



Format Revised 2023  
Syllabus revised in 2024

Florence University of the Arts (FUA) is an academic institution for study abroad in Florence, Italy. FUA collaborates with The American University of Florence (AUF), an international university offering US-style undergraduate and graduate degrees, in a cooperation to offer study abroad programs with a diverse breadth and depth of academic curriculum.

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**SCHOOL OF LIFE STUDIES AND HUMAN SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HUMANITIES; SOCIOLOGY**  
**COURSE TITLE: SOCIAL WORK**  
**COURSE CODE: LSHHSW200; LSSOSW200**  
**3 semester credits**

**1. DESCRIPTION**

The course focuses on the fundamentals of social work, exploring the values, the code of ethics, and the types of services of this practice-based profession. Various social work spheres are explored throughout the course, including services for the underprivileged, children, older adults, women, disabled individuals, people suffering from mental health issues, drug addicts, and convicts. The course provides tangible illustrations of social work institutions, with particular emphasis placed on the social fabric of Florence, to show how this discipline contributes to the well-being of both individuals and societies. At the same time, the course also investigates social work in relation to globalization and multiculturalism, to showcasing transnational shared goals and objectives.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The course aims to inform students about the pillars of social work across different fields of involvement. Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Gain an understanding of the main spheres of social work, together with specific characteristics and illustrations.
- Acquire knowledge of the values and code of ethics of social work.
- Identify the main power structures that contribute to the formation of marginalized communities.
- Understand the local and global goals of the discipline.

**3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

## 5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

### TEXTBOOK:

- Gladden, Jessica. *Introduction to Social Work*, Libretexts, 2022. Available online here: <https://batch.libretexts.org/print/Letter/Finished/socialsci-24536/Full.pdf>

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

### FURTHER READINGS

(Books listed below are available in the FUA-AUF library)

- Bell, Kate. 'Poverty, Social Security, and Stigma', *Poverty*. 144: 10-13. 2017.
- Consoli, Teresa *et alii*. 'The Italian Network for Implementing the 'Housing First' Approach', *European Journal of Homelessness*. 10(1): 83-98. 2016.
- Kirst-Ashman, Karen. *Introduction to Social Work & Social Welfare: Critical Thinking Perspectives* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.), Brooks/Cole, 2013.
- Minoia, Vito. 'Educating in Prison through Theater and Literature: Examples from Italy and the United States', *Ricerche di Pedagogia e Didattica – Journal of Theories and Research in Education*. 14(3). 2019.
- Pierce Colfer, Carol J. *et alii*. *Making Sense of 'Intersectionality'*. Center for International Forestry Research. 2018.
- Reamer, Frederic G. *Social Work Values and Ethics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Furman, Rich. Negi, Nailini & Salvador, Rommel. 'An Introduction to Transnational Social Work', in *Transnational Social Work Practice* pp.3-19, Columbia University Pres, 2010.

### Internet Resources:

- CAT Cooperativa Sociale: <https://www.coopcat.it/?lang=en>
- Emergency International: <https://en.emergency.it/>
- Millennium Development Goals: <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>
- Telefono Azzurro: <https://azzurro.it/en/what-we-do/>
- Video "Prison in Italy": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tysDrvqPVzw> (2017)
- Video "Social Workers as Super-heroes": [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A27QjpQ\\_Ieo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A27QjpQ_Ieo) (2015)

### LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

The FUA-AUF library is located in Corso Tintori 21. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. Please note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to check-out materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

### BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

#### BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation: [www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblate.it)

#### THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

### 6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

### 7. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

### 8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

### 9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

20% Participation & Assignments

20% Midterm Exam

25% Final Exam

25% Final Project

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

### 10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1

absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

#### LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

#### TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

### 11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

The **Midterm Exam** accounts for 20% of the final course grade. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

Format: the exam consists of two parts:

- Part I: Short-answer and multiple-choice questions for a total of 70 points.
- Part II: Two open-ended for a total of 30 points (15 points each).

The **Final Exam** accounts for 25% of the final course grade. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.** Format: the exam consists of two parts:

- Part I: Short-answer and multiple-choice questions for a total of 50 points.
- Part II: Two open-ended questions for a total of 50 points (25 points each).

The Final Exam is cumulative.

The **Final Project and Presentation** account for 25% (20% + 5%) of the final course grade. The final project is a 1500-word research paper with bibliography and references that explore a social work association or organization of choice that operates in Italy. The association chosen needs to be discussed in detail and embedded in a larger framework of global social work. The student is encouraged to contact the association to obtain additional insights.

The Final Project must contain:

- History of the association.
- Current mission and objectives.
- Analysis of services provided in relation to micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
- Links to global social work framework.

The Presentation of the Final Project occurs on the last day of class. Students should prepare 3-5 slides describing the main characteristics of the association and its relevance from the local to the global level.

## 12. LESSONS

<b>Lesson 1</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Course structure and objectives. History of social work. Profession, mission, and values of social workers.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the history and the main characteristics of social work.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Watch and discuss “Social Workers as Super-heroes” video.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, “Introduction to Social Work”, Chapter 1.1

<b>Lesson 2</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The NASW (National Association of Social Workers) Code of Ethics. Social work and human diversity: the quest for cultural competence.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the ethical standards that social workers must uphold. Recognize the relationship between social work and factors such as, race, ethnicity, religion, and gender.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Read and discuss Lia Lee’s case study, Gladden, Chapter 1.3, p. 13-14
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, “NASW Code of Ethics”, Chapter 1.2; “Cultural Competence”, Chapter 1.3

<b>Lesson 3</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Generalist Practice. Micro, Mezzo, and Macro levels of social work.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the theories behind social work. Apprehend the various approaches of social work at individual, group, and community levels.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Create your own ecomap following the example in Gladden, Chapter 1.4, p. 3
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, “Generalist Practice”, Chapter 1.4

<b>Lesson 4</b>
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<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Services for individuals below the poverty line. Homelessness in Italy, the 'Housing First' case study.
<b>Objectives</b>	Recognize in depth, the ways in which social structures and values may oppress or marginalize certain groups. Identify the practices of social work to stimulate social and economic justice. Learn about the social work to aid homelessness in Italy.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Select an association for the Final Project and discuss your choice in class.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, "Poverty", Chapter 1.6 Read: Consoli, "The Italian Network for Implementing the 'Housing First' Approach"

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Services for children and the youth. Telefono Azzurro case study in Italy.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the main challenges in the delivery of efficient support to children and adolescents. Understand how family functions and traumas affect the development of children.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Research a social work association operating in Italy that protects children and the youth.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, "Child Welfare and Foster Care", Chapter 1.7 Read: The Telefono Azzurro website.

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Services for the elderly. Services for people with disabilities: I Ragazzi di Sipario case study in Florence.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the main challenges in the delivery of efficient support to older adults and people with disabilities. Learn about the social work practices implemented when cognitive capabilities are impacted.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Research about a social work association operating in Italy that protects older adults.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, "Gerontology and People with Disabilities", Chapter 1.8

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Midterm Exam

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
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	Academic Break
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<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Services for individuals with mental health issues and for individuals with substance dependencies. San Patrignano case study in Italy. CAT Social Cooperative case study in Florence.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the main challenges in delivering efficient support to individuals dealing with substance abuse. Learn how different typologies of addictions affect social work practices.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Research about San Patrignano, touching on its past and present approaches, and discuss the social work practices in class.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, “Mental Health and Substance Use”, Chapter 1.10 Watch: First episode of docuseries “SanPa: Sins of the Savior”, available on Netflix.

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Services for women in an intersectional perspective. Centro Artemisia case study in Florence.
<b>Objectives</b>	Understand how gender inequalities impact the condition of women, with a focus on Italian society. Identify how intersectionality plays a substantial role in the marginalization of individuals.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Analyze Intersectionality scheme in Pierce Colfer, p. 25
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Pierce Colfer, Chapter 1 and 2, pp. 1-9 Assignment: Choose one of the projects curated by CAT and upload a short research paper on their role (300 words).

<b>Lesson 11</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Crime and correctional social work. Focus on the events and activities organized at Sollicciano, the Florence penitentiary.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the inhumane conditions still subsisting in many penitentiaries and the attempts of social workers to improve the situation.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Watch: “Prison in Italy” short documentary. Discuss the ways in which social work can improve the inmates’ living conditions.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Gladden, “Social Work in Criminal Justice Settings”, Chapter 1.11 Read: Minoia, “Educating in Prison through Theater and Literature: Examples from Italy and the United States”

<b>Lesson 12</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The globalization of social work 1. What is transnational social work?
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the main characteristics, benefits, and challenges of transnational social work in an ever more globalized world.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Group exercise: Analyze the Millennium Development Goals and find at least one Italian social work organization per goal.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Furman <i>et alii</i> , "An Introduction to Transnational Social Work"

<b>Lesson 13</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The globalization of social work 2. Emergency case study in Italy: the work of Gino Strada and main areas of interest.
<b>Objectives</b>	Further recognize the inequalities and injustices that condition the lives of individuals in a globalized society. Be introduced to the works of Emergency, a fundamental Italian organization that promotes transnational social work.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Group exercise: Choose one project by Emergency and analyze its significance from a social work perspective, then present and discuss the findings in class.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Emergency International website Assignment: Conclude Final Project and prepare the presentation.

<b>Lesson 14</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Summary of the course. Presentation of the Final Projects.
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify and link the main objectives and modules of the course. Be able to present findings with clarity and accuracy.
<b>In-Class Activity</b>	Presentations with Q&A.
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Assignment: Submit Final Project

<b>Lesson 15</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Final Exam

### 13. DISCLAIMER

This course intends to bring students on-site to show them the activities conducted in social work associations or organizations in the local territory. Nevertheless, the delicate nature of these associations



requires elasticity and empathy on our part. The visits cannot be scheduled in advance conclusively since sensitive emergencies or concerns, together with impending duties of the social workers, might affect their availability with short notice. The instructor will be in continuous contact with the associations to discuss visiting opportunities according to the social workers' disposals. This means that lectures may be swapped with others during the course.

**FUA-AUF works with:**

- I Ragazzi di Sipario (<https://prova.iragazzidisipario.it/>): a social cooperative that employs adolescents and young adults with psychological or physical disabilities in a restaurant open to the public.
- Centro Antifumo USL Toscana (<https://www.uslcentro.toscana.it/index.php/servizi-e-attivita/diagnosi-e-cura/621-i-servizi-per-le-dipendenze/10718-centro-antifumo>): a government-run center to support smokers who intend to quit.
- Cooperativa Sociale Il Girasole (<http://www.coopilgirasole.it/>): a social cooperative supporting the elderly through social-health assistance.
- Il Cenacolo Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus (<http://www.coopcenacolo.it/>): a social cooperative working to find employment and collocation for marginalized individuals.
- Associazione Volontariato Penitenziario (<https://www.avpfirenze.org/>): a volunteer-based association providing support to current and former inmates, as well as their families.
- CAT Cooperativa Sociale (<https://www.coopcat.it/>): one of the biggest social cooperatives in Tuscany. It aims at preventing and reducing harm related to exclusion and social marginality, and it runs a vast number of social work projects related to:
  - Immigration and reception
  - Children and teenagers
  - Prostitution and human trafficking
  - Abuse of psychotropic drugs
  - Mental disorders
  - Excluded minorities
- Misericordia Fiorentina (<https://www.misericordia.firenze.it/Servizi>): the oldest private voluntary institution in the world that is still active since its foundation established in 1244. The Misericordia mostly operates emergency unit dispatches, and it also supports elderly and fragile people by offering transportation services.
- Azienda Ospedaliero-Universitaria Meyer, AOU Meyer, also referred to as Meyer Children's Hospital (<https://www.meyer.it/>): a pediatric hospital supported by social workers providing services such as pet therapy, music therapy, and play therapy to hospitalized children.