

MUNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

School of Social Work

**SW 722 Section 001: Integrative Seminar for Community Based Initiative
Scholars: Social Work in Diverse Communities**

CREDIT HOURS: 1

PREREQUISITES: Community Based Initiative and National Community Scholars;
SW 647 & SW 697 (Community Scholars Section Taught in Detroit, Michigan)

**Fall 2014: Wednesdays 1-4pm:
October 8, 15, 29 (no meeting Oct 22), November 5, 13
Room B770 SSW**

Seminar Description:

This integrative seminar will integrate micro and macro levels of practice; research in community development, community leadership, neighborhood asset building programs, community based clinical practice, municipal governance, sustainable communities and the relationship of community initiatives and promotion of citizen participation, community well-being. The seminar integrates content and perspectives from several disciplines, specifically social work, political science, education, urban planning, natural resources, arts and medicine as these disciplines address problems – and solutions - in the areas of community social and economic development and sustainable communities. The seminar will highlight issues of social justice, oppression, privilege, diversity, and socially just evidence based community practice and empowerment among neighborhood residents, community stakeholders and local institutions, and municipal governing bodies.

Seminar Content:

This advanced level, integrative seminar is intended to be taken by students in their third or final term of masters level study. The purpose of this seminar is to integrate content related to community organization in urban, suburban, and rural settings domestically, internationally and globally. The outcomes of community organizing, specifically community well-being and citizen participation, are analyzed along several dimensions. The first dimension reflects the continuum of at least at least five models of community organizing (power based, community building, civic, gender-centered, and transformative). The second dimension is research that describes the executive, legislative and judicial work leading to the construction of local and national community policy. The third dimension is the relationship

between community organizing and non-profit service sectors, including housing, community planning, education, employment, and health/mental health care service sectors. The fourth dimension involves the integration of community practice from other professional and academic perspectives, especially public health, medicine, community psychology, economics, business, urban planning, political science, humanities and natural resources.

The seminar covers select topics in community organizing that are of notable currency and controversy and that allow for the integration across these four dimensions. Particular emphasis is placed on topics that reflect issues of oppression and social justice, disadvantage, and disproportionality. Examples of topics include: 1) environmental racism, 2) racial construction and maintenance of “inner cities” “urban community”, “rural communities” 3) tax incentives for promotion of business and housing related community development, 4) expansion of school choice and dismantling of public school systems, 5) use of intellectual property laws to support “creative economies”, 6) identification, benefits and opportunity costs of identifying artists, gays, lesbians and immigrants as ‘urban pioneers, rural pioneers, change agents, and source of entrepreneurial activities’ in community and social change development, 7) education and training needs for community residents in the design of ‘smart growth, urbanism and green building’ 8) alignment of political and economic power in urban and rural communities, 9) feminist and gender based approaches to community and social change practice, and 10) recreating progressive community policies for the United States.

Seminar Objectives:

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

1. Understand the relationship and intersections of race, gender, and social class in creation and maintenance of ‘inner city’ ‘rural areas’ constructions of community.
2. Use this understanding in a critical analysis of a spectrum of interventions used to promote progressive community well-being and citizen participation.
3. Conceptualize and describe issues and interventions in community organizing that promote community well-being and citizen participation from individual, social and structural perspectives especially as it relates to diverse dimensions (including 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).
4. Demonstrate knowledge about research findings, as they relate to a range of neighborhood development and citizen participation policies, programs, services and issues.

5. Demonstrate knowledge about the relationship of community organizing, community well being, and citizen participation to other social problems.
6. Demonstrate knowledge about substantive material from other professional disciplines, such as urban planning, public policy, law, natural resources, education, and public health as they are related to community practice, citizen participation, and community well-being.
7. Generate a “capstone” project that integrates skills, competencies, theory, and knowledge acquired by students during their masters level experience in the Community Scholars Program.

Seminar Design:

This seminar will make use of lectures, discussion, small group exercises, student presentations, and media. Guest speakers from relevant disciplines and experts in issues addressed in the seminar will be employed. Students will be required to demonstrate specialized knowledge related to urban community practice issues of their choice, which they will explore by means of critical reviews, literature reviews, visits to relevant programs, and direct contact with impacted individuals.

Relationship of the Seminar to Four Curricular Themes:

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed in this seminar through the emphasis on enhancing the well-being and community participation of populations and groups that have been historically subject to discrimination, injustice, and oppression. The issues to be examined will include the motivations for, content, and impact of laws and regulations affecting human rights and nondiscrimination on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, religion, and sexual orientation.
- **Social Justice and Social Change** underlie the creation of mediating structures, programs, and policies expressly designed to enhance community well-being and citizen participation. Students will examine these issues as well as social work’s historical engagement in planned change and the meaning of its underlying commitment to social justice in contemporary U.S. and global environments. Methods for increasing community participation and empowerment will be reviewed, and special attention will be given to developing methods that are democratic, participatory, and focused on equity and equality.
- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be examined in terms of whether programs and policies are effective or ineffective in their promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation efforts. Sometimes, programs designed to express these themes complement each other – for example, when participation enhances promotion and prevention, and both are part of a comprehensive strategy of change. The seminar will also focus on how policies and services can promote the goal of social justice and, by addressing the structural

causes of privilege and oppression, prevent the emergence or reemergence of their consequences. For these reasons, the extent to which programs and policies are infused with these themes and how they interact with each other will receive critical analysis.

- **Behavioral and Social Science Research.** This seminar will be based on the twin assumptions that the programs and policies to be studied can be understood through social scientific methods and that scientific concepts can also be used in the design of effective programs and policies. However, even this assumption needs analysis. Scientific perspectives can lead to very different interpretations of social issues and, consequently, different policy and programmatic responses. For example, much of sociology can be divided into (1) structural/functionalist perspectives which advocate the eliminating of cultural and behavioral skill differences between groups and the legal, economic, and other barriers to full participation; and (2) conflict perspectives, which assume that societies tend towards conflict because power and resources are inequitably distributed and that, in the long run, conflict is positive because it increases the likelihood of expanding access to social goods. These perspectives infuse many of the readings and analyses presented in this seminar. Applying one or the other can lead to different interpretations of events and social processes and to very different social agendas and programs for social change. For this reason, even the social science knowledge base of this seminar will itself be subject to examination.

- **Social Work Ethics and Values.** This seminar will address ethical and value issues related to policies and services directed at social participation and community well-being. The NASW *Code of Ethics* and other sources of the profession's ideology and values will be used to inform practice in this area. Special emphasis will be placed on the social worker's responsibility to promote social justice in a diverse society by preventing and eliminating discrimination, oppression, and privilege, 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, ethical issues related to working with various client systems will be reviewed, such as the meaning of self-determination in a multicultural society, the impact of information technology on client confidentiality and privacy rights, and the concept of the client's interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, interruption of services, and termination.

Relationship to PODS Content

This seminar is designed to provide intensive focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS). Materials on these four themes are woven into the curricular themes described above and are integral aspects of seminar readings, assignments, activities, and exercises. Methods for developing and implementing PODS content are a major emphasis of this integrative seminar.

Specifically, PODS reflects six competencies:

1. Vision of and Skills for Social Justice
2. (Methods for) Reduce barriers (Oppression and Privilege)
3. Intersectional and Intercultural skills and humility
4. Monitor PODS development and application
5. Critical consciousness, self knowledge for continued learning
6. Intersectionality and eight groups (economic class, age, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and disability status).

Grade and Deliverables (Assignments)

This is a one-credit capstone course. Grading is P/F (no letter grade).

Assignments: All due no later 11/19/14 5pm (Ctools website)

The project may be anything that is of benefit to the student. Students may complete a resume, philosophical statement of approach to social work practice, create a process for organizing field, course related experiences (e.g. projects and papers), and extracurricular activities.

1. **Students will complete a 2-3 reflection/reaction paper** based upon the 2013 (SW 622 Ctools Site) personal roadmap of your anticipated professional and personal journey as a Community Based Initiative Scholar. Use the following guiding questions in your response.
 - What did you learn about community social work practice?
 - What did you learn about yourself as a professional social worker?
 - What changed most about you and your perspective about social work?
 - What changed least about you and your perspective about social work?
 - Any other observations?
2. **Each student will identify, continue work on, and possibly complete a Capstone Project.** Briefly stated, a “capstone” project is a key or signature work that integrates skills, competencies, theory, and knowledge acquired by students during their masters level experience in the Community Scholars Program. You can think of it as a fulsome response to the employer question “so, give me an example of your best work. And tell me why you think it’s your best work.”

Use that project as a core artifact in your ePortfolio, mPortfolio, seelio, LinkedIN social media presence. The use of Seelio is suggested but not mandated for the course. Students may use any portfolio application including those in current use, e.g. LinkedIN or another secure website.

3. Each student will **design and develop a simple personal statement – 1-2 paragraphs is fine**. In developing your personal statement respond to the following items:
 - What is your personal model of social work? What is your metaphor for social work? For community work?
 - What are your signature skill sets – your core competencies?
 - How will others be able to discern your model of practice by your professional and public work?
 - View ePortfolio and seelio examples if students are interested.
4. Each student will **design and develop a professional 1 page (front and back) resume (if you do not already have one)**. *If you feel the full resume is too ambitious to be completed in the minicourse, please complete the following two core resume components:*
 - In three sentences, describe your professional profile:
 - What do you do? With what communities and groups of people?
 - What are you skilled at doing?
 - What is your professional style of work and interaction?
 - In between 2 to 10 bullet points, list your core competencies/capabilities

Structure of the Course:

- We will always have a specific space and time (Wednesdays 1-4pm, b770). The instructor will always be present save for the October 22, 2014 session. We will have some times for structured activity, some times for drop in consultation with the instructor, and some times for individual student or group drop ins. We will add readings of interest periodically throughout the minicourse.

Overview of Capstone Course

	Learning and Assignment Related Activities
October 8, 1-4pm	1-4pm Thinking about deliverables for the course
October 15, 2014 (Begin Assignment 1)	1- 1:30 – Student discussion/feedback 1:30-2pm – review of revised course outline/activities 2 – 3:30pm – Generative Interview #1
October 22, 2014 (Work on Assignment 2,3,4)	NO FORMAL MEETING, but feel free to use the space (I will not be @ SSW)
October 29, 2014	1-2:30 pm: Career Workshop for Macro Students (SPE, CO, MGT) with Michelle Woods (To be confirmed) 2:30-4pm: Initial job pitch and presentations (rough presentations)
November 5, 2014	1 – 2:00pm: Work and feedback on personal Statement 2 – 3:00pm: Work and feedback on Resume /Resume elements 3-4pm: Creating/Enhancement online presentation
November 13, 2014	Brief Job Talks – 5 min presentations/Employment Pitches