SW 645 Jewish Communal Service in the U.S. and Abroad
Fall 2004
Wednesday, 9am-12pm

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Course Description
This course will address the changing face of the global Jewish community and its implications for future Jewish communal professionals. The course is based on the essential question: “How did the Jewish community get here and where is it going?”

The structures of the Jewish world in the United States and abroad are forever changing. Jews have been in the United States for 350 years and have experienced great communal growth, development, successes and failures. The Jewish community in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) continues to exist and survive, with the help of Jewish communal institutions, despite great historical oppression. The State of Israel, 56 years old, seeks to redefine its relationship to Diaspora Jews while also defining its own Jewish population. The Jewish world at home and abroad offers new challenges to those who work within it.

This course will explore the historical development of the profession of Jewish Communal Service and will allow future social work professionals the opportunity to analyze theories and philosophies that have been used throughout history as Jewish communal structures, agencies, modes of governance, and identities developed.

Relationship SW530 to School’s Four Curricular Themes
• Multiculturalism and Diversity: Specific field of service is critically analyzed from multicultural, historical, or cross-national perspectives.
• Social Justice and Social Change: The course critically analyzes current trends, ethical issues, and their implications for promoting social justice and social change.
• Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation: The course gives attention to the ways in which current policies and programs address promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.
• Behavioral and Social Science Research: Analytic frameworks drawn from behavioral and social science literature and research are presented for each field of service.
Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values
The historical overview in this course includes an analysis of the value base of the profession. Ethical responsibilities of social workers within fields of service will be reviewed. Differences among codes of ethics for several social work professional organizations will also be explored.

The instructors will select required and recommended readings. In addition, the instructors will include a range of pedagogical methods, such as participatory discussions, written assignments and experiential exercises related to course materials. Students will complete tasks as assigned. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

Course Content
This course will focus on the direct application of the analytical skills associated with six core components of the Jewish communal sector.

I. Foundations of Jewish Communal Service
II. Arenas of practice including underserved Jewish populations—the depth and breadth of Jewish communal service
III. Lay leadership and professional relationships/governance
IV. The structure of the Israel and Overseas Jewish communities
V. The changing face of Jewish identity in the United States: Outreach of in-reach
VI. Political activism and relationships with other minority groups

Course Objectives
On completion of SW 645, students will be able to:
I. Categorize and describe the major Jewish communal organizations including educational institutions, synagogue movements, and agencies in the U.S. as well as those abroad. Analyze the systems within which they operate
II. Summarize the development of the Jewish communal structures we know today in the United States and abroad and offer historical evidence to support conclusions as to why the agencies were needed and what events led to their creation, evolution, and tasks
III. Demonstrate skill in drawing on traditional Jewish texts and sources along with social work ethics, and integrate them into professional practice to formulate a professional philosophy statement
IV. Identify lessons that are learned about American volunteerism from the Jewish communal experience and the likely areas of collaboration with other ethnic, minority, and faith based communities
V. Show analysis of actual Jewish community populations and operations in the U.S. and abroad while offering attainable suggestions for their improvement based on histories, challenges, and current events
VI. Describe current political and world situations in the U.S. and abroad that affects their respective Jewish populations. Explain the way in which Jewish groups, agencies, communities, and individuals might respond to such situations
Course Readings
All course readings are required; their completion is essential for classroom activities and assignments. Course books are available at Ulrich's on S. University. To the extent possible, a copy of each book will be on reserve in the SSW Library.

Assignments

I. Class Participation 10%
Students are expected to be present in each class and be actively involved and engaged in discussions. Everyone will receive a standard score of 100 for participation, in recognition of a norm of attendance, contributions to small group assignments, and informed participation in class. Points will be deducted from the base score if you miss class, are late, or are unprepared.

II. Weekly Journal Entries 20%
Each week, students will be asked to submit a one page journal entry answering an essential question presented by the instructors. Each journal entry should be no longer than two double-spaced typed pages. The combined journal submissions will equal 20% of the grade for the course.

III. Professional Philosophy Statement 10%
Students will prepare a 4-5 page statement explaining their own professional philosophy. The philosophy will inform the key values and concepts that will guide their practice.

IV. Group Project-Community Assessments- 60%
Group Paper and Presentation Part I: U.S. Community Assessment and Re-Design 30%
Students will work in groups to explore and assess a Jewish community in the U.S. of their choosing. They will prepare a class presentation that outlines the population, history, and current situation of the community. They must also make recommendations and assumptions about the future of the community using facts, figures, budgets, personal interviews, etc. which they uncover in their research. Students must research the community thoroughly; document resources used; and prepare a 20-30-minute summary presentation for the class. A 10-15 page paper, written and submitted by the group, must be turned in when the group presents its summary to the class. Topics to be covered within the paper include history, population, lay and professional structures, agencies and community organizations and institutions, analysis of Jewish life and Jewish community, recommendations and considerations for the future of the community.

Group Paper and Presentation Part II: Overseas Community Assessment and Re-Design 30%
Students will work in groups to explore and assess an international Jewish community of their choosing. They will prepare a class presentation that outlines the population, history, and current situation of the community. They must also make recommendations and assumptions about the future of the community using facts, figures, budgets, personal interviews, etc which they
uncover in their research. Students must research the community thoroughly; document resources used; and prepare a 20-30-minute summary presentation for the class. A 10-15 page paper submitted by the group must be turned in when the group presents their summary to the class. Topics to be covered within the paper include: history, population, lay and professional structures, agencies and community organizations and institutions, analysis of Jewish life and Jewish community, recommendations and considerations for the future of the community.

Course Tools
Please access the course web page via COURSE TOOLS as directed.

Grading System
Grades are earned by successfully completing the work on the assignments, demonstrating understanding of Jewish communal structures and core concepts, and attending and participating in class.

A+  99-100%   B+  87-90%   C+  77-80%   D <69% (no credit)
A   94-98%    B   84-86%   C   74-76%
A-  91-93%    B-  81-83%   C-  70-75%

Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal expectations of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final weeks of class. Students with specialized learning needs are requested to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the necessary arrangements. Please review the Student Guide section on Ethical Conduct in the University Environment. This section addresses plagiarism, harassment and discrimination policies.

Required Texts:

Required Readings
Additional articles will be assigned throughout the course.
Overall Question: How did we get here and where are we going?

SEPTEMBER 8 - Introductions; Tzedakah (righteousness), Chesed (acts of loving kindness), and Tikkun Olam (repair of the world)

- Journal question:
  What do our historical texts and teachings related to tzedakah, chesed, and tikkun olam allow us to conclude about the profession of Jewish communal service? How are they related?

- Readings for next week:
  - Linzer, et. al., chapters 2, 4, 5, 6
  - Kaufman, ch. 3
  - Levine article: "Jewish Professional-Professional Jew: Commitments and Competencies for a Jewish Mission"

SEPTEMBER 15 - Components of a Jewish Community and an Historical Review of Jewish life in U.S.

- Journal question:
  What makes a community specifically Jewish? What must be present in order to have a Jewish community in your opinion that does not necessarily need to be based upon halachah (Jewish law)?

- Readings for next week:
  - Wexler and Solomon, “Setting Standards for Volunteer Leadership and the Profession”
  - Conrad and Glenn, “Board/Staff-Delicate Balance: What it is and how it works”

SEPTEMBER 22 - Lay Leadership and Volunteerism in the Jewish Community

- Journal question:
  Jewish communal professionals increasingly must fund raise for their agencies, a task previously limited to the lay domain. What are the positives and negatives for this shift in responsibility? As a communal professional, which model do you prefer and why?

- Readings for Next Week:
  Linzer, et. al., ch. 7

SEPTEMBER 29 - Arenas of Jewish practice-Planning, allocations, central agencies, and management

- Journal question: What is the role of the federation, as a central fundraising/allocating agency, and how does it impact the autonomy of individual agencies? How do you feel about it?

- Readings for next week:
  - The Philosophy of Informal Jewish Education by Barry Chazan
  - Chapters 4, 6, 7 - Kaufman
  - Chapter 2-Sales and Saxe
  - Day/supplemental schools article

OCTOBER 6 - Arenas of Jewish practice-Direct Service Agencies
Journal question:
In your opinion, do agency practices match communal priorities?  Give examples to support your opinion.

Group Paper and Presentation, Part I due: “U.S. Community Assessment and Re-Design”

OCTOBER 13 - Underserved Jewish Communities
- Journal question:
  Is the greater Jewish community responsible for serving “underserved” populations?  How so or why not?

Readings for next week:
- Linzer, et. al., ch. 10

OCTOBER 20 - American Jewish Community and Political Activity and the Jewish community's relationship with other minority groups and ethnicities
- Journal question:
  How and why do issues become priorities on the Jewish communal agenda?  What dynamics inform the nature of the interaction of the Jewish polity with American society?

Readings for next week:
- Linzer, et. al., chapters 1, 8, 11
- Kaufman, ch. 3
- Levine article: “Jewish Professional-Professional Jew: Commitments and Competencies for a Jewish Mission"

OCTOBER 27 - American Jewish Identity and Servicing the core vs. outreach
- Journal question:
  Where do you stand on the issue of inreach vs. outreach?  If you work in an outreach agency, will you be comfortable?

Readings for next week:
- Linzer, et. al., ch. 9
- Elazar article, “Jewish communal structures around the world"
- Synagogue 2000 article
- Complete Rosenthal book over next three weeks

NOVEMBER 3 - Israel and Overseas
- Journal question:
  In your opinion, should Diaspora Jews have a say in Israel’s political and social decisions?  On what do you base your opinion?

Readings for next week:
- Will be handed out in class

Professional Philosophy Paper due

NOVEMBER 10 - Israel and Overseas
Journal question: 
Up through the “Baby Boomer” generation, the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora was often likened to a wheel: the hub was Israel and each spoke emanating from it Diaspora communities. If you were to draw a model of how you view the Diaspora-Israel relationship, how would it look and why?

Readings for Dec. 1:
- Will be handed out in class

NOVEMBER 17 - GA—no class

NOVEMBER 24 -

DECEMBER 1 - Israel and Overseas: Focus on Argentina
- Journal question: 
  What are two strengths of the American Jewish community? What are two challenges facing the community for the next decade?

DECEMBER 8 - Group Paper and Presentation, Part II due: “Overseas Community Assessment and Re-Design” AND Wrap-up and Conclusions

DECEMBER 15 - No class, though journal questions are due
- Journal question: 
  In your opinion, what is the responsibility of one Diaspora community to another? To what end(s) does it serve to forge relations with Jews in the FSU, Argentina, or elsewhere?
- Journal question: 
  What are some new pieces of knowledge or insight you have gained through this course?

KEY DUE DATES

Oct. 6: Group Paper and Presentation Part I: U.S. Community Assessment and Re-Design

Nov. 3: Professional Philosophy Paper

Dec. 8: Group Project Part II: Overseas Community Assessment and Re-Design