

Spring 2024 Course Description

579 Special Topics

HWC 579-4 (55251) Special Topics in Social Work: Social Work and Environmental Ecological Justice

This course provides students with a foundation in the principles of environmental and ecological justice, environmental racism, and an understanding of the role of social work in promoting social, environmental, and ecological justice. The meaning and application of Environmental Social Work will be explored through readings, class discussions, and service learning assignments. The course will highlight examples of environmental inequity and environmental racism in the local community, region, and worldwide; provide historical context for the environmental justice movement; suggest various ways that social workers and communities can mobilize to redress injustice; situate social work's role in environmental justice in the context of ecological justice; and expand our definition of "environment" beyond the social. This class will meet in person with a required service learning component of 6 hours to be completed in local communities.

This course includes a combination of in-person class meetings, zoom check ins, independent service learning activities, and group (the whole class and smaller sub-groups) service learning projects. The majority of the time in this class will be spent outside of the classroom setting. We will meet in person and via zoom to cover critical historical background and define our projects and service activities for the semester. The three main focuses of this course for Spring, 2024 are: 1) Long Island environmental justice, including the history of EJ movements and current issues (Brookhaven Landfill, Superfund sites, climate change); 2) Environmental Justice in Puerto Rico, including the aftermath of natural disasters, climate justice, military occupation, and sustainable development of small island states; 3) Policing of environmental movements, including "eco-terrorism", Stop Cop City movement, Standing Rock water protectors, global examples of police or military quelling of environmental justice advocacy.

Most of our group activities will take place during the course meeting time at locations around Long Island accessible by car or carpooling. Examples of these local service learning activities include: visiting landfills, beaches, superfund sites, and visiting local community environmental justice advocates. Other group activities will be conducted independently or in small groups (examples: awareness campaigns, bake sale fundraisers, targeted local activities).

HWC 579-5 (55252) Special Topics in Social Welfare: Women's Health Issues

This course will cover the health issues most relevant to women in today's society. Each week a guest speaker will provide background information and state-of-the art information on a particular woman's health issue and the treatment and policy issues relevant for social work. Topics incorporate health issues, clinical treatment and social policy for women that vary across the lifespan. Topics range from pregnancy and childbirth to the particular health needs of aging women.

HWC 579-6 (55269) Special Topics in Social Work: Emotionally Focused Therapy for Individual Couples and Families

Emotionally Focused Therapy is an evidence-based, state of the art, new science researched relational therapy with a success rate of almost 75% effective five years after treatment. Students will understand and practice the basic experiential and systemic concepts of an "Emotionally Focused" approach to therapy. Students will be able to view clients interpersonal attachments and conceptualize relationship distress and repair based on theories of attachment and emotion including trauma-informed strategies to address the invisible wounds of those most harmed. Students will develop and practice skills in overcoming common blocks and impasses in individual, couple and family modalities and so shaping core corrective emotional experiences.

HWC 579-10 (55308) and 12 (56009) Special Topics in Social Welfare; Forensic Social Work: Psychosocial and Legal Issues- Criminal Law

This second semester course will focus on the various issues within criminal law. Using a trauma-informed perspective, students will learn about criminal proceedings, the different charges, mass incarceration, wrongful incarceration, bail and custody issues, risk assessment, and issues with regard to compassionate release and reentry. There will be a special focus on mitigation and the crucial role social workers hold in the criminal justice system including addressing inequities and racial and ethnic disparities, utilizing evidence-based interventions, and addressing the direct and ancillary needs of clients with criminal charges.