

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Foundations of Social Justice: Values, Diversity, Power, & Oppression

<b>Course/Unique Number:</b> SW 325/ 64021	<b>Semester:</b> Fall 2015
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Social Work seeks to bring order, to connect private troubles to public causes, and help disenfranchised people create better lives for themselves. In this class you will learn about social inequities and problems as well as strategies for allying with others in the pursuit of change. This course will survey the direct costs of privilege within US culture. There will be an emphasis on the impact of discrimination and oppression by individuals and society on people of diverse origins and orientations. The content of the course has the potential to be emotionally charged because of possible controversial issues; therefore, the students and professor will establish guidelines for a respectful and challenging learning environment collectively.

This course is based the following assumptions:

1. Membership in a population-at-risk group (e.g., people of color, women, gay and lesbian persons) significantly influences and 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.

*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.*

While we do not have a class meeting time every week, you do have reading, watching, listening and writing assignment that are due at specific times. We will communicate through Canvas, using the

announcements, discussion boards and email. Additionally, you can meet with me in person, on video-chat, or on the phone by appointment. If the class is interested, we can also set up group conversation times on campus or select a time for group video-chats.

## **II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:** *(By the end of the course the student should be:)*

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)**;
  - a. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination **(PB18)**
  - b. Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice **(PB19)**
  - c. Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice **(PB20)**
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 **(PB14, 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 **(PB15)**;
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)**;
6. Engage diversity and difference in practice **(EP2.1.4)**;
7. Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power **(PB14)**;
8. Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups **(PB15)**;
9. Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences **(PB16)**.
10. View selves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants **(PB17)**;
11. Advance human rights and social and economic justice **(EP2.1.5)**.

## **III. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

Johnson, A. G. (2006). *Privilege, power, and difference* (2nd ed.). Boston, Mass: McGraw-Hill.

Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W., Castaneda, C., Hackman, H.W., Peters, M.L., & Zuniga, X. (2013). *Readings for diversity and social justice*. (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

**Additional reading and video links will be assigned and available to you electronically via Canvas.**

## **IV. TEACHING METHODS**

The primary methods of instruction for this web-based course uses Canvas and tumblr, and includes reading, video, online posts and discussions through blogging.

The content of the course has the potential to be emotionally charged because of possible controversial issues; therefore, the students and professor will maintain a respectful and challenging learning environment collectively.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

The following assignments and activities will be completed during the semester. Your grade will be based on a total of **100 points** accrued by the end of the semester.

**Detailed directions and grading criteria for each assignment are posted on Canvas.**

### Self-Interview (5 pts.)

Part I: At the beginning of the semester, you are asked to conduct an interview-style initial assessment of your own ideas and attitudes about diversity, privilege, and oppression.

### Blog (50pts)

This course involves a significant amount of required reading and online interaction. Each student will create a blog and make weekly entries that reference the readings, classroom discussions, and responses to relevant issues related to social justice.

### OP-ED ESSAY (10pts each)

Two Op-Ed pieces written about an issue related to social justice, diversity, power, and oppression. This writing exercise is a way to present an effective and concise argument about important issues that impact the lives of your clients and the communities they live in. Writing Op-Ed pieces are also a way to advocate and participate in civil society.

### Take a Picture (10 pts.)

We discuss a lot of ideas related to perception and reality. This assignment asks you to take a picture of a scene in your day-to-day life and then describe the scene with reference to various social identities.

### Comprehensive Examination (25 pts.)

A comprehensive take home exam will be distributed near the end of the semester and students will have approximately one week to complete the exam. Responses will be graded on thoroughness, including each student's ability to integrate readings from the texts, videos, collateral readings, and blog discussions.

## VI. COURSE POLICIES

**1. Conduct and Civility:** Social work students adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their conduct. Scholastic honesty and integrity are to be consistent social work values. The instructor will comply with University guidelines regarding scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Social work practitioners respect others; therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected. Students will help create and support a learning environment that does not interfere with the learning of fellow students. When students voice an opinion with which you do not agree, feel free to voice opinions in a civil manner that can enhance the flow of ideas and dialog.

**2. Readings and Preparatory Assignments:** Students are expected to be active and participate in the learning process and in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are also expected to complete all readings and preparation assignments. Failure to demonstrate through online discussions and assignments that one has comprehended the readings will be considered when assigning the final grade. Professor reserves the right to conduct quizzes should there be a pattern of students not demonstrating that they have completed the readings and are not prepared to engage in thoughtful discussion.

**3. Professional Communication and Interactions:** Disrespect towards the professor, students, or others is unacceptable and will be handled directly and in the context it occurs. Disrespectful behavior includes overt acts, such as talking over others or making derogatory remarks based on another person's age, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religious preference, and ability. Moreover, covert acts of disrespect such as sneers, and other facial expressions, excluding class members from classroom tasks, etc. are also unacceptable.

**4. Assignments and Grades:** Assignments should be turned in online on the date they are due, barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. Late assignments will be considered when assigning the final grade.

**5. Writing Style:** The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Sixth Edition (APA) is the style manual to be used by all students. The manual is available at the library or for purchase at the Co-op.

**6. Use of Canvas:** The instructor uses Canvas, the web-based learning management system of The University of Texas at Austin. If you do not have a personal computer with personal Internet access, there are computers available for your use at the SW Learning Resource Center (LRC), the Flawn Academic Center, and campus and public libraries.

**7. Course Modification:** To ensure achievement for course objectives, the professor reserves the right to make modifications to any part of this syllabus related to schedule and assignment due dates. Should any modifications be made, students will be notified by posts to Canvas announcements. Students should be thoughtful about the settings of their Canvas notifications and check their email frequently to insure timely communication about class requirements or modifications. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on the Internet may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

## **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 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 professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

### **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 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 14 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 the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office gives you instructions to do so.

## **VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE**

Topic	Reading	Watching/Doing	Assignments Due
<b>Week 1: August 26<sup>th</sup> – August 28<sup>th</sup></b>			
Introduction	Syllabus		<b>Discussion Board Introduction</b>
<b>Week 2: August 31<sup>st</sup> – September 4<sup>th</sup></b>			
Conceptual Frameworks	Johnson: Ch.1 & 2  Adams: “Theoretical Foundations”	<u>Video:</u> 1. <i>Moyers &amp; Diaz</i>	<b>Self Assessment</b>
<b>Week 3: September 7<sup>th</sup>-September 11<sup>th</sup></b>			
Cycles of Socialization	Johnson Ch. 3  Adams: “The Cycle of Socialization”  Adams: “The Cycle of Liberation”  “Can we just like, get over the way women talk?”  “Common Classist Assumptions”	<u>Videos:</u> 1. <i>Jensen</i> 2. <i>Rich Benjamin   My road trip...</i>	<b>Blog post</b>
<b>Week 4: September 14<sup>th</sup> – September 18<sup>th</sup></b>			
History of Privilege	Zinn: Chapters 1-4 & 23-26  Adams: “Symbolic Racism, History and Reality”  Peggy MacIntosh: “ Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”  Melissa Harris-Perry and James Perry: “From New Orleans to Ferguson, a Decade of Asserting Black lives Matter”	Visit the LBJ Library Social Justice Gallery (2h)  <u>Video:</u> 1. <i>Michael Moore   A Brief History...</i>	<b>Blog post</b>
<b>Week 5: September 21<sup>st</sup> – September 25<sup>th</sup></b>			
Cultural Competency	Johnson: Chapters 4-6	<u>Videos:</u>  1. <i>Jimmy Carter   Why I believe...</i> 2. <i>Melody Hobson   Color blind or color brave?</i>  <u>Online Activity:</u> Project Implicit Global Rich Test	<b>Blog post</b>
<b>Week 6: September 28<sup>th</sup> – October 2<sup>nd</sup></b>			
Identity Construction	Adams: “The Complexity of Identity: Who Am I?”	<u>Videos:</u> 1. <i>Stella Young   I am not your inspiration...</i> 2. <i>Lana Wachowski</i> 3. <i>iO Twillett Wright   50 shades of gay</i>	<b>Blog post</b>

		4. <i>Yassmin Abdel-Magied   What does my headscarf mean to you?</i>	
<b>Week 7: October 5<sup>th</sup> – October 9<sup>th</sup></b>			
Theories of difference	Adams: “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness”  Adams: “The Dangerous consequences of Growing Inequality”  Adams: “Night to His Day”  Adams: “How Homophobia Hurts Everyone”	<u>Videos:</u>  1. <i>Lee Mokobe   A powerful poem...</i> 2. <i>Rosie King   How Autism freed me...</i>	<b>Blog post</b>  <b>Op-Ed #1</b>
<b>Week 8: October 12<sup>th</sup> – October 16<sup>th</sup></b>			
Theories of difference, continued	Adams: “Aging with Disabilities”  Adams: “Recognizing Ableist Beliefs and Practices and Taking Action as An Ally”  Adams: “Christian Privilege”	Visit Blanton Museum Exhibit   <i>Moderno: Design for Living in Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela, 1940-1978.</i>	<b>Blog post</b>  <b>Take a picture</b>
<b>Week 9: October 19<sup>th</sup> – October 23<sup>rd</sup></b>			
Identity and Social Interactions	“Identities and Social Locations”	<u>Videos:</u> 1. <i>Aaron Huey   America’s Native Prisoners of War</i> 2. <i>Tan Lee   My immigration story</i> 3. <i>Jaqueline Novogratz   An escape from poverty</i>	<b>Blog post</b>
<b>Week 10: October 26<sup>th</sup> – October 30<sup>th</sup></b>			
Stigma	“There’s Something Absolutely Wrong With What We Do To Boys Before They Grow Into Men”  “11 ‘Girly’ Things Men Wish They Could Do Without Judgment”	<u>Videos:</u> 1. <i>Because Who Is Perfect?</i> 2. <i>Kiri Davis</i> 3. <i>LZ Ganderson   The myth of the gay agenda</i>	<b>Blog post</b>  <b>Op-Ed #2</b>
<b>Week 11: November 2<sup>nd</sup> – November 6<sup>th</sup></b>			
Institutional Inequity	Jean Baker Miller: “Domination and Subordination”  Pinkus: “Discrimination comes in many forms”	<u>Videos:</u> 1. <i>Cyntoia Brown   16 year old killer</i> 2. <i>Dropout Nation   PBS Frontline</i> 3. <i>Prison State   PBS Frontline</i> 4. <i>Park Avenue   Money, Power &amp; the American Dream</i>	<b>Blog post</b>
<b>Week 12: November 9<sup>th</sup> – November 13<sup>th</sup></b>			
Empowerment & Spheres of	Ash Beckham: “The fastest way to combat	<u>Videos:</u> 1. <i>What is Empowerment</i>	<b>Blog post</b>

Influence	prejudice-open up”  Clint Smith: “My hopes, dreams, fears for my future black son”	<i>Thinking Beyond Borders</i> 2. <i>Nate Garvis   Change our culture, change our world</i> 3. <i>Nicholas Christakis   The hidden influence of social networks</i> 4. <i>Drew Dudley   Everyday Leadership</i>	<b>Spheres of Influence worksheet</b>
<b>Week 13: November 16<sup>th</sup> – November 20<sup>th</sup></b>			
Individual and Social Change	Adams: “Developing a Liberatory Consciousness”  Adams: “Allies”  Adams: “Intercepting the Cycle of Oppression”  Adams: “Unite and Rebel”  Annah Anto-Pallindrome: “This white feminist loved her dreadlocks- here's why she cut them off”  Johnson: Chapters 8 & 9	Videos: 1. <i>Verna Myers   How to Overcome our biases?</i> 2. <i>Mattieu Ricard   How to let altruism by your guide</i> 3. <i>Scilla Elsworthy   Fighting with nonviolence</i> 4. <i>Ash Beckham   When to take a stand--and when to let it go</i> 5. <i>Clint Smith   The Danger of Silence</i> 6. <i>Omar Ahmad   Political Change...</i> 7. <i>Emilano Salinas   A civil response to violence</i>	<b>Blog post</b>
<b>Week 14: November 23<sup>rd</sup> – November 27<sup>th</sup></b>			
<b>THANKSGIVING</b>			
<b>Week 15: November 30<sup>th</sup> - December 4<sup>th</sup></b>			
<b>Final Exam Due</b>			

### Course Grading:

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