

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

**Course Number:** SW 310  
**Unique Number:** 60300  
**Semester:** Fall 2015  
**Meeting Time:** Mon and Wed  
11:00 AM-12:30 PM  
**Meeting Place:** SSW 2.122

**Instructor's Name:** Suze L. Miller, LMSW  
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appointment

**INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE**

**(Required Course – BSW Program)  
(Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag)**

**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.**

**III. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is an introductory social work course in which students will learn about the profession of social work, its fields of practice, values and ethics, policies and history of the social work profession, its interactions with contexts which shape practice, and its promotion of social and economic justice to advance human rights, alleviating critical social problems, and promoting well-being. The course will also offer knowledge and practice behaviors in engaging diversity and differences in social work practice. As an introduction to the social work profession, the course will discuss being a professional social worker and how to conduct oneself accordingly.

The course is also a UT Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag course and will focus on the underrepresented cultural groups of immigrants and refugees and women, covering the culture, perspectives and history of these groups.

The diversity of UT students and the diverse variables of their potential social work clients – as manifested by ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and religious beliefs – will be explored in the context of the social work helping relationship.

Students will have the opportunity to assess their personal strengths and weaknesses and identifying potential ethical conflicts with clients. The course will offer the knowledge of principles and practice behaviors to guide professional ethical decision-making.

## **II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate and apply knowledge, values and skills of the social work profession.
2. Demonstrate and apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice;
3. Demonstrate and apply knowledge about diversity and engage in diversity and differences in practice;
4. Explain the history of the social work profession and the American social welfare system.
5. Explain the various contexts and settings in which social workers practice, including the roles and functions that they perform, and respond to contexts that shape practice;
6. Identify some of the social, economic and political forces that have shaped the evolution of social welfare history, policies and services in the U.S.
7. Analyze the important ideologies, values and ethical decision making process in the NASW Code of Ethics that have helped to shape social welfare and social work and that continue to guide the profession.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of how diversity variables, such as race and ethnicity, gender, age and sexual orientation affect the helping relationship, especially with populations at risk.
9. Describe and analyze major issues and trends in various areas of social work practice, such as child welfare, gerontology, substance dependence and domestic violence.
10. Critically analyze how social services enhance the individual and social wellbeing of people, promote social and economic justice, and advance human rights.
11. Develop an identification as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly, assuming the student is interested in majoring in social work.
12. Assess one's strengths and weaknesses as a potential professional social worker.

## **III. TEACHING METHODS**

Although a variety of teaching methods will be employed (e.g., lecture, videos, guest speakers, discussion, and group exercises), experiential learning (e.g., group projects) will be emphasized.

This course will use an electronic Canvas site—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their e-mail address is correct on this site so that class e-mails are received. To reach your class site on Canvas, please go to <http://courses.utexas.edu>. You will need a UT EID and password. The Help Desk, available through the UT home page ([www.utexas.edu/its/help/](http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/)), can assist you with your computer and blackboard questions. You can also call them at 475-9400. Additionally, the Learning Resource Center at the SSW has computers and computer assistance.

## **IV. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND COURSE MATERIALS**

### **Required Text:**

DiNitto, D. & McNeese, A. (2008). *Social work issues and opportunities in a challenging profession*. Chicago,IL: Lyceum Books.

Supplemental course materials (worksheets, assignments, resources, articles) will be posted on Canvas.

## **V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Due to the format and content of this course, both attendance and contribution are imperative. The other students in your class are dependent upon you for a quality learning experience; if too many students are absent, the class suffers. Students' participation is highly encouraged, and is both valuable to them and to their classmates.

1. Five Thought Papers (5 points each)	25pts
2. Service Learning hours*	25pts
3. Five Service Learning Forms (I, II, III, IV, V)	10pts
4. Service Learning Presentations and Outline (Cultural Diversity Emphasis)	10pts
5. Research Paper (Cultural Diversity Emphasis)	20pts
6. Attendance and Class Participation	<u>10pts</u>
	100pts

*\* Service learning component grade will be based on the hours completed, subject to verification by instructor. To receive full credit for service learning hours, all parts of the assignment must be completed. Up to 20 points may be deducted from the service learning component grade for incomplete or poor performance on the forms and the service learning presentation. **If students do not complete at least 30 hours of the 45 hours service learning hours, they may not pass the class.***

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Five Thought Papers (5 pts each) 25 pts.**

The Thought Paper is a log of your experiences and reactions to our readings, exercises, films, interactions, and other course activities. Each week before the due date, the instructor will send a "guiding question" out by 9am Saturday morning for the following week. The Thought Paper content should be driven by this question. The Thought Paper also provides a forum for you to reflect on your experiences, to deepen the learning that comes from course activities, and to wrestle with multiple thoughts and feelings that arise from the course content. They are an opportunity to share with your instructor your questions, frustrations, hopes, fears, satisfactions, and ideas. It is a way for your instructor to find out what you are learning from the readings and from class.

When you respond to something in the readings, please be specific. Thought Papers need to be 2-3 pages in length using 12-point Times New Roman and typed as Word documents. Thought Papers are due at the beginning of class. Please make sure that your name, the date, and the Thought Paper number are on your Thought Paper. You are required to complete 5 Thought Papers.

### **2. Service Learning Hours 25 pts.**

45 hours must be completed by the last day of class. This is a requirement for those who are planning to major in social work. The Release and Indemnification Agreement Form must be signed in before service learning hours can start. The signed form is due August 31.

This Service Learning requirement is to explore ethics, social justice, and cultural diversity issues related to social work.

### **3. FIVE Required Forms**

**10 pts.**

Provide a set of the forms to your supervisor at the beginning of the semester for their records. On the days that the forms are due, the forms need to be completely filled out and signed by the supervisor to receive full credit. Late forms will not be accepted unless the instructor was notified 24 hours in advance.

Release and Indemnification Agreement Form	DUE 8/31/15
Service Learning Agency Selection (Form I)	DUE 9/28/15
Service Learning Log (Form II )	DUE 10/12/15
Service Learning Log (Form III)	DUE 12/2/15
Service Learning Agency Evaluation of Student (Form IV)	DUE 12/2/15
Service Learning Student Evaluation of Agency (Form V)	DUE 12/2/15

### **4. 10 Minute Service Learning Agency Presentation and Outline**

**10pts**

Students are asked to provide a brief written description of their service learning experience as well as a typed 1 page outline of his or her talk (including a-e) on the day of the presentation. The oral presentation will include (a) description of the service learning agency; (b) type of population served at the agency; (c) social work related activities assigned to you at the agency; (d) lessons learned about cultural diversity in your agency and (e) lessons learned about ethics and social justice issues related social work.

### **5. Research Paper on Cultural Diversity**

**20pts**

There will be an 8-10 page, doubled-space 12pt Times New Roman font, 1-inch margin, American Psychological Association (APA) format, final research paper on a topic related to a minority group in the United States. The research paper will address 3 problems and the solution for each of the 3 problems of one minority group that has experienced persistent marginalization. Cultural Diversity in the United States is to be emphasized. The paper will be about problems and solutions related to social and economic justice (or injustices) facing this minority group. Hardcopy of research paper is DUE in class on Nov 9, 2015

### **6. Class Participation**

**10pts**

This will be determined on attendance and the quality of participation in class discussion, homework assignments, and small group exercises. Class readings and assignments will require informed classroom participation. Attending the entire class period is expected in order to receive credit for attending class that day.

## **GRADING POLICY/GRADING CRITERIA:**

Beginning Fall 2009, UT adopted a +/- grading scale for undergraduate courses. The UNDERGRADUATE GRADING SCALE is

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

All students must achieve an overall course grade of C or better to avoid repeating the course. To receive an “A” in this course you must have excellent attendance, participation, and you must produce work that is of superior quality.

Grading of all written assignments will take into account the quality and content of the writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) – 6<sup>th</sup> edition format should be used when relevant. Written material should be carefully proofread and errors (punctuation, typographical, spelling, etc.) corrected prior to submission in order to avoid losing points in the assignment grade, particularly the research paper. This may be a useful link: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

## **VI. CLASSROOM POLICIES**

### **1. Participation and Attendance**

Students are expected to attend class sessions regularly and to participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are expected to complete the readings PRIOR to class and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments. Failure to regularly attend the class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade.

Students will be allowed two (2) unexcused absences. These unexcused absences will include absences due to medical problems or other emergencies. Attendance will be taken each class period. In cases where a student misses more than the allotted two unexcused absences, the professor reserves the right to lower that student’s final grade by one point for each class missed beyond the first unexcused absence. In extenuating circumstances of absence, students are to notify the professor. Students are responsible for any material

missed due to absences. Any student missing more than six classes in total (excused or unexcused) maybe in jeopardy of not passing this course. There may be homework assignments based on discussion and films shown in the class are due on the assignments dates and will be counted towards participation grades.

Instructors are responsible for implementing attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. Special regulations of colleges and schools, required by the unique nature of their programs of study, may be enacted through the normal approval process. These special regulations may not conflict with University regulations on class attendance and absence.

## **2. Late Assignments**

Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, late assignments WILL NOT be accepted without penalty. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date at the beginning of class. Assignments not turned in class on the day it is due will be considered late. If accepted, late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of three (3) points each day late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.

## **3. Student Achievement**

Student Achievement in meeting course objectives will be evaluated on the following written, oral, and in-class experiential assignments, regular and punctual class attendance, and informed class participation based upon class readings/assignments.

## **4. Student Feedback**

Student feedback is welcome either informally or formally about class room learning and content, the teacher's teaching strategies, peer relationships, scheduling, or other items. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during office hours, by phone, by e-mail, and by appointment if they desire.

## **5. Assignment Changes**

The instructor reserves the prerogative to change class assignments as needed to meet the course objectives. The changes will be discussed with the students in class or by email before implementation.

## **6. Cell phone and Laptop Use**

Cell phones and laptops are not permitted in class unless instructor permission is given. Failure to comply with this expectation may result in a grade reduction in class participation grade.

## **VII. 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 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 or online at [www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/](http://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 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.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Items Due</b>	<b>Readings/Items Due</b>
August 26 Week 1	Introduction/Syllabus Review	None
August 31  Week 2	Ethics and Social Justice Service Learning Opportunities Discussion	NASW Ethics  <b>RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION FORM DUE</b>
Sept 2  Week 2	What is Social Work?	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 1
Sept 7  Week 3	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY	
Sept 9  Week 3	Theory and Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups Major Theoretical Perspectives	DiNitto & McNeese Ch 2
Sept 14  Week 4	Practice with Organizations and Communities	DiNitto & McNeese Ch 3  <b>Thought Paper 1 due</b>
Sept 16  Week 4	Research Paper/Cultural Diversity	APA Format Writing
Sept 21  Week 5	Culturally Competent Practice: Immigrants & Refugees (Cultural Diversity Emphasis)	DiNitto & McNeese Ch 4
Sept 23  Week 5	Gender and Social Work Practice (Cultural Diversity Emphasis)	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 5  <b>Research Paper Outline Due</b>
Sept 28  Week 6	Social Work Practice with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered People (Cultural Diversity Emphasis)	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 6  <b>Service Learning Form 1 Due</b> <b>Thought Paper 2 due</b>
Sept 30  Week 6	Mental Illness and Social Work Practice	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 7
Oct 5  Week 7	Addictions and Social Work Practice	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 8  <b>Thought Paper 3 due</b>
Oct 7  Week 7	Social Work Practice in Health-Care	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 9

Oct 12 Week 8	Service Learning Presentations	<b>Service Learning Form II due</b>
Oct 14 Week 8	Guest Lecturer – Dr Diane Rhodes Issues in Domestic Violence	
Oct 19 Week 8	No Class	
Oct 21 Week 9	Disabilities: The Fight for Inclusion Continues	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 10
Oct 26 Week 9	Social Work with Children and Families	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 11 <b>Thought Paper 4 Due</b>
Oct 28 Week 10	Service Learning Presentations	
Nov 2 Week 10	Service Learning Presentations	
Nov 9 Week 11	Service Learning Presentations	<b>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</b>
Nov 11 Week 11	Gerontological Work	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 12
Nov 16 Week 12	Poverty in the United States	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 13
Nov 18 Week 12	Social Work Practice in the Justice System	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 14
Nov 23 Week 13	Rural Social Work Practice	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 15 <b>Thought Paper 5 due</b>
Nov 25 Week 13	Thanksgiving holiday – no class	
Nov 30 Week 14	International Social Work	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 16
Dec 2 Week 14	Social Work Professional Education	DiNitto & McNeese Ch. 17 Service Learning Forms III, IV, V Due