A. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines theory and research knowledge about political, economic and societal structures and processes related to communities, groups and organizations within contemporary American society. Consideration is given to ways in which these social systems have significant social, political, economic, and psychological impacts on the functioning of individuals, families and social groups. The course provides a framework for understanding the influences of medium to large social systems on individuals, families and groups with whom social workers practice. Communities, organizations, and other social groups are examined in terms of risk and protective factors that promote or detract from optimal individual and group well being.

B. COURSE CONTENT:

The course gives special attention to the critical evaluation of theory and research knowledge about social change and social processes within an organizational, community, societal and international context. There is a focus on oppression, discrimination, prejudice and privilege and their relationship to social and economic justice for populations served by social workers. This knowledge is considered within a context of social work values and ethics that support the general welfare of all citizens, especially the disadvantaged and oppressed.
C. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify, describe and discuss selected theoretical perspectives on organizational, community, and societal structures, processes and change, and on social and behavioral science knowledge.

2. Describe and discuss the impact of communities, organization and other societal groups on the social environment interactions between individuals, families and small groups.

3. Describe and discuss the meaning of multiculturalism and diversity and their consequences in American society for community, organizational, and societal functioning.

4. Identify, describe and discuss the role of risk and protective social factors in relation to social problems, social work interventions and social/economic justice.

5. Identify, describe and discuss major processes and contemporary manifestations within the social environment of: oppression, discrimination, prejudice, power, and privilege as they impact on the social environment, especially in relation to women, people of color, and gay, lesbian and bisexual persons.

6. Identify, describe and discuss barriers to organizational and community competence, especially those derived from race, ethnicity, culture, social class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental functioning ability, age, or national origin.

7. Critically evaluate organizational, community, and societal structures and processes that seek to promote social and economic justice by applying professional values and ethics.

8. Critically evaluate and apply social and behavioral science knowledge about macro systems to generalist social work practice.

D. COURSE STRUCTURE:

Students are expected to have completed all reading assignments prior to the class session on the date indicated on the outline. Lectures, discussions and exercises that follow the progression of the course outline will structure class sessions. Brief student presentations, guest speakers, field excursions, and audio-visual aides are also used where appropriate and feasible.

E. COURSE TEXT AND SOURCES:

Required Material:
The first required text is by Fellin, P. *The Community and The Social Worker*, 3rd Edition. 2001, Peacock, Itasca, IL.


The New York Times

A course pack is available at Excel, 1117 South University.

**Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:**

*Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be addressed through presentation of theory and research on their role in community, organizational and societal functioning and well being.

*Social Justice and Social Change* will be addressed through discussion of the role of risk factors and preventive social factors in relation to social problems and social work interventions.

*Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation* will be addressed through discussion of programs and systemic interventions to prevent stress and oppression of individuals, families, and groups and enhance their quality of life and well being.

*Behavioral and Social Sciences Research* will be addressed through its inclusion in the description of the social environment and its impact on individuals, families and groups.

**Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

This course will address ethical and value issues related to working with organizations, communities, and societal structures and processes. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to inform practice in this area. Examples of ethical and value related issues will include: the social worker’s responsibility to promote the general welfare of society by preventing and eliminating discrimination, ensuring equal access to resources, expanding choices and opportunities for all persons, encouraging respect for diversity, advocating for changes in social policies, and encouraging informed participation by the public. In addition, issues related to organizations will be covered, such as preventing discrimination in the work place, improving agency policies and procedures, and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations.

**F. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

There are 3 assignments for this class.
1. There will be a final exam in class on December 12th, which will cover content in the assigned readings and class presentations and discussions.

2. Each student will select a novel of her/his choosing that addresses an issue of community, such as culture, ethnicity, or social economic status and it’s implications for personal, group or social development. Students must select a book that describes a racial, ethnic, or cultural group different from their own. Each student will submit to the instructor a one page typewritten paper by September 26, which identifies the name of the novel, it’s author, a brief synopsis and your rational for selecting it.

Write a 5 to 8 page double-spaced typewritten paper using 12 point font in which you:
- summarize the book in no more than two pages
- identify a few bases of comparison/contrast between your own personal experience and those of the fictional character(s) in the book
- compare and contrast your own personal experience and perspective of community with those presented in the novel

This paper is due October 31, 2001.

3. The class will be divided into two groups, A (Americam Bald Eagles) and B (Great Horned Owls). Students in each group will write 5 personal journals describing your own community as your understanding of community develops through your reading of the assigned material. These journals, based on your personal reflections and experiences, should correspond to the assigned readings for the week and demonstrate your understanding of the materials’ relationship to the course objectives. The journals will be typed and posted on Course Tools no later than 48 hours prior to class. Student groups will alternate posting and responding to journals. Group A (Eagles) will post their journals 48 hours prior to class on 9/19, 10/3, 10/17, 11/7, and 11/21. Group B (Owls) will post their journals 48 priors to class on 9/26, 10/10, 10/31, 11/14, and 11/28. During the weeks when your group is not assigned to post a journal, each member of your group will review the other groups’ postings and respond to at least two of them. Your responses, reflecting your understanding of the assigned readings, should express your perspectives as they contrasts, agree with or further develop the content of the original posting. Journals will be discussed in class. You should keep hard copies of your postings as reference material for the final exam.

G. GRADES:

The final exam is worth up to 30 points.
The paper is worth up to 30 points
The personal journal entries are worth up to 30 points
Class participation and attendance is worth up to 10 points.
Grades are as follows: A+ = 98, 99, or 100 points. A= 94, 95, 96, or 97 points. 
A- = 91, 92 or 93 points. B+ = 88, 89 or 90 points. B = 85, 86 or 87 points. 
B- = 82, 83 or 84 points. C+ = 79, 80 or 81 points. Etc.

H. COURSE SCHEDULE:

1. September 5 - Overview and Introductions. Coursetools lab.

2. September 12 – Theories of Society and Social Welfare
   Reading – Mullaly, chapters 1 – 6.

3. September 19 - The Societal Context of Communities
   Reading – Fellin, Chapters 1 & 2.
   Reisch, Michael- Welfare Reform and Social Justice, class handout.

4. September 26 - Defining Communities and Community Competence
   Reading – Fellin, chapters 3 & 4.
   Mullaly, chapter 8
   Coursepack - “An Approach to Teaching about Diversity in American Communities”
   “Teaching About Sexual Orientation from a Community Context”
   “The Lesbian Community: An Anthropological Approach”
   “A Time of Fear, A Time of Hope”

5. October 3 - Demographic Development of Communities
   Neighborhood Communities
   Reading – Fellin, Chapter 5 and 7.
   Coursepack - “Socioeconomic Factors, Health Behaviors and Mortality “
   “America’s Apartheid and the Urban Class.”

6. October 10 Stratification by Social Class
   Reading – Fellin, chapters 6 & 8.
   Coursepack - “The New Urban Poverty and The Problem of Race”
   “Community Organization and The Underclass.”
   “Mobilizing Minority Communities: Social Capitol and Participation in American Neighborhoods.”
   “The Responsive Community: A Communitarium Perspective”

7. October 17 - The Community Social Systems – Social Agencies
   Reading – Fellin, chapter 9
   Coursepack – “The Organizational Context of Empowerment Practice:
   Implications for Social Work Administration”
   “Work Place Policies as Social Policy”
“Transforming Human Service Organizations Through Empowerment of Neighbors”

8. – October 24 - The Community Social Systems - Social Agencies –continued
Reading – Fellin, chapter 9
“Creating An Ethical organization.”
“Asset Building as Community Revitalization Strategy”
“The Ideational System of Social movement agencies:
An Examination of Feminists Health Centers”

Community Compact, learning organization, leadership style

9. – October 31 - The Community Education Systems
Reading – Fellin, chapter 10
Coursepack – “School Reform: Linking Public School with Human Services”
“Educating Black youths: The Unfulfilled Promise of Equality”
Children.”

Video presentation / guest speaker

10. – November 7 - The Community Economic System
Reading – Fellin, chapter 11.
America.”
“Social Capitol and Local Economic Development: Implications for
Community Social Work Practice.”

Video Presentation on the GI Bill
Labor Unions simulation

11. November 14 - The Community Political System
Reading – Fellin, chapter 12.
Coursepack – “When Social Problems are treated as Emergencies”
“The Political Context of Social Work”
“Civil Society and Political Institutionalization.”
“Power in Social Work Practice.”

12 – November 21 – Community Conflict
Reading - Fellin, chapter 13.
Mullaly, chapter 7.
Coursepack - “Not in my Backyard”
“The Dynamics of Community Conflict”
“Militant Action and Organizational Development”

13. November 28 – Social Integration in Communities
Reading – Fellin, chapter 14.
Mullay, chapters 9 & 10.
14. December 5 – Communities and Social work Practice
Reading – Fellin, chapter 15.
Coursepack – “Community Building – Building Community Practice”
    “Reformulation of the context of Community Based Care”
    “Neighborhood Based Services: Organizational Change and Integration Prospects.”

December 12th Final Exam