

SW 504: Social Justice and Diversity in Social Work

Fall, 2015 section 009
Tuesdays 2:00 – 5:00 pm
Room B 798, SSWB
Foundation HBSE Course, 3 cts

Instructor: Timothy Corvidae, llmsw
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Office hours by appt. Please do ask to meet!

Required Texts

- Mullaly, Bob (2010) *Challenging oppression and privilege*, 2nd Ed, Oxford University Press, 978-0-19-542970-1
- Clare, Eli. *Exile and pride: Disability, queerness, and liberation*.
There is a new edition of this book released (2015) from Duke University Press, but I'm fine with people getting one of the older editions from SouthEnd Press (1999). I don't think they've changed except the introductions (though the authors of the new intros are excellent).

Course Description

This required foundation course is designed to increase students' awareness, knowledge, and critical skills related to diversity, human rights, social and economic justice. The topics of this course include developing a framework for 1) engaging diversity and differences in social work practice and 2) advancing human rights and social and economic justice. We will explore the knowledge base that underlies skills needed to work towards justice. These include types and sources of power, multiple social locations, social constructions, social processes, social identities, conflicts, and how all these interact. A major emphasis is on developing skills in critical contextual thinking and analyses, and in praxis, learning to use knowledge and theory to recognize and critique underlying assumptions and paradigms, and inform working for change. Multiple kinds of boundaries are especially important—across groups, between organizations and system levels, and within and between people, related to intersecting social locations.

Course Content

Students will actively explore how societal power and diversity characterize and shape the human experience, and are critical to the formation of social structures, cultural understandings, group and organizational processes, and identities. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. In this course, students will learn how current experiences of privilege and oppression are shaped by historical forces, societal structures, social constructions, group and interpersonal processes, and human understandings, including an understanding of the institutional, organizational, policy, and socio-cultural arrangements that contribute to them. Additionally, this foundation course will explore formulations of human rights, including positive rights, and negative conditions that need to be eradicated. This course also studies how social justice and injustice occur in organizations, institutions, and society, relevant theories that can inform work for justice (e.g., critical race theory, and components of many theories), and how mechanisms of oppression and privilege work (e.g., marginalization, exploitation, violence, cultural hegemony, and powerlessness).

Course Objectives

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

1. Describe community and organizational work for social change.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and skills for working for justice, enacting critical consciousness, and engaging and addressing issues of power and diversity. (4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7)
3. Describe the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups. (4.1, 4.5)
4. Describe how structural differences in society are shaped by historical, psychological, social, and political factors. (4.1, 4.5)
5. Demonstrate knowledge of social locations, constructions, processes, and identities and the diversity within these. This includes increased knowledge about the forces that shape complex selves, relationships, and worldviews.. (4.2, 4.3)
6. Demonstrate skills in critical contextual thinking, applying multiple theories and frameworks to illuminate underlying assumptions, biases and possible opportunities, and engaging in praxis.
7. Demonstrate awareness of the sources of power, how to mobilize power towards positive change, and ways to challenge oppressive assumptions, biases, and prejudices (4.2, 4.3)
8. Describe methods for continuing a life long process of recognizing our biases, learning how to change oppressive behaviors and structures, and building a more socially just multicultural society. (4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7)

Course Design

This class will strive to foster a learning environment where each student can reflect critically on sources of power and mechanisms of oppression and privilege, construct a framework for justice, and examine sources of their beliefs and perspectives. This course will work to create a climate that supports critical analyses, mutual learning, engaging within and across differences and examining sources of power and knowledge. It involves lectures, video, and participation in experiential activities. Additionally, this course will provide a forum to critically examine how our multiple status locations, societal constructions, and social processes shape our beliefs, assumptions, behaviors, and life experiences. Special attention will also be given knowledge about justice and change, and principles of change towards justice.

Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity

is addressed from the perspective of critically considering how diverse dimensions (such as ability; age; class; color; culture; ethnicity; family structure; gender - including gender identity and gender expression; marital status; national origin; race; religion, spirituality or worldview; sex; and sexual orientation) are socially constructed, embedded in societal structures across system levels, and maintained through social processes and intra and interpersonal relationships and schemas.

Theme Relation to Social Justice

is addressed from the perspective of critically analyzing theories and conceptualizations of justice, current trends and ethical issues and their implications for promoting social justice and social change, by considering the influence of normative rules and conditions. Additional focus will be directed towards how structural and institutional conditions affect the opportunities and well-being of different populations (advantaged and disadvantaged groups) in society.

Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation

is addressed from the perspective of critically considering how varied ideological, theoretical and empirical perspectives influence the definition of social problems and, subsequently, the ways in which institutional policies and practices address access, promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research

will be reflected in the theory, social science literature and research covered characterizing and analyzing macro-level structures, processes and their bearing and implications for the well-being of different vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and populations in society, as well as how marginalized groups exert agency and influence society.

Relationship to SW Ethics and Values

The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to give students direction about ethical issues as they relate to the experience of marginalized groups. The course will focus on social workers' responsibility as professionals to promote general welfare by working toward the elimination of discrimination, expanding choices for all persons, encouraging respect for diversity, advocating for progressive changes in social policies, and encouraging informed participation by the public.

Intensive Focus on PODS [Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice]

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of practice, theories and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

Important Questions for SW 504

1. What comprises and defines social justice?
 - What theories and assumptions underlie different formulations of justice?
 - What do we know about what creates and sustains socially just situations, contexts, practices?
 - What makes for competent, resilient, and socially just communities, and institutions/organizations within those communities?
 - How is social justice related to such concepts as promotion of health and well-being, individual and community resilience, prevention of various social problems?
2. How is society possible? What defines society? What are important components of society?

[e.g., class conflict, social solidarity, ideas, culture (symbols, rituals), social affiliations, shared and conflicting values, social structures, coercion and constraint]

What factors within these levels and components of society keep recreating and sustaining inequality?
3. What explains social behavior? How are macro and meso level behaviors and forces embedded in and influenced by macro contexts, and vice versa?

[e.g., early socialization, on-going socialization, statuses and roles, social structures, rewards and punishments, conformity, audience reaction]
4. What creates and sustains inequalities, injustice, oppression, privilege? Why are some social locations and categories associated with unearned privilege and others with disadvantage? What are different types and consequences of different forms of oppression, and implications for working for justice?

5. How do societal institutions work? What is important for me as a social worker to know about different types of institutions in order to be effective in my workplace and in reaching justice and other practice goals, with or on behalf of clients and in working with others?

[e.g., families, organizations and communities and their functions, government and “the state”, the global political-economy]

6. How do societies and institutions change? General theories, planned change approaches?

[e.g., From the bottom up, one individual at a time, collective behavior, changing consciousness, symbols, natural selection, new technologies, external forces, crises, economic markets and forces (capitalism)]

7. What’s the role of government (the State) in funding and regulating behavior and social institutions, maintaining or reducing inequality?

8. How have and do micro, meso, macro structures and processes shape and influence me? How can I use knowledge about these forces to increase my critical consciousness, and work with diversity?

9. What is the role of theory, theorizing, and knowledge about all the above, in improving my practice, and in creating more just situations and more effective human services and communities?

Course themes we will draw upon:

Difference between dialogue, discussion, debate & discourse.

Difference between equity, access & equality.

Difference between intent & impact.

Difference between action & service *AND* charity work & change work.

Difference between change & progress.

Difference between empowerment & agency.

Difference between activism, advocacy, allyhood & solidarity.

Difference between being a change agent & a “fixer”/”do-gooder”/helper/savior.

Difference between a riot, rebellion, revolt, uprising & chaos.

Difference between community organizing, (re)building & development.

Course Policies (the fine print)

Emailing the Instructor: I usually check email once a day Monday to Friday and try to respond within 48 hours. If I will be away from email you will receive an out-of-office reply.

Late assignment policy: One point will be deducted for each day an assignment is late, including weekends. If an extension is needed, arrangements can be made with the instructor up to 24 hours before the assignment’s due date. ***However, late forum posts cannot receive credit.***

Grade change policy: Students who wish to petition for a grade change must submit a formal, detailed, *written* (non-electronic) request to the instructor within 72 hours of receiving the grade.

Accommodations: Please let me know of any accommodations that may help to enhance your learning experience, preferably at the beginning of the semester. For reference, the Office for Services for Students with Disabilities is located in G664 Haven Hall; <http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/>

UM’s Code of Academic Conduct: Acts of plagiarism, cheating, double submission of essentially the same paper to different classes, paraphrasing from the internet, etc. are considered acts of dishonesty that violate the rights of other members of your community. Here are a few definitions for reference:

Plagiarism: Submitting a piece of work (for example, an essay, research paper, assignment, lab report) which in part or in whole is not entirely the student’s own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source.

Double Submission of Papers: Submitting or resubmitting substantially the same paper for two or more classes in the same or different terms without the express approval of each instructor.

GRADING		
Attendance and participation		25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class participation ▪ End-of-class reviews ▪ 5 min writings and other assignments <p>We will often start (or interrupt) class with 5 minute 'essays' (essay meaning 'a try, an attempt'). If you miss one due to absence, a 2-3 page essay make-up assignment will be available.</p>		
Questions Forum		10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By Monday 8 pm each week, post 2 questions about that week's reading. ▪ Post 10 weeks, 1 point per (quality) post 		
Digestible		10%
Critical Incident Analysis #1: Inside your past	<i>(due Oct. 6)</i>	10%
Critical Incident Analysis #2: Outside your Box	<i>(due Nov. 3)</i>	10%
Praxis Assignment: Applying social theory	<i>(due Nov 24)</i>	20%
Critical Incident Analysis #3	<i>(due Dec 11)</i>	10%
E-portfolio	<i>(due Dec 11)</i>	5%

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

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. Exceptions will only be made for extreme circumstances.

Active participation is critical to the small group learning community we will create. Please do what you can do show up each week, on time, having done the readings, ready to engage.

You won't be graded for *what* you say in this class—there are no clear rights and wrongs in the kind of inquiry we'll be doing together. But you will be graded for the effort you invest in developing your skills at listening, engaging, communicating (verbally and non-verbally), and critically interrogating. "Considerate" participation necessitates respectful and engaged comments *and* body language. Please remember to turn off your cell phones and other distracting electronic devices.

I realize that some people feel less comfortable or confident speaking up in class. If this applies to you, please let me know in person or via email. We can always talk through your ideas during office hours and discuss strategies that may help you with participation during class. I also realize that some people are very comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions. Their challenge will be to choose when to actively listen instead of talking, even when they might be able and willing to contribute a lot each class. Experimenting with changing up your style of participation might have surprising benefits to you, as well as to the class.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

We have a lot of small assignments that are designed to support us in creating an effective co-learning community as a class. Please remain on top of them, out of respect for your own learning and for the hard work and contributions of your classmates.

The Weekly Questions Forum

The purpose of the forum is to give us a sense of where curiosities, confusions, excitements and controversies lie in our readings, so that we can guide ourselves to and through them efficiently (and maybe even effectively!) in class each week. You'll post 2 questions by 8 pm Monday night before class. These are due each week, but you do get a freebie week to miss (you need to post 10 total).

Ask questions you really want us to answer or explore! I will be selecting some of the questions each week to focus our conversation in the classroom.

You are more than welcome to respond to others' questions and comments, but this is not required. You can also post links or add images or videos in your comments, to extend the conversation with more resources (but you still need to write your own words, too).

Questions must be *on time to receive credit*—a late post does not contribute to our class, since we want to use our contributions to inform our class sessions.

Digestibles

As part of our collaborative learning process this term, we will be divvying up responsibility for creating and sharing 'digestibles' on our readings each week. A digestible is something capable of being readily digested, and we will rely on these digestibles in class to jog our memories, guide our inquiry, and organize the many theories and ideas and perspectives we'll be juggling each week. At the end of the term, we will find ourselves with a full set of collectively constructed notes.

When it is your turn (we'll sign up at the beginning of the semester), your task is to create a one sheet guide to the readings for the week (it can be two sided if you *really* feel it needs to be). Your digestible might:

- Graphically represent and/or organize key information
- Summarize key points
- Raise critical questions
- Draw connections between the week's readings
- Draw connections to previous readings/ideas/experiences in class

Your digestible cannot do all of these things *thoroughly*. If it did, it would be too hard to digest. The readings were already thorough; we don't need you to rewrite them. Rather, challenge yourself to examine all of your ideas about what you could put onto your sheet, and then EDIT. Edit creatively, edit wisely, edit with our course purposes in mind. You won't be the only one serving up a digestible on your week, so don't feel that you have to cover everything. Cover what *you* find compelling, and then we'll find out what overlaps and differs and converses with whatever the others choose to serve.

Critical Incident Analyses

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, and reflecting on your own life. Writing for yourself can be a great way to do this, and I highly encourage it. A few times during the term, you will submit critically reflective essays to me. These will serve as a place to examine some of your own experiences with some depth and breadth, with special attention given to how your identities and knowledge/experience around privilege and oppression may be shaping your actions, reactions and learning process.

These will not be graded for their descriptions of what you are learning (everyone will learn differently). Instead, **they will be graded for their depth of insight and self-reflection, and incorporation of readings.**

Praxis Assignment:

Details forthcoming. This is still in development.

A note on the emergent nature of this course:

This is a new course, and not just because of that I reserve the right to—and also commit to you that I will—change the readings, assignments, and activities planned to best suit our needs and goals as a learning community. That means that the readings listed below are likely suggestions of what we'll be reading this term, but they are subject to change (with adequate notice for you to adjust!).

Week and Themes	Readings (to be read before class) Assignments (to be completed before class)
<p>1 (Sept 15) <i>Who are we? What is this?</i></p>	
<p>Week 2 (Sept 22) <i>Theoretical and Conceptual Considerations</i></p>	<p>Chapter 1: Theoretical and Conceptual Considerations</p> <p>Yoshino, K. (2006) Pressure to Cover. New York Times.</p> <p>DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. <i>The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy</i> 3(3): 54-70</p>
<p>Week 3 (Sept 29) <i>Privilege, Oppression, Power</i></p>	<p>Ch. 2- Oppression: An Overview</p> <p>Ch. 10-Unpacking Our Knapsack of Invisible Privilege</p> <p>Todd, J. (2010). "Confessions Of A Christian Supremacist." <u>Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping</u> 16(1): 140-146.</p>
<p>Week 4 (Oct 6) <i>Oppression at the Personal Level</i></p>	<p>Ch. 3-Oppression at the Personal Level</p> <p>Levins Morales, A. (1998). History as Curandera in <i>Medicine stories: history, culture, and the politics of integrity</i>. Cambridge, MA, South End Press.</p> <p>Clare, E. (1999). The Mountain in <i>Exile and pride: Disability, queerness, and liberation</i> (Second ed.). Cambridge, MA: SouthEnd Press.</p> <p>Take Implicit Association test at: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html</p>
<p>Week 5 (Oct 13) <i>Oppression at the Cultural Level and Social Construction</i></p>	<p>Ch. 4-Oppression at the Cultural Level</p> <p>Wendell, S. (1996). The Social Construction of Disability in <i>The Rejected Body</i>. New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Clare, E. (1999). Freaks and Queers in <i>Exile and pride: Disability, queerness, and liberation</i> (Second ed.). Cambridge, MA: SouthEnd Press. (pp 67-101)</p> <p>Clare, E. (1999). Reading Across the Grain in <i>Exile and pride: Disability, queerness, and liberation</i> (Second ed.). Cambridge, MA: SouthEnd Press. (pp 103-122)</p> <p>Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson (1980). Excerpt from <i>Metaphors we live by</i>. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.</p>
<p>Oct 20</p>	<p>NO CLASS</p>
<p>Week 6 (Oct 27) <i>Intersectionality: Personal, Cultural, Structural</i></p>	<p>Crenshaw, K. (2000) UN report: The structural and political dimensions of intersectional oppression (in Grzanka reader)</p> <p>Holvino, E. (2012). The "Simultaneity" of Identities: Models and Skills for the Twenty-First Century. In C.L. Wijeyesinghe & B.W. Jackson III (Eds.) <i>New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development: Integrating Emerging Frameworks</i> (2nd ed) (pp. 161-191). New York: NYU Press.</p> <p>Clare, E. (1999). Stones in my Heart, Stones in my Pocket in <i>Exile and pride: Disability, queerness, and liberation</i> (Second ed.). Cambridge, MA: SouthEnd Press. (pp123-138)</p> <p>Green, K. (2013) Navigating Masculinity as a Black Transman: "I will never straighten out my wrist." retrieved at http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/04/i-will-never-straighten-out-my-wrist/</p> <p>Kimmel, M. (1994) Masculinity as Homophobia</p>

<p>Week 7 (Nov 3)</p> <p><i>Oppression at the Structural Level</i></p>	<p>Ch. 5 Oppression at the Structural Level</p> <p>Smith, A. Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy OR Smith, A. Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy</p> <p>Lipsitz, G. (1995). The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the "White" Problem in American Studies. <i>American Quarterly</i> 47(3): 369.</p> <p>https://medium.com/@YawoBrown/the-subtle-linguistics-of-polite-white-supremacy-3f83c907ffff</p> <p>99% Invisible: The Arsenal of Exclusion http://99percentinvisible.org/episode/episode-51-the-arsenal-of-exclusion/</p> <p>Clips from: Adelman, L. (Executive Producer). (2003). <i>Race—The power of an illusion</i> [Television Series]. San Francisco, Calif: California Newsreel.</p>
<p>Week 8 (Nov 10)</p> <p><i>Bringing together levels of oppression in place and time</i></p>	<p>Clare, E. (1999). <i>Place in Exile and pride: Disability, queerness, and liberation</i> (Second ed.). Cambridge, MA: SouthEnd Press. (pp 17-64)</p> <p>Russo (2011) skwadi'lic, Board Feet, and the Cedar Tree (17 p)</p> <p>Safransky, S. (2014). "Greening the urban frontier: Race, property, and resettlement in Detroit." <i>Geoforum</i> 56: 237-248.</p> <p><i>Optional: Paperson: The Postcolonial Ghetto</i></p>
<p>Week 9 (Nov 17)</p> <p><i>Internalized Oppression and Domination</i></p>	<p>Ch. 6 Internalized Oppression and Domination</p> <p>"Girls Do What They Have to Do to Survive: Illuminating Methods Used by Girls in the Sex Trade and Street Economy to Fight Back and Heal"https://ywepchicago.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/girls-do-what-they-have-to-do-to-survive-a-study-of-resilience-and-resistance.pdf</p>
<p>Week 10 (Nov 24)</p> <p><i>Working for Change: Anti-Oppressive Social Work</i></p>	<p>http://www.radiolab.org/story/295210-adoptive-couple-v-baby-girl/</p> <p>Leondar-Wright, B. (2014) <i>Missing Class: How Seeing Class Cultures Can Strengthen Social Movement Groups—Chpt 1 and 2</i> (Or just 1)</p>
<p>Week 11 (Dec 1)</p> <p><i>Working for Change: Anti-Oppressive Social Work</i></p>	<p>Ch.8-Anti-Oppressive Social Work Practice at the Personal and Cultural Levels</p> <p>Reynolds, Vikki (2012). An ethical stance for justice-doing in community work and therapy. <i>Journal of Systemic Therapies</i>, Vol. 31, No. 4, 2012, pp. 18–33</p> <p>White, M. (1997). Ch. 10: Decentered Practice in Narratives of Therapists' Lives. Dulwich Centre Publications</p>
<p>Week 12 (Dec 8)</p> <p><i>Working for Change: Anti-Oppressive Social Work</i></p>	<p>Ch. 9-Anti-Oppressive Social Work at the Structural Level and Selected Principles of Anti-Oppressive Social Work</p> <p>Sakamoto, I., & Pitner, R. O. (2005). Use of critical consciousness in anti -oppressive social work practice: Disentangling power dynamics at personal and structural levels. <i>British Journal of Social Work</i>, 35, 435-452</p>