



School of Behavioral and Social Sciences

SWK 3003 - Introduction to Social Work

3 Units

Fall 2026Ⓢ

Meeting days/times: MWF 8:30 am – 9:25 am

Meeting location: Rohr Hall Room Ⓢ

Final exam: Wednesday of finals week, December 16, 2026 at 7:30am

Course Information	Specifics for the Course
Instructor title and name:	Colleen Jensen Cook, LCSW
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Office location and hours:	Rohr Hall Room 102

PLNU MissionⓈ

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description⊕

From the PLNU 2026-2027 catalog; this class is: *an historical and contemporary view of the profession of social work within the field of social welfare: the values, the ethical standards, the knowledge base, and the social welfare programs and services where social workers practice.*

Social Work Program Mission Statement

PLNU BSW Social Work Mission Statement - *The mission of the baccalaureate social work program is to:*

- *develop competent professionals*
 - *who are committed to serving others through acquisition and integration of the essential knowledge, skills, and values that form the foundation of generalist practice in the social work profession;*
 - *who are motivated to promote social justice; and*
 - *who understand that a Wesleyan perspective, a desire for continuous personal development, and respectful engagement in the community that empowers others are integral components of the means for relating to God through service.*

Program and Course Learning Outcomes⊕

Course learning objectives (CLO's) are statements of what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do by the time they complete the Intro to Social Work course:

Students, you will:

1. **Define the scope, mission, and roles** of generalist social work practice across micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Competency 1
2. Use anti-racist and anti-oppressive lenses to **critique the historical development** of the profession, social welfare systems, and structural oppression in the U.S. Competency 3 and 5
3. **Analyze how social welfare policies affect** the delivery of and access to social services for diverse populations. Competency 5
4. **Apply the strengths and person-in-environment (PIE) perspectives** to understand human behavior and social environments. - Competency 6
5. **Manage the distinction between personal values**, Christian faith perspectives, and the professional standards of the NASW Code of Ethics. - Competency 1 and Competency 10
6. Apply critical thinking to analyze and **advocate for policies and practices that advance** social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. - Competency 2
7. **Demonstrate professional behavior**, demeanor, and ethical communication standard to entry-level generalist practice. - Competency 1
8. **Demonstrate cultural humility** and self-awareness to manage personal bias when engaging with diverse clients and constituencies. - Competency 3
9. **Apply person-in-environment (PIE) assessment frameworks, baseline community data, and empirical research to collaboratively design, execute, and critically evaluate an**

evidence-informed, small-scale social intervention that addresses identified community needs and advances social justice and human rights. (2, 4, 7, 8, 9)

Apply person-in-environment (PIE) assessment frameworks, (competency 7)

- ***baseline community data, and empirical research (competency 4)***
- ***to collaboratively design, execute, and critically evaluate an evidence-informed, small-scale social intervention (competency 8)***
- ***that addresses identified community needs and advances social justice and human rights. (competency 2)***
- ***assess and evaluate the class's activity, including each participant's contribution to the development and implementation of the small-scale social intervention. - Competency 9***

Breakdown of Integrated Elements:

- ***Research (Competency 4): "...baseline community data, and empirical research..."***
- ***Assessment (Competency 7): "Apply person-in-environment (PIE) assessment frameworks..."***
- ***Intervention (Competencies 2 & 8): "...to collaboratively design, execute... an evidence-informed, small-scale social intervention that addresses identified community needs and advances social justice and human rights."***
- ***Evaluation (Competency 9): "...and critically evaluate..."***

10. Critically evaluate the outcomes of the intervention while using reflection and self-regulation to assess team dynamic performance, individual contributions, and collaborative leadership.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources*

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

Keith-Lucas, A. Bauer, S. & Gregory, L. (2021). *So you want to be a social worker: Reflections for the Christian social work student.*

Zastrow, C. & Hessenauer, S. (2023). *Introduction to social work and social welfare.* Cengage 13th edition.

See Canvas for more information.

Course Credit Hour InformationⓈ

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a _3_ unit class delivered over __16_ weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated _112.5__ total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

Assessment and GradingⓈ

Grades will be based on the following:

Course Breakdown By Percentage

Senior Portfolio Preparation (Add in SYWTBSW and Guest Speakers Reflections)	10%
Community Ministries Experiences	2%
Learning Assessments	34%
Group Action Project	7%
Presence, Preparation, Participation, Professionalism Assessment	17%
Social Work Pioneer Paper	10%
Journal Article	2%
Final Exam	18%
Total	100%

Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policyⓧ

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for *one* of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include poverty, disabilities, unhoused populations, suicide and suicidal ideation, grief, loss, substance use and abuse, sexual abuse, etc. . If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [poverty, disabilities, unhoused populations, suicide and suicidal ideation, grief, loss, substance use and abuse, sexual abuse, etc. and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include poverty, disabilities, unhoused populations, suicide and suicidal ideation, grief, loss, substance use and abuse, sexual abuse, etc. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed

or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of poverty, disabilities, unhoused populations, suicide and suicidal ideation, grief, loss, substance use and abuse, sexual abuse, etc. and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

General Course Concerns*

If you have a concern related to the content or structure of this course, please bring your concern(s) to me (the instructor) in a timely manner, so that we have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts and work together toward a solution.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due, including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Assignments are marked late right away, and are reduced by 10%. Each day they are late, it is another 10 (for the next 3 days).

Spiritual Care*

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization⊕

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright PolicyⓈ

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.]

PLNU Recording NotificationⓈ

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty PolicyⓈ

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. Please consult the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Behavior PolicyⓈ

Both faculty and students at Point Loma Nazarene University have the right to expect a safe and ordered environment for learning. Students are expected to take the initiative to learn and conduct themselves in a mature and civil manner in the classroom environment. Any student behavior that is disruptive or threatening is a serious affront to Point Loma Nazarene University as a learning community. Students who fail to adhere to these behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from class or further university sanctions. For a full definition of disruptive behavior, response procedures, and the appeal process, please consult the [Academic Behavior Policy](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

PLNU Artificial Intelligence (AI) PolicyⓈ

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) in this course. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. Please use this [Purdue resource](#) to guide your citations when using AI.

PLNU Academic Accommodations PolicyⓈ

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center, [by email](#) or phone at 619-849-2533. Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines approved accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their approved accommodations in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive; as such, clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability-related need should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. In accordance with ADA, accommodations cannot constitute a fundamental alteration to course outcomes; therefore, planning ahead is vital in establishing appropriate accommodations for equal access to this course. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC eligibility process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging*

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice-free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination*

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the [Title IX Office](#). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the [Title IX Office](#).

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact [Counseling Services](#) or [consult the list of campus pastors](#).

If you (or someone you know) has experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via the [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

PLNU Attendance and Participation PolicyⓈ

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

PLNU Course Modality Definitions*

1. In-Person Courses: These are courses that meet in person with the instructor and students in a physical classroom setting. With approval by the area dean, this may include up to 25% of qualified class interactions through a Learning Management System (such as Canvas).

In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered asynchronously, and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. More information on credit hours can be found in the [Academic Policies](#) in the [University Catalog](#).

Use of TechnologyⓈ

Note: Include this section if teaching an Online or Hybrid course.

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

Loma Writing Center

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar, and polishing final drafts, and more.

Walk-ins are welcome, but we recommend making an appointment in advance. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Email](#)

LomaBooks Instructions for Students ☼:

Note: For courses using materials available through LomaBooks

For both digital and print materials, please add these student instructions to your syllabus and Canvas Course. Prior to the start of class, the PLNU Bookstore will also be sharing student instructions in a standalone email on how to access their content.

This course is part of our course material delivery program, [LomaBooks](#). The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your [LomaBooks](#) materials.

Assignments At-A-Glance/Canvas Course Summary ☼

Note: Faculty are required to either create assignments in Canvas so that there is a record by the end of the semester OR list the assignments in the syllabus to support the Records office in dealing with possible transfer credit, etc. In the Canvas syllabus function, please use the Show Course Summary checkbox to create a course schedule. Then cut and past the schedule into the syllabus you provide for the Assessment website.

We will meet 3 times a week for 55 minutes. Each class will follow the same format.

- *Minutes 0–5: The Hook* (A quick, silent on-screen prompt or 3-question reading check).
- *Minutes 5–30: Direct Instruction* (Max 5–7 visual slides covering the "must-know" textbook definitions and frameworks).
- *Minutes 30–50: Active Application* (A focused 20-minute case study, role-play, or guest speaker Q&A that puts the theory into practice).
- *Minutes 50–55: The Exit Ticket* (Students hand in their response to the opening hook as they walk out, serving as your automatic attendance and accountability check).

Each week, classes will have different themes (as the calendar and assignments allow).

- Mondays - Foundations
- Wednesdays - Practice Deep-Dive - Guest Speakers
- Fridays - Ethics and Faith Integration and “So You Want to Be Social Worker”

See Canvas for more information on the schedule.

Typical Class Format

55 minutes - stay tight to this (8:30-9:25am)

8:30-8:35a 5 min- warm up

8:36-8:51am 15 minute - lecture (no study guide for test - just what's in notes)

8:52-9:07 - 15 minute - course and student teaching

9:08-9:18a 10 minute - discussion

9:19-9:25 5 min - cool down and reflection

<u>Textbook Unit</u>	<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
<u>Unit 1 - Social Welfare and Justice, Theories, and Examples of "Un"welfare and Injustice</u>	ch. 1, ch. 4 (p.1), ch. 12 (p.1), ch. 13 (p.1) ch. 16 (p.1), ch. 2, and ch. 3.	Week 1-4	Test is Sept. 23

<u>Unit 2</u> <u>Overview of Special Populations</u>	ch. 14, ch. 4 (p.2), ch. 16 (p.2), ch. 12 (p.2), ch. 13 (p.2), ch. 7	Week 5-8	Test is Oct. 21
<u>Unit 3</u> <u>Micro/Mezzo Effects of Social, Economic, and Environmental Injustice</u>	ch. 6, ch. 5, ch. 8, ch. 11	Week 9-12	Test is Nov. 20
<u>Unit 4</u> <u>Mezzo/Macro Effects of Social, Economic, and Environmental Injustice</u>	<u>ch. 9,</u> <u>ch. 15,</u> <u>ch. 17, and</u> <u>Epilogue)</u>	<u>Week 13-</u> <u>15</u>	<u>Test is Dec.</u> <u>9</u>
<u>Final</u>			<u>Test is Dec.</u> <u>16</u>

Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare: Empowering People

Chapter 1 - Social Welfare: Its Business, History, and Future

Chapter 2 - Social Work as a Profession and Career

Chapter 3 - Generalist Social Work Practice

Chapter 4 - Poverty and Public Welfare

Chapter 5 - Emotional/Behavioral Problems and Counseling

Chapter 6 - Family Problems and Services to Families

Chapter 7 - LGBTQIA+ Individuals

Chapter 8 - Drugs, Substance Abuse, and Substance Abuse Treatment Programs

Chapter 9 - Crime, Juvenile Delinquency, and Correctional Services

Chapter 10 - Problems in Education and School Social Work

Chapter 11 - Work-Related Problems and Social Work in the Workplace

Chapter 12 - Racism, Ethnocentrism, and Strategies for Advancing Social and Economic Justice

Chapter 13 - Sexism and Efforts for Achieving Equality

Chapter 14 - Aging and Gerontological Services

Chapter 15 - Health Problems and Medical Social Services

Chapter 16 - Physical and Mental Disabilities and Rehabilitation

Chapter 17 - Overpopulation, Misuse of the Environment, and Family Planning

Epilogue

So You Want to Be a Social Worker: A Premier for the Christian Student

Preface and Introduction to the Second Edition

Chapter 1 - Finding Common Ground

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Human Beings and Society

Chapter 3 - Social Work Insights from the Christian Faith

Chapter 4 - Social Work and the Bible

Chapter 5 - Social Work and Sin

Chapter 6 - A Christian View of Suffering

Chapter 7 - Hope and Resilience

Chapter 8 - Social Work and Witnessing

Chapter 9 - The Spiritual and the Material

Chapter 10 - Settings for Practice