

## Media Relations

### UNH Professors Write The Book On Social Work

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DURHAM, N.H. – Two University of New Hampshire social work professors have written a textbook that might help some students answer the proverbial “What do you want to be when you grow up?” question. “Social Work and Social Welfare: An Introduction” (Pearson Education, Inc., 2011) aims to introduce students to social work while helping them decide whether they might want to pursue it as a career.

“We tried to present what makes social work different, what makes it special,” says Jerry Marx, associate professor of social work, who co-authored the book with associate professor Anne Broussard. “Students are under so much pressure to decide on a major quickly, and there’s not a lot of time to play around these days, in terms of the rising cost of tuition.”

Marx and Broussard, along with co-authors Fleur Hopper of Bowdoin College and David Worster, an adjunct professor of social work at UNH, wrote the book to support the shifting focus of social work education to better demonstrate core competencies as mandated by accrediting agencies. It is part of the publisher’s Connecting Core Competencies series, which is used at about 400 universities nationwide.

Yet as the text to accompany introductory courses, the book aims to do more than simply introduce concepts of social work. “We see introductory social work courses as a gateway to the profession. A textbook is our chance to motivate students,” Marx says.

In addition to introducing students to the profession of social work, the textbook explores the history of social work and social welfare. Individual chapters discuss how social work intersects with issues of poverty, health, emotional and behavioral problems, children and families, disabilities, substance abuse, crime, and aging.

“Social work pulls from so many disciplines,” Broussard says. “We had to synthesize all this information, which was fun.”

Motivated in part by their own circuitous paths to social work – Marx majored in business and engineering and thought he wanted to become a minister; Broussard changed majors six times before settling on psychology and then social work – the authors sought to present a rich picture of what social workers do, from providing direct service to clients to managing nonprofits or nongovernment organizations (NGOs).

The textbook also dispels negative stereotypes of social workers as faceless bureaucrats who remove children from parents.

“We were trying to show people what social workers do, and that it’s a very broad spectrum of intervention methods,” Marx says. “There are so many different things that social workers can get jobs in,” he adds, noting that social work, like many health services professions, has fared well, comparatively, in this economic downturn.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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Reporters and editors: Textbook authors [Jerry Marx](#) (603-862-0274) and [Anne Broussard](#) (603-862-3953) are available for interviews.


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