

Spring 2025 Course Description

579 Special Topics

HWC 579-1 (57345) Special Topics in Social Welfare: Digital Media and Mental Health

This course will use the latest clinical and brain imaging research along with a sociological, political and economic lens to explore how Digital Media (i.e. Social Media, gaming, AI, VR, chat rooms, etc) has harmed our mental health, shaped our society, affected child development and impacted education. This course will also explore the latest best-practice clinical protocols in the assessment and treatment of tech overuse and tech addiction. We will also explore the global impact of "Big Tech Colonialism" and the exploitation of marginalized peoples around the world who are used to manufacture our devices. This course is essential for any social worker in both micro or macro settings to better understand the impact of our ever-evolving digital age on individuals and on society.

HWC 579-2 (57386) Special Topics in Social Welfare: Play Therapy and Social Work Practice

This course is designed to provide social work students with an introduction to child-centered play therapy. Students will explore the history of play therapy, its different types, and begin to enhance their engagement skills with children and parents through play. In addition, students will learn about the application of play therapy with specific populations. Attention will be given to play therapy viewed through a multicultural lens. Social justice issues will be explored as well within this modality.

HWC 579-4 (57631) Special Topics in Social Welfare; Social Work Environmental and 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.

HWC 579-5 (50192) 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 (50255) 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.