Learning Outcomes

**Learning Outcome #1:** Articulate a process for analyzing specific societal and global systems, structures, and issues, identifying the influence of political ideologies, and designing strategies to initiate and sustain change.

To initiate and sustain change in societal and global systems and issues, such as governance, economic globalization, and the media, we must question our assumptions, decide who is benefitting from the status quo, consider what is not working, look to other societies for possible solutions and a better way, and then change what we are doing accordingly. Through questioning and truth-seeking using a wide variety of sources we can attempt to sort out the facts from the disinformation and find new answers and better methods to solving societal and global issues. Real change cannot happen if we do not realize and admit that something is not working and set about making a change in dysfunctional systems. Another important component of creating real and lasting change is by sharing knowledge and education, spreading awareness, and empowering others. Furthermore, advocacy, activism, and organizing on the local, national, and global scales are necessary to bring about and maintain changes in systems that are not working. It is up to everyone to elect visionary leaders who will serve the public instead of catering to the corporate elites (Kaivo-oja, 2002), to petition lawmakers and public officials for alternative and sustainable strategies and practices, for higher taxation of the wealthy and corporations, to provide services and protections for vulnerable populations (Pilotti & Rinaldin, 2002), and to create and enforce global laws and reforms that are effective and just (Guptara, 2010).
Learning Outcome #2: *Identify and analyze political ideologies that influence global dynamics.*

Currently, democracy, capitalism, socialism, communism, Islamism, feminism, and environmentalism are a few political ideologies that greatly influence global dynamics. To a lesser extent other ideologies, such as anarchism, libertarianism, and Fascism also have a global impact today. These ideologies have dramatically changed the world during the 20th century alone, some for the better and others for the worse. Created with the noble ideal of rule by the people, democracy has in some places manifested as rule by the rich and powerful instead. Democracy gave rise to capitalism, which has led to extreme disparities between wealth and poverty, excess power in the hands of corporations, corrupt government, extraordinary ecological challenges, and political and economic instability (Sargent, 2009, p. 115; Guptara, 2010).

Though many countries embrace it, socialism has negative connotations in the U.S., seen as a threat to the American way, but capitalism and socialism need not be mutually exclusive and can actually complement one another. A potentially new and developing ideology is globalization which, as its name implies, affects the entire world. As the global market economy expands, a global consciousness is being formed, replacing nationalism. Similar to many other ideologies, globalization has both pros and cons associated with it. The benefits of globalization include greater job opportunity, higher wages, and better quality of life for those in developing countries, reducing the incidence of war by bringing people together, and lowering the cost of goods. Negative aspects of globalization are exploitation of people in developing countries who are still being paid relatively little, working long hours and in often unsafe conditions, the risk of child labor and environmental degradation, all due to less stringent or no regulations, as well as outsourcing that takes jobs away from people in more developed countries (Sargent, 2009, p. 49).

To ensure that globalization does not do more harm than good we need to promote education and
awareness of the conditions and effects, continue to enact and enforce global reforms and laws to protect workers and the environment, and introduce a global minimum wage and guarantee of basic human needs and rights (Guptara, 2010).

**Learning Outcome #3:** Identify and evaluate techniques used internationally including global activist and non-governmental organizations that can support the health and well-being of individuals, communities, and human services delivery.

Several organizations and practices are identified in the book *The Global New Deal*, as well as within our lectures, that are supportive to the health and well-being of people and societies globally. The World Trade Organization has safety regulations in place that help to protect the health of the environment as a whole, including human beings, plants, and animals. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was passed by the United Nations to ensure protection of human rights, in particular for “the right to work” and for “just and favorable” working conditions for all people. The World Health Organization concerns itself with public health matters, such as containing and eradicating communicable diseases and managing the effects of non-communicable diseases throughout the world. UNICEF primarily deals with the health, education, and other basic rights of children. Unfortunately, some governments or certain governmental leaders are corrupt and do not follow through with the stipulations of these various entities and/or documents. Because of this it is the duty of the people, particularly those living in democracies, to demand that these leaders and governments are held accountable and that the required terms are met to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of people and communities globally.

**Learning Outcome #4:** Assess your knowledge, skills, and theory of social movements and reflect on your ability to be proactive in global social change strategies and the influence of
human services values, attitudes, and ethics in relationship to those strategies.

Throughout history a great many social movements have changed the world for the better. From the Suffragist Movement, Abolition, the Environmental Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the Women’s Liberation Movement, Hunger Relief Movements, the End It Movement to stop human trafficking and modern day slavery, and the Human Rights Movement, organized activism and advocacy have consistently created lasting social and global change. I have learned a great deal about my ability to make a change in the world. Through education and awareness and by seeking knowledge and truth via many different sources, such as news, radio, magazines, and books, by using what I have learned in the human services program, and by utilizing self-reflection, critical thinking, and writing skills, I can ensure that I am doing what I can to understand the issues that are happening in the world and making the right decisions and actions to bring about change. I can be an advocate for those who do not have the ability to do so themselves, I can physically go out and demonstrate for change, I can teach what I have learned and empower people to help themselves and others, and I can be an example through my ethical and benevolent actions how to behave as an honorable and helpful person in society.

Learning Outcome #5: Analyze the systemic issues related to culture, diversity, and social class in the context of societal and global systems.

Around the world there continue to be many social issues that plague society. Globally, social stratification and the disparity of wealth has reached epoch proportions. Extreme poverty and needless suffering are a stark reality in every corner of the globe, while ultra-rich and powerful elites live a fairy-tale existence. Meanwhile, diversity is being squelched by those who would create one amalgamated society in which unique languages, cultures, centuries old traditions, knowledge, and beliefs, and ecological systems are disappearing. In order to preserve
the beautiful and awesome diversity that still exists in the world we need to take a stand against the forced conversions of indigenous peoples and destruction of pristine lands of the world.
Likewise, we must advocate for equality, justice, and basic human rights for people globally.
Whether it is by instigating a resurgence of tribalism, capping the accumulation of wealth at a reasonable level, requiring higher taxation of the wealthy and of corporations, we cannot allow the iniquity and injustice of the world to continue.

Final Reflection

Throughout this quarter in I have learned a great deal of new information about global systems as well as building upon information that I learned in prior human services courses and/or elsewhere in my life. The assigned texts, my research that clarified concepts and issues about globalization, reading others’ presentations about global issues, and the discourse that occurred in our discussion forums reinforced the complex challenges of global systems, the importance of education and awareness, and the significance of creating and sustaining positive change in the world. Through my readings I learned the numerous ways that we can make a difference in the world by thinking outside of the proverbial box. By means of the in-depth research that I conducted on the environmental and social effects of capitalism and globalization I learned that there is a lot that we can do individually and collectively do to stop the devastation that is occurring all over the world. The amazing and educational presentations of my classmates taught me about systems that I knew scant about prior to taking this class, such as modern day human slavery and sex-trafficking, and I was shocked into realizing that we must act now to make a change in these devastating conditions to prevent more people from being harmed. The discussions in which I engaged were often thought-provoking and stimulating, and many of the questions that my peers posed and the replies that I received to my own posts were thoughtful
and inquisitive and allowed me to think more critically, delve more deeply into concepts, and to see from differing perspectives, helping me to expand my mind and greatly enhance my learning.

I have ultimately determined that as human beings we have choices to make regardless of what is going on in the world around us and that if I make appropriate choices, those that will empower others, alleviate stress, and help rather than hinder circumstances, then I will be helping to make the world a better place. We truly can change the world, one person and action at a time. By continuing to immerse myself in readings and other media such as those required for this class and other courses throughout the program, I will keep my head and heart in the right place and become a first-rate human services professional. As a society we need to change our thinking and expand our minds and hearts beyond that which we are familiar and comfortable to better understand, appreciate, and be able to assist individuals and communities globally. With education, awareness, compassion, global reforms, advocacy and activism, we can create a global society and future with conscience and equality, and ultimately end needless human suffering.
References


Scheffer, K.A. (4/4/13 - 6/12/13). *Human services professionals & global systems: Concept papers, research topic presentation, news analysis paper, discussions, lectures, documentaries, and other resources*. Bellingham, WA: Western Washington University Human Services Distance Learning Program.