

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

<b>Course Number:</b>	SW 381S	<b>Instructor:</b>	Brenda Fierro LCSW-S
<b>Unique Number:</b>	61455	<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Semester:</b>	Fall 2022	<b>Office:</b>	3.104A
<b>Meeting Time/Place:</b>	Fridays	<b>Office Phone:</b>	512-917-4434
	8:30am – 11:30am	<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment
	SSW 2.122		

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

### I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the origins and impacts of social, racial, economic, and environmental injustices and introduces students to actions to dismantle systems of oppression. A core emphasis is on the development of advocacy skills for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Through self-reflection and collective learning, this course provides students with a shared language and structural analysis of racial inequity and oppression across social identities. These include race, ethnic origin, class, gender, gender identity and expression, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical and mental abilities, caste, immigration/refugee status, national origin of communities and tribal sovereign status. Course materials and activities lift counternarratives to emphasize the lived experiences of marginalized populations and intersectionality. Students will understand how marginalization from the dominant culture adversely affects individuals, groups, and populations. Students will explore the social construction of whiteness and understand the power and leverage it holds within society and the social work profession, identifying the systemic impact of anti-black racism. A variety of frameworks, including, but not limited to, ecological systems theory, critical race theory, feminist theory, the strengths-based perspective, and other theories with an anti-oppressive and antiracist focus will be used to support discourse on the social construction of race, cycle of socialization, systemic oppression, and strategies for community advocacy. In a collaborative learning community, students will develop their professional use of self and explore their role in promoting social, racial, economic, and environmental justice in assessment, planning, access to resources, research, and policies. Students will have an expanded understanding of the foundations of a socially just society and learn antiracist strategies to dismantle oppressive systems.

### II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Engage in intentional practice to interrogate personal biases and assumptions related to intersectional identities and commit to this as a life-long process.
2. Explore the inherent power social work holds as a field and name social workers' responsibility to manage their capacity to gatekeep and create harm.

3. Analyze how various societal factors, such as capitalism, patriarchy, and ethnocentrism create and maintain structural oppression and power differentials.
4. Learn to build on and mobilize the resilience and strengths of clients and populations relegated to the margins, centering clients and populations as experts in their lived experience, to dismantle systems of oppression in social work practice.
5. Develop skills to navigate essential conversations about race and racism and incorporate antiracist principles into practice.
6. Identify and compare various historical and current social justice movements.

### **EPAS Competencies**

The Steve Hicks 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, the UT SHSSW engages in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

**Using a common evaluation instrument, this course measures the implementation of knowledge, skills, values, and/or cognitive and affective processes to assess the following competencies:**

#### **Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Outcome 2.1: Responses demonstrate an ability to apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

Outcome 2.2: Responses demonstrate an ability to present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences

Outcome 2.3: Responses demonstrate an ability to apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies

#### **Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice**

Outcome 3.1: Responses demonstrate an ability to apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels

Outcome 3.2: Responses demonstrate an ability to engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

### **III. TEACHING METHODS**

This course is designed to provide you with a meaningful learning environment. You are expected to complete assigned readings, video viewings, and activities prior to each subsequent module. You are expected to participate in class via your discussion posts. Class attendance (based on your discussion posts) is required and essential for successful completion of this course. This course will use an electronic Canvas site. Canvas will be used for turning in assignments, grading, and communication between students, the instructor, and the TA.

To reach your class site on Canvas, please go to <http://courses.utexas.edu>. To access the course website, you must have an Internet connection and computer access. You will need a UT EID and password. The Help Desk available through the UT home page ([www.utexas.edu/its/help](http://www.utexas.edu/its/help))

can assist you with your computer and Canvas questions. You can also call them at 512-475-9400. Additionally, the Learning Resource Center at the SSW has computers and computer assistance.

#### IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

**Book:** Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W.J., Castaneda, R., Hackman, H.W., Petters, M.L., Zuniga, X. (Eds.). (2018). Readings for diversity and social justice (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.

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

#### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Late Submissions:** There is a 10% penalty for each day past the due date.

**Self-Interview:** Conduct an interview-style initial assessment of your own ideas and attitudes about diversity, privilege, and oppression. An interview guide is provided on Canvas. Make an audio or a video recording of yourself answering the questions in the interview guide. (video submission approx. 20 minutes long)

**Identity map and positionality statement and reflection paper:** Use Jacobson and Mustafa's Social Identity Mapping Tool (2019) to create your own social identity map. (Pg. 4 of the article describes how to fill out the map.)

- <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1609406919870075>

**Culture Chest Collage:** Create a collage that includes the identities assigned to you in society and those that may be invisible using pictures of items that represent those ideas. Please don't include subjects such as past trauma experiences.

**Implicit Bias Test:** An online test that measures bias by revealing implicit associations.

**Cultural experience assignment:** Directly observe and experience communities, organization, and individuals that may be outside of your cultural norms by attending an event. Reflect on your positionality as an attendee of the event. Write a 2 to 3 page self-reflection essay with the following components:

Social event examples:

- Art gallery featuring artists of color
- Meeting sponsored by an advocacy organization
- Lecture sponsored by an advocacy organization
- Protest rally

A = 100 – 90 points/Superior work: The assignment significantly exceeds expectations listed in the syllabus. Student exceeds what is required in the assignment and demonstrates a high level of

in-depth critical thinking and analysis (i.e., writing is coherent, ideas synthesized and logical, discussion well developed).

B = 89 – 80 points/Good Work: The assignment meets all the requirements and demonstrates evidence of in- depth critical thinking and analysis.

C = 79 – 70 points/Average Work: The assignment meets the requirements, but has minor gaps, and lacks evidence of in-depth critical thinking and analysis.

D-failing = 69 and below/Poor/failing Work: The assignment has important gaps, both in terms of not meeting the requirements and lacking critical thinking and analysis.

## **VI. GRADES**

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

## **VII. CLASS 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. Failure to demonstrate through discussions posts 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 posts.

**3. Professional Communication and Interactions:** 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 making derogatory remarks based on another person's age, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religious preference, and ability.

**4. Assignments and Grades:** Assignments should be turned in online on the date they are due, barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. There is a 10% penalty for each day past the due date.

**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 UT Co- op. A free, online resource for APA formatting can be found here:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html)

**6. 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 via Canvas. Students should check their email frequently. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on Canvas may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

## VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

**COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION.** The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

**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.

**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. For more information, visit: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**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 race, 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. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. 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.

**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 <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

**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 (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) 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 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

**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.

**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.

**UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC MAIL STUDENT NOTIFICATION.** Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

**RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS.** A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#). The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

**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 on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

**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 and COVID-19 ADVICE LINE (BCCAL).** If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. 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 <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>. The Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

**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.

## IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

The best place to get all the details on assignments, reading, and due dates will be Canvas. Each module will include the information you will need for the week.

<b>Class Day (Friday)</b>	<b>Topic (s)</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Fri 8/26	Syllabus Review What is Social Justice?	
Fri 9/2	History of Privilege	
Fri 9/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implicit Bias</li> <li>• Racism</li> </ul>	Self-Interview
Fri 9/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures that Influence Society</li> <li>• Classism</li> </ul>	Implicit Bias/Identity map and positionality paper due
Fri 9/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ways to Frame the Problems</li> <li>• Religious Oppression</li> </ul>	Oppression Analysis/Policy brief
Fri 9/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Competence</li> </ul>	Case Analysis (In Class)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Oppression</li> </ul>	
Fri 10/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positionality &amp; Intersectionality</li> <li>• Gender Oppression (trans* and non-binary)</li> </ul>	Case Analysis (In Class)
Fri 10/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Othering &amp; Belonging</li> <li>• Heterosexism</li> </ul>	
Fri 10/21	Ableism Allying & Allyship	Discussion Questions (In Class)
Fri 10/28	Age Oppression	Discussion Questions (In Class)
Fri 11/4	Advocacy	Advocacy Assignment
Fri 11/11		Policy Brief Draft
Fri 11/18	Age Oppression	Discussion Questions (In Class)
Fri 11/25	No class	
Mon 12/2	Activism What are you going to do?	Discussion Questions (In Class) Cultural event project due

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