Spring/Summer 2014  
Wednesday, May 28, 2014 & Saturday, May 31, 2014

SW 799: Barry Checkoway  
Concepts and Techniques of Akwugo Emejulu  
Social Justice

Course Description

This course examines concepts and techniques of social justice. It analyzes the changing context and core concepts of social justice; models and methods of social justice practice; and techniques for strengthening social justice in areas whose groups experience inequalities in society.

Social justice is a deeply contested concept and the course explores the ways it is expressed and applied in grassroots groups and social agencies.

The course draws upon scholarship and practices from several social sciences and professional fields, with special emphasis on work in the United States and United Kingdom.

Course Objectives and Competencies

The course enables students to:

1. Analyze and critique core concepts of social justice, e.g., equality, justice, rights, solidarity, diversity, participation.
   
   2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice
   2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice

2. Understand and evaluate major models and methods of social justice practice, e.g., grassroots organizing, political engagement, community development.
   
   2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
   2.1.10 a-d Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

3. Develop knowledge of practices to strengthen social justice, e.g., joining together in solidarity, building political capacity, challenging prejudice and discrimination, facilitating dialogues across differences, education for social change.
   
   2.1.10 a-d Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
4. Recognize issues of ethics and values arising in the field.

2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research

Course Design

Responsibilities include readings, participation in discussions, written assignments, and individual and group exercises related to course objectives. Community collaborators and guest speakers may address topics in areas of expertise.

Relationship of Course to Curricular Themes

Multiculturalism and Diversity: Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which social justice can address race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other forms of stratification.

Social Justice and Social Change: Emphasis is placed on how social justice can strengthen social change, and vice-versa.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation: The course will focus on how to prevent social problems and promote socially just organizations and communities.

Behavioral and Social Science Research: Relevant research from diverse social science disciplines and professional fields will contribute to understanding of empirically-based practice.
SW 799: Concepts and Techniques of Social Justice

Illustrative Topics

Day 1

- What is social justice?
- Core concepts and conceptual frameworks
- Models and methods of practice
- What difference does it make?
- What matters most?
- Segregation and diversity as forces in society

Day 2

- Lessons from empirically-based best practices in the United States and United Kingdom.
- Strategies for strengthening social justice, e.g., joining together in solidarity, building political capacity, challenging prejudice and discrimination, facilitating dialogues across differences, education for social change.
- Becoming a social justice change agent: Who are they? What do they do?
- What is a socially-just community, and what is a socially-just process for accomplishing it?
- Obstacles and opportunities