The contemporary world presents social workers with global challenges. From difficulties associated with the violation of human rights to the need for social justice and citizen participation, there is increasing pressure for the social work profession to expand its scope of policy and practice. Culturally relevant interventions and theoretical perspectives are needed that address natural, human-influenced, and global environmentalism often associated with issues related to exploitation, pollution and climate change. Social workers are positioned to engage in international partnerships committed to environmentalism to facilitate a sustainable connection between nature’s life forces and people.

Increasingly, social workers participate on interdisciplinary teams that help communities address environmental issues by partnering with government and non-government organizations. The goal of this course, taught by faculty from both the U.S. and India, is to provide a national/international perspective on responses to environmental issues that are most likely to impact vulnerable populations and their communities.

**Anticipated outcomes of the course:**

1. An understanding of the theories and concepts associated with environmentalism in the context of social work practice and policy.

2. Knowledge of the major roles for social work in providing environmental-related service delivery that enhances well-being in various national/international settings.

3. An understanding of the impact of environmental policies on global populations with a focus on human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.

4. Collaboration with international colleagues that supports advocacy efforts consistent with social work values and ethics.

5. Competency development that advances human rights and social, economic and environmental justice.
KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

1. Knowledge of the relationship between *person-in-the environment, ecological social work welfare and practice*, and *sustainability* and *environmentalism*.

2. Knowledge of the operation and results of global environmental injustice in addressing social need.

3. Knowledge of the principles, basic structure and provisions of global social welfare policies and programs that address environmentalism.

4. Understanding of major national/international concepts and theories associated with disaster prevention and recovery and their culturally relevant application.

SKILL OBJECTIVES

1. Ability to define and apply concepts of social work to international environmental issues, including disaster prevention and relief efforts.

2. Ability to recognize value stances and beliefs with respect to environmentalism and to distinguish them from information gained through systematic inquiry and data collection.

3. Ability to use the skill associated with social work practice and policy in assessing strengths and weaknesses of disaster response and relief procedures.

4. Ability to evaluate emerging approaches to define and meet national/international social need by assessing the influence of particular social, economic and environmental assumptions.

5. Increased ability to form constructive national/international partnerships that address environmentalism and social work practice and policy.

6. Ability to employ national/international opportunities and techniques for influencing social, economic and environment justice.

ATTITUDE OBJECTIVES

1. Awareness of the need for social work practice and policy that increase: social, economic and environmental social justice; respect for individual and group differences; and, address global oppression.
2. Awareness of the need for scientific inquiry and rational analysis in the formulation and implementation of national/international disaster prevention and response procedures.

3. Commitment to the social work's commitment to develop professional competence to advance human rights and social, economic and environmental policies and programs to enhance social well being.

**COURSE CIVILITY**

It is important for students to be civil in the classroom and online. In the classroom setting, cell phones, IPads, laptops, and other technological equipment are not needed and should be left in student’s bag and turned off. During the class lecture, if surfing the web, playing games, and checking personal accounts are too tempting then students can turn off their computer screen. Students that are being disrespectful to classmates and the instructor by using technology inappropriately will be asked to excuse themselves from the class.

If a student has a concern regarding course civility they should contact the instructor immediately via email at tice@umbc.edu or cburry@ssw.umd.edu.

**STUDENT ACCOMODATIONS**

All the universities supporting this course are committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that may disadvantage students based on disability. In terms of UMBC and UMB, services for students with disabilities are provided for all students qualified under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADAAA of 2009, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who request and are eligible for accommodations. The faculty is committed to coordinate accommodations that would allow students to have equal access and inclusion in all courses, programs, and activities associated with the course.

If you have a documented disability and need to request academic accommodations, please contact the faculty as soon as possible. If you require accommodations for the class, make an appointment to meet and discuss your need for approved accommodations.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Readings: Students are expected to do all required readings. Class time is an opportunity to question and clarify material from the readings that may be unclear or confusing.
Reading the material for each class in a timely fashion will give students a chance to use the class in this way, as well as promote active participation in discussions.

**Attendance:** Attendance and participation in this class are crucial to the overall course objective of understanding a national/international perspective on responses to environmental disasters that advance human rights and social, economic and environmental justice. Therefore, the following attendance policy is in place. In the case of medical absences, a doctor’s note is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absence(s)</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No change in the final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Final grade is lowered by one full grade (i.e. a “B” becomes a “C”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Final grade is lowered by two full grades (i.e. a “B” becomes a “D”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Course failure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Grading, examination dates, and assignments are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>% of Course Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PowerPoint Group Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Nations Declaration</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

- 100 - 90 points - A
- 89 - 80 points - B
- 79 - 70 points - C
- 69 - 60 points - D
- Below 59 points - F

All written assignments must be neatly typed, grammatically correct and turned in on time in APA format. No assignments will be accepted after the due date for posting except in highly extenuating circumstances with documentation (i.e. medical condition, etc). All assignments must be posted by noon the day before the designated class or will be counted as LATE and will not be accepted.
**Current Event**
Post an article, along with a picture, that describes a recent national or international disaster. Using content from the class, analyze the reasons for the disaster and its impact on people and communities. Offer comments on the relief effort and how to prevent such a disaster from occurring once again.

**Literature Review**
Compile and post a list of six (6) evidence-based, peer-reviewed, research articles that support environmentalism in social work practice and policy. Write an abstract on each article that states the article's purpose, theoretical frameworks, major concepts, and conclusions on practice or policy. All the research articles should be attached to the literature review.

**Collaborative PowerPoint Presentation**
Design and post a PowerPoint presentation that reflects the work of a collaborative international partnership. The partnerships will be created within the class and the presentation should address the following:

- An example of a national/international disaster prevention program.
- Why the disaster prevention program reflects national/international goals and values.
- The social work theoretical frameworks and concepts that support the prevention program.
- How the victims and survivors of the national/international disaster reflect national/global socio-economics.
- The political dynamics involved in the disaster prevention program and subsequent responses.
- The role of the media in both the disaster prevention and response.
- The roles social workers assume in the disaster prevention and response.

**Declaration to the United Nations**
Work in a collaborative international partnership and write and post a *Declaration* (no more than two (2) pages in length) to present at the United Nations that advocates for social workers as first responders in an environmental-related prevention or relief effort. The *Declaration* should include:

- A description of national/international environmental-related prevention or relief effort.
- The social work theoretical frameworks and concepts that support prevention and preventative efforts.
- The connection between social work policy and practice and human rights and the need for social, economic and environmental justice.
- How ethics and values support social workers in environmental-related prevention and response efforts.
Academic Integrity

Consistent with ethical requirements of the social work profession and the course holds students to the highest standards of academic integrity. Students are expected to know and adhere to the rules established by individual social work professors in specific social work courses. Student’s academic work must also conform to the guidelines established by the Universities regarding the definition of misconduct, including, but not limited to, cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. Allegations of academic misconduct on the part of social work students will be taken seriously and will be responded to following procedures established by the Universities.

COURSE OUTLINE

Class/ Date(s)

Class 1  DEFINING INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

- Welcome and introductions and review of the course syllabus.
- What is international social work?
- How is environmentalism defined?
- What is the relationship between human rights and social, economic and environmental issues and social work practice and policy?

Readings:


Class 2  DEFINING INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK AND ENVIRONMENTALISM (continued)

- What are the roles of social workers in international practice and policy?
- How is cultural humility defined and applied to environmentalism?
- What is the relationship between cultural humility and interdisciplinary teams?
- What are common approaches to working on interdisciplinary teams?
- How does cultural humility advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice?

Readings:


**Assignment:** Post an article, along with a picture, that describes a recent national or international disaster by noon the day before Class 3.
Class 3  ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

- What are current/recent examples of environmental issues at these levels?
- How do definitions of environmental issues vary by location?
- What are the immediate aftermath and long-term consequences of these concerns?
- How do human rights and social, economic and environmental justice interface with environmental concerns at these levels?
- What is the role of the media in environmental concerns at these levels?

Readings:


Class Activities:
- Brief video lecture on the questions above need to write and record
- Students briefly share the articles they posted and note where those fit within the questions above

Class 4  HOW DO ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS RELATE TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE AND POLICIES?

- How are the terms person-in-the environment and ecological social work practice related?
- What are the social work practices and policies that address environmental issues?
o How does human rights and social, economic and environmental justice interface with social work practices and policies?

o How can the strengths perspective be applied to practice and policies associated with environmental issues?

o How do ethics and values apply to environmental issues?

Readings:


Activities:

Assignment: Post a list of six (6) evidence-based research articles that support environmentalism in social work practice and policy by noon the day before Class 5.

Classes 5 WHAT THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND CONCEPTS & SUPPORT DISASTER RESPONSES?

o What skills are needed for analyzing key policy components?

o What are the major concepts that support national/international disaster prevention practice and policies?

o What are the theoretical frameworks that underpin national/international disaster prevention programs?

o What research is needed to develop national/international disaster prevention practice and policies?

o How does cultural humility apply to a national/international disaster research agenda?

o What are the roles of people and communities in developing national/international disaster efforts?

o What are the ethics and values that influence the current research agenda on disaster efforts?
What are the roles social workers in developing national/international disaster efforts?

Readings:

Class Five:


Class Six:


Class 7  DISCUSSION ON DISASTER PREVENTION
& 8

- What are national/international disaster prevention efforts and policies?
- What are examples of national/international disaster prevention programs?
- What roles do social workers play in disaster prevention efforts?
- What are the national/international politics that influence disaster prevention responses?
- How does disaster prevention reflect national/international goals and values?
- What is the role of the media in both disaster prevention?
- How can the victims and survivors of national/international disasters contribute to disaster prevention?

Readings:

Class Seven:


**Class Eight:**


**Assignment:** Post a PowerPoint on an agenda for disaster prevention and responses designed by a collaborative partnership on disaster efforts by noon the day before Class 9.

**Class 9 &10 CONSIDERING AN AGENDA THAT ADDRESSES GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

- How do key concepts and theories frame the responses and the protracted recovery phase of challenges to the environment?
- What are the unique cultural features that should be included in environment protection?
- Is an understanding of vulnerable populations included in the agenda for environment protection?
- What is the proposed research agenda for environmentalism?
- How do disasters present an opportunity for social work to address human rights and social, economic and environmental justice?
- What are the emerging roles for social workers and international partnerships in environmentalism?
Readings:

Class Nine:


Class Ten:


Class 11 AN ADVOCACY AGENDA FOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT

- How should social workers and interdisciplinary team members be educated on global challenges to the environment?
- Why is there a need for an understanding of the unique cultural features associated with global environmental challenges?
- What knowledge is needed on the consequences of disasters on vulnerable populations?
- What are strategies that would expedite the use of funds and services for victims of disasters?
- Why is a rigorous research agenda vital to environmentalism?
- What is the need to advocate for national/international leadership in the area of global environmental challenges?
- How should advocacy strategies be assessed for impact on global challenges to the environment?

Readings:


Philip, D. & Reisch. (2015). Rethinking social work’s interpretation of ‘environmental justice:’ From local to global. Social Work Education, 34, NEED TO ADD PAGE #S.


**Class 12  SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF DISASTERS**

- How is sustainability defined in the context of national/international challenges to the environment?
- How does sustainability reflect human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice?
- What social work roles compliment sustainability efforts?
- How are advocacy efforts sustained over time and global borders?

**Readings:**


Class 13 SELF-CARE ASSOCIATED WITH ENVIRONMENTALISM

- What are the components of self-care for social workers as first responders in disasters?
- Why is self-care a critical element to challenges to the environment including disaster prevention, response programs and sustainability?
- What is the relationship between self-care and trauma?
- Why and how does self-care interface with cultural humility?

Readings:

Assignment: Post the United Nations Declarations written by the international partnership members by noon the day before Class 14.

Class 14 REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATIONS

- How do the Declarations support human rights and environmental, social, and economic social justice?
- Describe how the Declarations reflect social work national and international values and ethics.
- How do the Declarations foster a sense of cultural humility?
- Why and how do the Declarations expand the role of social work policy and practice?

Readings:


**Class 15 DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION OF CLASS**

- What were the strengths of the class?
- How can the class be improved?
- What have you learned about the members of your collaborative partnership?
- What are similarities and differences between the countries represented in the collaborative partnership?
- How did your collaborative partnership contribute to fund of knowledge associated with social justice and environmentalism in social work practice and policy?

**RESOURCES & READING REFERENCES**