

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

Course Number: SW325	Instructor's Name: Diane McDaniel Rhodes
Unique Number: 63981	Office Number: SSW 3.116D
Semester: Spring 2013	Office Hours: M-Wed 12:30-3:00, or by appointment
Meeting Time: M-Wed 11:00 – 12:30 a.m.	
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### **Foundations of Social Justice: Values, Diversity, Power & Oppression**

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.

#### **I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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.*

#### **II. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course the students 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 (**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**) 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**).

### **III. ACCREDITATION**

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: Blog Posts, Observations, Culture Boxes, Op-Ed Papers, Final Exam

**PB15** Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups  
Objectives 4  
Assignment: Blog Posts, Observations, Culture Boxes, Op-Ed Papers, Interviews

**PB16** Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences  
Objectives 2  
Assignment: Blog Posts, Observations, Op-Ed Papers

**PB17** View selves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants  
Objectives 2  
Assignment: Blog Posts, Observations, Op-Ed Papers

#### **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: Blog Posts, Observations, Op-Ed Papers, Final Exam

**PB19** Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice  
Objectives 1 and 5  
Assignment: Op-Ed Papers

**PB20** Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice  
Objectives 1 and 5 Assignment: Op-Ed Papers

#### **IV. TEACHING METHODS**

This course incorporates a variety of teaching methods including lectures, readings, in class and online discussions, guest speakers, audiovisual materials, group activities, and student presentations to ensure a rich learning experience. 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.

#### **V. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

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

Adams, *Readings for diversity and social justice*. (2010) (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

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

#### **VI. 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 for each assignment are posted on the class wiki including the grading criteria.

##### **Attendance, Punctuality, and Contributions to Class (25 pts)**

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in an interactive framework between students and professor. Failure to attend class regularly and failure to demonstrate comprehension of the readings through class discussion either in the classroom or online will have an impact on the final grade.

##### **Self-Interview**

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. An interview guide is provided on the class wiki. You are asked not to prepare in any way for this assessment. You will make an mp3 audio or a video recording of yourself answering the questions in the interview guide. Your interview should last a minimum of 60 minutes. Your recording is due during the second session of class.

At the end of the semester you are asked to listen to/view the interview and to reflect on your responses in a 5-7 page essay **as part of your final exam**. The purpose of this assignment is self-reflection and not extensive discussion of the readings. Refer only to ideas, events, and readings that were most significant to you in your analysis.

### **Blog (25pts)**

This course involves a significant amount of required reading and classroom 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. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate understanding of course content as well as:

- a) Clarify your thoughts about and understanding of course content covered by the readings, videos, classroom activities and discussion;
- b) Examine your 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 ones own role in promoting social and economic justice; and,
- d) Extend the dialog outside the classroom in a respectful, reflective and thoughtful manner, using a variety of media to articulate your responses and reflections on issues related to social justice, diversity, privilege and oppression

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 are expected to 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.

Criteria for evaluation: Your blogging will be graded on the thoughtfulness, topicality (please note this blog is not a venue for personal venting),

### **CULTURE BOX (10pts)**

The purpose of this assignment is to identify your “collective me” that has shaped your social identity. Choose a small box for your “culture chest.” Place inside, 5 items that represent your social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, social class, nationality, age, size) that have influenced your worldview or behavior. These items might include photographs, pieces of art, jewelry, piece of clothing, or anything you believe has significant influence on how you perceive and behave in the world. • Decorate the outside of your box with 5 images (e.g., pictures, drawings, words or phrases) that describe how you think others view your social identities and have treated you based on these social identities. • Please be mindful of time while presenting your culture box so others also have an opportunity to do so within a timely manner.

**Criteria for evaluation:** Thoughtful contents inside the culture box. Thoughtful decoration of the outside of the culture chest. Sharing of the culture chest during class, including your description of how each item relates to a specific social group

membership.

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

Two Op-Ed pieces written about an issue related to social justice, diversity, power, and oppression. We will read several examples of Op-Ed writings from the NY Times, Washington Post, and other major newspapers to familiarize students with the structure of writing an opinion that is substantiated by facts. 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 our democracy. Cite all sources used and include a reference list following APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition) and include a reference page of all cited literature.

We will use NY Times word limit guidelines for op-ed submissions, recommended 750 words, however read the following articles by Op-Ed Editor David Shipley for detailed guidance:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/31/opinion/31shipley.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1312145219-hrcY5PeF68QWkOrwm54Olg>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/02/01/opinion/and-now-a-word-from-op-ed.html>

### **Criteria for evaluation:**

Adherence to op-ed guidelines (word limit). Content (clear and convincing substantiated argument). Writing Style (organization, clarity, grammar).

### **Comprehensive Examination (20 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 student's ability to integrate readings from the texts, collateral readings, and class discussions.

**Social Work Student Day at the Legislature** (5pts extra credit) **March 4.** We will convene at 9:00 am at the First United Methodist Church meeting hall for training, and proceed to the Capitol Steps for speak outs and time to visit legislative offices. Participants will coordinate their own legislative visits. If you participate, write a one page reflection on the experience.

## **VII. 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 readings and preparatory assignments prior to class. Failure to demonstrate through discussions in class, online, and through assignments that one has comprehended the readings will be considered when assigning the final grade. Students are responsible for the material in the assigned readings whether or not the material is covered in class. 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:** Refrain from private conversations during class or other disruptive behavior. Disrespect toward 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. **Electronic Devices:** All communication devices should be turned off or placed on silent mode during class. Unless laptops are required for specific class sessions, students may not use laptops during class without prior permission from the professor. Grade is negatively impacted by student's failure to comply with this policy.

**4. Class Attendance Policy:** Punctuality and timeliness are important for social work practitioners. Class attendance is expected. Attendance is defined as students' attentive physical presence in class for the entire class. Establishing a pattern of late arrivals and early departures will negatively affect your grade. A pattern is considered three or more late arrivals and early departures during the semester. Late arrivals and early departures are defined as student arriving 10 minutes after class starting or prior to class ending. Missing more than two classes will result in loss of a letter grade. It is your responsibility to sign the weekly attendance sheet. The instructor should be notified in advance of any planned absence and as soon as possible in the case of an unforeseen, serious emergency.

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

**6. 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.

**7. Use of WIKI:** The professor uses a wiki page – a Web-based course management /collective workspace. An orientation will be given the first day of class. 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, campus and public libraries.

**8. 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 in class and modifications will also be posted to the WIKI page. Students should check their email and WIKI frequently. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on the Internet may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

## **VIII. 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 you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## **IX. COURSE SCHEDULE**

Date	Topic	Reading due	Assignments
Monday January 13	Introductions Course Overview Review of Syllabus and		Sign in to WIKI & set up blog

	Assignments		
Wednesday 1/15	Conceptual Frameworks	Johnson Ch. 1 & 2 Adams Section 1	
Monday 20	MLK Holiday		
Wednesday 22	Cycle of socialization	Johnson Ch. 3 & 4 Self-interview	
Monday 27	Culturally Competent Practice	Johnson Ch. 5,6,7 & 8	
Wednesday 29		Jensen video	
Monday February 3	Historical context of Privilege, Power and Division	Zinn, Chpts 1 - 4	
Wednesday 5	US Cultural norms	Zinn, Chpts 23 - 25	
Monday 10	Race & Ethnicity	Adams Section 2 Project Implicit test	
Wednesday 12			
Monday 17	Class	Adams Section 3 Global Rich List test	
Wednesday 19		Erenriech/ Moyers video	Op Ed 1 due
Monday 24	Religion	Adams Section 4	
Wednesday 26			
Monday March 3	Gender	Adams Section 5	
Wednesday 5		Beauty & Beast Blog	
Monday 10	Spring Break		
Wednesday 17			
Monday 17	Heterosexual privilege	Adams Section 6 & 7	
Wednesday 19			
Monday 24	Able bodied assumptions	Adams Section 8	
Wednesday 26			
Monday 31	Age	Adams Section 9	Op Ed 2 due
Wednesday 2		Jane Fonda video	
Monday April 7	Visions and strategies	Johnson Ch. 9	
Wednesday 9			
Monday 14	Visions and strategies	Adams Section 10	Culture boxes presentations
Wednesday 16			Culture boxes presentations
Monday 21	Culturally Competent Practice Revisited	Kivel pgs 93 - 118	
Wednesday 23		Abrams <i>Critical Race Theory...</i>	
Monday 28	Reflections		Final available
Wednesday 30***			

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