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**LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**SOWK 709**

**Social Work and the Law**

**Semester & Year**

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**Instructor:**

**Instructor Name, Title, and Pronouns:**

**Email:**

**Telephone:**

**Office Hours:** [Add days, times, in-person/virtual]

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**Class Day and Time:**

**Class Location:** [Add building and room number or note online via zoom]

**Credits/Length of Course:** 3 credit hours/14 weeks

**Method of Delivery:** [Note: In-person/hybrid/online]

**Prerequisites:** 500-level courses except for SOWK 506; completion of first-level internship (SWFI 530, SWFI 531) or concurrent enrollment with SWFI 531

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**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK MISSION & IDENTITY STATEMENT**

Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work provides transformative education for practice-informed social work. The school advances rich and diverse knowledge grounded in empowering work with clients and organizations from a participatory, person-in-environment perspective. We promote social justice through macro, meso, and micro practice. “Transformative education” reflects our commitment to engaging students be effective change agents for social justice in a global context. “Practice-informed social work” refers to a strengths-based, client-centered focus on working with individuals, families, groups, communities, and environmental systems.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides students with an overview and analysis of the relationship between the disciplines of social work and law. Through lecture and discussion, students acquire a framework for comprehending and analyzing laws that affect individual clients and groups with whom and on whose behalf social workers advocate. Students learn to examine critically the function of law in society, with an emphasis on criminal and juvenile justice; child welfare; domestic violence; mandated reporting; and confidentiality. The course is designed to help students master the use of law as a tool of social work practice and social justice. In addition, students learn to use legal materials and to understand legal references in social work materials.

**Learning Objectives & EPAS Related Competencies\***

\*Framed by the Council on Social Work Education’s Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)

**Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

| **Assignment** | Midterm exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | Final Exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |

**Competency 2: Engage in Diversity and Difference in Practice**

| **Assignment** | Midterm exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | Final Exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |

**Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

| **Assignment** | Midterm exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | Final Exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |

**Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice**

| **Assignment** | Midterm exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | Final Exam | Knowledge, Values, Skills, and Cognitive & Affective Processes |

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

**Sakai**

This course will be conducted [in person/online (synchronous or asynchronous)/hybrid] with content available via Sakai. Sakai is the learning platform used at Loyola University Chicago. The platform offers a variety of tools that allow students and instructors to communicate, turn in assignments, participate in discussions, provide/receive feedback, and track students’ grades and progress. Make sure to do the following before the first day of the semester:

* Verify that your credentials to access the course are working properly
* Locate and access the course within Sakai
* Familiarize yourself with the Sakai tools

**Minimum Technical Requirements**

The course is delivered [in person/online/hybrid]. Students are expected to have basic knowledge and command of a computer/tablet and be familiar with the following software and tools:

* Web browsers such as Firefox. Tools such as VoiceThread work better with Firefox
* Reliable high-speed internet access
* Access to an active e-mail account. Be sure to check your Loyola University e-mail regularly, including the Spam folder.
* Word processing program (Microsoft Word recommended)
* Antivirus software
* Adobe Acrobat
* Access to a Windows, Chromebook, or Mac computer to complete assignments in the event your mobile device does not meet the minimum technical requirements

**POLICIES & RESOURCES**

**LUC SSW BSW/MSW Student Handbooks**

Please familiarize yourself with all content in the [LUC SSW BSW & MSW Student Handbook](https://www.luc.edu/socialwork/student-support/forms/)s. Additional key information is noted below.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance and participation are important elements in learning whether the class is in-person, asynchronous, synchronous, or hybrid. While there is not a standard attendance and participation policy in SSW, each instructor will in their syllabus have the policies for their class. Students are responsible for reading the syllabus for course content and policies like attendance and participation. When something is not clear students should request clarification from the instructor. Students having been approved for accommodations by the SAC should follow the protocol of the SAC as well as speak with the instructor at the beginning of the semester to address any questions from the instructor. Should circumstances change during the semester, students should inform the instructor.

**Students with Special Needs – Student Accessibility Center**

Loyola University Chicago provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). Professors will receive an accommodation notification from SAC, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with their professors individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. Please note that in this class, the software may be used to audio record class lectures in order to provide equal access to students with disabilities.  Students approved for this accommodation use recordings for their personal study only and recordings may not be shared with other people or used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as part of the class activity.  Recordings are deleted at the end of the semester.  For more information about registering with SAC or questions about accommodations, please contact SAC at 773-508-3700 or SAC@luc.edu.

**Respect for Diversity**

Guided by the NASW Code of Ethics and the mission of the University, the School of Social Work is committed to the recognition and respect for variations in racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with regard to class, gender, age, physical and mental ability/disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. The school values ethnically sensitive and culturally competent social work education and practice. Students must uphold the ethical standards set forth by the profession and the Jesuit ideals of the university. (See: [Respect for Diversity](https://www.luc.edu/socialwork/aboutus/) for more information).

**Gender Pronouns and Name on Roster**

Addressing one another at all times by using appropriate names and gender pronouns honors and affirms individuals of all gender identities and gender expressions. Misgendering and heteronormative language exclude the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Explicit identification of pronouns is increasingly used in professional identification (e.g., conference nametags, Twitter handles, etc.).

As part of our professionalization and in the spirit of our professional values, during our first class as we introduce ourselves, you may choose to share your name and gender pronouns (e.g., Hello, my name is Sam and my gender pronouns are she/her/hers or Hello, my name is Lou, and my gender pronouns are they/them/theirs). If you would only like to introduce yourself by name, without pronouns, that is also completely fine. If you do not wish to be called by the name listed on the roster, please inform the class. You may also choose to add your pronouns to your zoom account profile (e.g., Sam Smith (they/them) so they always appear on the screen. Note that if you choose to do so, you must change your profile name from the main login on your Zoom account (e.g., add the pronouns after your last name) or you will have to add the pronouns manually during each and every zoom session. The goal is to create an affirming environment for all students with regard to their names and gender pronouns.

**Brave and Safe Space**

A safe space is ideally one where the expression of identity and experience can exist and be affirmed without fear of repercussion and without the pressure to educate. While learning may occur in these spaces, the ultimate goal is to provide support. A brave space encourages dialogue. Recognizing differences and holding each person accountable to do the work of sharing experiences and coming to new understandings - a feat that’s often hard, and typically uncomfortable.

The School of Social Work values creating a brave and safe space within classrooms for all students. Our instructors welcome all course-related comments and concerns from students. If you have a concern about whether your classroom is a supportive, brave, and safe space, or any other concerns, you are welcome to speak with your instructor or any other faculty or staff member that you trust. That person will help you talk through a pathway to address your concerns and bring them to the Associate Dean with you or on your behalf if you so desire. You should be reassured that expressing your concerns will not result in any penalty to you.

**Title IX Disclosure and Rights**

Under Title IX federal law, "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972). It is important for you to know the professor has a mandatory obligation to notify designated University personnel of incidents of gender-based misconduct (sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment, etc.) that are shared in private or during class discussions. The reason for this is to keep all members of the Loyola community safe, also to ensure you are connected to the resources and reporting options available. Hypothetical scenarios that are discussed do not require any action. Please visit the [Title IX at Loyola University Chicago Page](https://www.luc.edu/equity/titleixequitylaws/titleix/) for more information regarding the University’s response to notifications of gender-based misconduct. The following link contains information if you wish to [speak or contact a confidential resource on campus](https://www.luc.edu/equity/about/contacttheoecteam/).

**Student Code of Conduct**

Respecting the rights and opinions of others is an important aspect of a Jesuit education. Please respect others by allowing others to express their opinion, and avoiding the use of vulgar language and/or offensive or discriminatory comments (racial, ethnic, etc.). It’s the student’s responsibility to read and adhere to the[Loyola University Code of Conduct](https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/law/fyi/pdfs/Code_of_Conduct.pdf).

**Privacy Policy – FERPA**

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a federal law that protects the privacy of students and educational records. To learn more about students’ privacy rights visit the [FERPA Actat Loyola University](https://www.luc.edu/regrec/aboutus/ferpa/) website or the [U.S Dept. of Education website](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html). Loyola University, e-mail, and Learning Management System meet FERPA requirements.

**Third-Party and FERPA**

Some assignments may require the use of public online websites, applications, social media, and/or blogs among others. If a course requires students to participate in these types of activities the students can choose not to participate. In this case, the students should contact the instructor as soon as possible and let them know of their decision. Please avoid sharing the private information of others.

**Resources for Writing**

The Writing Center, Loyola University Chicago, is available to help writers develop and clarify ideas and work on specific issues such as punctuation, grammar, documentation, and sentence structure. Students are encouraged to visit the [Writing Center Website](https://www.luc.edu/writing/index.shtml) for additional information. Services are available at both WTC & LSC. Resources for APA may be found here: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

**Help with Technology – Help Desk**

The ITS Service Desk provides the University with a single point of access for support with technology. They are committed to providing excellent, professional customer service in tracking and resolving support requests. To request assistance, please contact the ITS Service Desk at 773.508.4ITS or via email at ITS Service Desk ITSServiceDesk@luc.edu. Help Desk [Support Hours](https://www.luc.edu/its/service/support_hours.shtml).

**Important Contact Information**

IT Help Desk: 773-508-4487, [IT Help Desk Website](http://www.luc.edu/its/service/)

Wellness Center: 773- 494-3810,  [Wellness Center Website](https://www.luc.edu/wellness/)
Writing Center: 312-915-6089, [Writing Center Website](https://www.luc.edu/writing/index.shtml)
Tutoring – Academic Excellence: 773-508-7708, [Tutoring Website](https://www.luc.edu/tutoring/index.shtml)
Ethics Hotline: 1-855-603-6988, [Ethics Hotline Website](https://www.luc.edu/hr/ethics/)
Military Veteran Student Services: 773-508-7765, [Veteran Student Services Website](https://www.luc.edu/veterans/)
Library: 312-915-6622, [Library Website](http://libraries.luc.edu/)

Students Accessibility Center: 773-508-3700, [Students Accessibility Center Website](https://www.luc.edu/sac/)

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS**

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is essential to a student’s professional development, their ability to serve others, and to the university’s mission. Therefore, students are expected to conduct all academic work within the letter and the spirit of the Statement on Academic Honesty of Loyola University Chicago, which is characterized by any action whereby a student misrepresents the ownership of academic work submitted in their name. Students who plagiarize risk receiving a failing grade at the instructor’s discretion. All students who plagiarize will be referred to the Committee of Student Affairs (CSA) for judicial review. Knowledge of what plagiarism is will help you from inadvertently committing it in your papers. Additional [information on plagiarism](https://www.plagiarism.org/).

Plagiarism is a serious ethical violation, the consequences of which can be a failure of a specific class and/or expulsion from the school**.** Responsibilities of Academic Honesty are detailed in [the LUC BSW & MSW Student Handbooks](https://www.luc.edu/socialwork/student-support/forms/). Please read the Graduate Catalog stating the university policy on plagiarism. The definition of plagiarism is: “In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately (or unintentionally) uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source." Source: WPA (n.d.). Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The [WPA Statement on Best Practices](http://wpacouncil.org/files/wpa-plagiarism-statement.pdf).

This commitment ensures that a student in the School of Social Work will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thereby, affirming personal and professional honor and integrity. Students may not use the same assignment content to fulfill different course requirements. If a paper is submitted to a course that is closely related to a paper submitted for another course, it is suggested that the student cite the paper. (Example: paper submitted for SOWK 000, Instructor: Wayne Williams, Semester: Spring 2020)

**Turn-It-In**

By taking this course you agree that all required papers may be subject to submission review to Turnitin.com (within Sakai or otherwise) to detect plagiarism. Any and all written material submitted as course work may be subject to detection of plagiarism using the Turn-it-in database. To learn about their usage policy, visit the [Turn-It-In](https://www.turnitin.com/) website.

**Academic Warnings**

Students are responsible for tracking their progress through each class. As a result, students should identify and resolve any academic difficulty as early as possible. In the event that a student is experiencing academic difficulty, the student will be notified by the instructor in writing (via e-mail) no later than the deadline for early alert according to the LUC Academic calendar at mid-term. See the [LUC SSW BSW & MSW Student Handbooks](https://www.luc.edu/socialwork/student-support/forms/) for additional information regarding academic concerns.

**Grading Criteria**

Grades are based on the following criteria:

**A** = Exceptional. This grade will be assigned to assignments that show extensive use of literature as well as broad use of concrete concepts and examples of practice, paying special attention to the use of professional language, grammar, and sentence structure in all written materials.

**B** = Fully meets graduate-level standards. This grade will be assigned to tasks and assignments in which all the steps have been satisfactorily completed showing a combination of the appropriate use of theories, principles, and precise descriptions of practice.

**C** = Performance, in general, is not satisfactory and is below the graduate level standard, all the requirements of the task or assignment have been completed.

**D** = Performance, in general, is not adequate. The student must re-take the course.

**F** = Failure. The performance and quality of work are not satisfactory, or some parts of the tasks or assignments have not been completed.

**I** = At the discretion of the section Instructor a temporary grade of **Incomplete** may be assigned to a student who, for a reason beyond the student’s control, has been unable to complete the required work in a course on time. The request signed by the student and the faculty member must be approved and on file with the BSW or MSW Program Director when grades are submitted.

### **Grading Scale**

| **Grade** | **Percentage (%)** |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | 96 – 100 |
| **A-** | 92 – 95 |
| **B +** | 88 – 91 |
| **B** | 84 – 87 |
| **B-** | 80 – 83 |
| **C+** | 76 – 79 |
| **C** | 72 – 75 |
| **C-** | 68 – 71 |
| **D+** | 64 – 67 |
| **D** | 60 – 63 |
| **F** | Below 60 |

**Grade of “Incomplete”**

The temporary grade of “Incomplete” will be considered for those students who, for reasons beyond their control, have not been able to complete the requirements and tasks of the course on time, within the time stipulated in the academic calendar. It is the student's responsibility to request an “Incomplete” grade. This request must be approved and signed by the instructor and the student with final approval of the program director. If the student fails to complete the request or receive appropriate approval, the final grade will be F.

**Use of Rubrics as an Evaluation Tool**

Rubrics will be used as assessment tools for course activities and assignments. All tasks and assignments will be evaluated following the criteria outlined in the specific rubric. The grade of each activity will be based on the combination of points assigned to each evaluation criteria listed in the rubric for that assignment. Unless an obvious error can be established and documented in the rubric, the points and/or grade awarded by the instructor will be considered final for that activity or assignment.

**Instructor Feedback to Learners**

The instructor will provide individual feedback to each student for each assignment submitted. These comments will be offered to complement the grade obtained and will include comments about student progress, knowledge, comprehension and skills.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Saltzman, A., Furman, D. and Ohman, K., *Law in Social Work Practice, 3rd Edition* (Boston, Cengage Learning)

In addition to the required text, the current Illinois statute(s) that relates to each chapter of the textbook that we cover in the course will be posted for students as required reading. For example, for the chapter in the textbook on the criminal law, we also read Article 9 of the Illinois Criminal Code of 2012, 720 ILCS 5/9-1.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are expected to come to class having read/listened to/watched all required resources. Grades will be based on two exams: a midterm (50% of grade) and a final exam (50% of grade).

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**Module 1 Basic legal concepts, principles and skills for social workers**

**Date:** First 3 weeks of class

**Description:** In this 3-week module, we will explore basic legal concepts, principles, and skills important for social work practice.

**Learning Objectives:**

After successfully completing this module, students will be able to:

* understand the concepts of the law and the legal system,
* develop their skills in reading the law
* understand the hearing process
* acquire competence for participation in the hearing process.

**Required Resources:**

Chapter 1, “Understanding the Law and the Legal System”, Chapter 3, “Understanding the Hearing Process”, andChapter 4, “Skills for Competent Practice in the Hearing Process”, in Saltzman, Furman and Ohman

**Module 2 Law related to specific fields of social work practice: Criminal justice and juvenile justice**

 **Date:** Four weeks

**Description:** This 4-week module will take a deeper dive into law related to criminal and juvenile justice.

**Learning Objectives**

After successfully completing this module, students will be able to:

* understand concepts of the substantive and procedural criminal law
* understand and explain basic principles underlying juvenile justice.

**Required Resources:** Chapter 9, “Criminal Justice” and Chapter 10, “Juvenile Justice”, in Saltzman. Furman and Ohman.

**Module 3 Law related to specific fields of social work practice: Mandated reporting and law related to child and adult protection**

**Date:** Three weeks

**Description:** This module explores mandated reporting and laws applicable to child and adult protection.

**Learning Objectives**

After successfully completing this module, students will be able to:

* understand and apply laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect
* understand and explain federal and state laws related to child protection.

**Required Resources:** Chapter 11, “Protection of Children”, and Chapter 19,” Guardianship and Protection of Vulnerable Adults”, pp. 485-86, in Saltzman, Furman and Ohman.

**Module 4 Law related to specific fields of social work practice: Domestic violence**

**Date:** Two weeks

**Description:** This module explores law and policy related to domestic violence.

**Learning Objectives**

After successfully completing this module, students will be able to:

* understand state law regarding orders of protection
* describe other legal remedies regarding intimate partner violence.

**Required Resources:** Chapter 14, “Adult Domestic Relations”, p. 332; pp. 354-361, in Saltzman, Furman and Ohman.

**Module 5 Law impacting all fields of social work practice: Confidentiality**

**Date:** Two weeks

**Description:** Our final 2-week module explores laws surrounding confidentiality as applied to social work practice.

**Learning Objectives**

After successfully completing this module, students will be able to:

* understand their legal duties regarding the confidentiality of client communications and records
* critically analyze possible conflict between legal and ethical responsibilities

**Required Resources:** Chapter 7,“Confidentiality and Other Legal and Ethical Obligations”, in Saltzman, Furman and Ohman.

**COURSE FEEDBACK**

**Course Feedback**

You will receive an email communication near the end of this semester with regard to your feedback for this course related to the content, assignments, instructor support, etc. Your feedback for each of your courses improves learning outcomes for students and the instruction process in the course. Your feedback is valuable and affects revisions to this course.