I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course will provide students with a framework for advanced policy analysis and strategies for policy change in order to support practice with troops, veterans, and their families. The course will focus on military and veteran programs and systems and will build upon the concepts and themes explored in SSS593. The course emphasizes military culture and lifestyle and introduces students to historical policies and programs impacting veterans’ health care and benefits. Special emphasis is placed on family studies and literature emerging from Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) documenting the impact of sustained, overseas efforts on military family functioning, and the dynamics of transitioning or returning veterans. This course takes into account the effects of repeated, extended separation, as well as active duty and veterans’ physical, psychological, and cognitive injury, and examines how policies and programs can be developed to ensure the provisions of seamless, quality services to a deserving population. Students will examine the policies, programs, and services that contribute to military and veterans’ family health and wellbeing and will be introduced to past and present issues and themes that impact service members, veterans, and their families. Students are encouraged to consider how a social work approach may be particularly beneficial in responding to the complex and evolving needs of today’s military and veterans’ families.

II. COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), requires that students meet 10 core competencies, which are operationalized as practice behaviors. Each course is designed to
cover one or more of the ten core competencies and each course is also designed to cover some, but not all of the practice behaviors within a competency. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following practice behaviors within the noted competencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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</table>
| **Professional Identity:** Identify as a clinical social worker & conduct self accordingly | 1. Social workers practice with a clear understanding of the professional strengths, capacities, and limitations of clinical social work.  
2. Social workers understand how clinical theories from multiple disciplines inform the practice of clinical social work.                                                                                                                                                           | 1, 3, 4      |
| **Ethical Practice:** Apply social work ethical principles to guide clinical practice | 1. Social workers recognize and manage personal biases as they affect the clinical relationship in the service of clients’ well-being.  
2. Social workers recognize and negotiate the complexities that can arise when organizational policies/procedures interface with competing professional standards for ethical social work practice in settings in which they practice; | 2, 3, 4      |
| **Critical Thinking:** Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate clinical judgments | 1. Social workers distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom in an ongoing process of assessment and intervention.  
2. Social workers demonstrate effective oral and written communication with clients and other professionals.  
3. Social workers include personal reflection in clinical decision making, are adept at differential diagnosis, and articulate both client strengths and vulnerabilities in the diagnostic process | 2, 3, 4      |
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| **Diversity in Practice:** Engage diversity and demonstrate awareness of the complexities regarding identity differences and how they play out in clinical practice | **1.** Social workers view themselves as cultural learners and engage those with whom they work as collaborators and experts about their own identity and life experience.  
**2.** Social workers use their self-awareness to reflect on and diminish the influence of their personal biases and values in working with others.  
**3.** Social workers recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping the life experiences of clients, themselves, and the working alliance.  
**4.** Social workers recognize and articulate to clients, and the service delivery system, the extent that societal structures and values may oppress, marginalize, and alienate, or create, enhance, and privilege different cultural groups within a society. |
<p>|   | 1, 2, 3, 4 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Human Rights &amp; Justice:</strong> Advance human rights through understanding how social and economic justice factors impact clinical practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social workers use knowledge of the effects of oppression, discrimination and historical trauma on the client and client system to guide treatment planning and intervention.</td>
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<td>2. Social workers understand how power and inequities are initiated and reinforced, and are cognizant not to replicate power inequalities in the relationship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Social workers advocate at multiple levels for mental health parity and the reduction of health disparities for marginalized populations, and they identify social and economic inequalities that exist in various populations and advocate for justice in a domestic and global context.</td>
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<td>1, 3</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Research Based Practice:</strong> Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Social workers critically evaluate and utilize theoretical and empirical research relevant to the problems and/or populations seen in clinical practice.</td>
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<td>1, 2, 3</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Human Behavior:</strong> Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social workers consult with other professionals when assessing clients, and partner with other professionals to coordinate treatment plans and monitor progress and challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>2, 4</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Policy Practice:</strong> Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social workers demonstrate an understanding of the link between policy and clinical practice in interaction with clients, and demonstrate an understanding of the link between policy and clinical practice in advocacy to influence policies that affect clients and service</td>
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<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Social workers communicate to stakeholders the implications of policies and policy change in the lives of clients</td>
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</table>
### Practice Contexts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Social workers consult and collaborate with colleagues from other disciplines and demonstrate an understanding of the social worker's role in a multidisciplinary context.</th>
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<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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### III. ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

**Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Identify the principles, foundation, and provisions of the primary social welfare programs that affect military and veteran families, and critically analyze policy decisions that have played influential roles in the health and wellbeing of military and veteran families across time and historical context.

2. Demonstrate core, foundational knowledge of the military and veteran systems, institutional structures, programs, and resources in order to optimally prepare students for roles as professional social work clinicians within a military and veteran environment.

### IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**A. Required Texts**


**B. Additional Recommended Readings**


**C. Other Recommended Resources and Media**

- Department of Defense website, [www.defense.gov](http://www.defense.gov)
- VA website, [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)
- Veterans Benefits, [www.vba.va.gov/VBA/](http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/)
- USO, [www.uso.org](http://www.uso.org)
- Legislative and policy data sources, [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)
D. Course Assignments

The assignments for this course consist of active class participation, an advocacy critique of military or veteran hearing testimony, a formal group presentation to peers, and a scholarly paper. Additional assignment details, expectations, and guidelines will be presented in class at the beginning of the semester. Students will have an opportunity to ask questions to clarify focus and scope of the respective assignment. See outline below for due dates and grading policy.

Assignment #1: Observation of Congressional Testimony—Due class 6
This assignment introduces the student to Congressional Military and Veterans Hearing Testimony. The student must observe a hearing of an Armed Services Committee, Committee on Veterans Affairs, or related Subcommittee hearing to gain deeper insight into a respective policy issue. It is preferred that the student observed the hearing in-person, but the hearing may be viewed via online video if in-person viewing cannot be arranged. In response to the student observation, the student will be asked to critique the hearing for potential impact to military or veteran well-being. The critique should be roughly 5 pages in length and should follow standards from APA, version 6, for scholarly writing.

Assignment #2: Group Project—Due class 9
Students will organize into small groups and be tasked to create and develop a military, veteran, or family service program. The assignment is comprised of five main components: framing the selected issue, researching and analyzing existing policy (if any) related to the selected issue, creating and developing a services program to address the issue while supporting existing policy or advocating for new policy, establishing criteria and a measurement plan to evaluate the program empirically, and educating and marketing the program to an audience (peers) through a well-organized presentation (45 minutes in length). Further directions will be provided in class.

Assignment #3: Scholarly Paper—due class 12
For this scholarly paper (12 – 18 pages in length), the student must select, research, and analyze a military or veterans social policy. The student should select a topic that emerges from the group project so that assignments two and three are linked. In support of the analysis, the scholarly paper should include an historical account of the issue and policy, qualitative and quantitative data and statistics, and content on future advocacy for policy change and implementation. Further guidelines for analysis of the policy will be provided and discussed in class. Assignment three should follow standards from APA, version 6, for writing scholarly papers. In addition, students will be asked to brief their final policy papers to their peers on the last day of class. The format for the briefing will be discussed in advance.

Assignment #4: Class attendance and verbal participation
E. Grading Policy and Weights of Assignments
Grades will be based on the CUA Grading Policy as described in the Graduate Announcements. Full credit will not be given for assignments that are submitted late. No credit will be given for assignments submitted after they have been reviewed in class. The following provides weights for the various course assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation, Attendance, and Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 69</td>
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F. Preparation, Attendance & Participation
Students are required to attend classes and are expected to participate meaningfully in class discussion/exercises and online forums as required. The class participation grade will be determined by the instructor’s perception of the student’s preparation for and contributions to class discussion/activities. Different students will make different kinds of contributions. Some will have an easy time with spontaneous interactions while others will be more comfortable making planned statements about key ideas from the readings or other sources. Both types of contributions are valued. Unexcused absences will lower the participation grade. More than three unexcused absences will result in a grade of F for participation.

G. Course and Instructor Evaluation
NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.
V. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements (http://ncsss.cua.edu/courses/index.cfm), including scholastic and behavioral requirements.

NCSSS is committed to creating an open and inclusive learning environment where all members - including students, faculty, administrators, and staff – strive to listen to and learn from one another. We recognize that in a multicultural society, it is inevitable that issues or tensions relative to diversity and different life experiences will arise. It is how we handle these events that matters. Therefore, when such issues occur – inside or outside of the classroom - we agree to engage in respectful and productive discussion with one another until learning is enhanced and understanding is deepened by all involved.

A. Scholastic Expectations

All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Behavioral Requirements:

Students are expected to maintain accepted standards of professional conduct and personal integrity in the classroom. Students should:

• Attend all classes and contribute constructively to the classroom culture
• Recognize and avoid behavior that jeopardizes the learning/teaching environment of other students or the instructor
• Demonstrate competence in planning academic activities and in following through on those plans
• Reasonably respond to and respect others’ reactions to one’s comments or actions in the classroom
• Use an appropriate level of class time and instructor’s time and attention in and out of class
• Behave in a manner that is consistent with the ethical principles of the social work profession.

C. Academic Honesty

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy (http://graduatestudies.cua.edu/currentstudents/academintgrt.cfm) and appropriate Program Handbooks.
D. Confidentiality

Each student is expected to adhere to the Confidentiality Agreement that is signed at the beginning of every semester. This agreement covers “practice materials” in classes, supervisory sessions, case conferences, seminars, and other educational settings within the NCSSS BSW or MSW programs are for professional learning purposes only and are subject to strict professional standards of confidentiality. These same standards of confidentiality also extend to various forms of written communication and peer consultation. Adherence to these standards means all students refrain from communicating beyond the classroom setting about practice material that is presented in class. Students also will refrain from using social media outlets (blogs, twitter, Facebook, etc.) or email to discuss practice settings, program responsibilities and projects with individuals who are not in teaching or supervision roles directly related to the situation.

E. Accommodations

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, you must present that documentation to your instructors and arrange a meeting with as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

F. Use of Electronic Devices

No laptops or other electronic devices are permitted in the classroom, unless you have a specific documented learning disability. Please turn off all cell phones or other devices that would disrupt the learning environment of the classroom and put them away and removed from the classroom environment.
## CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics and Readings</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 1     | **INTRODUCTION TO DOD & VA SYSTEMS; COURSE OVERVIEW, EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND STUDENTS’ LEARNING GOALS**  
Required Readings  
Korb et al: Chapter 1  
Longman: Preface to Third Edition & Introduction  
Recommended Readings  
Blaisure et al.: Chapter 1 |
| 2     | **IDEOLOGY OF CONTEXT, CULTURE, AND STRUCTURE: IDENTIFYING CONTEXTUAL MEANING OF SERVING ONE’S COUNTRY AND FINDING THE PLACE FOR WELL-BEING**  
Required Readings  
Korb et al: Chapter 3  
Longman: Chapter 7  
Recommended Readings  
Blaisure et al.: Chapters 1 – 3  
Longman: Chapter 4 – 5  
| 3     | **HIGH-PROFILE POLICY ISSUES: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT IMPACTING MILITARY MEMBERS, VETERANS, AND THEIR FAMILIES**  
Required Readings  
Korb et al: Chapter 4 & 6  
Longman: Chapter 1 |

**Recommended Readings**

Blaisure et al.: Chapters 1 – 3

Longman: Chapters 2 & 10


**DYNAMICS OF DEPLOYMENT & REINTEGRATION; FINALIZE GROUPS AND TOPICS FOR ASSIGNMENT 2**

(Guest presenter, TBA)

**Required Readings**

Korb et al: Chapter 5


**Recommended Readings**

Blaisure et al.: Chapters 6 – 8


INTRODUCTION TO BENEFITS AND NAVIGATING THE SUPPORT PROGRAMS: EXAMINING THE IMPACT FOR VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (VSO), THE UNITED SERVICES ORGANIZATION (USO), AND MORALE, WELFARE, AND RECREATION (MWR) RESOURCES

Required Readings
Korb et al: Chapter 5

Longman: Chapter 8


Recommended Readings
Blaisure et al.: Chapters 9, 10 & 12


THE HEALTH CARE SAFETY NET; GROUP PRESENTATION
MEETING TIME
ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE

Required Readings
Korb et al: Chapters 5 – 6

Longman: Chapter 5


Recommended Readings
Blaisure et al.: Chapters 9 – 10

THE HEALTH CARE SAFETY NET: CONTINUED; GROUP PRESENTATION MEETING TIME
(Guest presenter, TBA)

Required Readings
Longman: Chapters 6 & 10


POLICY ISSUES SPECIFIC TO WOMEN’S HEALTH; GROUP PRESENTATION MEETING TIME

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


GROUP PRESENTATIONS; ASSIGNMENT 2 MATERIALS DUE

VIOLENCE ACROSS THE MILITARY & VETERAN WORKPLACE

Required Readings


Recommended Readings


CONGRESSIONAL DECISION MAKING & BENEFITS FROM A RESEARCHER’S PERSPECTIVE, AND OVERVIEW OF THE FAMILY CAREGIVER ACT

(Guest Presenter: Congressional Research Service, TBA)

Required Readings
Korb et al.: Chapter 4


12 **TRANSFORMING POLICY WITH DIVERSITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


13 **LEADERSHIP: A FUTURE NEEDS PERSPECTIVE THROUGH THE LENS OF A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER/VETERAN**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**

**SOCIAL WORK’S ROLE IN ADVOCACY & POLICY, FINAL REVIEW, AND COURSE WRAP-UP; ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**

**Required Readings**
Korbet al: Chapter 7
Longman: Chapter 11

**Recommended Readings**