**Fall 2024 COURSE
SYLLABUS**

COURSE INFORMATION: SOCW 641 Integration of Faith and Advanced Practice: Seminar I (1)

This semester the **Integration of Faith section** of this course will be taught online, asynchronous.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE (S): SOCW-647

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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ONLINE LEARNING

The eClass URL is http://eclass.e.southern.edu. For technical support, contact the eClass Help Desk at 423.236.2086 or by e- mail at eclasshelp@southern.edu. Students should use *Google Chrome* as their browser to access eClass with the greatest ease (https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/).

REQUIRED TEXTS

The best-practice articles and book chapters required for this course will be provided for each module.

Links to www.swpro.org/integration reading resources and forum discussions will be provided in the e-class. Password: sau

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar course is designed to integrate students' personal faith and professional values with the ethical practice of social work. Students will also examine ongoing practice concerns in the field practicum. Thus, it provides vital links between the theoretical knowledge, skills, and social work and faith values derived from social work coursework and field practice.

SOCIAL WORK CORE VALUES AND BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

Social Work Core Values (NASW, IFSW)	Biblical Foundation
Service	Matthew 25:31-45; Luke 10:25-37
Social justice	Jeremiah 22:3; Micah 6:7-9; Isaiah 58:6
The importance of human relationships	Matthew 5: 23-24; Matthew 22:37-39; Mark 12:31
The dignity and worth of the person	Isaiah 49:14-16; Matthew 10:31; Romans 12:9-13; Romans 15:7
Integrity	1 Chronicles 29:17; 1 Timothy 3:9
Competency	Proverbs 3:5 Matthew 7:7; Matthew 25:13-30; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Corinthians 3:5
Human rights	Genesis 1:27; Proverbs 22:2; Proverbs 31:8-9; Exodus 22:21; Leviticus 19:33-34; Galatians 3:28; James 2:1-4;

COURSE DIVERSITY ELEMENTS: Age, gender, gender identity, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, class, disability, ethnicity, culture, immigration status, color, political ideology.

STUDENT'S COMMITMENT LEVEL FOR SUCCESS:
In order to be successful in this course, it is helpful to understand the level of commitment that is expected of graduate students from the School of Social Work. Each credit hour represents a weekly expectation of one "in-class" hour and minimum of two additional coursework hours. Because this is a 1-credit course, you can anticipate that in addition to the class time, you will spend a minimum of 2 hours completing the required coursework each week (i.e., face-to-face week = 1

hour of class + 2 hours coursework; online week = 1 hours of online work + 2 hours coursework). **Organize your time wisely**!!!

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Assigned Readings:
- For each class or module, a curated list of academic articles and relevant literature will be provided. Students are required to thoroughly read these materials in preparation for the course.
- This preparatory reading is essential for informed participation in the forum discussions, where students will engage in critical analysis and discourse based on the concepts and theories presented in the readings.

Forum Discussions:
- Each module of this course includes a designated forum discussion topic, correlating with the module's subject matter. Active participation in these online forums is a course requirement. Students are expected to contribute thoughtful and constructive opinions and engage in meaningful dialogue.
- These online forum discussions are an opportunity to delve deeper into the topics under study, allowing for a richer understanding through collaborative learning. It is essential that students prepare by completing the assigned readings to ensure that their contributions are informed and add value to the academic discourse.
- You are required to use AI assistance in developing your answers. Check the Appendix for specific instructions.

Final Exam: Comprehensive Reflection on Learning Integration
- This final exam is an introspective assignment designed to assess your understanding and personal growth throughout the course. You are required to critically reflect on your learning journey, with a particular focus on how the topics covered in this class have contributed to your ability to integrate faith and professional learning in social work practice.
- This reflection should capture your insights, experiences, and the evolution of your perspective in relation to the course material. It offers an opportunity to demonstrate your comprehension of the academic content, as well as your capacity to synthesize and apply these concepts in the context of faith and professional ethics. Your analysis, depth of reflection, and clarity of expression will be the key criteria in evaluating this final assignment.

Students will also have the chance to share practicum experiences and learning plans as part of this course's Advanced Practice Seminar section.

Class Participation & Attendance:
- The 'Integration of Faith and Learning' component of this course will be conducted online in an asynchronous format. Students are required to adhere to all set deadlines. Please note that there will be no scheduled in-person or Zoom meetings for this section. Comprehensive information regarding the Advanced Practice Seminar, including specific guidelines and requirements, will be made available on the e-class platform by the Field Director.

EVALUATION

The final grade will be based on the following:

Prepare your post using Microsoft Office Forms 40%
Post your answer in online 40%
Reflection 20%
TOTAL POINTS: 100%

GRADING SCALE: *Final grades will be based on a percentage of the total possible points.*

100 – 94: A	76 – 74: C
93 – 90: A-	73 – 70: C-
89 – 87: B+	69 – 67: D+
86 – 84: B	66 – 64: D
83 – 80: B-	63 – 60: D-
79 – 77: C+	59 and below: F

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY DISABILITY STATEMENT:

In keeping with the University's policy, if you are a student who believes you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge, *(i.e. physical, learning, psychological, ADHD or other type),* you are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (DSS) at 423-236-2544 or stop by Lynn Wood Hall, Room 1082. Students taking online courses from off-campus locations may also contact the DSS through email at dss@southern.edu. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive

and cannot be implemented until faculty or staff members have received the official Letter of Accommodation from DSS. Specific details of disabilities remain confidential between students and DSS unless a student chooses to disclose or there is legitimate academic need for disclosure, which is on a case-by-case basis. For further details, visit the Disability Support Services website at www.southern.edu/disabilitysupport.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK POLICIES

Southern Adventist University and the MSW program faculty have developed a set of policies to ensure effective communication and enhance understanding of academic benchmarks for our students. These policies are also designed to encourage and deepen professionalism, an essential competency for excellence in social work practice.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

All students enrolled in the MSW Program in the School of Social Work are expected to demonstrate the following professional and academic behaviors:

- Students are expected to complete all online assignments in a timely manner and arrive prepared for class discussion.

- Students are expected to actively participate in e-class, class discussions, and cohort projects.

- Students are expected to assess personal and educational needs and interact with the professor as necessary. Do not wait until late in the semester to ask for assistance.

- Students are expected to adhere to the *NASW Code of Ethics* in all aspects of course work and participation.

A. ATTENDANCE POLICY

- No face-to-face meeting or Zoom meetings are scheduled for this section of the 641 class. Details about the Advanced Practice Seminar section will be posted on e-class by the Field Director.

B. LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIY

The MSW program at SAU is a competency-based and evidence-based academic program. As such, students in the MSW program are required to complete and/or remediate any unsatisfactory work until they meet or exceed program standards for all

of the required competencies, as defined by their respective practice behaviors. In this learning environment, students are expected to complete all required assignments *prior* to advancing to their next coursework. This policy delineates the MSW program's standards and processes associated with the late submission of course assignments.

POLICY RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Due dates/times for assignments and exams are clearly marked in the course schedule found in the syllabus and/or eClass.
2. Exemptions from the penalties for late assignments will be granted for documented medical or other emergency reasons, as defined in the procedures section below.
3. Assignments submitted after the designated due date will be considered late and will receive 10% off the achieved score for each day the work is late, up to seven days (70%).
4. Assignments will not be accepted later than one week after the due date.
5. Any exceptions to items 2-4 will be made directly between the student and their individual professor. For example, an exception might be an emergency that impacts the student's ability to complete their assignment. However, there is no guarantee that any exceptions will be made.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the professor regarding late assignments.

C. ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY POLICY

The School of Social Work is dedicated to scholastic integrity. Students are expected to maintain high professional, ethical, and Christian levels of academic honesty. This policy was developed to define the academic honesty standards that apply to MSW coursework.

POLICY RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All coursework should reflect the student's own original work and cited appropriately; all other sources should be cited appropriately.
2. It is the student's responsibility to learn the proper procedures for acknowledging quoted wording, information, or ideas. Please note that "not knowing" is not an acceptable justification for work that is identified as plagiarized.
3. For all coursework, students are required to use the most recent American Psychological Association (APA) guide to formatting citing and referencing works cited.

4. Students must submit all papers to Turn-it-in for an online check of their writing. If the Turn- it-in report notes a similarity index of 30% or more, the student will need to do an immediate rework of the paper.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. When a student engages in academic dishonesty or fails to meet appropriate citation guidelines, a meeting is called between the professor(s) and the student to discuss the incident. This meeting may result in:
   a. Redoing the assignment
   b. Failing the assignment without opportunity to make up points
   c. Failing the course
2. If the incident is not resolved in the student/teacher(s) meeting, the issue will go to the MSW Leadership Team for a determination.
3. If there is a second infraction, the MSW Leadership Team will automatically review the incident and respond. In addition to the possible consequences listed above, the MSW Leadership Team may consider dismissing the student from the program.
4. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the MSW Leadership Team using the process outlined in the Academic Grievance section of the university's graduate catalog.

D. PROGRESSION AND RETENTION POLICY

- Foundation students must satisfactorily complete all Foundation-level courses, including the foundation field practicum, before progressing to Advanced Placement.

- Students are required to maintain both academic and non-academic standards to remain in the MSW program. First, the university's academic standards for retention must be met and sustained. However, even if a student's academic performance is satisfactory, it may become necessary, due to unsatisfactory professional performance, to advise a student to reconsider his/her goodness-of-fit to the field of social work. Failure to do so may result in termination from the MSW program.

POLICY RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students in the MSW program are responsible for taking full ownership of meeting all academic and non-academic retention requirements.

2. University academic standards for retention must be met and sustained, as follows:
    a. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0, earning a grade below B- in no more than two courses.
    b. Courses with an earned grade of C- or below will not be counted for credit toward the master's degree.
    c. Graduate students may only retake two courses in order to increase their cumulative grade point average.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. The MSW Leadership Team will evaluate students' grades and GPA at the end of each semester. If a student's academic performance does not meet the university's standards, the student will be notified via email that the MSW Leadership Team will be doing a review of his/her status in order to determine whether extenuating circumstances are present. Decisions about student retention in such instances will be made by the MSW Leadership Team on a case-by-case basis. The MSW Leadership Team, however, will not be able to alter university policies determined by graduate studies.
2. A student may be asked to withdraw from the MSW program for any of the following non- academic reasons:
    a. Academic honesty breaches
    b. Failing the field practicum
    c. Failing to abide by professional values and ethics, as outlined by the NASW Code of Ethics and the professionalism policy. Professionalism and ethical violations are addressed in the Professional Standards Policy.
3. Challenges to program termination decisions will follow the Grievance Policy.

E. INCOMPLETE (I) COURSE OPTION AND LIMITATIONS

The School of Social Work is dedicated to student success. Students are expected to progress through registered course work. This policy was developed to ensure the possibility of student success in completing registered course work.

POLICY RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students are not guaranteed the option of an incomplete grade. The option of receiving an incomplete grade is based on special circumstances that prevent the student from completing the course as scheduled in the semester.
2. Incomplete grades will be given at the discretion of the individual professor.
3. A student requesting an incomplete grade must submit a plan for completion of course work that meets the approval of the professor.
4. The timeframe for when the course must be completed is determined by the professor and students must meet the professor's timelines to successfully complete the course. Those timelines will not exceed one calendar year from the

receipt of the incomplete grade. After this time period, incomplete course grades will revert to the grade earned.

5. If a student has up to 6 credit hours with an incomplete grade, they may not register for more than 6 additional course credits until the incomplete grades are resolved.
6. If a student has more than 6 credit hours with incomplete grades, they may not register for any additional courses until
   - the incomplete grades are resolved, OR
   - the student decreases the number of incomplete course grades to 6 credit hours or below.
7. Limitations of registration as presented under #5 & #6 do not include curriculum planned incomplete grades related to field practicum.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. When students have incomplete grades, they are responsible for communicating with their professors, obtaining professor approval of their plan of completion and complete coursework to resolve the course as agreed with the professor's timeframe.
2. Students may only register for course credits that fall within the rules of this policy.

F. IN-PROGRESS (IP) COURSE OPTION AND LIMITATIONS

The School of Social Work is dedicated to student success. Students are expected to progress through registered course work. This policy was developed to ensure the possibility of student success in completing registered course work. In-progress course grades are different from incomplete course grades most notably in the timeframe given to complete the course, and the amount of work that remains to be completed.

POLICY RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. In-progress course grades are only appropriate if the student has a minimal amount of coursework left to complete the course.
2. Incomplete grades will be given at the discretion of the individual professor.
3. Students are not guaranteed the option of an in-progress grade. The option of receiving an in-progress grade is based on special circumstances that prevent the student from completing the course in the semester.
4. In-progress grades will be given at the discretion of the individual professor. The professor determines when the in-progress grade is appropriate.
5. A student who receives an in-progress grade must make a plan for completion of course work within 30-60 days. This

plan must meet the expectations and approval of the professor.

6. After 30-60 days, in-progress course grades will revert to the grade earned.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. When students have in-progress grades, they are responsible for communicating with their professors, obtaining professor approval of their plan of completion and completing course work to resolve the course in 30-60 days.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	LEARNING PRODUCTS & DUE DATES
Aug 18 - 25	**Syllabus Review and Technology** Learning how to use AI to evaluate and develop answers for forum discussion questions.	Introduce yourself to your classmates.
Module 1 Aug 26 – Sep 8	**Faith and Learning:** **"I don't need to be vaccinated! God is protecting me!" - Balancing faith and science.** Reflect on whether there are any tensions between religion and science that impact social work practice. Provide two specific examples where these tensions arise and explain the underlying factors that create these conflicts.	Read the articles provided and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Sep. 8 by midnight.
Module 2 Sep 9 – Sep 22	**Worldviews and Cultures:** **"This is the NORMAL way of doing it!" - Living in a diverse world.** What is a worldview? Reflect on the worldview proposed by your religion, faith, or church. How does this worldview influence your understanding of life, the universe, and human purpose? Compare and contrast this religious worldview with the scientific worldview, which is grounded in empirical evidence, observation, and rational analysis. If you do not identify with a specific religion, describe your personal worldview. How does it shape your approach to understanding the world, and how does it compare with the scientific worldview? Consider the similarities and differences in how each worldview answers fundamental questions about existence, knowledge, and truth.	Read the articles provided and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Sep. 22, by midnight.
Module 3 Sep 23 – Oct 6	**Epistemology:**	Read the articles provided and post a response to the

	"It's true because my mother taught me so!" - **Checking the sources of our information.** What is 'epistemology,' and how can epistemological inquiry help you critically assess and harmonize religious beliefs with academic knowledge? If you do not identify as a religious person, consider how epistemology can help you navigate and evaluate the overwhelming amount of information available today. What criteria do you use to determine what is true and reliable in a world filled with diverse perspectives and claims?	forum discussion question. Due: Oct 6, by midnight.
Module 4 **Oct 7 – Oct 27**	**Science:** **"It's true because I believe it!"** - **The scientific experiment and religion.** Learning through science and learning through religion offer distinct approaches to understanding the world, each with its own methods, principles, and goals. In what ways do these two modes of learning differ in terms of their methodologies, sources of knowledge, and the types of questions they seek to answer? Consider how science relies on empirical evidence, experimentation, and critical analysis, while religion often draws on faith, spiritual experiences, and sacred texts. Reflect on the strengths and limitations of each approach and how they might complement or challenge one another in the quest for knowledge and meaning.	Read the articles provided and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Oct 27, by midnight
Module 5 **Oct 28 – Nov 10**	**Hermeneutics:** **"It's true because my church is teaching it!"** - **Diversity of contradictory beliefs professed by diverse Christian traditions.** What is 'hermeneutics,' and how does it help us understand why Christians, despite reading the same Bible, have such a variety of conflicting interpretations and practices?	Read the articles provided and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Nov 10, by midnight.

	For those who do not identify as Christian, explore how hermeneutics can be applied to your own faith or belief system. If you do not identify with any religious tradition, consider how hermeneutical approaches could contribute to reducing conflicts between different religious groups. What strategies might foster greater understanding and peaceful coexistence?	
Module 6 **Nov 11 – Nov 24**	**Personal experience:** **"It's true because it works for me!" - Using religion in our practice.** Reflect on the role of faith in social work practice, both for practitioners and clients. What benefits can faith provide, and where might it have limitations? C Additionally, evaluate whether a practitioner's 'strong faith' and personal experience with God could potentially impact the client relationship. How might this influence the practitioner's approach, and what safeguards should be in place to ensure that clients' needs, and autonomy are respected?	Read the articles provided and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Nov 24, by midnight.
Nov 25 – Dec 1	**Thanksgiving Break!**	
Module 7 **Dec 2 – Dec 8**	**Christian Mission** **"I will help you, but first, let's pray!" – Service with no religious agenda?** Some faith-based agencies refuse to provide services to individuals whose lifestyles or beliefs do not align with their religious values. Explain how do the core values and ethical standards of social work, such as the principles of dignity and worth of the person, social justice, and the importance of human relationships, inform our responsibilities as social workers when providing services to all clients, regardless of their background or beliefs? How can social workers advocate for inclusive service provision within faith-based agencies while respecting the religious beliefs that may guide these organizations?	Read the articles provided and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Dec 8, by midnight.

| Dec 9 – Dec 15 | **Religious Trauma**

Recent studies have highlighted that while religion can serve as a profound source of support and encouragement, it can also, in some cases, lead to traumatic experiences for believers. As future social workers, it is important to understand the complex role that religion can play in both healing and harm.

Reflect on the following questions:

1. What factors or circumstances might increase the risk of traumatic experiences within religious settings or practices?
2. How do these traumatic experiences impact the mental health and well-being of individuals, particularly those who rely on their faith as a source of strength?
3. What steps can religious communities and leaders take to prevent inflicting trauma on their members, and how can social workers support these efforts within faith-based contexts?

In your response, consider the role of power dynamics, religious teachings, community expectations, and individual vulnerabilities. Provide examples where appropriate and discuss how social workers can navigate the balance between respecting religious beliefs and advocating for the mental and emotional well-being of their clients. | Read the articles provided

and post a response to the forum discussion question. Due: Dec 14, by midnight. |
| Dec 16 – Dec 19 | **Exam Week: Reflection – at least two pages long**

Bringing all together! A better way!

Reflecting on the integration of faith and learning, discuss how you can effectively incorporate your personal faith into your social work practice in a way that honors both your spiritual beliefs and the ethical standards of the profession. | Due: Dec 17, by midnight |

| | Consider how you might navigate potential conflicts or challenges that arise, ensuring that neither aspect is compromised.

If you do not identify as a religious person, evaluate the role and impact of faith-based organizations in our society. Analyze their contributions, the challenges they face, and how they intersect with social work values and practices. | |

Syllabus Policy: *The professor reserves the right to alter assignments and/or contents of this syllabus. Students will be given appropriate notice of any changes.*

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Appendix

AI-Assisted Reflection Assignment

In this course, you will engage with controversial topics in social work by reflecting on a specific question provided to you. To ensure that your responses are well-informed and aligned with social work values, we have integrated an AI evaluation process into the assignment.

Each eClass module includes a link to a Microsoft Office Form that will guide you step by step through the process of developing your answer for the forum discussion questions.

Assignment Process:

1. **Initial Response:**
   - First, read the assigned articles carefully. Afterward, draft your initial response to the question based on your understanding of the readings and your personal perspective.
2. **AI Evaluation:**
   - Once your initial response is complete, you will be guided to use AI to evaluate and improve your answer. The process involves copying your response and pasting it into an AI chat, along with a specific prompt provided in the form. This prompt will instruct the AI on how to assess your answer, focusing on alignment with social work ethics and values.
3. **Revisions:**
   - After receiving feedback from the AI, revise your response to better reflect social work principles while incorporating your own beliefs. You can repeat this process as many times as needed until you feel confident that your response is both ethically sound and personally meaningful.
4. **Final Submission:**
   - Once you have refined your answer, you will post it in the online discussion forum for the course. Additionally, you are required to submit the entire conversation you had with the AI through the Microsoft Form, including your initial response, the AI's feedback, and your revised answers.