

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number: SW 381S

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**FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:
VALUES, DIVERSITY, POWER & OPPRESSION**

I. 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 practice; 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.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the students will be able to:

1. Critique and apply culturally competent and social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access of resources, intervention, and research(PB 18,19,and 20)
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 (PB 14,16 and 17);
3. Understand the social construction of race and ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation (PB 14);

4. Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and socially just social work practices (PB15) 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 (PB 18,19, and 20).

The School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, we engage in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Several required courses in our curriculum are part of this ongoing assessment, including this course. Below is a list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

EP2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.

PB14 Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power

Objectives 2 and 3

Assignment: Class participation; book reviews; Quizzes/short tests; Social Justice in Action paper

PB15 Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

Objectives 4

Assignment: Class participation (case analyses)

PB16 Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences

Objectives 2

Assignment: Class participation; book reviews; quizzes

PB17 View selves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants

Objectives 2

Assignment: Class participation (case analyses); book reviews; Social Justice in Action paper

EP2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice.

PB18 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination

Objectives 1 and 5

Assignment: Quizzes; book reviews; Social Justice in Action paper

PB19 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice

Objectives 1 and 5

Assignment: Class participation; Social Justice in Action paper

PB20 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice

Objectives 1 and 5

Assignment: Class participation; Social Justice in Action paper

III. TEACHING METHODS

The content of this course has the potential to be emotionally-charged. Guidelines will be established collaboratively by students and the instructor to create a respectful, safe and challenging learning environment. The instructor has the ultimate responsibility to manage differences and conflict that arise in the course. The instructor will incorporate a variety of teaching methods, including readings, lectures, discussions, audiovisual materials, guest speakers, and small group activities. A variety of populations-at-risk groups will also be used to critically examine a social justice framework, with emphasis on values, diversity, power and oppression.

IV. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS, AND MATERIALS

Fadiman, Anne (1997) The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Leovy, Jill (2015) Ghettoside, New York: Spielman & Grau

Rothenberg, Paula (2016), Race, Class, and Gender in the United States, New York: Worth (10th edition)

Kidder, Tracy (2003) Mountains Beyond Mountains, New York: Random House

Selected required readings will also be placed on Canvas.

V. Course Requirements

1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (15% of grade)

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to participate in class discussion and exercises. Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and to be prepared to demonstrate their familiarity with major concepts and ideas from the readings during class discussions and experiential learning assignments. For some students, this will mean learning to speak up, to volunteer comments or to raise questions. For others, it means being sensitive and allowing others to contribute.

Students are expected to attend all classes. However, students will be allowed **one** unexcused absence. In cases where a student misses more than one class, the instructor reserves the right to lower the student's final grade by one point for each class missed. Students should not leave class during the break, as doing so will count as an absence. In extenuating circumstances requiring multiple absences, the student is to inform the instructor; documentation may be required. Students are responsible for any material (class notes, handouts, etc.) missed due to absence.

2. **Book review papers (30% of grade)**

Students will write book reviews of two of the required texts: Fadiman, The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down; and Leovy, Ghettoside. The reviews will address **questions to be distributed in class as well as describe the student's thoughts on the relevant issues in each book**. Each review should be 5-7 pages in length, and should be double-spaced and typed in a 12 font. Students must use APA format to cite research to support factual assertions made in the book reviews.

3. **Social Justice in Action paper (25% of grade)**

The purpose of this assignment is to write about approaches to social justice issues pertaining to a population-at-risk group as defined in the Standardized Course Description in this syllabus. Students must specify a population-at-risk of interest to them, and identify and research a human services organization or agency operating in central Texas that addresses this population. This research must include some contact with the organization/agency, e.g., via visit, interview with staff, phone conversation, email, etc. The student will also apply knowledge gained from the book Mountains Beyond Mountains in answering the following questions in an 8-10 page paper:

- a) Identify the population-at-risk that you have chosen as the focus of this paper, and describe the current day consequences of discrimination and oppression for this group.
- b) Describe the social justice approaches which have been directed toward this population. In your answer, you must include the following:
 1. An integration of what you've learned from the research literature and from course readings.

2. A description of the mission, goals, activities and accomplishments of the organization you have chosen to contact about their social justice work with this population.
3. A brief description of the work of other organizations, agencies, groups, or individuals that are involved in social justice work related to this population-at-risk locally, regionally, and nationally.

c) What principles of effective social justice work did you learn from the book, Mountains Beyond Mountains? Compare and contrast the approaches to social justice described in this book to the approaches utilized by the organizations discussed in part (b) of this paper.

d) Conclusions

Note: This assignment is due on the last day of class. *Papers will not be accepted after this date.*

5. **Quizzes (30% of grade)** Three quizzes will consist of short answer questions about readings and concepts discussed in class.

Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments

The skills possessed by effective professional social workers include the ability to write well and to speak in an articulate and persuasive manner to groups. Your written work should be well conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. Papers must be typewritten, proofread for spelling and grammatical errors, double-spaced and in 12 font, and must follow the APA style format. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) is the style manual to be used for all assignments. Incorrect use of APA style may result in a deduction of points on assignments. Appropriate referencing (authors, titles, page numbers, etc.) of assignments is required. This includes giving due credit to others when indirect quotes (paraphrasing) and direct (verbatim) quotes are used. Short direct quotes (less than 40 words) must be placed in quotation marks. Long direct quotes (40 or more words) should be indented. Paraphrasing requires more than changing a word or two in a sentence. Failure to give due to credit to others will result in a “0” for the assignment and/or an “F” for the course. Plagiarism is a form of scholastic dishonesty and will be addressed as such. If you do not know how to cite appropriately, please learn before you submit any assignments.

Papers must include the following elements:

- **Clear answers to all required questions**
- **Adherence to assignment parameters around length of paper (Note: papers less than the minimum length will receive no higher than a grade of 80; papers exceeding the maximum length will only be graded on a review of the maximum number of pages stipulated by the assignment)**

- Evidence of independent, critical thinking
- Research from peer-reviewed professional journals and from recent books
- Integration of material from lectures and course readings
- Use of grammar, spelling, and punctuation appropriate to graduate level written work.

GRADUATE 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

A = *Significantly exceeds assignment/performance expectations* (evidence of critical thinking, quality and quantity of research, and analysis that resulted in work additional to that set forth in the assignment directions);

B = Assignment/overall performance in course meets all the requirements with evidence of critical thinking, evidence of research effort, and analysis (i.e. coherence and integration of ideas);

C = Average. Assignment/performance meets all the requirements but lacks evidence of in depth thinking and analysis and lacks evidence of research from professional journals or recent or influential books

D = There are important gaps in the assignment both in terms of requirements and critical thinking and analysis.

VI. CLASS POLICIES

1. It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. **the beginning of class.** Assignments turned in after class starts

Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late. **The paper due at the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of class.**

2. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than one class without a valid excuse, e.g., medical illness or family emergency) will be penalized one point per unexcused absence when points are totaled.
3. This course is part of a professional training program. The behavior that is expected of social workers in professional practice is also expected of students in this course. Students are expected to arrive at class punctually, to remain in class for its duration, and to maintain focus upon course content during class. Eating in class is permitted only during breaks. Cell phones, smart phones and laptops must be turned off. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.
4. During this course, the professor will ask students to provide feedback on their learning in informal as well as formal ways, including anonymous surveys about how the professor's teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is very important for the professor to know the students' reactions to what is taking place in class, so students are encouraged to respond to these surveys, ensuring that together the professor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.
5. If students are concerned about their grades, the instructor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades prior to the end of the semester. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during office hours if you have any concerns or questions about the course material or about your performance in the course. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable.**
6. Course modifications: Should any modifications or changes need to be made to the course (e.g., calendar, assignments), students will be notified in class and/or by e-mail. Students should check their e-mail frequently, and students who are absent from class should check on announcements made in class during their absence.

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.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
8/26/16	Course Overview	

10/14/16 Social work and African-Americans

Quiz #2

Tate, M. "Austin, Texas in Sociohistorical Context" from Auyero, J. ed. (2015), *Invisible in Austin: Life and Labor in an American City*

Dow, D., "Death Penalty, Still Racist and Arbitrary," *New York Times*, July 9, 2011

Rothenberg p. 313-321; 378-80; 421-24; 428-31; 495-98; 503-510; 516-518; 523-25; 570-588

Ta-Nehisi Coates, The case for reparations, *The Atlantic*, 6/14

Schreer (2009) Shopping while black: examining racial discrimination in a retail setting; *Journal of applied social psychology*, 39(6)

Walk-Morris, T., Blacks challenged to buy from blacks to close gap, *New York Times*, 11/16/15

Blackinger, K. Heroin addiction sent me to prison. White privilege got me out and to the Ivy League, *Washington Post*, 1/21/15

10/21/16 People with disabilities

Hogsett, Not one for the sidelines, NY Times Magazine, 9/19/04

Johnson, The disability gulag, NY Times Magazine, 11/23/03

Corcoran, Barriers made of words

Introduction and conclusion chapters from Cohen, A. (2016), *Imbeciles: The Supreme Court, American Eugenics, and the Sterilization of Carrie Buck*

Kahle, M., "A series of daily victories when living on crutches," *Austin American-Statesman*, Aug. 13, 2011

10/28/16 Social work and Hispanics/Latinos

Articles, "Is immigration good for America?"

Hammond, B., "Arizona-style immigration laws would hurt Texas," *Austin American-Statesman*, April 6, 2011

Martinez, E.A., "Discarding America's welcome mat," *Austin American-Statesman*, April 15, 2011

Vargas, J.A., "Outlaw: my life in America as an undocumented immigrant," *New York Times*, June 26, 2011

Rothenberg p. 195-214; 220-223; 230-241; 266-269; 348-57; 419-20; 511-513

11/4/16 Social work and Hispanics/Latinos

Smith, A.K., Sudore, R., and Perez-Stable, Palliative care for Latino patients, Journal of the American Medical Association, 301(10), March 11, 2009

Nuila, R. (2009) Home: palliation for dying undocumented immigrants, *NEJM*, 301(10)

11/11/16 Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons

Second book review due (Ghettoside)

Surowiecki, J. "Unlikely alliances," *The New Yorker*, 4/25/16

Freedman, S.G., "How Clergy Helped a Same-Sex Marriage Law Pass," *New York Times*, July 15, 2011

www.thetaskforce.org
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, link: Take Action

Rothenberg p. 270-284; 440-450; 460-61; 530-33

11/18/16 Advocating for social justice: application to future
social work practice

Quiz #3

Putnam and Feldstein, Better Together pp. 1-33

Hamill, Alabamians
professing faith in God have a
moral duty to support tax
reform

Rothenberg p. 629-640

Moore, R. "A White Church
No More," *New York Times*,
5/6/16

Complete reading
**"Mountains Beyond
Mountains"**

11/25/16 **Thanksgiving Holiday**

12/2/16 Interventions for social justice: lessons learned
from

Paul Farmer, Anne Fadiman, Jill Leovy and others

Social Justice in Action paper due