

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

Course Number: SW381S
Instructor's Name: Alba Sereno, MSSW

Semester: Fall 2014
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Meeting Time/Place: Fri. 8:30-11:30 AM, SSW 2.116

**Office Hours: Friday 11:30 AM-12:30
PM by appointment**

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

STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTIONS. 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.

STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Critique and apply culturally competent and social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access of 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 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.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS, AND MATERIALS. The main readings for this course will come from the two required texts below. A course readings schedule and additional required reading will be posted on the class website by week. Texts labeled as optional will be used for the book review papers; you will choose 2 of the three texts listed to work with for these assignments therefore you are not required to obtain all three texts.

Required:

Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W.J., Castaneda, R., Hackman, H.W., Petters, M.L., Zuniga, X.
(2nd Ed.). (2010). Readings for Diversity and Social Justice: An anthology on racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism, classism, and ableism. New York: Routledge.

Burgett, B., Hendler, G., (2007) *Key Words for American Cultural Studies*. New York: New York University Press.

Lum, D. (2011) . *Culturally competent practice: A framework for understanding diverse groups and justice issues*. Belmont: Cengage

Optional:

Fadiman, Anne. (1997). *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors and the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York, NY. Farrar Straus & Giroux.

Alexander, M., (2012). *The New Jim Crow*. New York: The New Press

Manriquez, A., Perez De Alejo, C., Tzintzun, C. (2014). *Presente!: Latin@ immigrant voices in the struggle for racial justice / Voces inmigrantes Latin@s en la lucha por la justicia racial*. Oakland: AK Press

COURSE REQUIREMENTS. Students will be evaluated on the following required assignments, as well as class participation and contribution.

1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (10% 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. Failure to regularly attend class and contribute constructively to class discussions will be considered in determining the final grade. Students will be allowed one (1) 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. In extenuating circumstances of absence, 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 reviews papers (30% of grade)

Students will write book reviews of two of the texts listed as optional: Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, Manriquez, Perez De Alejo, Tzintzun, . *Presente!: Latin@ Immigrant Voices in the Struggle for Racial Justice / Voces Inmigrantes Latin@s en la Lucha por la Justicia Racial*, Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*.

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 pages in length, and should be double-spaced and typed in a 12 point font. Students must use APA format to cite research to support factual assertions made in the book reviews.

3. Social Justice in Action paper (20% of grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to learn about a human services organization or agency in Texas that addresses social justice issues pertaining to a population-at-risk group as defined in the Standardized Course Description in this syllabus. Students should identify an organization or agency and research its mission, activities, and accomplishments in depth with respect to the population-at-risk which is its focus. This research must include some contact with the organization/agency, e.g., via visit, interview with staff, phone conversation, email, etc.

Subsequent to this, students are asked to write a 8 page paper about the organization/agency and the relevant population-at-risk, and answer the following questions:

- a) Explore the history of oppression for this group in the United States

b) What are the current day consequences of discrimination and oppression for this group?

c) 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 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. This should be integrated with a detailed discussion of the organization/agency that you've researched and contacted, and must include information about this organization or agency's mission, activities, accomplishments and goals.

d) Conclusions

4. Quizzes (30% of grade) There will be two quizzes worth 15% each. These quizzes will consist of short answer questions about readings and concepts discussed in classes.

5. Culture box (10% of grade)

Choose a small box for your "culture box". Place inside 5 items that represent your social identities (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, social class, nationality, age, size) that have influenced your worldview or behavior. These items might include photographs, pieces of art, jewelry, piece of clothing, or anything you believe has significant influence on how you perceive and behave in the world. Decorate the outside of your box with 5 images (e.g. pictures, drawings, words of phrases) that describe how you think others view your social identities and/or have treated you based on these social identities (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, social class, nationality, age, size).

All papers assigned 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.

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 IN CLASS. 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. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

CLASSROOM CIVILITY. 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 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.

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 instructor. The instructor 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 can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at [512-471-3515](tel:512-471-3515) or online at www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/.

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 CLASS MATERIALS. The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor 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 includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with 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). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

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, an examination, a work assignment, or a 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.

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 to keep the university informed about changes to their 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 among 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](tel: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 of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered 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 SCHEDULE. Below is the course schedule, corresponding reading assignments are posted by week on the course website.

Date	Course Topic	Items Due
8/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction & Course Overview • Social Justice & Social Work 	
9/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power privilege and Oppression • Economic and Psychosocial Effects of Inequality • Structural Issues 	
9/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions • Conceptual Frameworks & Theoretical Perspectives 	
9/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture, Identity & Social Constructions • Intersectionality • Allies & Critical Consciousness 	
9/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations of Culture Box 	Culture Box (10%)
10/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class and Classism 	Quiz 1 (15%)
10/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and Sexism 	Book Review 1 (15%)

10/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Orientation, Heterosexism, Homophobia, Gender Identity & Transgender Oppression 	
10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race and Racism 	
10/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion and Religious Oppression 	
11/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability and Ableism Age and Ageism 	
11/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights Perspective 	Quiz 2 (15%)
11/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visions and Strategies for Change Alliance Building Resistance to Oppression 	Book Review 2 (15%)
11/28	No Class	National Holiday; Reflection Time
12/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrap-up Reflection Looking Forward Course Evaluations 	Social Justice Action Paper (20%) Have an excellent and restful Winter Break!