

**The University of Texas at Austin
School of Social Work**

Course Number: SW 381S
Meeting Time: Fridays 8:30-11:30am
Semester: Fall 2011
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**FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:
VALUES, DIVERSITY, POWER & OPPRESSION**

I. 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 increases 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 to apply social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research; and 4) professionals and programs have strategies to critically analyze distributive justice, human and civil rights, and global interconnections of oppression. There is an emphasis in this course on the impact of discrimination and oppression by individuals and society on people of culturally diverse backgrounds and orientations.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

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

1. Critique and apply culturally competent and social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access of resources, intervention, and research (PB 18,19, and 20);
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the history and heritage of population-at-risk groups, including women and culturally diverse populations, globally as well as those prevalent in the southwestern region of the United States (PB 14, 16, and 17);
3. Understand the social construction of race and ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation (PB 14);
4. Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and socially just social work practices (PB 15) and;
5. Assess the impact of discrimination (e.g. racism, sexism, homophobia), and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, service delivery, and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice (PB 18, 19, and 20).

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

EP2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.

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

Objectives 2 and 3

Assignment: Reflective papers, class participation, social issue paper, group presentation, quizzes

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

Objectives 4

Assignment: Reflective papers, group presentation, class participation

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

Objectives 2

Assignment: Reflective papers, group presentation, class participation, quizzes

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

Objectives 2

Assignment: Reflective papers, social issue paper, class participation

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

PB18 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination

Objectives 1 and 5

Assignment: Group presentations, reflective papers, quizzes, social issue paper

PB19 Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice

Objectives 1 and 5

Assignment: Class participation, group presentation, reflective papers, social issue paper

PB20 Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice

Objectives 1 and 5

Assignment: Class participation, group presentation, final reflective paper

III. Teaching Methods

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized, including: lectures, class discussions, experiential exercises, case examples, video presentations, and guest speakers. Details are included in the attached assignment descriptions.

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.

IV. Required Readings

Anderson, M.L. & Collins, P.H. (2010). *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Johnson, A.G. (2006). *Privilege, power and difference 2nd Edition*. New York, NY: McGraw-Gill.

Scholinski, Daphne. (1997). *The Last Time I Wore a Dress: A Memoir*. New York, NY. Riverhead.

Recommended reading:

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.

V. Course Requirements

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

1. Attendance and Participation (10% of grade)

Students are expected to attend all classes, participate meaningfully in class discussion and exercises, and call upon life experiences and course readings for contributions. The ten points for this requirement include attendance (5 total points) and in-class participation (5 total points). Students will be allowed one (1) absence without excuse or loss of points. Students are to notify the professor in advance when they are going to be absent.

It is important for social workers to be aware of group dynamics including peer groups in which they participate. A portion of the grade for this course will depend on your level of participation and contribution. For some, this means learning to speak up, add to discussions and ask questions. For others, it means taking a step back and allowing others the space to contribute.

Criteria for Awarding Attendance and Punctuality Points:

0-1 absence = 5 pts

2 absences = 3 pts

3 absences = 1 pt

4 or more absences = 0 pts

5 or more absences puts the student in jeopardy of not passing this course.

Note: Establishing a pattern of late arrivals or early departures will cause attendance points to be lowered.

Criteria for Awarding In-Class Participation/Contributions:

Ongoing, Active Participation = 5 pts

Some Participation = 3 pts

Limited Participation = 1 pt

No Participation = 0 pts

2. Reflective Papers (15% of grade)

(Due 9/16, 9/30, 10/14, 10/28, 12/2*)

Reflection papers are short essays (2-3 typed pages unless otherwise noted) which provide a time to reflect on the several previous week's readings. Your grade will be based on the extent to which you:

1. examine the **themes** in the assigned readings, videos, exercises, etc.,
2. address the **key points** from the readings, videos, exercises, and
3. reflect on the **impact of discrimination** (e.g. racism, sexism, homophobia, classism), and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, service delivery and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice.

Late reflection essays will not be accepted.

*Final reflective paper will be 3-4 typed pages. Further instructions will be provided in a handout.

3. Social Issue Paper (30% of grade) (Due 11/4)

As advocates and agents for social change, social workers must be able to identify and effectively argue (with support of evidence) their positions on controversial issues. The purpose of this assignment is to:

- a. reflect, critically evaluate, and respond to human rights and social justice issues presented
- b. demonstrate familiarity with diverse at-risk populations
- c. examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and socially just social work practices.

Students will analyze issues discussed in the The Last Time I Wore A Dress: A Memoir, conduct research related to the topic and answer a set of questions that will be distributed in class.

Papers should be 6-8 pages in length with 12 point double-spaced font. APA format must be used. References must be cited appropriately and should include 5-10 sources.

4. Group Presentation (25% of grade) (11/18)

For this presentation, students will be placed in small groups and assigned a topic to research and present to the class. Topics will be controversial and pose an ethical dilemma for students to explore.

- a) Students will provide a short history and description of the topic.
- b) Students will analyze the impact of discrimination, public policy, institutional structures and/or service delivery factors/approaches as they affect the population-at-risk.
- c) Students will identify the ethical dilemma analyzing how diversity and oppression impact the population-at-risk, as well as important social work principles to consider.
- d) Students will advocate for particular service delivery approaches and avenues for social change, as informed by their research.
- e) Students must present concise, effective arguments for their position.

5. Quizzes (20% of grade) (10/7, 12/2)

In-class quizzes will be comprised mainly of short answer questions about information learned through readings, class lectures, and assignments.

Extra Credit: Extra credit of up to two (2) points will be given for attending any of the events during the School's Social Justice week (10/17-10/21) and writing a 2-3 page reflective paper about the experience. Extra credit reflective papers are due November 4th.

Assignment Policy

NOTE: It is important for social work professionals to be punctual in attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Please take note of the following:

- **Assignments are due at the beginning of class** on the scheduled day and will be considered late if turned in more than 15 minutes after the beginning of the class period.
- **Students will lose two points per calendar day for late assignments.** Any adjustments in assignment due dates and/or examination dates **MUST** be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours **PRIOR** to the regularly scheduled date..
- All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced with 12 point font, and follow appropriate guidelines for APA format.

Professional Conduct in Class

The instructor expects students to act like 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 instructor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

GRADUATE GRADING SCALE

100 - 94 = A
93 - 90 = A-
89 - 87 = B+
86 - 84 = B
83 - 80 = B-
79 - 77 = C+
76 - 74 = C
73 - 70 = C- (Class failed/no credit: 73 and below)
69 - 67 = D+
66 - 64 = D
63 - 60 = D-
59 and below = F

VI. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: 8/26

Introduction & course overview
NASW Code of Ethics
Class activities

No assigned reading

Week 2: 9/2

Social Justice Frameworks

Johnson, pp. vii -41
Anderson & Collins: Part One intro (p.1-16)
Handouts

Week 3: 9/9

Social Justice Frameworks
Cultural Humility Presentation: Kerri Fisher

Anderson & Collins: 1-7
Newsweek article: "See Baby Discriminate"
Ayvazian, "Interrupting the Cycle of Oppression"
Cultural Competence Handouts

Week 4: 9/16

Models of Social Change
Privilege and Power
Cycle of Socialization
Reflective Paper Due

Johnson, pp. 42 -72
Anderson & Collins: Part Two intro (p.61-85)
Kivel, "Social service or social change?"

Week 5: 9/23

Color of Fear Video & Class Exercises

Johnson, pp. 73 -95
Anderson & Collins: 8, 10, 11, 37

Week 6: 9/30

Race & Class inequality
Reflective Paper Due

Johnson, pp. 96 - 136
Anderson & Collins: 13,16,17,18

Week 7: 10/7
Sex & Gender
Quiz #1

Johnson, pp. 137 – 171
Anderson & Collins: 19, 20, 22

Week 8: 10/14
Sexuality
Reflective Paper Due

Anderson & Collins: 29, 30, 41
Begin Scholinski book

Week 9: 10/21 (Social Justice Week)
Disability Visibility Presentation in Utopia

Bryan, “Struggle for Freedom”
Wendell, “Social Construction of Disability”
Anderson & Collins: 57

Week 10: 10/28
Gender identity & Transgender oppression
Reflective Paper Due

Anderson & Collins: 32
Finish Scholinski book

Week 11: 11/4
Immigration & Ethnicity
Resilience Theory
Social Issue Paper Due

Anderson & Collins: 24, 27, 54

Week 12: 11/11
Food Deserts & Food Justice

Anderson & Collins: Part 3 & Article 49, 53

Week 13: 11/18
Group Presentations

Anderson & Collins, 42, 45, 47

Week 14: 11/25
No class- Holiday weekend

Week 15: 12/2 (last class day)
Summary & Action Steps
Quiz #2
Final Reflective Paper Due (special handout)

Anderson & Collins, Part IV

VII. Class 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.

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://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

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 instructor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the instructor 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 instructor 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 instructor 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 instructor 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 instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instructor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Use of Blackboard in Class

In this class the instructor uses Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give students online quizzes and surveys. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

Feedback Statement

During this course the instructor will ask students to provide feedback on their learning in informal as well as formal ways, including through anonymous surveys about how the instructor's teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is very important for the instructor to know the students' reactions to what is taking place in class, so students are encouraged to respond to these surveys, ensuring that together the instructor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.