

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

**Course Number:** SW360K/ WGS340/AFR 374  
**Unique Number:** 61905/47010  
**Meeting Times** Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-2:00pm  
**Meeting Room:** SSW 2.118  
**Semester:** Spring 2017

**Instructor:** Dr. Dorie Gilbert  
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**Office:** SSW 3.130H  
**Office Hrs:** T/TH 2-3:00 or By Appt

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES**

**I. Course Description**

This course is designed to provide an overview of historical and contemporary issues facing African American and African-descent families and children. This course is an upper-division, social science elective and is open to BSW students as well as other majors. Topics include: African Heritage and Cultural History, Impact of Racism & Oppression, Africentric Social Work Practice & Theories, Health and Mental Health Care & Disparities, Gender, Sexuality and Relationships, Adolescent Development & Racial Identity, Faith-based and Community interventions, and Criminal Justice concerns.

**II. Course Objectives**

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of African American family structures and dynamics from a social systems perspective.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical background of African American families and its impact on contemporary family life.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the psychosocial dimensions of African American families.
4. Identify specific social issues facing African American males and females, children, families & other subsets of the population and design and implement a project for positive social change
5. Identify and describe the variety of life styles among African Americans and the situational determinants of different family forms and patterns of adaptation.
6. Identify barriers facing specific African American populations, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, women, gays and lesbians.
7. Critique the treatment of African American families in American scholarship.
9. Demonstrate an awareness of value dilemmas and policy initiatives that differentially affect African American families and diverse social service providers.
10. Promote social justice by recognizing and identifying ways to address discrimination against African Americans and other oppressed populations.

**III. Teaching Methods**

Lectures, class discussion, reading assignments, films, and small group discussions in class and via blogging and presentations will be utilized to achieve course objectives. Lectures are designed to supplement readings. Students are expected to come prepared to each class and participate in discussions of assigned readings and of supplementary material.

**IV. Required Readings** Required reading packet available online via CANVAS.

**V. Course Requirements**

**1. Attendance (15%)**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions, participate in class discussions and assigned activities.

**2. Contribution and Reflection (10% of grade)**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and actively participate by raising questions and helping to foster discussions. Students choose one of the articles from the readings to summarize and present for discussion. See CANVAS for details.

**3. Blogging (20%)**

Each student will create a blog and make weekly entries that reference the readings, classroom discussions, and responses to relevant issues. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate understanding of course content as well as:

- a) Clarify students' understanding of course content covered by the readings, videos, activities and discussion;
- b) Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and just social work practices;
- c) Reflect on the impact of discrimination and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, service delivery, and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice.

The professor may elect to provide specific questions related to the readings or class discussions for students to respond to in their blog posts. Blog posts can include photographs, video, and poetry, etc. as well as written reflections and responses to the readings. *You are also required to comment on at least two blogs of fellow students each week.* While blog posts are candid and honest portrayals of your reflections and experiences, they must be respectful and are not an arena for digression on unrelated issues or personal attacks. If you are referencing readings or data other than class content, cite sources using APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition).

**Criteria**

- Timely completion of the assignment.
- Address the key points from the readings/videos/classroom exercises
- Use of references and citations for all referenced material and data.

**Blog posts are due every Saturday by 11:59 for the previous week.** See CANVAS document for “How to create a blog”.

**4. Midterm Examination (25% of grade)**

Students complete in-class midterm. The exam will contain a combination of objective and essay questions.

**5. Research Project –GROUP PROJECT (25% of grade)**

The purpose of this project is to engage students as active agents of change by addressing an area of concern or issue related to the African American population. Students can use a variety of methods, media and collaborations. As a few examples, projects may be a photo essay or a video, a series of interviews, a survey, a pre-post questionnaire for a film screening, etc. There is a great deal of latitude; however, students must prepare a project proposal that provides details prior to approval. The approved proposal will serve as the specific criteria of the project. Students will submit updates throughout the semester that demonstrate progress towards achievement of the project as detailed in the proposal. Students will present their projects in class and provide a handout of their research findings and useful resources. See Research Project Description on CANVAS.

**6. Final Reflection Paper (5% of grade).** At the end of the semester, you will prepare and submit an assessment of your learning and development over the course of the semester.

Grading and Weighting of Assignments

Attendance	15%
Contribution and Reflection	10%
Blogging	20%
Midterm exam	25%
Research Project	25%
Final Reflection Paper	5 %
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Total	100%

**Grading Scale:**

100-94.0 = A	93.999 - 90.0 = A-	89.999 - 87.0 = B+	86.999 - 84.0 = B	83.999 - 80.0 = B-	79.999- 77.0= C+
76.999-74.0= C	73.999-70.0 = C-	69.999 -67.0= D+	66.000-64.0= D	63.999-60.0= D-	Below 60.0 = F

**VI. Class Policies**

1. **Attendance:** Attendance and prompt arrival to class is mandatory. Individual exceptions are made only in the event of *properly documented* extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control and prior notice of reason for absence and/or tardy. Poor attendance/participation will impact grade. Missing more than 2 classes or missing either of the last 2 class days will lower attendance grade because your peers count on you for your attention and support during their presentations. Students missing 5 or more classes will automatically fail the course.
2. **Late Assignments:** Two points per day will be deducted for late assignments.
3. **APA format:** We will use APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition.*
4. **Small group work:** Groups are expected to resolve challenges but are encouraged to consult with the instructor.
5. **Technology in the classroom:** Phones and engagement with personal social media in class is strictly prohibited.

## **OTHER POLICIES: UT-SSW\_SPRING 2017 UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

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

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

**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. More information may be found at <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**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 [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 that 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 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.

**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.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on concealed firearms 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.

**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. Students who report incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct to faculty, instructors, and/or staff who supervise students, will be provided a list of University resources. If the incident is impacting the academic environment, a report will be provided to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may be found at <http://socialwork.utexas.edu/dl/files/academic-programs/other/qrg-sexualharassment.pdf>.

**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.

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES**  
**COURSE SCHEDULE SPRING 2017**  
*(Professor reserves the right to update as necessary)*

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC AND READINGS</b>
<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>African American Families: African Heritage and History</b>
<b>Jan 17</b>	Course Overview <u>Class Exercise: Editorial Response to Bob Herbert's "A New Civil Rights Movement"</u>
<b>Jan 19</b>	Film: <i>Ethnic Notions: Black people in the minds of whites</i>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>African American Family: Diversity and Commonality</b>
<b>Jan 24</b>	Topic: White Privilege-Then and Now  READINGS: WEEK 2 (CANVAS)
<b>Jan 26</b>	Film, <i>White Privilege and its Consequences for Racial Equity &amp; Justice (Tim Wise)</i>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	<b>African American Family: Family Development and Intervention Theories</b>
<b>Jan 31</b>	READINGS: WEEK 3 (CANVAS)
<b>Feb 2</b>	<i>Critical Analysis: Film: CNN-Black in America, South Africa Program</i>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	<b>African American Families: Historical and Current Demographics &amp; Helping Traditions</b>
<b>Feb 7</b>	READINGS: WEEK 4 (CANVAS)
<b>Feb 9</b>	<i>Critical Analysis: Film: CNN-Marriage in Black in America</i>
<b>WEEK 5</b>	<b>African American Relationships: Gender, Race, Class &amp; Sexual Identity</b>
<b>Feb 14</b>	READINGS: WEEK 5 (CANVAS)
<b>Feb 16</b>	<i>Critical Analysis: Discussion of Readings</i>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	<b>African American Relationships: Gender, Race, Class &amp; Sexual Identity</b>
<b>Feb 21</b>	READINGS: WEEK 6 (CANVAS)
<b>Feb 23</b>	<i>Critical Analysis: Discussion of Readings</i>
<b>WEEK 7</b>	<b>African American Relationships: Gender, Race, Class &amp; Sexual Identity</b>
<b>Feb 28</b>	Film, <i>A different kind of black man.</i>
<b>March 2</b>	Research Project Planning –IN CLASS

<b>WEEK 8</b>	<b>Midterm and Project Planning</b>
<b>March 7</b>	Midterm
<b>March 9</b>	Research Project Planning—Independent/Group Research
----- <b>SPRING BREAK</b> ----- <b>Mar 13-Mar 17</b> -----	
<b>WEEK 9</b>	<b>African American Family Constellation and Parenting</b>
March 21	READINGS: WEEK 9 (CANVAS)
March 23	<i>Critical Analysis: Discussion of Readings</i>
<b>WEEK 10</b>	<b>Socialization and Identity in African American Early and Late Adolescents</b>
<b>March 28</b>	READINGS: WEEK 10 (CANVAS)
<b>March 30</b>	<i>TBA</i>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	<b>Education: African American Children &amp; Adolescents</b>
<b>April 4</b>	<i>Film: Boys of Baraka</i>
<b>April 6</b>	READINGS: WEEK 11 (CANVAS)
<b>WEEK 12</b>	<b>Youth, Media and Development</b>
<b>April 11</b>	<i>Film: Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats &amp; Rhymes.</i>
<b>April 13</b>	READINGS: WEEK 12 (CANVAS)
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Community, Health, Mental Health &amp; Social Justice Disparities among African Americans</b>
<b>April 18</b>	Film Discussion, <i>American Violet</i> ,
<b>April 20</b>	READINGS: WEEK 13 (CANVAS)
<b>WEEK 14</b>	<b>Presentations</b>
<b>April 25</b>	Presentations
<b>April 27</b>	Presentations
<b>WEEK 15</b>	<b>Presentations, Course Wrap-Up and Course Evaluations</b>
<b>May 1</b>	Presentations
<b>May 4</b>	Course Wrap-Up and Course Evaluations