



**SW 401 Fall 2015: Syllabus**

*Room B798*

*Course Instructor: Alice Mishkin ([amishkin@umich.edu](mailto:amishkin@umich.edu))*

*Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10 am – 1 pm, by appointment*

*Room 3833, SSWB*

*Please allow at least 24 hours for email responses.*

**Course Description**

This one-credit course is the capstone for the undergraduate minor in Community Action and Social Change. The course is designed to help students integrate their learning from the different component areas of the minor and to develop a project that captures core learning. Students will meet in small groups to facilitate the development of key markers of integrative learning. Students will present their projects in a showcase at the end of the semester.

**CASC Minor Mission Statement**

The CASC minor is for students interested in developing knowledge, skills, and experiences in community action and social change. The multidisciplinary 16 credit minor will prepare students to:

1. examine community action and social change using a multidisciplinary framework;
2. address community action and social change in multilingual and multicultural communities;
3. integrate social justice values into the community action and social change processes; and
4. engage in service learning to promote community action and social change.

**CASC Guiding Principles**

1. The core values of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, competence) frames our interactions with students inside and outside the classroom.
2. PODS: Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice are taught to similar degrees in every class.
3. We represent Social Work – both the School and the profession – in our interactions with students, including academic and career advice.
4. We strive to respond appropriately to student inquiries in a timely and personally engaging manner.
5. We structure courses with student participation in mind throughout the term, notably by some conversation about ground rules at the start of the term and some identifiable closure activity at the end.
6. We see curricular and co-curricular opportunities as intersecting and complementary. We seek to find more opportunities for high touch, high impact work with students.

## **Capstone Goals**

Students in this course will:

1. Engage in activities that use integrative learning principles to facilitate knowledge transfer and link classroom, fieldwork, and personal experiences.
2. Identify, document, and link knowledge and skills across educational, professional, and personal experiences.
3. Create or further develop an e-portfolio by completing the assignments listed below utilizing the [Seelio](#) platform, and present this to the Social Work community in a showcase at the end of the course.
4. Identify individual “tacit knowledge” (the “know-how” as opposed to the “know-what” [facts] and the “know-why” [theory or science]. A simple example: one does not know how to ride a bike or swim due to reading a textbook, but only through personal experimentation, by observing others, and/or being guided by an instructor).
5. Demonstrate basic skills for integrative learning, generative interviewing, appreciative inquiry, giving and receiving professional feedback, and personal reflection.
6. Explore their roles as learners, leaders, and professionals and become prepared to speak fluently about their work and experiences, roles played in fieldwork, and as agents for social change.
7. Develop meaningful relationships with student peers, capstone instructors, and other mentors who can be utilized as sources of inspiration and support.
8. Reflect on how social justice principles and processes are reflected in their work and how this can be strengthened.

## **Four Curricular Themes**

- Multiculturalism and Diversity issues will be explored as students identify self-knowledge and skills for regularly monitoring their practice within the context of their work. The PODS (Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice) lens will be applied to practice situations and students will have an opportunity to discuss relevant field issues related to the diversity dimensions (ability, age, culture, economic class, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender identity and expression, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation).
- Social Justice and Social Change issues will be addressed by helping students to critically assess their commitment to and skills for enacting change towards social justice goals. The role of the social worker will be discussed as reflected by their individual experiences and reflection.
- Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation approaches will be addressed within the context of the student’s orientation to practice. Small group discussions will allow the student to discuss, review, compare, and contrast alternative approaches and frameworks while reflecting on their individual work and experiences.
- Behavioral and Social Science research approaches will be addressed within the context of the student’s orientation and method. Small group discussions will allow the student to discuss, review, compare, and contrast alternative approaches and frameworks while reflecting on their individual work and experiences.

### **A Note on the Learning Environment**

While all of us come to this course with various experiences, skill sets and values, it is important that we respect diverse opinions and perspectives. The class is designed as a co-learning environment and one where class members are encouraged to try new skills and take risks. Your contribution as a “teacher and a learner” in the class will enhance the learning for all class members. To facilitate the co-learning environment, the instructor will provide useful and constructive comments, facilitate a constructive forum for discussion and learning, and be responsive to students’ questions both in and out of class. Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class, to engage with the instructor and their peers, and to complete assignments on time. Students are also expected to be respectful of diverse perspectives and be open to learning and challenging themselves beyond their comfort zones.

### **A Note on Technology**

This is not a course in which you will often be asked to take notes or to access materials online. Therefore, students should not use laptops, cellphones, iPads, etc. during class, except when indicated by the instructor. Your Facebooking/tweeting/instagraming/buzzfeed quiz taking/upworthy video watching/CASC newsletter reading distracts your learning, your peers’ learning, and my teaching. Students who use technology during class will be given one warning, and then will receive significant reductions in their participation grade. Any student who requires the use of technology for any reason should contact the instructor at the beginning of class.

### **A Note on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a very serious issue and will be treated as such. In this course, students are prone to self-plagiarism, which is defined as “Submitting the same paper, or portions of the same paper, twice for two different assignments.”<sup>1</sup> In these assignments, you will be asked to draw upon past experiences about which you may have already reflected. While I understand that past reflections might help spur your thinking for these assignments, you are expected to produce new writing and generate new reflections for this course. If you have concerns about this, please contact me *before* submitting work.

### **Grading**

Grading for this course is determined by four core components: 1) active participation in the course; 2) demonstration of thoughtful reflection on your learning and experiences; 3) satisfactory and timely completion of all assignments; 4) attendance. This class meets only four times; missing even one class will significantly reduce your attendance and participation grade.

### **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 Guide, Vol. 1, Sec. 8.01 states that an “I” grade is used when illness or other compelling reasons prevent completion of work, and there is a definite plan and date for completion of course work approved by the instructor. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.

### **Students in Need of Accommodations**

If you have a documented disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please notify the instructor 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. If religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments, please notify the instructor so we can discuss appropriate arrangements.

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<sup>1</sup> This definition comes from the University of Michigan’s English Department:  
<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/advising/plagNote.asp>

## **Assignments**

All assignments should be double-spaced, use standard margins, and use a reasonable font size. Grading is based primarily on content, not on presentation. Which is to say, I am much more interested in whether or not your writing demonstrates deep reflection, analysis and growth rather than if the font is size 11 or 12.

### **Due 10/6, noon:**

- Submit pre-survey responses.
- Read *Fostering Integrative Learning through the Curriculum* by Mary Taylor Huber.

### **Due 10/9, 11:55 pm:**

- Project Proposal: Based on the Huber article and classroom discussions, think about which track you would like to follow and write a 1-2 page response to the following questions. Where are you in your journey as an agent of community action and social change? Which aspect(s) of the CASC minor have most informed that journey? Of the three options (Standard, Pathway or Legacy), which best integrates your CASC-related learning? *\*Please note that if you choose the Pathway or Legacy option, I assume you have already completed some components of an e-Portfolio in another course. If you have not, and would still like to complete the Pathway or Legacy option, please consult with me.*

### **Due 10/13, 5 pm:**

- *For Standard Option:* Philosophy Statement. The Philosophy Statement provides you an opportunity to express yourself and create a narrative that is meaningful and powerful. Who are you as a social change agent? What have you been about up until this point/in your college experience? What are the next steps on your journey? This is an open-ended assignment that can be as creative or as structured as you would like. It should be 2-3 pages in length. If you are choosing a more creative option, please see me for length requirements.
- *For Pathway/Legacy Option:* Portfolio inventory: This should include the works you have done thus far and should incorporate a philosophy statement, and reflections on key learning experiences. If your philosophy statement is more than a semester old, it should be updated to reflect your growth during your senior year.

### **Due 10/20, 5 pm:**

- *For Standard option:* Cluster Reflection Drafts. Please reflect on three key learning experiences connected to your social justice journey on campus. Your experiences should in some way connect to context, diversity, and action learning competencies. They, may, but are not required to, come from coursework you completed to fulfill a CASC requirement. Please use the following guiding questions in your response: What was the project or work you were involved in? Why was it important to you? What skills and competencies did you gain? How are you going to carry this experience with you into the future? Each reflection should be 2-3 pages long.
- *For Pathway/Legacy option:* Meaning-Making or Legacy Project Drafts. There is no page minimum for this assignment. Please consult with me if you are choosing this option about expectations for the assignment.

### **Due 10/27, 5 pm:**

- Read *Supporting Social Justice Graduates: Practical Strategies and Critical Skills to Support Post-college Transitions* by Katie Richards-Schuster, Alice Mishkin and Joseph Galura.
- Alumni Interview Summary. The summary may be presented as a narrative, or as bullet points. The length of the summary will depend on the length of your interview.
- Alumni Interview Reflection. The reflection should be in narrative form. The reflection should be 2-3 pages. Guiding questions for the reflection: What are your takeaways? What surprised you?

What excited you? How do you feel about going out into the post-college world after talking with your alum?

**Due 11/3, 5 pm:** All materials should be uploaded to Seelio and to CTools. Please consult the assignment checklist at the end of this syllabus for a clear sense of what and where you should be uploading.

*The Showcase* - Each student will be required to make a 5-10 minute presentation, based on their portfolio, to a group of their peers.

**Due 11/8, 11:55 pm:**

- Final Reflection - Write a 2-3-page, double-spaced paper that addresses the following:
  1. What did you learn about yourself through this process, class, and the showcase?
  2. What did you learn about your overall experience in CASC/UM?
  3. What will you take away from CASC, from your past and for the future?
  4. Based on your learning, what advice would you give to others?

### **SW 401 Assignment Checklist**

*All students must complete the following assignments:*

Project Proposal

- Uploaded to CTools (Due 10/9, 11:55 pm)

Alumni Interview Summary and reflection

- Uploaded to CTools (Due 10/27, 5 pm)

Final Reflection

- Uploaded to CTools (Due 11/8, 11:55 pm)

*All students must choose one of the following project options and complete the assignments for that option:*

#### Option 1: Standard

Philosophy Statement

- Draft uploaded to CTools (Due 10/13, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 11/3, 5 pm)

Cluster Reflections

- Draft uploaded to CTools (Due 10/20, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 11/3, 5 pm)

#### Option 2: Pathway

Portfolio Inventory

- Draft uploaded to CTools (Due 10/13, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 11/3, 5 pm)

Meaning Making Project

- Draft uploaded to CTools (Due 10/20, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 2/10, 5 pm)

#### Option 3: Legacy

Portfolio Inventory

- Draft uploaded to CTools (Due 10/13, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 11/3, 5 pm)

Best Practices Project

- Draft uploaded to CTools (Due 10/20, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 11/3, 5 pm)