

University of Arkansas - Fort Smith

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General Syllabus

SCWK 34163 Understanding Human Differences

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Prerequisite(s): SCWK 30333 Human Behavior in the Social Environment I, or consent of instructor

Effective Catalog: 2026-2027

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

Increases awareness, knowledge, and understanding of issues related to differences, human rights, social and economic balance. Examines social identity, perspectives on social inequality, coalition building across differences and its applications in multicultural social work settings. Direct development of skills in working with, and on behalf of, all populations will be emphasized.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
2. Engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
3. Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.
4. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.
5. Utilize the NASW Code of Ethics to guide ethical decision-making.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills**Critical Thinking Skills**

Students will identify problems/issues and develop solutions/analysis.

Communication Skills (written and oral)

Students will communicate proficiently.

Ethical Decision Making

Students will model ethical decision-making processes.

Global and Cultural Perspectives

Students will appreciate and reflect upon cultural differences and their implications for interacting with people from cultures other than their own.

III. Major Course Topics

- A. Americans with Disabilities Act
- B. Social and Economic Justice
- C. Differences in social work practice
- D. Advancing human rights
- E. Social identity and ally development models
- F. Perspectives on social inequality
- G. Conflict/Resolution understanding
- H. Coalition building across differences
- I. Multiculturalism in social work settings