Course Description:

This course examines theory and research knowledge about political economic and societal structures and process related to communities, groups and organizations within contemporary society. Consideration is given to ways in which these social systems have significant social, political, economic, and psychological impacts on the functioning of individuals, families and social groups. The course provides a framework for understanding the influences of medium to large social systems on individuals, families and groups with whom social workers practice. This course will also introduce students to the curricular themes and PODS concepts (i.e. Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice) that are infused in the advanced practice areas. There is a focus on oppression, discrimination, prejudice and privilege and their relationship to social and economic justice for populations served by social workers. This knowledge is considered within a context of social work values and ethics that support the general welfare of all citizens, especially the disadvantaged and oppressed.

Course Content:

The course uses the central social work values of social justice, multiculturalism, empowerment to generate a framework for the critical examination of theoretical perspectives of organizational, community, societal, and global structures and processes. The key theoretical foundations that will be discussed include theories of poverty, inequality, racism, social change and social justice, theories of political economy and communities, and organizational theory. In examining these theoretical foundations, students will explore the intersectionality of the diverse dimensions [e.g. ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation], and how this intersectionality plays out in discrimination, oppression, and privilege.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
1) Identify, describe, and critique selected theoretical perspectives on organizational, community, and societal structures and processes.

2) Describe and analyze how community and societal structures and processes impact the client groups served by social agencies.

3) Describe how PODS (Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice) are manifested in the structures and processes of society, communities, and complex organizations.

4) Analyze how the intersections of the diverse dimensions impact their own life experiences, their relationships with colleagues and supervisors, and their relationships with agency clientele and community groups.

5) Identify major processes and contemporary manifestations of oppression, discrimination, prejudice, power and privilege as they impact on populations-at-risk and vulnerable and oppressed groups by:
   a) Describing barriers to organizational and community competence;
   b) Identifying sources of intragroup and intergroup conflict stemming from cultural group membership;
   c) Identifying the role of risk and protective social factors in relation to social problems and social/economic justice.

6) Apply professional values and ethics by:
   a) Distinguishing differences among culturally sensitive, culturally competent, multicultural, and ethnoconscious frameworks in social work;
   b) Critically evaluating organizations, community, and societal structures and processes that seek to promote social and economic justice.

Relationship to Curricular Themes.

Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed through presentation of theory and research about oppressed and at-risk populations, and the impact that community, organizational and societal functioning has on the well-being of these groups.

Social Justice and Social Change will be covered in the empirical and theoretical literature that document socially just organizational, community, and societal structures and processes. Social change theories and strategies will be presented that demonstrate how we move toward a more socially just society.
Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through discussion of programs and systemic interventions to prevent stress and oppression of individuals, families, and groups and enhance their quality of life and well-being. The role of risk, resiliency, and preventive social factors will be discussed in relations to social problems.

Behavioral and Social Sciences Research will be reflected in the organizational, community, and societal theories that are presented in order to analyze the impact that the social environment has on individuals, families and groups.

Social Work Ethics and Values: This course will address ethical and value issues related to working with organizations, communities, and societal structures and processes. The NASW Code of Ethics and other professional codes will be used to inform practice in this area. Examples of ethical and value related issues will include: the social worker's responsibility to promote the general welfare of society by preventing and eliminating discrimination, ensuring equal access to resources, expanding choices and opportunities for all persons, encouraging respect for diversity, advocating for changes in social policies, and encouraging informed participation by the public. In addition, issues related to organizations will be covered, such as preventing discrimination in the work place, improving agency policies and procedures, and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations.

Required Texts


Additional readings distributed or assigned by the instructor will usually be available on the Ctools web site under Resources in the subfolders for Readings.

Design

The format is a mix of lecture and seminar, including student-facilitated discussions of the assigned readings and in-class presentations.

Cell Phones and Laptops

Cell phones should be turned off at the beginning of each class and stored appropriately; laptop use is to be confined to taking/making notes. Students requiring an exemption from these rules for any given class should discuss this with the instructor prior to the beginning of that class.

Grading and Requirements
The overall grade for the course will be based on a 100 point system as follows:

1. Paper 1: Self-Reflection (5 points)
2. Community Analysis Project (50 points)
   - Group Paper (20 points)
   - Group Presentation (20 points)
   - Individual Self-Reflection (10 points)
4. Take-Home Final Exam (15 points)
5. Class Participation (15 points)

Grading:

A+ 97-100
A  94-96
A- 91-93
B+ 87-90
B  84-86
B- 81-83
C+ 77-80
C  74-76
C-  70-73

“A” is given for exceptional performance and mastering of the material
“B” is given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material
“C” is awarded when mastery of the material is minimal
“D” indicates deficiency and carries no credit
“E” indicates failure and carries no credit

Submitting written assignments – The written assignments should be submitted on the due date, prior to the beginning of class. Please submit assignments electronically via Ctools, or as an email attachment (katroot@umich.edu).

PLEASE NOTE:
• If you have any condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, 734-763-3000.

• All assignments are to be completed by the date due. Exceptions will be granted with the permission of the instructor in advance of the due date for the assignment. Assignments submitted late without such permission will be downgraded.

• Students are to use APA “citation format” for each of the assignments. Each assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers, for direct quotes.

• Please review the Student Guide section on “Ethical Conduct in the University Environment.” This section specifically addresses plagiarism and the possible consequences for engaging in this behavior. The University of Michigan Library system has an on-line resource that can assist you in preparing proper citations for assignments using APA format. Go to www.lib.umich.edu/ug/research/citationguide/AP5thed/pdf.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Session 1: September 12

Introducing ourselves

Introducing the course

Introduction to the PODS concepts: what are the different ways to think about the relationship between the individual, communities, and society?

Required Reading

Johnson, Chapter 2: Privilege, Oppression and Difference

Session 2: September 19

SELF-REFLECTION PAPER 1 DUE PRIOR TO THE START OF CLASS

Going beyond the Diversity Wheel

What baggage do we carry into the field?

Why does that matter?

Implications of childhood poverty
**Required Reading**


**Session 3: September 26**

Causes of poverty and inequality, part I

**Required Reading**

Constitution of South Africa (Chapter 2, Bill of Rights) (CTools)


- Chapter 5: The politics of poverty
- Chapter 8: Politicizing poverty


Hurst, Chapter 7: The polarization of economic resources. (CTools)

**Recommended Reading:**


**Session 4: October 3**
Competing social paradigms, and how they relate to social work practice.

**Required Reading**

Mullaly Chapter 2: The social work vision: a progressive view

Mullaly Chapter 3: The Neo-Conservative Paradigm

Mullaly Chapter 4: The Liberal and Neo-Liberal Paradigms

Mullaly Chapter 5: The Social Democratic Paradigm

Johnson Chapter 3: Capitalism, Class, and the Matrix of Domination

**Session 5: October 10**

Causes of poverty and inequality, part II

**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**


Kelly, Nathan J., and Enns, Peter K. 2010. Inequality and the Dynamics of Public Opinion: The Self-Reinforcing Link between Economic Inequality and Mass Preferences. (CTools)

**October 17: Study Break—no class**

**Session 6: October 24**
PAPER 2 DUE PRIOR TO START OF CLASS

How can we define communities and neighborhoods?

Why are they important to social work practice?

What are the forces that impact neighborhoods and communities?

- Demographic impacts
- Patterns of residential segregation
- What are poverty neighborhoods?
- What happens to a community when work disappears?

Required Reading


Recommended Reading


Session 7: October 31

What is the relationship between culture and structure in poverty neighborhoods?

How do cultural categories influence the distribution of resources?

What is the relationship between culture and oppression?

Required Reading


Johnson Chapter 4: Making Privilege Happen

**Session 8: November 7**

- Community social institutions
- The role of institutions in building community and social capital
- Community needs and human services

**Required Reading**


Johnson Chapter 5: The trouble with the trouble

**Session 9: November 14**

- The idea of a formal organization
What are human service organizations?

Why are social work values and ethics important for organizational analysis?


- Chapter 2: Hasenfeld, Y. The attributes of human service organizations.
- Chapter 3: Garrow, E. and Hasenfeld, Y. Theoretical approaches to human service organizations.

Johnson Chapter 6: What it all has to do with us

**Session 10: November 21**

**COMPARATIVE COMMUNITY ANALYSIS IS DUE**

---In-class presentations---

**Session 11: November 28**

What are organizational ideologies?

Where do they come from?

How do they influence social work practice?

**Required Reading**


- Chapter 6: Hasenfeld, Y. Organizational forms as moral practices
- Chapter 11: Martin, P. Rape crisis centers: Helping victims, changing society

Johnson Chapter 7: How Systems of Privilege Work

Mullaly Chapter 7: Feminist, Anti-Racist, and Postmodern Critiques

Session 12: December 5

Policy and task environments

How do social policies affect human service organizations?

Who are the stakeholders?

How do human service organizations adapt to a complex environment?

Required Reading


Johnson Chapter 8: Getting Off the Hook: Denial and Resistance

TAKE HOME EXAM PASSED OUT AT END OF CLASS, DUE DECEMBER 14

Session 13: December 12

What are human service technologies?

How does technology influence practices and worker-client relations?

Worker client relations: power and social work practice

Required Reading


- Chapter 13: Smith, B. Service technologies and the conditions of work in child welfare.


- Chapter 16: Watkins-Hayes, C. Human services as “race work”? Historical lessons and contemporary challenges of black providers.
- Chapter 19. Hasenfeld, Y. Worker-client relations: Social policy in practice

Johnson Chapter 9: What Can We Do?

**December 14: TAKE HOME EXAM DUE BY 5:00**