Program. Professor Edward Canda is the Director of the Korea portion of the program and the instructor for this course. The course is operated with the cooperation of the KU Office for Study Abroad.

In Korea, our host institution is Sung Kyun Kwan University in Seoul. Sung Kyun Kwan University is an educational exchange partner with KU. Professor Seung-Hee Park of the social work department is our Korea-based host and travel organizer. Professor Park has been a Visiting Scholar in the KU School of Social Welfare. His specialty is philosophy and ideology of Korean social welfare and social policy in comparison with social welfare in the USA. Professor Canda has been affiliated with SKKU since 1976-77, when he was a Graduate Fellow of East Asian Philosophy and Fulbright Scholar there.

As a scholarship program, student participants are selected on the basis of excellence in academic performance, demonstrated commitment to cross-cultural and international social work, and interest in Korean culture. Most costs of students related to travel and educational expenses are paid by the scholarship. Approximately six students will be selected to participate for each of four years, beginning 2002-2003. Students may be at the undergraduate or graduate level. They must be social work majors or enrolled in social work courses.