

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number:	SW 381S	Instructor:	Tahirah Samuels MSSW LCSW-S
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Semester:	Fall 2023	Office Hours:	By appointment
Meeting Time/Place:	Fridays 8:30am-11:30am Online	Office Phone:	214-531-7429

**FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE: VALUES, DIVERSITY, POWER &
OPPRESSION**

I. STANDARIZED 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 (SHS) has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, the SHS 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: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Behavior 2a: Advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels

Behavior 2b: Engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) in Practice

Behavior 3a: Demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels

Behavior 3b: Demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences

III. TEACHING METHODS

This class will be taught using a variety of methods with an emphasis on experiential learning for the purpose of building skill and confidence. The nature of the course content requires a didactic approach as well. Therefore, PowerPoint lectures, roleplays, videos, class discussions, small group and dyad exercises, and guest speakers will all be utilized. For success in this class, you must be willing to participate, take risks and "stretch" out of your comfort zone. You are expected to ask questions to clarify expectations, provide me with constructive feedback in a timely manner and meet with me individually as needed and/or when requested. All in-class discussions related to personal values, beliefs, or life experiences must be kept confidential.

Use of Canvas for this course:

This class uses Canvas – a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://canvas.utexas.edu> - for confidential communication such as posting and submitting assignments. Readings that are not in the required text, assignment guidelines and assignment grading rubrics are all posted to Canvas. Students can access Canvas Help 24/7 by calling 855- 308-2494. Students are expected to set notifications in Canvas so they receive announcements updates as soon as they are posted. **If anything is getting in the way of your learning, let me know as soon as possible so we can discuss it and problem solve!**

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

Benner, K., Loeffler, D. N., & Pope, N. D. (2022). Social, economic, and environmental justice: building social work practice skills. Springer Publishing Company, LLC.

Additional reading, video links, discussion questions, and other activities and assignments will be assigned and available to you electronically via Canvas.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Culture Chest Collage due 9/1 (10 pts):

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. Share in class.

Reading Discussions in Canvas due weekly starting 2nd week of class (10 pts total) students will submit a discussion question or reflection on weekly reading assignments in Canvas discussion forum (.5 pt) and respond to a question/reflection (.5 pt) for a total of 1 pt per week. Discussion thread may be referenced in class for further exploration.

Identity map and positionality statement and reflection paper due 10/13 (25 pts): 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>

Self-Interview due 9/22 (15 pts): Conduct an interview-style initial assessment of your own ideas and attitudes about diversity, privilege, and oppression. An interview guide is provided on Canvas. Write a 2 page self reflection with guide provided in Canvas.

Policy Brief Presentation due 11/10 and 11/17 (20 pts): Identify a current event, policy, process, or practice that you feel impacts a particular group of people disproportionately as a disparity or inequity issue, upholds white supremacy culture and/or you feel represents a social justice issue.

Cultural experience assignment due 12/1 (25 pts): 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. Reflection guide provided in Canvas.

Social event examples:

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

Assignment Points
Culture Collage 10
Identity map 25
Self-reflection paper 15
Policy Brief 15
Cultural experience 25
Weekly Canvas discussion and response 10
TOTAL Points 100

VI. GRADES

GRADING SCALE

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. 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. Each student can have one 48 hour extension on an assignment with prior notice to the professor without a penalty. This excludes assignments that are to be presented in class.

2. Writing Style: Students are expected to produce high quality work in terms of appearance, writing style and content. Points will be deducted for errors, misspellings, incorrect grammar,

poor organization, repetition of information, and inferior word processing. 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

3. Attendance and Participation: Attendance and participation for the entire class is expected for all students. Students are expected to have their camera and microphone on for the duration of the class period. If a student is unable to attend class, please inform the Professor by email at your earliest convenience. Repeated and excessive absences will require conference with Professor, and possible loss of points off the final grade. Classroom exercises, discussions, role-plays, and other class experiential exercises are essential for the students' professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. This form of learning cannot be "made up" once missed. Students will be expected to contact their peers to secure any missed notes or handouts. The student may schedule a virtual office visit with the professor if they wish to discuss missed classroom material in more detail.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. Time Management: All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date and time indicated. Late assignments will be penalized 5% of the total percentage points allowed per day that they are late and will only be accepted in the first week following an assignment due date. However, students will be allowed to turn one assignment in late by one day during the semester without incurring the 5% penalty. Contact the instructor before the assignment is due if other arrangements need to be made due to an emergency. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date and time indicated on Canvas.

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 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.

ACCESSIBLE/COMPLIANT STATEMENT: If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please touch base with your instructor to discuss your Accommodation Letter as early as possible in the semester so your approved accommodations can be implemented.

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 DISCLOSURE. Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as Senate Bill 212) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report to the [Title IX Office](#) any information regarding incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive information about incidents of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, class assignments, class discussions, or third-party reports) must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Faculty, staff, graduate assistants, teaching assistants, and graduate research assistants are [mandatory reporters](#) under federal Title IX regulations and are required to report [a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct](#), including the types of misconduct covered under Texas Education Code, Section 51.252. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy and parental status – in educational programs and activities. The Title IX Office has developed supportive ways and compiled campus resources to support all impacted by a Title IX matter.

If you would like to speak with a case manager, who can provide support, resources, or academic accommodations, in the Title IX Office, please email: supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu. Case managers can also provide support, resources, and accommodations for pregnant, nursing, and parenting students.

For more information about reporting options and resources, please visit: <https://titleix.utexas.edu>, contact the Title IX Office via email at: titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

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

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
8/25	Semester Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Expectations • NASW Code of Ethics 		Articles in Canvas
9/1	Power, Privilege, & Oppression:	1. Submit response to discussion board	SEEJ, Chapters 1, 2, 3

	Frameworks & Theories	Culture collage due: present to class	
9/8	Systems of Oppression: The history of whiteness Positionality and Intersectionality Othering and Belonging	2. Submit response to discussion board	SEEJ Chapter 13
9/15	Racialized Justice Internalized, Interpersonal, and Institutional Structural Racism	3. Submit response to discussion board	SEEJ, Chapters 5, 6, 11
9/22	Economic Justice and Environmental Justice Capitalism Classism Gentrification	4. Submit response to discussion board Self Interview due	SEEJ, Chapter 4, 9, & 10, 12
9/29	Disability Justice Ableism	5. Submit response to discussion board	SEEJ Chapters 7 & 8
10/6	Immigrant Rights Xenophobia & Nativism Religious Oppression	6. Submit response to discussion board	Articles in Canvas
10/13	Women's rights and Reproductive Justice Sexism, Sizeism and Fatphobia	7. Submit response to discussion board Identity map due	Articles in Canvas
10/20	LGBTQUIA+ Justice	8. Submit response to discussion board	Articles in Canvas

10/27	Healing Justice and Community Organizing	9. Submit response to discussion board	SEEJ Chapters, 14, 15
11/3	No class/self care day	10. Submit response to discussion board	See Canvas module
11/10	Policy Brief Presentations		
11/17	Policy Brief Presentations		
11/24	Fall break		
12/1	Last day of Class Next steps	Cultural event assignment due	

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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