1. Course Description:

This course will explore the origins and development of selected social variables characterizing racial, ethnic, gender, religious, class, ability and other cultural groups in contemporary U.S. society. Social and behavioral science theories and research findings on the allocation of different roles, status, and opportunities to these populations will be studied. Students will use a multidimensional, social justice, and multicultural framework to examine power, privilege, discrimination, and oppression. This course will emphasize that effective social work practice with diverse cultural groups involves understanding professional ethics in the context of the values of both the dominant society and the ethnic community.

2. Course Content:

The course content will include an exploration of historical, social, and political contexts for the study of diverse cultural groups, as gleaned from contemporary social science theories and conceptual frameworks. The current status of these cultural groups will be reviewed, including constructs such as the family, economic and educational attainment, development of informal and formal institutions within the cultural community, and modes of spiritual expression. This course will also explore the impact of multiple social group memberships on social roles, help-seeking and coping behavior, attitudes, and values. In addition, this course will contain a review of the contemporary conceptual frameworks influencing social science knowledge about intergroup relations and conflict, including but not limited to, culturally sensitive, and ethnoconscious practice. The relationships among privilege, discrimination, and oppression for selected cultural groups, and the implications of these forces for social work practice, the administration of human service organizations, and the formulation of public policies will be covered. Individual and small group activities related to the construction of critical consciousness and praxis in social work will also be included.
3. Course Objectives:

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

1. Identify the historical, social, and political forces influencing the social constructions of diverse cultural groups in the United States by:
   a. evaluating social science frameworks for the discussion of culture;
   b. gain and apply knowledge about social group memberships and identities, their histories and meanings, how they interact with each other in people’s lives and the larger society, and how they are affected by particular social contexts;
   c. reviewing one’s own social group memberships and how they have influenced opportunities and challenges.

2. Discuss the influences of discrimination, oppression, and privilege on life experiences of diverse cultural groups by:
   a. labeling forms of discrimination, prejudice, and oppression as these differentially affect U.S. cultural groups, including gay/lesbian/bisexual, racial/ethnic, gender, transgender, religious/spiritual, differently abled, and social class groups;
   b. identifying sources of intragroup and intergroup conflict stemming from cultural group membership;
   c. describe the forces that create and maintain individual, group, organizational, and community differences in power, privilege, and oppression.
   d. demonstrate skills in negotiating differences and conflicts at system interfaces.

3. Review the characteristics of selected ethnic and racial groups in the United States and identify key variables to be considered by social workers attempting to work with these populations by:
   a. examining historical, social, and political forces influencing the construct of family for these groups;
   b. locating the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, and ability status for these groups;
   c. critiquing the social science literature on social identity groups;
   d. examining variables, such as immigration and migration, cultural norms and roles, acculturation and assimilation, help-seeking behaviors, employment and income, educational attainment, and the establishment of informal and formal institutions within these cultural groups;

4. Course Design:
This course will include such pedagogical strategies as small group exercises, role plays, case analyses, video demonstrations, and didactic presentations. **Experiential activities will be central to the structure and process of this course.**

5. **Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:**

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** issues will be central to this course, which will provide students with a foundation for examining these issues within advanced practice courses.
- **Social Justice and Social Change** issues will be discussed throughout this course; however, those skills listed under the second course objective are particularly pertinent to this curricular theme. The relationships among injustice, conflict, and social change will also be discussed.
- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** approaches will be addressed within the section examining selected social identity groups in the United States. Students will use a strengths approach which links professional human service delivery systems with those formal and informal systems historically and currently available to these diverse cultural groups.
- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be used throughout this course and will provide a foundation for evaluating the knowledge base on ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, ability, and social class constructs in research and practice.

6. **Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

This course will operationalize the NASW Code of Ethics, as it applies to ethical responsibilities to service consumers (clients), colleagues, and organizations. Other social work codes of ethics will also be examined in the treatment of these ethical responsibilities for selected cultural groups nationally and internationally.

7. **Spring/Summer 2011**

Our national and global realities provide us with excellent opportunities for engaging in **praxis (critical reflection combined with action)** about the role of intersectionality in our lives and practice. There will be opportunities for intergroup issues to emerge; however, **this is not an intergroup dialogue class**. In order to operationalize key constructs for the term and examine their implications for praxis, we will focus on four contemporary issues: (a) immigration and migration (b) economic and social interdependence; (c) the complex interactions among race, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity and religiosity/spirituality; and (d) aging.
8. Source Materials:

Required Text:


Strongly Recommended:


Supplemental Readings

There are a number of required and recommended readings on the course CTools site in the Resources Section for your use. You might also consider the following readings:


Berman, Gary (2002). A spiritually sensitive social work response following a traumatic event. Reflections, 8 (2), 14-17.


**Assignments and Grading:**

--- All Assignments must be typed, double-spaced, use a clear, readable 12 point font, one-inch margin, page numbered, and edited for spelling and grammatical errors. UPON COMPLETION, ALL ASSIGNMENTS OTHER THAN THE PRIMARY RECORDING MUST BE SUBMITTED ON CTOOLS under the Assignments Section.

--- Points will be deducted from a paper that is difficult to read or one containing numerous spelling or grammatical errors. In addition to the stated criteria, papers will be graded for quality and clarity. Please be especially conscious of the appropriate methods for citing references so that inadvertent plagiarism does not occur. (If you didn’t initially complete the analysis or write it, you should probably cite it!! ) Remember that each submitted assignment should integrate course reading materials along with any other content. Two points per day are deducted from late
assignments. Papers not received by the beginning of the class period are considered late. If you have any concerns about your paper, you should see the instructor before the paper is due.

“How are my papers graded?”
A fully credited assignment would critically and succinctly cover all of the points in the original assignment description, use course or other readings to demonstrate an understanding of the main issues, and include personal reflections on the integration of this material in professional social work practice. The page limit will be enforced and will require you to choose your words carefully. No matter how brilliant you might be on page 10 of your assignments, the instructor will only read the number of pages cited below as the maximum. Your later brilliance will, therefore, not be included in the determination of your grade for that assignment.

Only those papers receiving failing grades may be revised and resubmitted for review. A contract between the instructor and student will be created in these cases.

**Assignment 1: Attendance and small group participation**
These are required and will constitute 30% of your final grade.

Participation includes being present, on time, active, and prepared for class and group discussions. Reading the assigned materials prior to class is also required. Active discussion includes asking questions or providing critical perspectives on the readings, but may also include involvement in the class CTools discussion group. You will be assigned to a small group during the first week of class, and will have at least one in-class, graded group assignment. Once during the term, each group will also lead the class in a half hour discussion of the subject for that week, drawing on the week’s assigned readings and those of previous sessions. Feel free to bring in additional readings and/or media for your presentation that week. Given the brevity of your presentation, additional guest speakers are not encouraged, without prior approval. The main purpose of the small group activity is to generate questions and observations drawn from the conceptual model and readings, and to link those observations to a particular course session. These small group sessions examine the ways in which our own intersectionality alters an understanding of the subject matter. Recognize that the contemporary United States is part of a global village, and consider the ways in which the remedies you recommend may influence other parts of the world. Students will be randomly assigned to these task groups.

**ASSIGNMENT #2 Taping Assignment Part 1: (10 Points, Due May 16th)**
Please interview yourself, using the questions found on the Ctools site in the Resources Section and labeled “First Taping Assignment.” This is your personal interview and while it will be collected by the instructor, it will be heard only by you. Bring your completed tape/CD/other recording device to the May 16th class session. No recordings will be accepted after May 26th. Further, no credit will be given for the final paper to those who have not submitted their recordings by the due date.

**ASSIGNMENT# 3: Annotated Bibliography (15 Points, Due June 6th)**
Please choose a topic among those included in this course and select three additional readings you would wish had been included among the requirements. Write an annotated bibliographic reference of no less than two paragraphs and no more than one page on the reference. Your choice should be a scholarly journal article, chapter, online journal, or book (no newspaper articles, please). Include the full citation for your reading. Your annotation should include a brief description of the selected reading, how it relates to intersectionality, and the forms of intersectionality excluded from its analysis or discussion.

**ASSIGNMENT #4: Annotated Bibliographic Review (15 Points, Due July 11th)**
From the list of annotated bibliographic references compiled by your classmates, choose two citations you have not read before on a topic you wish to learn more about. Read the two citations and write a one page summary for each, noting: (a) something new you have learned about your own intersectionality as a result of reading the article/chapter/book; (b) how this new knowledge affects your social work practice and; (c) the implications of the article for understanding current social, political and/or economic issues around the world.

**ASSIGNMENT #5: Taping Assignment Part 2 (30 Points, Due July 26th)**
This assignment is designed to use praxis as the primary method for describing how your own behavior throughout the semester (in and outside of class) has promoted or inhibited your understanding of an aspect of culture you were unfamiliar with before the term began. Describe your personal struggles and accomplishments this term regarding this aspect and the ways it is moderated by intersectionality. It will include your analysis of how specific information from at least two of the four topic areas discussed in depth this term might be incorporated in your practice. There is a nine page limit for the final paper.

**COMPLETE CITATIONS MATTER**

**GRADING**

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<th>Score Range</th>
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Schedule of Topics and Readings for the Term:

**Week 1. May 9, 2011 - Beginnings**

Introductions:
- What is intersectionality?
- The role of Theories and Conceptual Frameworks
- MCDM: A Primary Organizing Framework for the Course
- Course and syllabus overview
- Ground rules
- Hopes and fears

**Reading:**

**Week 2. May 16th - Intersection 1: Social Class - Lost and Found**

Taping Assignment Due

- Group 2 Leads Discussion
- Video: People Like Us
- “We don’t have class in the United States”
- Relationship of Social Group Memberships to Rates of Incarceration
- “Nice” women don’t
- Readings

- Zinn, Chapters 1,2 and Afterword for 20th Century Edition
- Zinn: 13,15,25
Week 3  May 23rd - Intersection 2: Immigration

- Group 1 Leads Discussion
- Social Oppression Model
- Video: A Beautiful Blend
- Readings
  - Zinn: Ch. 7, 8, 13

MAY 30th MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVED

Assignment 3 Due

- Group 2 Leads Discussion
- Understanding “whiteness” as a social construct in the U.S.
- Levels of Power and Privilege
- Confounds of Race and Class, Ethnicity and Class
- Readings:
Week 5 June 13th Intersection 4: Racial/Ethnic/Multiracial?

- Video The Color of Fear
- Fishbowl Discussions
- Readings:

Week 6. June 20th - Intersection: Aging

- Group Three Leads Discussion
- Perspectives on aging in the U.S.
- Privileges Versus Rights
- Who Shall Live?
- Readings:
  - Lee, Geum-Yong; and Ronald J. Angel (2010). Living arrangements and Supplemental Security Income use among

**Week 7. June 27th - Intersection: Gender Identity**

- Group Four Leads Discussion
- Act like a man/woman activity
- Ending dichotomous thinking about gender
- Gender Identity and Gender Expression Disaggregated
- U.S. Feminism: Who’s missing?
- What is marriage?
- Readings:

**Fourth of July Observed**

**Week 8 July 11th: Intersection: Gender Expression**
Assignment 4 Due

- **Group 5 Leads Discussion**
- Our Transgendered, bisexual, lesbian, gay and heterosexual lives
  - Hate Crimes
- What is marriage?
- Gender Oppression, Social Policy and Social Workers
- Readings:


@denison The Online Newsletter of Denison University(2006) Well-known 'Womanist' Kelly Brown Douglas '79 Challenges Beliefs of the Black Church Granville, Ohio: Denison University.


**Week 9 July 18th Intersection: Religion and spirituality**

- Religiosity Vs. Spirituality
- Sources of strength, privilege, or oppression?
- Dimensions of spiritual well-being
- The Role of Rituals
- Judge Your Neighbor Exercise as Praxis

**Readings:**


**Week 10. July 25th Intersection: “Dis”Ability**

**Assignment 5 Due**

- We are all temporarily abled
- Differences among “dis” abilities
• How “dis”ability impacts the individual, family, group, community, societal and international levels – the case of traumatic brain injury
• National and International Responses
• Readings
  o Teaching Tolerance: The ABCs of Disability Rights

Week 11 August 1st: Wrapup, Unanswered Questions, and Closing Exercise
• Sphere of Influence
• Being an Effective, Ethical Ally
• Readings:
  o Thompson, Allison (2009), Radical social work in these contemporary times. Journal of Progressive Social Services 20(2)110-111.

  o The Transitions Initiative Primer (http://transitionnetwork.org/Primer/TransitionInitiativesPrimer.pdf)