

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Foundations of Social Justice: Values, Diversity, Power & Oppression

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Semester: Fall, 2016

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is based the following assumptions: 1.) membership in a population-at-risk group (e.g., people of color, women, gay and lesbian persons) significantly influences an individual's life experiences, world view, and increases risk factors for exposure to discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression; 2.) professional social work ethics and values demand culturally competent practices; 3.) it is necessary for students to learn to apply social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research; and 4.) professionals and programs have strategies to critically analyze distributive justice, human and civil rights, and global interconnections of oppression. There is an emphasis in this course on the impact of discrimination and oppression by individuals and society on people of culturally diverse backgrounds and orientations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- 1.) Critique and apply culturally competent and social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research;
- 2.) Demonstrate familiarity with the history and heritage of population-at-risk groups, including women and culturally diverse populations globally, as well as those prevalent in the southwestern region of the United States;
- 3.) Understand the social construction of race and ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation;

- 4.) Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and socially just social work practices; and
- 5.) Assess the impact of discrimination (e.g. racism, sexism, homophobia) and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, service delivery, and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice.

TEACHING METHODS

The class is fully online and uses a form of blended learning where students learn content online through analyzing readings and articles, watching videos and completing exercises. Students will be expected to watch a weekly class lecture by either the instructor or a guest speaker and spend time synthesizing the information learned in lectures into weekly class assignments. In addition, students will work in small groups for some projects. A variety of technology will be used for this course. Students will need to have access to a computer with reliable internet connection to complete this course.

The instructor for this course is available in office hours and other scheduled times. Meetings may be scheduled in person, by phone, Skype, FaceTime, Google Hangouts, or Adobe Connect. In addition, four optional video class discussion times will be scheduled for the semester for extra credit. These discussions will be facilitated by the instructor and will serve as time students can gather to discuss the complex social justice issues being addressed in this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Adams, M. (2013). *Readings for diversity and social justice* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Johnson, A. G. (2006). *Privilege, power, and difference* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Additional readings may be posted to Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES

Course requirements will consist of thoughtful engagement with course lectures, videos and readings, discussion board postings, a book review assignment, and work on a social issue and action project with a group of peers.

All written assignment submissions must be submitted by 5:00pm on the due date. Assignment grades will be lowered by .5 points for each day they are late. Students are allowed to submit one assignment one day late during the semester without losing points. Students must communicate with the instructor regarding late assignments prior to the date the assignment is due.

Course requirements and their contribution to the final grade are summarized below.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

USE OF COURSE MATERIALS. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

TITLE IX REPORTING. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. Faculty, instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Title IX Deputy for the SSW, Professor Tanya Voss. Students, faculty and staff may contact Professor Voss to report incidents or to obtain information. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf>.

CAMPUS CARRY POLICY. The University's policy on concealed fire arms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC),

the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments for this course are as follows:

Introduction and Personal Growth Reflection Assignments (8 points)

Introduction Video (2 points)

Students should record an introduction video using Animoto.com (free). The Animoto should include photos and audio and can include a video segment if the student would like. The video should be no longer than 1 minute in length. Students should share briefly regarding their interest in social work and their background as well as brief personal information (what the student does for fun, hobbies, family information, etc....). Professionalism is expected in all Animoto introductions. The Animoto video is **due by 5:00PM on August 31, 2016**. The instructor will make all Animoto introductions available to all students in the class on Canvas. Students are expected to view all the Introductions and leave comments for two of their class member's Introductions **by 5:00pm on September 7, 2016**.

Introduction Questions (2 points)

Students should answer the following questions in a Word or Pages document and submit to Canvas **by 5:00pm on August 31, 2016**. Answers for all questions should not be more than 2 pages (double-spaced) in length. The answers related to student's interest areas will be used to help determine groups for the Group Critical Analysis and Social Action Paper and Presentation.

1. Where did you grow up? How long have you lived in Austin?
2. When you think of the term "social justice" what do you think about? How do you define social justice?
3. What are you most interested in learning in this class?

4. How do you think what you learn in this class will help you as you learn about becoming a social worker?
5. What are the social justice issues that most interest you?
6. How do you learn best? Share any other information about your learning style that you think would be helpful for me to know as your instructor.

End of Semester Reflection (4 points)

Students will be required to write a reflection at the end of the semester regarding their experiences and personal and professional growth with this course. Questions will be distributed to students two weeks prior to the due date for this assignment. The reflection will be due on December 2, 2016. ***A separate assignment sheet will be provided.***

Culture Chest (10 points)

In this assignment students will be presenting their “inner” and “outer” cultural identities. Students can choose to do this assignment by putting symbols of their “inner” identity in a box and decorating the outside of their boxes with symbols of their “outer” identities. Or students can creatively use PowerPoint to display their inner and outer identities. Either way, students must then use Screencast-o-matic to create a no longer than five-minute presentation to share with peers. Due Date: **September 22, 2016 by 5:00pm**

A separate assignment sheet will be provided.

Reading Reflections (10 points)

Students will use these reflections to integrate the course readings into their learning and ask questions regarding the reading content.

Each Reading Reflection should be 1 page in length (double-spaced) in Word or Pages and submitted on Canvas by 5:00pm on the Saturday of the week the reflection is due. To complete this assignment, students should follow these steps:

- Read the assigned readings for the week.
- Reflect on what was read. Some questions to potentially consider:
 - What stood out for you in the readings? And why?
 - What was most surprising for you?
 - Was there information in the readings that overlapped or did you see a pattern or theme?
- Include the student’s thoughts, opinions, feelings related to the issues raised in the readings.
- Include at least one question you would like to ask about the readings from the week.

- Reflections on the readings do not need a reference page, however in the text the student should let the reader know what assigned reading or culmination of themes of different assigned readings are being reflected upon.

Reading Reflections are due on: 9/3, 9/10, 9/17, 10/1, 10/8, 10/15, 10/22, 10/29, 11/5 and 11/12

Weekly Discussion Questions (12 points)

Each week, students will be required to watch video lectures and other materials and complete exercises related to the topic of that week. In order to integrate what is learned for that week, students will be required to complete a discussion question in Canvas. The discussion question will be posted in Canvas at the beginning of each week. Students should use critical thinking skills in answering the question and should complete their answer by the Saturday of the week the Discussion Question is due. Students should also provide a response to, at minimum, one of their peer's answer's in the Discussion Board in Canvas also by the Saturday the Discussion Question is due. Each Discussion Board Answer and Response will be worth a maximum of 1 point for a total of 12 points.

Weekly Discussion Questions and Responses are due on: 9/3, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24, 10/1, 10/8, 10/15, 10/22, 10/29, 11/5, 11/12 and 11/19

Op-Ed Assignment (10 points)

As future social workers and proponents of social justice, knowing how to write a persuasive and engaging op-ed is an important skill to have. Students will be expected to write a draft op-ed regarding one of the social justice issues from the course. The issue or topic will be selected by the student. A draft of this paper will be due on **October 22, 2016**. The instructor will then provide feedback to the student and a final op-ed with revisions will be due on **November 12, 2016**. The draft version of this assignment is worth 2 points and the final is worth 8 points. Any student who submits and has their final op-ed published in a mainstream or national newspaper will receive 2 extra points on their final grade.

A separate assignment sheet will be posted on Canvas.

Group Critical Analysis and Social Action Paper (35 points)

Throughout the semester, readings, lectures, and class discussions will touch upon many pressing social justice issues. This assignment will give students an opportunity to explore a social justice issue more in depth with a group of their peers. Students will indicate a topic area of interest to them in their answers to their Introduction Questions. Students will be placed into groups based on their answers and will work together to develop a critical analysis and social action paper based on this topic area.

The purpose of the paper is to:

- Assist in integrating course content (readings, course lectures & discussions)
- Sharpen critical analysis skills (i.e. what do YOU think? Where are the gaps?)
- Give students practice in progressing from the critical analysis and identification of a social problem to formulating a viable social action plan
- Assist students in seeing past the problems of individual clients by identifying and addressing the broader, structural factors that compromise the well-being of individuals, families, and communities
- Give students an opportunity to work in a group setting

The length of the paper should be no less than 15 double-spaced pages and no more than 20 pages including references but not including the title page. The paper is due on **November 19, 2016 at 5:00pm**.

A separate assignment sheet with additional deadlines for this assignment will be posted on Canvas.

Group presentation of the Critical Analysis and Social Action Paper (15 points)

The purpose of the presentation is to share information that is important for social workers to know about the social justice issues analyzed in the Critical Analysis and Social Action Paper. Each group will present as though they are at a professional conference. Groups need to present using a PowerPoint presentation in Screencast-o-matic. Presentations should not exceed 15 minutes or points will be deducted. All members of the group are required to participate in the Screencast-o-matic presentation. The presentation is due on **November 22, 2016 by 5:00pm**. Groups should have one member submit their presentation on Canvas (submissions from multiple members are not necessary).

A separate assignment sheet will be posted on Canvas.

Optional Course Discussion Times (.5 to 2 points extra credit)

To give course members a time to meet and discuss the complex and sometimes triggering issues of social justice being studied in class, the instructor will offer 4, one-hour meeting times this semester. These meeting times are optional and will occur using either Adobe Connect or Google Hangouts. The instructor will be facilitating these discussion times. Students who attend and participate will receive .5 extra points to their final grade per discussion.

Optional Course Discussion Times will occur on 9/15 at 1:00pm, 10/5 at 4:00pm, 10/28 at 9:00am and 11/14 at 6:00pm

GRADING

Grades will be assigned according to the cumulative number of points the student has earned on the required assignments. Grading rubrics will be posted on Canvas for each assignment.

GRADING SCALE

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

COURSE SCHEDULE

Reminder: All assignments are due on Canvas at 5:00pm on the due date. In addition to the due dates below, Optional Course Discussion Times will be held on 9/5 at 1:00pm, 10/5 at 4:00pm, 10/28 at 9:00am and 11/14 at 6:00pm.

Week Of	Topic	Due	Readings
August 24	Introduction Syllabus		
August 28	Power, Privilege and Oppression	Introduction Video, 8/31 (note: this due date is a Wednesday) Introduction Questions, 8/31 (note: this due date is a Wednesday) Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 9/3	Johnson, Chapters 1 and 2 Adams, "Five Faces of Oppression"
September 4	Definitions, Conceptual Frameworks and Theoretical Perspectives	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 9/10	Johnson, Chapter 3 Adams, "Theoretical Foundations"
September 11	Culture, Identity and Social Construction	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions,	Johnson, Chapter 4

	Intersectionality	9/17	Adams, "The Cycle of Socialization," "The Social Construction of Difference" and "The Social Construction of Disability"
September 18	Social Justice History	Culture Chest, 9/22 (note: this due date is a Thursday) Discussion Questions, 9/24 <i>Visit the LBJ Library Social Justice Gallery</i>	
September 25	Race and Racism	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 10/1 Culture Chest Reviews, 10/1 One-Paragraph Summary of Group Paper, 10/1 Schedule Group Meeting with Instructor, 10/1	Johnson, Chapter 5 Adams, "Defining Racism...." and "Symbolic Racism...."
October 2	Gender and Sexism	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 10/8	Johnson, Chapter 6 Adams, "Night to His Day," "Feminism," "Women's Pay," "Violence Against Women is a Men's Issue"
October 9	Sexual Orientation, Heterosexism and Transgender Oppression	Reading Reflection, and Discussion Questions, 10/15	Johnson, Chapter 7 Adams, Sections 6 and 7, Introductions, "How Homophobia Hurts Everyone," "Mutilating Gender," "Cisgender Privilege," and "Calling all Restroom Revolutionaries."
October 16	Class and Classism	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 10/22 Op-Ed Draft, 10/22	Johnson, Chapter 8 Adams, "Class in America-2006,"

			“Classified,” “Classism From Our Mouths”
October 23	Religion	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 10/29	Adams, Section 4, Introduction, “Christian Privilege and the Promotion of.....,” “Creating Identity-Safe Spaces on College Campuses...”
October 30	Ability and Ableism	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 11/5	Adams, Section 8, Introduction and “Struggle for Freedom” and “Aging with Disabilities”
November 6	The Criminal Justice System Finding Your Voice Empowerment	Reading Reflection and Discussion Questions, 11/12 Op-Ed Final, 11/12	Johnson, Chapter 9 Adams, “The Personal is Political” and “What can We Do?”
November 13	Working for Change	Discussion Questions, 11/19 Group Papers and Group Member Evaluations, 11/19	Adams, “The Cycle of Liberation,” “Allies” and “Bridging Differences through Dialogue”
November 20 and 27	Group Presentation Viewing and Feedback	Group Presentations 11/22 Group Presentation Feedback 12/2 End of Semester Reflection 12/2	