SW708 – SPECIAL ISSUES IN INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE
GRASSROOTS AND POLICY RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:
CRITICAL, STRUCTURAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES
WINTER 2015

Time: Wednesday 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm       Location: SSWB B684

Professor Mieko Yoshihama, Ph.D., LMSW, ACSW
Office hours: Before and after the class on Wednesdays or by appt.
Office:      SSWB Telephone: 647-6255 E-mail: miekoy@umich.edu

Course Description
This course will examine theories, social policies and services, social movements, activism and
research concerning violence against women, and domestic violence (intimate partner violence) in
particular. Domestic violence is prevalent across racial, ethnic, and class boundaries and impedes women’s
wellbeing and autonomy. Domestic violence is not limited to physical violence, but includes sexual violence
and a wide range of other acts used to hurt, isolate, intimidate, threaten, and control women. While focusing
on domestic violence, the course will address other forms of gender-based violence through an ongoing
analysis of interlocking systems of oppression, power and control.

This course is an integrative seminar designed to help students strengthen their critical thinking
skills and integrate their knowledge and skills at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The course encourages
the application of these skills to various types of practice aimed at ending domestic violence and other
forms of gender-based violence, especially social change activities through policy advocacy and
community organizing.

Course Content
In this course, we will undertake an analysis of domestic violence as a system of oppression and
control shaped by, and resulting in, hierarchies of power that are gender-ed, race-d, and class-ed and
maintained through sociocultural, economic, and political forces. Throughout the course, we will analyze
the intersectional influence of individuals’ and communities’ *positionalities*—social locations/groupings
(e.g., gender, race, class, religion/faith, sexual orientation, immigration status)—on their experience of
domestic violence.

We will begin with an examination of the root causes and scope of the problem and various
theoretical, ideological, and political perspectives on domestic violence, as well as historical and
contemporary societal responses to this problem. For example, we will examine the following questions:
• What sociocultural and structural forces support domestic violence?
• What ideologies and assumptions underlie societal responses (or a lack thereof) to domestic
  violence?
• In what ways have sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, and xenophobia shaped the
development of current policies, services, and other responses to domestic violence?
• How effective are local, state, national, and international measures to end domestic violence?

Guided by these critical analyses, we will explore more effective approaches to ending domestic violence.

The course will emphasize the role of social workers and the available advocacy and social
change mechanisms in local, state, national, and global settings. Although the focus of the course is
domestic violence in the U.S., we will examine innovative grassroots and policy responses to domestic
violence and other forms of gender-based violence around the globe.

This course emphasizes and models an activist approach. Students are encouraged to take action,
applying what they have learned from this and other courses to actions aimed at ending domestic violence and other forms of violence and oppression (see Community Organizing assignment, for example).

**Course Objectives:** At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills to the evaluation and interpretation of research, media, and political reports on the issues of domestic violence and gender-based violence.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the structural and sociocultural forces that contribute to/sustain gender-based violence, and domestic violence in particular.
3. Identify the impact of sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and other forms of oppression on societal responses to domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.
4. Recognize the underlying theories and ideologies and the strengths and limitations of current societal responses to domestic violence in the U.S. and abroad, and begin to formulate alternative approaches.
5. Demonstrate knowledge and skills in micro, mezzo, and macro practice in addressing the root causes of domestic violence.
6. Apply the ethical principles of social work (and related professions) to prevent and intervene in domestic violence cases at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

**Course Design**

Designed as an integrative seminar, this course will involve intensive and extensive participation on the part of the students. To promote critical thinking and analysis, this course will employ a variety of pedagogical strategies, including experiential exercises, group projects, small group discussions, didactic lectures, videos, role-playing, guest speakers, reflective writings, and community projects.

**Relationships to Curricular Themes**

*Multiculturalism and Diversity* will be central to the course and integrated throughout. This course will examine the ways in which gender, race, class, religion/faith, sexual orientation, immigration status, disabilities, and other social stratifications impact both perpetration and victimization of domestic violence, as well as personal, community, and political responses to it. This course will also examine how policies and practice approaches differently affect people of color, the poor, immigrants, LGBT individuals, and other marginalized groups.

*Social Justice and Social Change.* This course will examine the ways in which sexism, racism, classism, and heterosexism have interactively shaped social policies and services (or the lack thereof). It will also examine the grassroots and other innovative efforts to address domestic violence in the U.S. and abroad that are designed to promote social justice and social change. Through these ongoing critical analyses, students will be encouraged to explore and propose policy and practice approaches that promote social change and social justice.

*Promotion, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation.* This course will address a wide range of responses to domestic violence across micro, mezzo, and macro levels and evaluate their effectiveness with respect to promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

*Behavioral and Social Science Research.* In this course, ongoing review of seminal and contemporary behavioral and social science literature will guide the students’ development of a theoretical and empirical knowledge base. The course will also explore biases and assumptions in research, as well as the role of research in promoting social change and social justice.

**Relationship to Social Work Ethics and Values**

This course will address many complex and challenging ethical issues that may arise in responding to domestic violence cases, including rights to self-determination and confidentiality. This course takes a critical look at current policies and practice approaches by evaluating areas where they come into conflict with fundamental ethical principles (for example, the conflict between protecting abused women from harm and ensuring that abused women have the right to self-determination). We will explore strategies to change those policies and practices that violate social work ethics and values.
# Course Schedule

## Part I. Overview through Critical/Structural Lenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1 (1/7)</th>
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<td>Definitions, Dynamics, Theories &amp; Research</td>
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## Part II. Global, National, State and Local Responses

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<tr>
<th>Session 4 (1/28)</th>
<th>A. Global Movements: Human Rights &amp; Development</th>
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<td>Session 5 (2/4)</td>
<td>B. State &amp; Local Movements &amp; Responses</td>
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<td>Session 6 (2/11)</td>
<td>C. National Movements and Responses</td>
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**2/20/15 6pm <<Community Organizing Project Written Report DUE>>**

## Part III. Policy and Practice: Challenges & Strategies

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**3/4/15 Spring Break – No class**

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## Part IV. Putting Together

| Session 14 (4/15) | Poster Presentations, Reflections & Moving Forward |

**4/16/15 12pm Noon <<Final Paper DUE>>**
Course Reader

- Required readings are available at the CTools course site.

Recommended readings:
- Additional recommended readings are available at the CTools course site.

Course Requirements

The University of Michigan expects a student to put in a minimum of two hours weekly preparation for each credit awarded in a graduate/professional school. Thus, you are expected to spend a minimum of six hours per week of preparation for this class. The assignments in this class have been developed to help the student systematically strengthen social work knowledge and practice skills and to enable the student to achieve successfully the goals and objectives of the course.

A Note on Scholarly Discourse

What we will discuss in the class involves controversial issues, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, immigration, and sexual orientation. All of us come to this course with various experiences and values, as well as assumptions, prejudices, and stereotypes. Disagreements are expected and even welcomed as long as we respect diverse opinions and perspectives and refrain from attacking one another personally. Let us strive to remain open to diverse perspectives even though some of them may conflict with our own.

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES (see pp. 14-16 for more detail)

1. Reflection Papers, Attendance & Class Participation 15%  
   Due on 2/20/15 6pm
2. Community Organizing Project & Written Paper 30%  
   Due on 4/16/15 12pm
3. Final Paper 25%  
   4/15/15 (in-class)
4. Poster Presentation of the Final Paper 15%  
   Selected sessions 7~13
5. Group Project 15%  

For all assignments, you are encouraged to share your ideas and plans in advance with your instructor.

Grading: Letter grades ranging from “A” to “E” are earned, with “+” or “-” distinguishing the degree of performance. Specific expectations for each assignment are provided in a later section of this syllabus.

Accommodations: Any student who feels that he/she may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment to see me as soon as possible.

Class Attendance & Participation: This class is designed as an integrative seminar, and therefore, class attendance and participation are critical to achieving the full impact of the course. You are expected to actively participate in class discussions, small group discussions, and various in-class exercises, some of which require submitting a written report at the end of the class. Class attendance will be taken at random, and any unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. You need to inform the instructor of your absence as soon as practically possible.

If you have a disability or 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 is kept confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office at G664 Haven Hall, G-664 Haven Hall, 505 South State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045, TEL 734-763-3000, http://ssd.umich.edu/, Email ssdoffice@umich.edu.

If you have difficulties participating in discussion for linguistic, cultural or other reasons, let’s discuss them individually and explore ways in which you may become a more active participant in class.
**Incompletes:** Incompletes are given only when it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the stated time limits of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

We adhere to high standards of academic integrity. Please familiarize yourself with the Rackham Academic and Professional Integrity Policy ([http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section10](http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-policies/section10)), which defines The Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Students and Forms of Academic and Professional Misconduct.

Any student caught plagiarizing or cheating in any way will earn a failing grade in this course and may be expelled from the University of Michigan. Other forms of Academic and Professional Misconduct include a wide range of behaviors, such as abuse of confidentiality and obstruction of the academic activities and scholarly research of another (e.g., harassment, intimidation, or tampering with data, records and notes).

The Library Research Guide on Academic Integrity in Social Work is also available at [http://guides.lib.umich.edu/swintegrity](http://guides.lib.umich.edu/swintegrity).

**SELF and GROUP CARE**

Regardless of whether you have been victimized by intimates and/or non-intimates, the course topics and materials have the potential to elicit distress, anxiety, a sense of helplessness, rage, and other strong and/or traumatic reactions. While these reactions are common and natural, they may be intense and may interfere with your personal and academic life. It is important to recognize your reactions (in other words, do not deny them, but explore and develop ways to process them). We as a group will acknowledge and address our reactions through class discussions, reflective writings and other means. I hope we can create a mutually supportive learning environment for all of us in the class.

If you experience a persistent and increasing sense of distress, anxiety, or trauma, it is important to seek assistance. The following are some of the resources available on and off campus. The instructor is happy to assist you in locating any additional resources you may need.

- UM Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). 734-764-8312; [http://www.umich.edu/~caps/](http://www.umich.edu/~caps/)
- UM Medical Center Psychiatric Emergency Services. 734-996-4747; 734-936-5900 (Crisis phone service, 24 hour/7 days); [http://www.psych.med.umich.edu/pes/](http://www.psych.med.umich.edu/pes/)
- UM Sexual Assault Prevention & Awareness Center (SAPAC). 734-998-9368, 734-936-3333 (Crisis line); 800-649-3777 (MRC); [http://www.umich.edu/~sapac/](http://www.umich.edu/~sapac/)
- UM Center for Education of Women. 734-764-6005; [http://www.umich.edu/~cew/](http://www.umich.edu/~cew/)
- SAFEHouse Center. 734-973-0242, 734-995-5444 (Crisis line); [http://www.safehousecenter.org/](http://www.safehousecenter.org/)
ASSIGNED READINGS

Part I. Overview through Critical Structural Lenses

Session 1 (1/7) Introductions; Domestic Violence – Overview

Assigned readings:

Resources/additional readings:

Session 2 (1/14) Definitions, Dynamics, Theories & Research

Assigned readings:

Resources/additional readings:

Session 3 (1/21) Root Causes & Consequences: Intersections of Oppression & Privilege

Assigned readings:


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**Part II. Global, National, State and Local Responses**

| Session 4 (1/28) | A. Global Movements: Human Rights & Development |
| Session 5 (2/4) | B. National Movements and Responses, |
| Session 6 (2/11) | C. State & Local Movements and Responses |

**II-A. Global Movements: Human Rights & Development**

*Assigned readings:*


*Resources/additional readings:*

II-B. National Movements & Responses

Assigned reading:

Resources/additional readings:

II-C. State & Local Movements & Responses

Assigned readings:

Resources/additional readings:


2/20/15 6pm <<Community Organizing Project Written Report DUE>>

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III-B. Correctional System

Assigned readings:


Resources/additional readings:


III-C. Health Care System

Assigned readings:


Resources/additional readings:


(n.d.). Oakland County Coordinating Council Against Domestic Violence. *Domestic violence: Causing an injury is a crime and must be reported*.

### III-D. Welfare System

**Assigned reading:**


### III-E. Child Welfare System

**Assigned readings:**


**Resources/additional readings:**


**III-F. Immigration Policies**

*Assigned readings:*

- Futures without Violence (Formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund). Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/content/features/detail/778/>
- Also see various Power and Control Wheels < http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html>
- *Introduction to immigration relief for battered immigrants.* Handout distributed at the annual conference of the Network to End Violence Against Immigrant Women, October 2003.

*Resources/additional readings:*

- Also see Futures without Violence (Formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund). *Resources for working with immigrant women.* <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/section/our_work/women_and_girls/_key_resources_immigrant_women>
III-G. Prevention & Community Engagement/Organizing

Assigned readings:


Resources/additional readings:

- 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/>
  - Soul City, South Africa (pp. 63-71);
  - There is no excuse for domestic violence (pp. 89-92);
  - Texas Council on Family Violence (pp. 93-100);
  - Freedom from Fear: Campaign against domestic violence. (pp. 106-113).

III-H. Arts, Media & Activism

Assigned readings:


Resources/additional readings:


Part IV. Putting it Together

Session 14 (4/15) Poster Presentations, Reflections & Moving Forward

Assigned readings:


ASSIGNMENTS

### Guidelines for Written Assignments

All written assignments will be evaluated for organization, clarity, and written quality, as well as for substantive content. In addition, they must:

- Be typed and double-spaced.
- Page number on each page.
- Be submitted via Ctools Drop Box by the due date (late papers will result in the deduction of 1/2 a letter grade).
- Follow an established academic convention for organization, pagination, footnoting, and bibliographic references (e.g., APA style). Papers that do not comply with an established convention will be returned, and a penalty for late submission will be applied.
- **Consult the Student Guide to make sure you are citing others’ work appropriately and not committing plagiarism.**

### 1. Reflection Papers, Attendance & Class Participation

At the end of each class, you will write and submit a short reflection of your learning. Some of the reflections will be shared anonymously in the class to aid mutual learning.

### 2. Community Organizing Project & Written Paper (6-8 pages) Due 2/20/15 6pm

**Assignment Goals:**

- To apply the knowledge and skills you have gained in this and other courses to a community organizing effort aimed at increasing awareness about domestic violence among people in your social network.
- To strengthen skills in project planning and public speaking.
- To deepen your understanding of group dynamics, including the impact of participants’ and your positionalities.

**Assignment Details:**

A. **You will organize a group meeting** to discuss domestic violence with friends, classmates, co-workers, and/or other acquaintances (e.g., church members), and

B. **Write a paper** (6-8 pages) that addresses the following:

1. **Planning** (1-2 pages)
   - Goals and objectives
   - Audience and recruitment methods
   - Assessment of the knowledge and experience of the audience and you
   - Planned activities—content and process

2. **Implementation** (1-2 pages)
   - Who attended & who did not? What factors affected their participation?
   - How did they participate:
     - Verbal and nonverbal behavior
     - The group dynamics
     - The perceived effects of the participants’ and your backgrounds/positionalities on the group process
   - The challenges you faced and how you addressed them

3. **Evaluation of the Discussion/Group Meeting** (2-3 pages)
   - Did the meeting go as planned? If not, why not, and what changes did you make?
• Did the meeting achieve the intended goals/objectives? If not, why not? What are the impacts of the meeting on participants, yourself, and others?
• Future actions about the audience, if any
• What did you do well?
• What do you want to learn more about; in what areas do you want to strengthen your skills?
• If you were to do this project again, what would you do differently or similarly and why?

4. Reflection about Your Learning (1-2 page)
   • Lessons learned: Summary of what you learned about yourself, others, the topic addressed, and/or a particular group, community, or institution.
   • The role of small gatherings/discussion groups in addressing domestic violence and other social issues.
   • Skills and/or capacities that you have developed, strengthened, and/or demonstrated through the assignment.

❖ Submit a copy of the materials you used (e.g., audiovisuals, handouts, recruitment materials).
❖ Cannot be part of the ongoing/normal task of your job/internship.
❖ You may include a social component (e.g., serving refreshments); however, organizing a luncheon or dinner party where domestic violence is “mentioned” does not constitute sufficient completion of this assignment.
❖ As you plan the meeting, it is important that you keep a good record of your planning processes: e.g., how and why you decided whom to invite to the meeting, how and why you organized the meeting in a particular way (e.g., the use of a video and/or small group discussion, etc.).
❖ Please do not include identifying information of the participants unless they are public figures and attended the meeting as such.

3 & 4. Final Paper (approximately 10 pages) & In-Class Poster Presentation
A. Paper is due on 4/16/15 12pm Noon
B. In-Class Poster Presentation of the Final Paper is on 4/15/15
   * More detailed instructions will be provided in class at a later time.

Assignment Goals:
   • To integrate the knowledge and skills in analyzing the root causes, theories, research concerning domestic violence, and societal responses to this problem.
   • To develop alternative/innovative approaches to addressing/ending domestic violence.
   • To strengthen (and demonstrate) your ability to clearly and logically present your ideas.

Assignment Overview:
This assignment will consist of two products: a written paper and an in-class poster presentation.
1. Pick a specific policy or strategy currently or recently implemented to address domestic violence, e.g., mandatory reporting of domestic violence cases, universal screening at health care settings, mandatory arrest policy; domestic violence prevention/intervention at workplace)
2. Write a paper including:
   a. Critical analysis of the policy/strategy currently/recently implemented (3-5 pages)
      i. A brief description of the policy/strategy of your choice and its goals and target population(s)
      ii. Background (e.g., the nature and scope of the problem the policy/strategy intended to address, socio-historical-political conditions)
      iii. Underlying assumptions, values, and theories
      iv. Strengths and limitations of the policy/strategy
   b. Your proposed alternative policy/strategy (3-5 pages)
      i. A description of your proposal – can be brief but be SPECIFIC and CONCRETE.
      ii. Rationales (e.g., theoretical and empirical base) for your proposal
iii. Analysis of the strengths and limitations of your proposal, including potential unintended consequences, as well as anticipated barriers and how to overcome them.

iv. Social work values that guided the development of your proposal.

c. Reflections about your learning (1-2 page)

i. Lessons learned: Summary of what you learned about yourself, others, the nature of the assignment, the topic of your paper and/or a particular group, community, or institution.

ii. Skills and/or capacities gained/demonstrated: A brief description of the knowledge and skills that you developed, strengthened and/or demonstrated through the assignment.

3. **Create and present a poster in class.** *We plan to open up the poster presentation to other students, staff, faculty and any interested individuals. Invite your family and friends!*  

*An alternative project* may be arranged in consultation with the instructor. Please consult with the instructor as soon as possible and no later than 12/2/14.

5. **Group Project - Facilitating an In-Class Discussion**

In this assignment, your pair/group will be responsible for presenting the main points/issues of the assigned week’s readings and facilitating class discussion. You have about 50 minutes. So, time management is important.

These presentations will take place during the selected Sessions 7~13 (2/18 ~ 4/8/15); tentative topics include: Welfare system; Child welfare system; and Immigration policies (subject to modification due to class size, guest speakers’ schedules and other logistical reasons).

Pay attention to:

- The goals, underlying values and assumptions, and strengths and limitations of the framework/policy/practice approaches presented;
- When applicable, impact of the framework/policy/practice approaches presented, including intended and unintended consequences;
- Implications for multiple levels of social work practice;
- Issues of PODS (privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice), especially intersections of oppression and privilege;
- Ways to encourage students’ participation, reflection, and/or critical analysis*.

* You are encouraged, but not required, to use interactive and other creative methods to present the main point of the readings and/or facilitate the class discussion.

The same grade will be assigned for both/all students in the pair/group. You are encouraged to share the responsibilities for preparation and actual presentation/facilitation in class.
SW708 – SPECIAL ISSUES IN INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

Student Profile

Name: ______________________________ Phone (_____) __________________________

E-mail: _____________________________ Current Address (City) ______________________

Where (city, state, country) are you from? ________________________________________

Practice Method: Major: IP  CO  MHS  SPE Minor (if any): IP  CO  MHS  SPE

Area of Concentration __________________________

First Year or Second Year? 1  2 

Track: 16mos. 20mos. AS  ED  PT

Field Placement (if any) __________________________

Reason(s) for choosing Social Work ____________________________________________

Please list any undergraduate and graduate degrees:

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Please list any previous “Social Work” experiences (please circle ones that are related to domestic violence/violence against women):

| 1.                     |                    |
| 2.                     |                    |
| 3.                     |                    |
| 4.                     |                    |

Please describe your reason(s) for taking this course.

Please list two objectives you have for this course:

1. ________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________

Anything else about you that you want the instructor to know?