Social Work 709: Dialogue Facilitation For Diversity and Social Justice  
Tuesday, 1:00-5:00 PM, 3752 SSWB  
Spring/Summer 2015

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School of Social Work joint office, SSWB 2764  
Office hours: Tuesday 12:00-1:00 in SSWB 2764, or by appt.

Course Description:  
This course is designed to give students a foundation in the awareness, knowledge, understanding, and skills needed to effectively carry out multicultural social work practice with populations who are culturally diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, ability status, and national origin. In particular, students will gain skills in facilitating multicultural group interactions and in resolving conflicts or resistance that may emerge due to cultural misunderstandings or oppressive dynamics. The topics of this course include social identity group development; social identity intersectionality, prejudice and stereotyping and their effects on groups; difference and dominance and the nature of social oppression; our personal and interpersonal connections to power, privilege, and oppression; understanding and resolving conflicts or resistance; methods of dialoguing and coalition building across differences; and basic group facilitation skills and their applications in multicultural settings.

Course Design:  
Like the learning environment you will be expected to create for dialogue participants, this class will strive to foster a learning environment where each student can reflect critically on their beliefs and perspectives and where your multiple perspectives can be understood, respected, and critically examined.

Facilitation training in this course will involve participation in dialogue-like exercises during class and practice sessions in facilitation skills. In addition, readings, journal writing, self-reflection assignments, and consultations with the instructor will enhance your training and learning in this course. More critical than your learning of dialogue facilitation skills in this course, however, is your learning of the content on cultural diversity and social justice. This will provide you with some of the knowledge, awareness, and skills that social workers need to possess in order to work in a multicultural society. Before you can facilitate dialogues on issues of cultural diversity and social justice, you will need to examine these issues for yourself and reflect on your own identities, issues, and experiences around oppression. This course will provide a forum to critically examine how our
multiple identities shape our beliefs, assumptions, behaviors, and life experiences. Special attention will also be given to assess how our multiple identities and different experiences with oppression enhance or hinder our work with diverse populations. Application of this knowledge will then be used in the learning of dialogue facilitation skills.

It is our goal to create a learning environment that is inclusive and respectful, as we believe these are critical elements to creating a safe space for dialogue. As a part of this, we would like to invite each of you to let us know if you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course. Please schedule a private appointment as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. You may also seek additional information and resources through the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.

**Course Objectives and Guidelines for Learning:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be better able to:

1. **Demonstrate personal dialoguing skills around issues of multiculturalism and oppression.**
   
   Students will learn how to engage in dialogue with others about cultural diversity and social justice across our differences, using respectful and inquisitive forms of active listening, self-reflection, and critical consciousness. Special attention will be given to learning how to discuss the difficult issues of stereotypes, prejudices, conflicts, and the pain we experience because of oppression when it is most difficult to engage in these discussions.

2. **Demonstrate dialogue group facilitation skills.**
   
   Students will learn how to create a space for respectful dialogue across differences, how to engage students in a process of multicultural learning and dialogue, and how to address group dynamics and processes that enhance or hinder dialogue.

3. **Demonstrate knowledge of multiple identities and the diversity within identities.**
   
   Students will develop a clear understanding of multiple social identities (i.e., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability status, age), as well as an understanding of the many ways that our multiple identities intersect to create remarkably diverse identity groups (e.g., being an able-bodied woman of color, a Christian Latino gay male, a poor white man with a mental illness).

4. **Understand the interconnections between forms of oppression.**
   
   Students will recognize that there is no hierarchy of oppression that supports one form of oppression or serves to perpetuate other forms. Students will also understand the concept of intersectionality and how the cumulative effects of multiple forms of oppression can create additional burdens.

5. **Understand dynamics of difference and dominance.**
   
   Students will understand what the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression are (e.g., systems of inequity and inequality, power and status differences, and relative differences in power/privilege or oppression), and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups. In addition, students will understand how structural differences in society are shaped by historical, psychological, social, and political factors.

6. **Demonstrate skills for multicultural social work practice,** including respect and validation of others’ experiences and perspectives, critical consciousness of oppressive socializations and awareness of one’s own biases, recognizing our personal role in oppression, and learning how to
interrupt oppression and work for social justice through various actions, including alliance and coalition building across differences.

7. **Ongoing development of critical consciousness and understanding its implications for social work practice.** Awareness of how the beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that emerge from our multiple identities (and their corresponding experience with dominance or oppression) enhance or hinder our abilities to work with diverse and disenfranchised groups. Students will also become more aware of the oppressive assumptions, biases, and prejudices that they hold towards other groups or their own group (internalized oppression), and how these influence their interactions with others, through conscious and unconscious beliefs, assumptions, emotions and behaviors.

8. **Recognize that this learning is continuous.** Develop methods for continuing this life long process of recognizing our biases, learning how to change our oppressive behaviors, and building a more socially just multicultural society.

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

**Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be fundamental to this course. Students will develop a clear understanding of multiple social identities (i.e., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability status, age), as well as an understanding of the many ways that our multiple identities intersect to create diverse identity groups.

**Social Justice and Social Change** will be central themes in the study of dialogue facilitation skills for multicultural social work practice. Special emphasis will be given to studying how dialogues can be used to interrupt oppression and work for social change and social justice through alliance and coalition building across differences.

**Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be addressed through applications and discussions in this course. Students will learn how multicultural practice skills can be applied to their field of practice interests and how cultural competence enhances the capacity of diverse groups being able to access the services and programs they need in culturally relevant forms.

**Behavioral and Social Science Research** will comprise many of the course readings and will provide a foundation for learning the theories, frameworks, and models of social identity development, intersections of multiple identities, intergroup relations, difference/dominance dynamics, cycles of oppression, and cultural competence methods.

**Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**
This course will address the social work ethics and values from the NASW Code of Ethics, including the social work values of social justice, the importance of human relationships, and competence (in multicultural practice), as well as the ethics related to cultural competence and social diversity (1.05) and to social and political action (6.04). This course develops multicultural competency skills to work with disenfranchised and oppressed groups in culturally competent ways and to address social injustice due to discrimination and oppression. Training in dialogue facilitation promotes sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural diversity, and it also increases personal and group capacity to work for social and economic equality and justice around differences in race/ethnicity, gender, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and ability status. This course also addresses the social work value of the importance of human relationships through developing skills in dialogue and alliance building across differences, both of which foster intergroup relations and support the belief that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for social change. Finally, this
class supports social work ethics that social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression (1.05) and that social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of difference, while working for equity and social justice for all people (6.04).

**Grading/Course Requirements:**

This is a graded, 3-credit, course. Students will be graded on the assignments described below. The following guidelines and descriptions are intended to help you meet the expectations for the assignments.

A major part of your grade for written assignments is based on your clarity and thoroughness. All written assignments should be carefully proofread for typos and clarity of content. A paper with lots of errors is difficult to read and will be marked down. **Most assignments should be double-spaced, using 12-point font, with 1-inch margins (The exception is journal assignments, which should be single-spaced.).**

You should turn in all written assignments on time (journal entries are due Sundays by 8 pm, all other assignments are due on CTools by 1 pm Tuesdays). Please post all assignments in Assignments on CTools. No hard copies are necessary. Having assignments in on time will assist us in reading and grading them in a timely manner. A paper will be marked down for each day it is late. Exceptions will be made only for extreme circumstances. If you expect that you are going to be late turning in an assignment, let us know as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly. Please try to anticipate your responsibilities and start your assignments well in advance of the due date.

Your grades will be distributed along the following scale:

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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-98</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>97-94</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>89-87</td>
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<td>86-83</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>79-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>76-73</td>
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<td>69-60</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>59 and below</td>
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**Assignment 1. Attendance and Participation (25%)**

Attendance and participation in all class sessions are critical for the learning process in this course. For this reason, students are expected to attend all class sessions. One point (2.25%) out of a possible 11 will be deducted for each missed class. Exceptions will only be made for extreme circumstances. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor and arrange for missed material. Active participation is critical to the small group learning community we will create.

**Weekly Readings**

Readings for each class session will be assigned from the course texts. Participation will be impacted by how extensively you are prepared to discuss the readings in class. As we find readings that are useful, we will either pass them out or make them available on CTools. If you find good readings, pass them on and we can make them available to the class as well.

**Required Texts:**


These texts are available for purchase online through various booksellers. They are also on reserve at the University of Michigan library. Additional readings will be available to you on CTools. Go to www.ctools.umich.edu.

**Assignment 2. 4 reflection journals (1 p, single spaced) and 4 forum posts and responses (25%)**

In order to deepen your process of learning in this course, it is important for you to spend some time reflecting on the class discussions and the readings by writing in a journal entry that your instructors will read, or a Forum Post to be shared with the class. The journal should serve as a log of your own experiences and reactions to the class exercises, discussions, readings and assignments, with special attention and reflection given to how your identities and knowledge/experience around oppression may be shaping your reactions and learning process. The Forum Post can cover these areas as well. You will be required to turn in four journals, typed, single-spaced, on CTools, on the due dates noted below, and four Forum Posts of approximately a paragraph (due Sundays) and then reply to at least two other posts (due Mondays). You are encouraged to write on your reflections over the past week. These will not be graded for their descriptions of what you are learning (everyone will learn differently). Instead, they will be graded for completeness, for their depth of insight and self-reflection, and incorporation of readings and classroom activities/discussions. Journals and Forum Posts will be given a score on a 10 point scale, and your grade will be the average score, weighted 25%. Clarity and careful proofreading are necessary.

**Assignment 3. In-Class Dialogue Facilitation, Facilitation plan, and self-assessment (25%)**

Each student will have an opportunity to group facilitate an in-class exercise once during the semester. Students will be assigned to co-facilitation pairs and a dialogue topic in the 3rd class session. Each pair will assume responsibility for about an hour of class on the day that their issue topic is scheduled. Students will deliver an activity related to the issue (shorter activities are highly recommended) and facilitate dialogue following the activity. Students will develop a plan with the instructors and are strongly encouraged to use the Adams, Bell & Griffin text as a resource. If special resources or space is necessary, please let us know as soon as possible. An additional 30 minutes will be allocated for classmates to provide students with feedback on their facilitation.

Students are expected to turn in a jointly written facilitation plan one week prior to the activity, using the planning template provided on CTools. The facilitation plan should be a minimum of two pages and include the goals and objectives of the activity and subsequent dialogue, details of what you plan to do and the steps you will be taking, how long you expect each activity to take, the logistics of your plan (who is doing what), key issues for the dialogue, and potential questions that might arise.

Additionally, a 5-page self-assessment of

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<th>IN-CLASS FACILITATION PROJECT</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 week sequence of Planning/Facilitating/Assessment (25% of grade)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1 (or earlier, as scheduled)</strong></td>
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<td>Planning Meeting(s) with Co-facilitator</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, Week 2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, Week 3</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, Week 4</strong></td>
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your plan and your experience will be turned in the week following your facilitation. The self-assessment should be written alone, not jointly with your co-facilitator. It should include not only your own critical assessment of how you did, but should include what you thought you did that was useful, what was not so useful, what you might have done differently, and areas you would like to grow. You should reference the handouts, text, and readings to identify how the facilitation experience reflects the principles of dialogue, facilitation, and social justice education in general. Try to be explicit in your references to other sources—it should be more than your opinion. Grades will be based on the clarity and thoroughness of your self-assessment as well as linkages to readings and resources.

Assignment 4. Reflection papers I (8-10 pages) (15%) and II (5 pages) (10%)
See assignment details at the end of the syllabus. We will discuss this more in class as well.

Weekly Schedule & Course Outline
In order to prepare students to facilitate intergroup dialogues, attention must be given to both content and process issues. In addition to group facilitation skills, dialogue facilitation requires us to reflect on our own experiences with oppression and privilege and to be prepared for issues that often arise given the emotional and controversial nature of social justice issues. This course is structured to provide opportunities for us to engage with activities and readings designed to stimulate dialogue and increase our consciousness related to power issues. These shared activities will also serve as examples for us to illustrate and practice skills for facilitating intergroup dialogue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Topics</th>
<th>Readings (to be read before class)</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong> (May 12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intersectionality and Simultaneity</td>
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<td>Journal 1 due Sunday, May 17th 8 pm</td>
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### Week 3 (May 26)

**Power, Privilege, Oppression and Socialization**


**Week 4 (June 2)
Dialogue Facilitation Basics**


- **OPTIONAL (Additional reading on facilitation, overlaps with other readings but offers great, thorough, well-categorized coverage):**
  - Adams, Bell, & Griffin (Teachings Book)—Chapter 5: *Facilitating Social Justice Education Courses P. 89-113*
### Week 5 (June 9)

**Examining Privilege, Intersectionality, and Positionalities in Dialogue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OPTIONAL: (Readings on dialogue design)</strong></td>
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**Weeks 6-9**

Weeks 6 thru 9 will primarily involve dialogue sessions designed and facilitated by students. We will determine early in the term, as a class, the broad dialogue topics that we’ll cover this term, selecting from these topics:

**Racism, Genderism/Sexism/Transgender Oppression, Heterosexism, Classism/Income and Wealth Inequality, Religious/Faith-based Oppression, and Ableism**

Readings for these weeks will be assigned by students in collaboration with instructors, drawing primarily from the section related to students’ topics in:


As you’re picking readings, you might find the Table of Intersections at the beginning of the book useful to help you select readings that engage intersectionally with the topic.

Curriculum design and facilitation strategies can draw on the relevant chapter in:


The facilitation plan for the session you are responsible for co-facilitating is due on Tuesday at 1 pm, one week before their assigned dialogue session.

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**Forum Post 2**

due Sunday, June 7th 8 pm

Comment on two Posts by Monday, June 8th by 8 pm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6  (June 16)</th>
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| Dialogue: | TBD  
| Co-Facilitators: |  
| Coach: |  
| | Journal 3 due Sunday, June 14th 8 pm  
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<th>Week 7  (June 24)</th>
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| Dialogue: | TBD  
| Co-Facilitators: |  
| Coach: |  
| | Forum Post 3 due Sunday, June 22nd 8 pm  
| | Comment on two Posts by Monday, June 23rd 8 pm  
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<th>Week 8  (June 30)</th>
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| Dialogue: | TBD  
| Co-Facilitators: |  
| Coach: |  
| | Journal 4 due Sunday, June 28th 8 pm  
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<tr>
<th>Week 9  (July 7)</th>
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| Dialogue: | TBD  
| Co-Facilitators: |  
| Coach: |  
| | Forum Post 4 due Sunday, July 5th 8 pm  
| | Comment on two Posts by Monday, July 6th 8 pm  
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<th>Week 10  (July 14)</th>
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| | Readings to be Determined based on class interest.  
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<tr>
<th>Week 11  (July 21)</th>
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| | Reflection II due Tuesday, July 21st 1 pm on CTools  
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Reflection Paper I  (8-10 pages, 1” margins, double spaced, 12 pt font)

1. Background
Please elaborate on your identities in relation to: Age; Racial identity and ethnicity; Sex, gender and gender identity; Sexual orientation; Religion and Faith; Ability status; and Socioeconomic Status.

2. Identity and Awareness
   a) What does it mean to you to be a person from your different social identity groups? Do you think it has made any difference in your life?

   b) What are the positive aspects about being a member of your different social identity group? What are negative stereotypes held about your social identity groups?

   c) Consider a social identity in which you are in the privileged group and one where you are in a marginalized/oppressed group. In general, when you are in the privileged group, what do you think about the experiences of individuals from groups who are targeted for oppression (i.e., people of color, females, poor, LGBT, persons with disabilities, non-Christians)? When you are of the marginalized/oppressed group, what do you think about the experiences of individuals from dominant/privileged groups?

   d) What is your understanding of identity intersectionality? What is your understanding of how different social identities intersect with each other and the experience this provides for people? How do you think about and experience this in your own life?

   e) What has been your personal journey in learning about issues of oppression and privilege? What were key formative experiences in your learning? What are continuing issues you want to address or work through in regards to social identities, oppression and privilege?

   f) What impact does your social identity have on your:
      i. Communication styles?
      ii. Conflict styles?

3. Learning from previous experiences and intergroup dialogues

   Intergroup interactions
   a) Describe three experiences with people from different social identity backgrounds--one that was positive, one that was negative, and one that was ambiguous. What made these positive, negative, ambiguous? Please describe the dynamics in these interactions. How are these representative of the dynamics of intergroup relations in the US presently? What lessons did you take from these?

   b) What have your experiences been in discussing intergroup issues in the classroom? What made these experiences positive? negative?

   c) What have your experiences been in discussing intergroup issues outside the classroom? What made these experiences positive? negative?
Intergroup dialogue experiences
  a) Have you ever been involved in an intergroup dialogue experience? (If you’ve never been involved in dialogue, think about an experience where some form of discussion was facilitated around diversity or social justice and answer these questions.) If so, what conditions facilitated effective dialogue? What conditions hindered dialogue?

  b) What did facilitators do that was effective? In instances when facilitators were not effective, what could the facilitators have done to be more effective?

Facilitation experiences
  a) What have been your previous experiences of facilitation or leading small groups?

  b) What knowledge do you have of facilitation skills? What do you think it takes to be a good facilitator? How comfortable do you feel in facilitating learning in small and diverse groups?

  c) Why are you interested in facilitating dialogues? How do you see this as part of your career and role as a social change agent?

  d) What are the strengths that you bring to facilitating dialogues?

  e) What challenges can you identify in becoming an effective dialogue facilitator?

  f) How comfortable are you with:
      i. Participants expressing a variety of conflicting beliefs during dialogue sessions?

      ii. Disclosing some of your own fears and uncertainties as a way to model this behavior for students in your group?

4. Social Justice and Social Change
  a) In your opinion, what does it take to be a good ally in social justice work? What do you bring in terms of being an ally? What do you need from others to form alliances?

  b) What would be the consequences (i.e., costs) of acting against oppression of a particular marginalized/oppressed group that you do not belong to? With family? Friends? At school? At work?

  c) There are times for most of us when we do not challenge oppression. Thinking of times you do not challenge oppression, what holds you back from action?

5. Building a support system
  a) What do you expect from the course instructors and other students in assuring that you have a strong support system to learn, practice, and develop effective intergroup dialogue facilitation skills?

  b) What form of a support system do you need or have outside of school to talk about issues that come up in class?
Reflection Paper II

NOTE: It will be helpful to look back at your first reflection paper and journal entries as you answer these questions.

- How has your story changed over the course of the term? What have been the important experiences in the course that have affected your story?
- As you have developed a more complete sense of your role as a facilitator over this term, what are some specific strengths that you bring to this work? And, at the end of this term, what areas of continued growth and development can you identify?
- How have you learned about identity intersectionality and facilitating this awareness in others?
- Please identify and elaborate on three learning objectives for yourself to continue developing your skill as a facilitator of diversity and social justice. How will you go about working to achieve these objectives? How will you know that you have been successful?
- Please reference and cite at least 6 pertinent articles from the syllabus. You may also reference any additional course content, and activities.

The syllabus and course outline for Training in Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation were developed by Mike Spencer, David Martineau, Anna Yeakley, Julica Herman, Laura Wernick, and Naomi Warren based on examples and models from similar courses offered through the Program on Intergroup Relations (IGR) at the University of Michigan (developed by Ximena Zúñiga, Todd Sevig, Ratnesh Nagda, Monita Thompson, Teresa Graham-Brett and Charles Behling, Ruby Beale, Jackie Simpson) and through the University of Washington School of Social Work (developed by Ratnesh Nagda).

Adapted by Adrienne Dessel & Timothy Corvidae, Spring 2012, Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015