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# SW325

## Foundations of Social Justice

Spring 2015, Section 61605  
Monday, Wednesday, 9:30 to 11:00 am  
Room 2.116, Social Work Building

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or by appointment



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### REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS

Mullaly, Robert P. (2010). *Challenging oppression and confronting privilege: A critical social work approach*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Danquah, M. N. (1998). *Willow weep for me: A Black woman's journey through depression*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Texts can be purchased at the University Co-Op, 2246 Guadalupe, <http://www.universitycoop.com>. **Additional required readings are listed on the syllabus and will be available on Canvas.**

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### Standardized Course Description

This course is based on 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 increase 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 and 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

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, interventions and research **(PB 18, 19, 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, 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 ethnical, culturally competent, and socially just social work practices **(PB 15)**
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, 20)**

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## Accreditation

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The University of Texas' 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 found in 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, create, or enhance privilege and power  
Course Objectives 2 and 3  
Class Assignment: Participation, reflection journals, action plan project
- PB15** Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups  
Course Objective 4  
Class Assignment: Participation, reflection journals
- PB16** Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences  
Course Objective 2  
Class Assignment: Participation, reflection journals, action plan project
- PB17** View selves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants  
Course Objective 2  
Class Assignment: Participation, reflection journals, action plan project

### **EP2.1.5 ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

- PB18** Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination  
Course Objectives 1 and 5  
Class Assignment: Participation, reflection journals, action plan project
- PB19** Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice  
Course Objectives 1 and 5  
Class Assignment: Action plan project
- PB20** Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice  
Course Objectives 1 and 5  
Class Assignment: Action plan project

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## University Policies

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**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.

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### Classroom Policies

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**PARTICIPATION.** You are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions. This means coming to class having completed the readings for that day and bringing both your questions and ideas / thoughts / reflections concerning those readings. If class discussion lags, I will not hesitate to call on you to offer your ideas. I also encourage you to bring “additional” sources of information to share with the class as pertaining to the topic(s) of discussion. This may include sharing information you have learned from other classes, news or pop culture media, or simply relating your own experiences and observations of everyday life.

We will be discussing a variety of controversial issues that may hold special significance to students. It is important to discuss ideas in a supportive and respectful manner, acknowledging that others may have different opinions. I encourage you to see things from a different point of view and use feedback from each other to augment your ideas. And while I encourage debate and disagreement as a productive aspect of classroom discussion, all students will be expected to act in a respectful manner towards classmates, the professor, and any guest speakers at all times.

To help foster a productive learning environment, each member of this class should avoid behaviors that are disruptive to other students and the professor. This means:

- Turning off cell phones *before* coming to class. If you must keep your cell phone available for emergency purposes, please notify me before class.
- Do not hold side conversations with your classmates at any time during class.
- Computers are not allowed in this class. Although instruction will consist of both lecture and class discussion, I feel that discussion is a crucial part of the learning process. The use of computers often distracts from this productive activity.

**LATE WORK.** Late work will be penalized 10% for every 24-hour period following the deadline for a given assignment (including weekends), and will only be accepted in the first week following an assignment's due date. If you anticipate being unable to meet an assignment deadline, let me know in advance.

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## Graded Assignments

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For all written assignments, unless noted otherwise, you will be graded on the quality of your writing. Be sure to review and edit your written work before submission. Any quotation, concept, idea, or piece of information that is taken or paraphrased from another source must be properly cited and referenced according to American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines. If you have any questions or are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please come see me. I also strongly encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Consultation Services available to graduate students via the DiNitto Center for Career Services (<http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/dccs/students-and-alumni/writing-consultations/>).

All graded assignments will be scored according to a grading rubric. These will be available on Canvas, and I encourage you to reference them in advance of completing the assignment so that you are informed of the criteria you need to meet to achieve your desired grade!

**CLASS PARTICIPATION (20%).** Students will receive participation points for in-class assignments, attendance, and modelling professional behavior (please refer to the Standards for Social Work Education available online at <http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/current/forms/>). Since discussion and participation are an essential component of learning in this class, I will deduct *at least* 10 points from your final participation grade for more than one unexcused absence and/or chronic lateness. You must communicate with me before missing class if you anticipate being absent (although this does not guarantee that I will excuse you). For extreme circumstances, please let me know within 24 hours of missing class.

**READING REFLECTION JOURNALS (20%).** Your reflection journal will provide you with a space to “think out loud” about the readings and become critically engaged with the issues raised in this course. Your journal entries will not be graded according to the mechanics of your writing; your ideas matter more than the ways in which you write about them. The journal should be your place to record your reactions to the readings, but in ways that go above and beyond summarizing the material. If you get stuck on what to write about, see Canvas for some potential prompts to get you started. You must complete at least one journal entry per week, and entries will be collected four times over the course of the semester for grading (see Canvas). Journals can be handwritten or typed. Use this as an opportunity to get creative and include pictures, drawings, visuals, as it suits your purposes.

**ACTION PLAN PROJECT (60%).** In this assignment, you will identify and assess an issue you want to take action on in your community to promote social justice. By the end of this assignment you will have:

- Identified and evaluated a social issue or social problem
- Developed an action plan
- Implemented and evaluated one component of your action plan
- Reflected on your experience doing this assignment in written and oral form

Detailed explanations of this assignment will be available on Canvas and discussed in class, and it is in your best interests to read the instructions of this assignment closely.

### Grade Scale

A	94.0 +	C+	77.0 – 79.999	D-	60.0 – 63.999
A-	90.0 – 93.999	C	74.0 – 76.9991	F	Below 60.0
B+	87.0 – 89.999	C-	70.0 – 73.999		
B	84.0 – 86.999	D+	67.0 – 69.999		
B-	80.0 – 83.999	D	64.0 – 66.999		

*Please Note: Grades will not be rounded.*

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## Weekly Schedule of Readings & Assignments

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January 21 Course Introduction

### **PART I: Conceptual Foundations**

#### **Understanding Oppression**

January 26 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 1-33

January 28 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 34-65

#### **Levels of Oppression: Micro**

February 2 Readings  
• Mullaly, pp. 67-91

February 4 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 160-186

#### **Levels of Oppression: Macro**

February 9 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 93-158

February 11 PANEL PRESENTATION: Using Creativity in the Service of Others

#### **Models of Oppression and Privilege**

February 16 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 188-218

February 19 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 287-320

#### **Toward Anti-Oppressive Social Work**

February 23 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 220-258

February 25 Readings:  
• Mullaly, pp. 259-285

### **PART II: The Diverse Forms of Oppression**

#### **Race and Racism**

March 2 Readings:  
• Bell, L. A. (2007). Overview: Twenty-First Century Racism. In M. Adams, L. A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 117-122). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Bell, L. A., Love, B. J., Roberts, R. A. (2007). Chapter 6. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 123-128). New York, NY: Routledge.

March 4

Readings:

- Bourgois, P. & Schonberg, J. (2009) A Community of addicted bodies. In *Righteous dopefiend* (pp 79-116). Berkeley: UC Press.
- Corneau, S., & Stergiopoulos, V. (2012). More than being against it: Anti-racism and anti-oppression in mental health services. *Transcultural psychiatry*, 49 (2), 261-282.

### **Class and Classism**

March 9

Readings:

- Leondar-Wright, B. & Yeskel, F. (2007). Chapter 13. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 309-317). New York, NY: Routledge.

March 11

Readings

- Hansen, H., Bourgois, P., & Drucker, E. (2014). Pathologizing poverty: New forms of diagnosis, disability, and structural stigma under welfare reform. *Social Science & Medicine*, 103, 76-83.
- Mackinnon, S. (2011). Building capacity through participatory action research: The state of inner-city report project. *Community Development Journal*, 46(2), 154-167.

### **SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS MARCH 16 / 18**

### **Sexism, Heterosexism, and Transgender Oppression**

March 23

Readings:

- Griffin, P. (2007). Overview: Sexism, heterosexism, and transgender oppression. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 167-172). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ong, A. (2003). Refugee love as feminist compassion. In *Buddha is hiding: Refugees, citizenship, and the New America* (pp. 142-167). Berkeley: University of California Press.

March 25

Readings:

- Catalano, C., McCarthy, L., & Shlasko, D. (2007). Chapter 10. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 219-228). New York, NY: Routledge.
- FILM: Trans

### **Sexism, Heterosexism, and Transgender Oppression**

March 30

Readings:

- Goldberg, M. (2014). What is a woman? The dispute between radical feminisim and transgenderism. *New Yorker*, August 4, 2014.

April 1

Readings

- Griffin, P., D-Errico, K. H., Harro, B., Schiff, T. (2007). Chapter 9. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 195-200). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ajandi, J. (2011). "Single mothers by choice": Disrupting dominant discourses of the family through social justice alternatives. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies*, 2 (3/4), 410-431.

### **Religious Oppression**

April 6

Readings:

- Adams, M. (2007). Overview: Religious Oppression. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 247-254). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Adams, M. & Joshi, K. Y. (2007). Chapter 11. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 255-266). New York, NY: Routledge.

April 8

Readings:

- Aviv, R. (2013). Where is your mother? A woman's fight to keep her child. *The New Yorker*, December 2, pp. 52-65.

### **Ableism**

April 13

Readings:

- Griffin, P., Peters, M. L., Smith, R. M. (2007). Chapter 14. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 335-342). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Johnson, H. M. (2003). Unspeakable conversations. *The New York Times*, February 16, 2003.

April 15

Readings:

- Nussbaum, S. (2008). The empowered Fe Fes: A group for girls with disabilities. In Anita Harris (Ed.), *Next wave cultures: Feminism, subcultures, and activism* (pp. 105-122). New York, NY: Routledge.

### **Ageism and Adulthood**

April 20

Readings:

- Love, B. J., & Phillips, K. J. (2007). Chapter 15. In M. Adams, L A. Bel, & P. Griffin (Eds.), *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 359-365). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Stone, S. D. (2003). Disability, dependence, and old age: Problematic constructions. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La Revue canadienne du vieillissement*, 22(01), 59-67.

April 22

Readings:

- Wilson, H., & Huntington, A. (2006). Deviant (m) others: The construction of teenage motherhood in contemporary discourse. *Journal of social policy*, 35(01), 59-76.
- Kaufman, S. R. (1994). The social construction of frailty: an anthropological perspective. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 8(1), 45-58.

### **Memoir Analysis**

April 27, 29

Readings:

- Danquah, M. N. (1999). *Willow weep for me: A Black woman's journey through depression*. New York, NY: One World/Ballantine Press.

### **Action Plan Project Presentations**

May 4, 6