



Columbia College
Special Topics in Human Services (HSPD285)
Course Outline

Semester Dates: June 29, 2026, to August 1, 2026

Please note that when a holiday falls during the week, your class will be rescheduled for the Friday of that week. Students are required to plan to be present at the rescheduled class.

Facilitator: David Getiro

Email: david.getiro@columbia.ca

Class Times: Thursdays 5:30PM to 9:30PM and
Saturday 12:30PM to 4:30PM

Room: Microsoft Teams Invite and HSDP285
Moodle Page

Credit: 3

Prerequisite: None

Note: It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the information contained in the Course Outline and to clarify any areas of concern with the facilitator. Please note that when a holiday falls during the week, your class will be rescheduled for the Friday of that week. Students are required to plan to be present at the rescheduled class.

Course Description:

This course offers the student an opportunity to explore key topics and issues focusing on their area of specialization. Primary and secondary research will be used to prepare a major project on the topic/topics of choice.

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of active participation in these sessions, a student can expect to:

- Define, explain, and describe key terms, concepts, theories, ideologies, and models.
- Summarize a human services approach to working with individuals experiencing poverty, unemployment, and other associated challenges.
- Describe how human services workers work with diverse populations such as seniors, Indigenous Canadians, immigrants, and individuals with disabilities,
- Articulate an understanding of social agencies for delivering social welfare resources to people in need through strategic and operational frameworks.
- Understand the social welfare system and critically assess its issues, roles, approaches, initiatives, and challenges.
- Discuss the role of professional and non-professional service providers within the social welfare provision.
- Demonstrate professional and personal growth in human services through self-assessment activities.
- Summarize the process of how social welfare policies are formalized, implemented, and evaluated.

Course Format:

This 45-hour remote course uses a variety of teaching/learning methods including discussion, personal reflection, experiential exercises, student presentations, role-plays, group activities and especially case studies. Our faculty aims to create a learning environment where the learner is actively engaged in inquiry, critical thinking and problem solving. The online classroom provides you with a place where you can learn with and from others in a cooperative and collaborative manner.

You are expected to take a very active part in online class discussions and take responsibility for your own learning. Be a positive and co-operative team member. The expectation is that you will come to each online class prepared with pre-class homework completed. Your facilitator will engage you in activities that are based on your completed homework and readings. Your enthusiastic and positive approach in the online setting classroom will create an atmosphere that will help every student develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed for success.

How you conduct yourself in our online classes will largely mirror your conduct in society and your future work site. For example, if you tend to ask questions, challenge the ideas of others in a respectful manner, draw out the best from your colleagues, and encourage both group development and task accomplishment in this class, it is likely you will do the same at work. A high level of student involvement and developing professionalism is expected in the classroom as you work towards your goal.

Required Textbooks and Equipment:

- ***Assigned readings provided to you in Moodle/Portal***

Recommended Readings and Resources:

Students may access these other academic sources such as those available in the Columbia College E-Brary in their respective Moodle/Portal Course Page.

The most recommended for use are:

- ProQuest
- ERIC
- Google Scholar (limited access)

Homework Assignment Due for the First Class:

1. Read this course outline and be prepared to discuss it in class.
2. Read assigned readings from Required Readings
3. Prepare for a test on the assigned readings.

Evaluation - Assessment of Student Performance:

The final grade in the course will be based on the following elements. Wherever possible, facilitators will use rubrics to assess your performance and offered feedback.

Title of Assignment	Due Date	Weight
Daily Tests	Class 1 - 9	20%
Asynchronous Activities	Classes 4, 6 & 8	15%
Writing Assignment A	Class 5	20%
Writing Assignment B	Class 7	25%
Final Presentation	Class 10	20%

Please note that all homework and assignments are due at 11:59PM on the day of each due date (unless otherwise noted).

Grading:

Grades for each component will be added together at the end of the semester. The final total will be translated to Columbia College's 4.0 grading scale as follows:

Marking and Grading Conversion:

Description	Letter Grade	Grade Points	Percentage Scale	
Excellent	A+	4.0	100	95
	A	4.0	94	90
	A-	3.7	89	85
Good	B+	3.3	84	80
	B	3.0	79	75
	B-	2.7	74	70
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	69	65
	C	2.0	64	60
	C-	1.7	59	55
Poor	D	1.0	54	50
Failure	F	0.0	49	0

Please note that to pass this course you must earn at least a "B-" (a minimal pass) for the course.

Submission and Completion of Assignments:

You are expected to submit assignments by the due date. Any late assignments may be assessed a marking penalty of 5% per day. If you are unable to submit an assignment on the due date, you must request an extension **before** the due date by filling out an *Application for Assignment Extension form* (SSPP-F012) that is to be submitted to the Department Chair for approval. This form is available on your Microsoft Teams General Channel and from Department Chairs.

Attendance Requirements:

Columbia College believes that students are committed to their program and learning experiences. However, it is understood that there are times when students may be absent and unable to complete online activities and daily assessments. Any absences can be viewed as a potentially serious disruption of the learning process and necessary achievement of the learning objectives. Completion of online activities and Daily Tests constitute an attended day. Unavoidable absences or lateness must be reported to the course facilitator in advance. Please refer to Columbia College's *Attendance Policy and Regulations (ADM-P151)* for detailed information on Attendance Requirements.

Academic Integrity:

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from Columbia College.

There is no tolerance for academic dishonesty, and any student caught plagiarizing is subject to serious sanctions as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct Policy (ADM-P229)*. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this policy and avoid any behavior that could possibly be seen as cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting, or putting into question the integrity of one's academic work.

Student Conduct:

It is the responsibility of each student to uphold the expectations and responsibilities outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct Policy (ADM-P229)*, *Columbia College's Commitment to Human Rights and Diversity Policy (ADM-P029)*, and any additional requirements established by your program.

Generally, each student will:

- be respectful and courteous toward others; this includes online meetings and discussions.
- demonstrate appropriate and supportive communication skills, and coach, assist, advise and otherwise support other students in their studies.
- manage any personal stress and conflict in a positive and resourceful manner and assist others to do the same.
- be dressed in a manner appropriate for their workplace or learning environment, as established by the program.
- conduct themselves in a professional manner regarding their communication with others and their behavior in class.
- conduct themselves with academic integrity in all their learning activities, tests, exams, and assignments.
- keep up with day-to-day classroom and course expectations.

Important Dates:

Description	Date
Last to add/drop courses	5 school operating days from the start of the semester OR before the third scheduled class, whichever is greater
Last day to withdraw without academic penalty	50% or less of the semester has been completed

Appeals:

Please refer to the *Student Appeal Policy (ADM-P177)*.

Students with Temporary or Permanent Disabilities or Medical Condition:

Students with temporary or permanent disabilities or medical condition may apply for accommodations. To be considered for an accommodation, a student must register with Columbia College's Accessibility Services by making an appointment with an Accessibility Services Advisor – Main Office – Bldg. 802 or emailing accessibilityservices@columbia.ca. The Department Chair or facilitator is not able to provide you with any accommodations without you taking this step. Please refer to Columbia College's website to review *the Accommodation Policy and Handbook (ADM-P188)*.

Student Support:

Students should be aware that Life Coaching, Career and Accessibility Services, and Student Support Services (i.e. tutoring, academic strategists, etc.) are provided by Columbia College. Inquire how to request these services at the Main Office in building 802. It is the student's responsibility to discuss their specific learning needs with the appropriate service provider.

Class Schedule/Overview:

Please note that this schedule is subject to change. Any changes or cancellations will be emailed to you. It is your responsibility to check your Columbia College email/Teams daily for any messages from the Department Chair/designate, facilitator or College Administration. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the information contained in the Course Outline and to clarify any areas of concern with the facilitator.

Class	Topics	Pre-Class Readings
1	• Outline Discussed • Introduction to Social Policy	• Course Outline • Facilitator provided PowerPoint
2	• Historical Influences	• Facilitator provided PowerPoint
3	• Child Welfare and Parenting	• Reading available in Class 3 Moodle
4	• Child Welfare and Education	• Reading available in Class 4 Moodle • Asynchronous Activity #1
5	• Indigenous Social Policy Supports	• Reading available in Class 5 Moodle • Writing Assignment A Due
6	• Truth and Reconciliation	• Reading available in Class 6 Moodle • Asynchronous Activity #2
7	• Community Spaces- Libraries	• Reading available in Class 7 Moodle • Writing Assignment B Due
8	• Community Spaces- Youth Homelessness	• Reading available in Class 8 Moodle • Asynchronous Activity #3
9	• Community Spaces- Outreach Supports	• Reading available in Class 9 Moodle
10	• Final Presentations	• Course Surveys • Final Project Due

Appendix 1 Assignment Outlines

Please note: Students must complete all assignments, tests, and final projects to pass this course.

Daily Tests

Due Date: Each class from classes 1 through 9.

Weight: 20%

Students will be expected to have read the assigned chapters in the text and other assigned readings and be prepared to write a graded test based on these reading assignments.

- Tests are open in Moodle from 8:30 AM on the day of the scheduled class to 11:59 PM the following day.
- There is one attempt.
- There is a 30-minute time limit on each test (unless otherwise noted)

Asynchronous Activities

Due Date: Classes 4, 6 & 8

Weight: 15%

Asynchronous activities are those that take place outside of the live lecture/class time. They are intended to build upon critical thinking skills based on material connect to or assigned for that day. Activities are assigned at the conclusion of a live lecture with explicit directions and completion dates. Facilitator support is available should there be any queries.

Asynchronous activities may include but are not limited to	
Completion of Worksheet/problems- independent and/or collaborative	Case study review and assessment
Video responses	Microsoft Forms
Microsoft Padlet	Others as assigned

Writing Assignment A Critical Response

Due: Class 5

Weight: 20%

This assignment is designed to help you gain an understanding of Canadian social policy. In this assignment, using course provided material and searching up material on your own, you will analyze various aspects of social policy in Canada, focusing on its historical development, current state, and potential future directions. You will also explore the impact of these policies on the well-being of Canadian citizens.

Explore potential directions of social policy based on your understanding of Canadian Social policy trends and observations in your course material and readings. What are some changes you would like to see made? What are some mistakes the government may have made in implementing or reducing policies? Be specific with your examples.

Writing Assignments Expectations:

- **Objective:** The objectives of the writing assignments are to critically apply concepts, ideas, and procedures to facilitate higher level learning. The assignments are designed so students can demonstrate depth of knowledge related to the course content.
- **Focus:** Each assignment is designed to apply knowledge from the chapters and class discussions.
- **Format:** All assignments will be double-spaced. Do not include title pages. Include your name at the top of each page. A minimum of one-inch margins on each side. 12-point Calibri font is preferred.

Each assignment should have a minimum length of 500 words but is not to exceed 750 words. Students will be evaluated according to the attached rubric: **Critical Writing Response Marking Rubric.**

- **How to avoid plagiarism:** The simplest way to avoid plagiarism is to reference any sources properly (using both in-text, parenthetical citations in the body of your assignment and a 'References' page at the end). While it is commonplace to build upon the knowledge of others, it is necessary to clearly state the sources and foundations of that knowledge. Referencing must conform to the APA style- see your ENG110 text for support.

Writing Assignment B Critical Response

Due: Class 7

Weight: 25%

Considering the history of Indigenous people in Canada and the various social welfare policies and structures that have been created for them, write a critical analysis that focuses on what a human services professional should consider when encountering Indigenous clients in their respective work environments.

You are expected to use your assigned readings as evidence as well as seeking other academic and professional sources to use as evidence to your arguments/analysis.

Things to consider:

- Canadian practices – past and present
- Legislation enacted upon diverse people.
- desire for autonomy for diverse individuals
- What “position” should a human service professional take when encountering Indigenous clients?
- What histories can/should a human services professional study should they be willing to learn about being an ally for Indigenous peoples? You can bring in your personal experiences as someone who is considered “diverse” or working with Indigenous peoples.

Writing Assignments Expectations:

- **Objective:** The objectives of writing assignments is to critically apply concepts, ideas, and procedures to facilitate higher level learning. The assignments are designed so students can demonstrate depth of knowledge related to the course content.
- **Focus:** Each assignment is designed to apply knowledge from the chapters and class discussions.
- **Format:** This assignment should be typed and double-spaced. Do not include title pages. Include your name, course name/number and facilitator's name at the top left of the first page. Place a title, center-aligned on the first page. 12-point Calibri font is preferred. Each assignment should have a minimum length of 750 words but is not to exceed 1000 words. Students will be evaluated according to the attached rubric: **Critical Writing Response Marking Rubric.**
- **How to avoid plagiarism:** The simplest way to avoid plagiarism is to reference any sources properly (using both in-text, parenthetical citations in the body of your assignment and a 'References' page at the end). While it is commonplace to build upon the knowledge of others, it is necessary to clearly state the sources and foundations of that knowledge. Referencing must conform to the APA style- see your ENG110 text for support.

Final Project – Oral Presentation

Due Date: Class 10

Weight: 20%

The final project will enable you to explore the entirety of the covered course content **BUT** you will only choose one or two assigned academic readings/topics to discuss in detail in an oral presentation. You will need to expand on your choice of reading and explore other resources available within the social policy areas.

Your presentation should be more than a review of material in the text, but rather an expanded, more thorough learning that may be relevant to you now or in the future as a social service worker. Make connections with your personal/professional/academic learnings.

Assignments Expectations:

- **Objective:** The objectives of this assignment are to critically apply concepts, ideas, and procedures to facilitate higher level learning. The assignments are designed so students can demonstrate depth of knowledge related to the course content.
- **Focus:** Each assignment is designed to apply knowledge from the chapters and class discussions.
- **Format:** Present to the class, your findings using a presentation tool such as PowerPoint or another approved format. Students will be marked using: **Oral Presentation Rubric**
- **How to avoid plagiarism:** The simplest way to avoid plagiarism is to reference any source properly (using both in-text, parenthetical citations in the body of your assignment and a “References” page at the end. While it is commonplace to build upon the knowledge of others, it is necessary to clearly state the sources and foundations of that knowledge. Referencing must conform to the APA referencing formats outlined in your ENGL110-1 texts (chapters vary).

Appendix Assignment Rubrics

Columbia College Critical Writing Response Marking Rubric

Area	10-9	8-7	6-5	4-0
Quality of Response Content/Ideas	• Demonstrates reflection, insight, and accurate interpretation of assignment. • State's main idea/opinion clearly. • Provides support for the main idea through numerous, relevant sources.	• Demonstrates reflection and accurate interpretation of assignment. • State's main idea /opinion clearly. • Provides support for the main idea through several relevant sources.	• Demonstrates limited response to assignment. • Partly identifies main idea/opinion. • Attempts some support for the main idea, but it is limited in applicability.	• Creates limited response that is hard to follow. • Main idea/opinion not identified. • Uses little to no references to support opinion.
Analysis	• Explores issue thoroughly and with insight, developing a clear, original position with persuasive examples. • Demonstrates sound logic. • Demonstrates excellent critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	• Explores issues well, developing an original position with and good examples. • Demonstrates good logic. • Demonstrates very good critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	• Defines the issue but explores it inadequately. • Uses examples inconsistently and/or examples are lacking. • Demonstrates weakness in logic. • Demonstrates weak critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	• Defines issue inadequately, demonstrating a simplistic view. • Lacks logic. • Demonstrates poor critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
Style Expression of Ideas	• Uses highly effective, clearly focused, varied sentences, addressing audience and purpose. • Incorporates knowledge of stylistic techniques. • Conveys all ideas with originality and clarity. • Uses rich, accurate and effective word choice. • Consistently demonstrates original, sincere and compelling personal voice.	• Mostly uses effective, well structured, focused, varied sentences, addressing audience and purpose. • Demonstrates the use of stylistic techniques. • Conveys most ideas with originality and clarity. • Uses accurate and effective word choice. • Mostly demonstrates original, sincere personal voice.	• Demonstrates limited attempts at creating varied sentences to address audience and purpose. • Often sentences are somewhat awkward. • Little attempt at using stylistic techniques. • Conveys some ideas clearly. • Uses vague, ineffective word choice. • Demonstrates little to no development of a personal voice.	• Uses simplistic sentence structures that are awkward and do not address the audience and purpose. • No stylistic devices attempted. • Most ideas are not conveyed clearly. • Inadequate word choice. • No evidence of a personal voice.

	10-9	8-7	6-5	4-0
Organization and Structure	- Creates a sophisticated, well-developed beginning, middle and conclusion. - Connects all ideas logically. - Uses a variety of carefully crafted sentence structures. - Consistently establishes appropriate paragraphing and transitions.	- Creates a well-developed beginning, middle, and conclusion. - Connects most ideas logically. - Uses a variety of well-structured sentences. - Most of the time establishes appropriate paragraphing and transitions	- Creates an unfocused beginning, middle and a simple conclusion. - Creates answer that is poorly structured. - Uses some sentence variety with errors that begin to interfere with meaning. - Shows faulty paragraphing and lack of transitions.	- Creates a limited response with no clear beginning, middle, and conclusion. - Creates confusion in structure. - Uses little to no sentence structure variety. - Many structural errors - Weak to no paragraphing or transition.
Mechanics, Grammar, Professional Format	- Mainly error free. - Uses APA citation correctly where applicable for referencing sources. - Meets and exceeds all requirements for an excellent academic response. - Meets and exceeds all requirements of the assignment.	- A few minor errors in usage, grammar, or mechanics. - Generally, uses APA citation correctly where applicable for referencing sources. - Meets most requirements for a well written academic response. - Meets most requirements of the assignment.	- Frequent errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics, beginning to interfere with the readability and meaning of the paper. - Uses APA citation inconsistently and with errors when sources are used. - Meets a few requirements for an acceptable academic response. - Meets a few requirements of the assignment.	- Numerous errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics, affecting the readability and meaning of the paper. - Many errors in APA citation, demonstrating lack of citation knowledge when sources are used. - Meets few requirements for an acceptable academic response. - Meets little to no requirements of the assignment.

Plagiarism: A “0” grade will be given to a paper where significant sections of the paper were copied from other, unattributed sources.

Total Score out of 50: Facilitator/Evaluator’s Comments:

**Columbia College
Oral Presentation Rubric**

Area	10-9	8-7	6-5	4-0
Organization	- Creates introduction that is unique, clearly focused and engages the audience. - Organizes content logically, making entire presentation easy to follow. - Builds main points through carefully selected and original examples/ references. - Has effective transition between sections. - Summarizes all key points and stimulates thought at the end.	- Creates introduction that is original, clearly focused and gets the attention of the audience. - Organizes content logically, making most of the presentation easy to follow. - Builds main points through carefully selected examples/ references. - Has a transition between most sections - Summarizes most key points and stimulates some thought at the end.	- Creates an introduction that tends to be unfocused. - Doesn't engage the audience's interest. - Content appears disorganized, without logic and consistency. - Builds a few main points with details, but most ideas are unsupported. - Few to no transitions are evident. - Little to no summarizing evident. Ending does not stimulate much thought.	- Presentation shows little to no logical organization. - Content is difficult to follow. - Not a thoughtful presentation.
Content	- Provides evidence of supporting research to back all main points. - Gives a complete explanation of all key points. - Uses relevant examples/ references.	- Provides evidence of supporting research. To back most points. - Explains most key points. - Uses some relevant examples/ references.	- Provides evidence that not enough research has been done to support the content. - Gives an incomplete explanation of key points. - Uses a few relevant examples/ references.	- Indicates little to no research. - Gives a limited explanation of a few points. - Uses little to no examples/ references.
Delivery Style: Nonverbal Effectiveness	- Demonstrates ease and confidence through carefully maintained posture, poise, and facial expression. - Uses continual eye contact.	- Demonstrates confidence through most of the presentation with careful posture, poise, and facial expression. - Uses consistent eye contact.	- At times demonstrates developing confidence in presenting content. At times uses posture, poise, and facial expression to support presentation. - Uses eye contact inconsistently.	- Shows lack of ease in presenting through poor posture, lack of poise, and lack of facial expression. - Uses poor to no eye contact.

Area	10-9	8-7	6-5	4-0
Delivery Style: Verbal Effectiveness	- Conveys passionate interest for the topic. - Speaks naturally at a moderate rate with correct pronunciation, enunciation, and volume. - Uses few unnecessary pauses “ums”. - Makes no obvious grammatical errors. - Uses cue cards or other supports effectively and does not read the presentation. - Uses rich, precise, and varied vocabulary. - Well-rehearsed and prepared.	- Conveys enthusiasm for the topic. - Most of the time speaks clearly at a moderate rate with correct pronunciation, enunciation, and volume. - Uses few unnecessary pauses “ums”. - Makes few grammatical errors. - Most of the time uses cue cards or other supports appropriately, without reading the presentation. - Uses well-chosen and varied vocabulary.	- Demonstrates minimal enthusiasm for the topic. - Speaks with some lack of clarity in pronunciation and enunciation with varying volume and rate of speech. - Uses too many unnecessary pauses (“ums”), distracting from the presentation. - Makes some grammatical errors. - Tends to not use cue cards effectively and mostly relies on reading the presentation. - Uses ineffective vocabulary.	- No enthusiasm is conveyed for the topic Speech is unclear with poor enunciation and incorrect pronunciation. - Volume and rate of speech are often inappropriate, making comprehension difficult. - Uses too many unnecessary pauses “ums”, making comprehension difficult. - Makes frequent grammatical errors. - Reads presentation. - Uses inappropriate or simplistic vocabulary.
Mechanics, Grammar, Professional Format	- Mainly error free. - Uses APA citation correctly where applicable for referencing sources. - Meets and exceeds all requirements for an excellent academic response. - Meets and exceeds all requirements of the assignment.	- A few minor errors in usage, grammar, or mechanics. - Generally, uses APA citation correctly where applicable for referencing sources. - Meets most requirements for a well written academic response. - Meets most requirements of the assignment.	- Frequent errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics, beginning to interfere with the readability and meaning of the paper. - Uses APA citation inconsistently and with errors when sources are used. - Meets a few requirements for an acceptable academic response. - Meets a few requirements of the assignment.	- Numerous errors in usage, grammar, and mechanics, affecting the readability and meaning of the paper. - Many errors in APA citation, demonstrating lack of citation knowledge when sources are used. - Meets few requirements for an acceptable academic response. - Meets little to no requirements of the assignment.

Total Score out of 50:

Facilitator/Evaluator's Comments

**Columbia College
Asynchronous Activity Rubric**

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Poor (1)
Understanding	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the assignment.	Demonstrates a good understanding of the assignment.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the assignment.	Demonstrates limited understanding of the assignment.	Demonstrates little to no understanding of the assignment.
Completeness	All parts of the assignment are completed thoroughly.	Most parts of the assignment are completed thoroughly.	Some parts of the assignment are completed thoroughly.	Few parts of the assignment are completed thoroughly.	Very few parts of the assignment are completed thoroughly.
Accuracy	All information is accurate and relevant.	Most information is accurate and relevant.	Some information is accurate and relevant.	Little information is accurate and relevant.	Information is mostly inaccurate and irrelevant.
Presentation	Work is well-organized, neat, and easy to read.	Work is mostly organized, neat, and easy to read.	Work is somewhat organized and readable.	Work is poorly organized and hard to read.	Work is disorganized and very hard to read.
Timeliness	Submitted on time or early.	Submitted slightly late.	Submitted late but within an acceptable range.	Submitted significantly late.	Not submitted or extremely late.

Total Score: /25