



SW 504 - 014: Social Justice and Diversity in Social Work
Tuesdays 6-9 pm

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3 Credits, no prerequisites

Foundation HBSE Course

Required Text

- Mullaly, Bob (2010) *Challenging Oppression and Privilege*, 2nd Ed, Oxford University Press, 978-0-19-542970-1

Additional Readings, Handouts, and Media

There will be additional readings and handouts from recent social science/medical journals and pertinent news articles and/or social media publications, blogs, and other sources distributed to students via Canvas. This course will also include supplemental videos and social media to enhance and support your learning experience.

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.
3. Describe the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups.
4. Describe how structural differences in society are shaped by historical, psychological, social, and political factors.
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.
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.
8. Describe methods for continuing a lifelong process of recognizing our biases, learning how to change oppressive behaviors and structures, and building a more socially just multicultural society.

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 to knowledge about justice and change, and principles of change towards justice.

Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity

Multiculturalism and 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

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

This theme 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

This theme 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, learning to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, working toward social justice processes, applying intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthening critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

If you need an accommodation for a disability please let me know as soon as possible. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in class activities, and teaching methods can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. I will make every effort to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 7633000 or go to <http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/>

Health and Wellness Services

Health and wellness encompasses situations or circumstances that may impede your success within the program. The Office of Student Services offers health and wellness services that are directed to the MSW student body. Feel free to contact Health and Wellness Advocates Lauren Davis (laurdavi@umich.edu) or Nyshourn PriceReed (ndp@umich.edu), 734-936-0961, regarding any health, mental health or wellness issue. This could include need for advocacy and referral to University or community resources, financial resources or counseling. Also contact Health and Wellness using ssw.wellness@umich.edu. The MSW student Guide to Health and Wellness can be found at http://www.ssw.umich.edu/current/Health_Wellness_Guide.pdf

Dependent Care Resources

For students with child or parenting/elder care responsibilities, feel free to consult the Students with Children website (<http://www.studentswithchildren.umich.edu>). This site is dedicated to the needs of students at UM who juggle parenting/elder care, study, and work. Resources include child care, financial assistance, social support, housing, and health care information. The website was created by the former Committee on Student Parent Issues (COSPI). For additional information on work/life support please also visit the Work/Life Resource Center site (<http://www.hr.umich.edu/worklife/>) and the UM Child Care gateway (<http://www.hr.umich.edu/childcare/>).

Religious Observances

Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance, community participation or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct

All students should be familiar with the Student Code for Academic and Professional Conduct (<http://archive.ssw.umich.edu/studentguide/2014/page.html?section=12&volume=1>) which holds our students to the highest standards of academic and professional conduct. Unacceptable academic behavior refers to actions or behaviors that are contrary to maintaining the highest

standards in course work and includes such actions as cheating, plagiarism, falsification of data, aiding and abetting dishonesty and impairment. Any suspected situations of academic misconduct will be discussed with the student and then reported to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, Jorge Delva.

Campus Commitment and "Expect Respect" campaign

A respectful, supportive, and welcoming environment is necessary for student learning. The University of Michigan has developed the Campus Commitment within the Expect Respect initiative as a University wide educational program that "provides clear definitions of discrimination and harassment prohibited by University policy, as well as contact information for University resources and ways to report concerns. Its goal is to contribute to an environment of civility and respect in which all members of the University community can work and learn." For more information on this program please read <http://hr.umich.edu/oie/cc/index.html>. Please contact me if you have any concerns about these issues as they relate to our class or your experience at the UM in general.

Laptop Policy

Laptops may be used for legitimate classroom purposes only, such as taking notes or looking up readings on Canvas. Email, Facebook, instant messaging, online shopping, surfing the Internet, and playing games are not considered legitimate classroom purposes. Such use is distracting to those seated around you, and if I see you using your computer for these purposes, I may ask you to turn off your computer and take notes by hand.

Course Calendar

| Week | Date | Topic | Readings / Media | DUE By 5pm |
|------|----------|--|---|--|
| 1 | 9/6/16 | Who are We? Overview of Topics | | Survey |
| 2 | 9/13/16 | Different Types and Levels of Systems and Boundaries | Mullaly, chapter 1 Reisch & Staller (2011) Arao & Clemens (2013) Zheng (2016) UC letter (2016) | |
| 3 | 9/20/16 | Intersectionality, Multiple Perspectives, Power, Differences, Diversity | Mullaly, chapter 7 Marsiglia & Kulis, chap 3 Adewunmi (2014) | Journal #1 |
| 4 | 9/27/16 | Social Justice Theory and Social Justice Policy Implications** | Readings divided by group (see below) | Group A Presentation |
| 5 | 10/4/16 | Privilege and Oppression at Multiple Levels** | Readings divided by group (see below) | Group B Presentation |
| 6 | 10/11/16 | Perspectives on Privilege and Oppression | Mullaly, chapter 10 Kendall, chapter 5 | Journal #2 |
| 7 | 10/18/16 | NO CLASS – Fall Break | | |
| 8 | 10/25/16 | EXPERIENTIAL CLASS – (Not meet during class time) Attend Event*** | | |
| 9 | 11/1/16 | Legacies of Oppression | Marsiglia & Kulis: Chapter 8 Belt (2015) | Blog #1 (experiential) Final Project Proposal |
| 10 | 11/8/16 | Social Justice, Social Work, and the Political Process | Addams (1915) Rutenberg (2015) Kenney (2016) | Blog #2 (election) |
| 11 | 11/15/16 | Conflict, Dialogue, & Community Class Presentations | Classmates' Blogs #2 Hodge (2005) (pp. 207-218) Dessel (2011) (pp. 213-34) Hodge (2011) (pp. 235-251) Dessel (2012) (pp. 361-367) | |
| 12 | 11/22/16 | Working for Change: Doing Justice and Challenging Oppression at the Personal and Cultural Level Class Presentations | Mullaly chapter 8 | |
| 13 | 11/29/16 | Working for Change: Doing Justice and Challenging Oppression at the Structural Level Class Presentations | Mullaly chapter 9 | |
| 14 | 12/6/16 | Working for Change: Doing Justice and Challenging Oppression through Social Policy Class Presentations | Marsiglia & Kulis chapter 14 Colby (2013) | |
| 15 | 12/13/16 | Application, Wrap-up, Reflection Class Presentations | | Final Project |

Readings for Week 4

** For September 27 (Week 4), I will divide half of the class into several groups that will read different theories of social justice. Each group will present on one of these theories: (1) contractual and distributive approaches; (2) human rights approaches; (3) capabilities approaches; (4) process-based approaches; and (5) combatting injustice approaches.

- *Contractual and Distributive Approaches*
 - Rawls, J. (2001) *Justice as Fairness: A restatement*. Preface and part I, fundamental ideas, 1-38.
- *Human Rights Approaches*
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948)
 - Sen, A. (2009) *The Idea of Justice*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Chapter 17, Human rights and global imperatives, 355-387.
 - Capeheart, L. & Milovanovic (2007) *Social Justice: Theories, Issues and Movements*. Rutgers University Press. Chapter 8, Indigenous/Postcolonial Forms of Justice, 108- 124.
- *Capabilities Approaches*
 - Nussbaum, M. C. (2006) *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*. Social contracts and three unsolved problems of justice, 9-95.
 - Nussbaum, M. C. (2011) *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Chapter 2, the Central Capabilities, 17-45.
- *Process-Based Approaches*
 - These are implied within Sen's approach to implementing social justice, some postmodern approaches, and approaches that assume you must combat forces working to sustain or recreate inequality along the way.
 - Young, Iris Marion (2011) *Responsibility for Justice*. Oxford U Press. Foreword (by Nussbaum), ix-xxv.
- *Combatting Injustice Approaches*
 - Mullaly summarizes Iris Marion Young's mechanisms of oppression, from her earlier book, *The Politics of Difference*.

Readings for Week 5

For October 4 (Week 5), I will divide the other half of the class into several groups that will read different chapters in Mullaly (chapters 3-6) and conduct a brief presentation/facilitated discussion on their chapter.

More Details for Week 8

*** For October 25 (Week 8), we will not meet in class but will instead have an “experiential class.” This will provide an opportunity to apply some of the concepts from this course. You will be expected to participate in an activity or attend an event. You must be actively engaged,

reflective, and critically analyze aspects of the activity or event. This is not a passive assignment. The instructor will provide some examples of events/activities you can attend, but you may also attend an event of your choice (with instructor approval). You will use this experience to draft your first blog entry (maximum 350 words).

Course Grades

The University of Michigan, School of Social Work, Master's Program grades on a 9.0 grading scale, which translates to the following:

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|---|-----|
| A+ | 9.0 | B+ | 6.0 | C+ | 3.0 | D | 0.0 |
| A | 8.0 | B | 5.0 | C | 2.0 | E | 0.0 |
| A- | 7.0 | B- | 4.0 | C- | 1.0 | | |

Letter grades from "A" through "E" are given for class performance. "A" grades are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of "A+", "A", and "A-" distinguishes the degree of superiority. "B" grades are given to students who demonstrate mastery of the material. "B+" is used for students who perform just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. "B-" is used for students just below the mastery level. "C" grades are given when mastery of the material is minimal. A "C-" is the lowest grade that carries credit. "D" grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit. "E" grades indicate failure and carry no credit.

Grading Scale (by percentage)

| | | |
|--------|---|----|
| 97-100 | = | A+ |
| 93-96 | = | A |
| 90-92 | = | A- |
| 87-89 | = | B+ |
| 83-86 | = | B |
| 80-82 | = | B- |
| 77-79 | = | C+ |
| 73-76 | = | C |
| 70-72 | = | C- |
| 67-69 | = | D+ |
| 63-66 | = | D |
| 60-62 | = | D- |

Grade Contestation

We strongly discourage *grade grubbing* of any kind of your papers. Grade grubbing is defined as begging, pleading, arguing, bribing, crying, or in any way asking for a higher grade. Instead, we encourage you to discuss why you lost points and what you can do to improve for the future.

If, however, you feel strongly that you have a valid dispute about a grade on an assignment, you should submit a statement *in writing* explaining the mistake you think has been made and what alternate grade you suggest. Make an appointment with your instructor to discuss the grade in person. *Note that re-reading an assignment submission can result in either a lower or a higher grade and that this grade will be final.*

Course Assignment Table

| Assignment | Points | Due Date | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Attendance & Participation | 40 | ongoing | 20% |
| Journals (2) & Blogs (2) | 40 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 entries x 10 points each | 9/20, 10/11, 11/1, 11/8 | 20% |
| Group Presentation | 20 | 9/27 or 10/4 | 10% |
| Final Project Assignment | 100 | various | 50% |
| <i>Final Project Proposal</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 points | 11/1 | 10% |
| <i>Class Presentation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 points | various | 20% |
| <i>Final Project Product</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 points | 12/13 | 40% |
| <i>Final Project Reflection</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 points | 12/13 | 30% |
| Total Points | 200 | | |

Attendance / Participation / Survey (20%)

Before the first day of class, you must submit the survey before the stated deadline. This will count toward your participation and grading points.

Both attendance and active, purposeful, and high quality participation in class discussion and activities are critical for the successful completion of this course. As a reflection of this importance, 20% of the final grade will consist of course engagement according to the rubric below. We will take attendance at the beginning of each class. If you are unable to make class or need to arrive late, please email the instructor prior to class. If you miss class, you also miss opportunities to learn and engage with your classmates and further analyze and discuss class concepts and themes in class. While I understand that life circumstances may arise that may require you to miss a class, it is important to communicate with the instructor when that happens. The following rubric will be used to assess participation:

| Criteria | Exemplary Performance | Points (40 max) |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Frequency of participation in class | Student initiates contributions more than once in each class session, however, quality of comments is weighted over quantity. Student responds actively when invited by the professor to contribute. Student does not comment overzealously or to the exclusion of other learners. | 10 |
| Quality of comments | Comments are always insightful & constructive. Student uses respectful terminology when referring to individuals, communities, and cultural contexts. Comments are balanced between general impressions, opinions, and specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions. Evidence is used to support arguments when possible. Comments are informative and relevant to the discussion at hand. | 20 |
| Listening skills | Student listens attentively when others present materials and perspectives, and contributes comments that build on others' remarks. Student expresses disagreement in a professional and respectful manner. | 10 |
| Total | | 40 |

* Modified from the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence

Journals and Blogs (20%)

Students will submit two journal entries and two blog entries. Each entry will be worth 10 points for a total of 40 points. The instructor will provide specific topics for each entry the week before the entry is due. Students will select and cite an external source of information on the assigned topic and critically analyze the issue, including questions and concerns that you have about the issue and possible next steps. Sources may include: news articles, scholarly journal articles, newspapers, Internet blog/opinion posts, and similar resources. Students should include a copy/live link of the source at the bottom of the journal in the “references” section. Students are expected to draw relevant, cohesive, and logical linkages between the topic, source, and course readings and/or discussions. **Students must write in “first person”** and supply personal reactions/insights regarding the assigned topic. Students must also draw in course topics, themes, and readings to support their argument. **The maximum word count for the journal entry is 500 words.**

Only the instructor will read the two journal entries. However, to help you practice how to develop and present these topics publicly, students will also be expected to submit two blog entries. The journal entries will help you develop skills to create the blog entries. Because concise language is often most effective at delivering a message, the **maximum word count for the blog entry is 350 words.** Students will also be responsible for reading each others’ blog entries and prepared to discuss in class. The instructor will design a website for students to submit their blogs on wordpress and will provide more instructions on constructing blogs throughout the class.

| Criteria | Exemplary Performance | Points (10 max) |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Accuracy | Journal entry/Blog represents the author’s ideas, evidence, or conclusions accurately, fairly, and eloquently. It shows a firm understanding of the implications of each author’s argument(s). | 3 |
| Argument | Journal entry/Blog fully meets the requirements of the assignment. It explores implications of chosen ideas for the assigned topic in thoughtful and/or original ways. It makes convincing and personalized case for why selected key ideas connect and/or contradict texts, class discussions, and/or lectures. | 5 |
| Clarity and Presentation | Journal entry/Blog consistently uses precise and unambiguous wording. It has clear and lucid sentence structure. It has minimal use of quotations and effectively frames first-person perspective in the text. It is clean, correctly formatted in APA style (12-point font, Times New Roman or Arial, 1” margins), and written in full sentences. All citations are properly attributed and cited in a consistent style. There are virtually no spelling or grammatical errors. For the blog, the presentation must also be visually appealing (and not cluttered) to allow for ease of reading and draw readers to the blog post. | 2 |
| Total | | 10 |

* Modified from the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence

Tips for your Readings and Journal Entries

- (1) Determine the main point(s). If you had to summarize the reading in 3 sentences or fewer, what would you write?
- (2) Where do you agree with the author(s) and why? What are the strengths of the reading?
- (3) Where do you disagree with the author(s) and why?
- (4) What solutions can you propose for improvement? How can we build on this reading to create a theory and/or practice for social justice?
- (5) Consider and reflect on course concepts and theories while answering the above questions.

Group Presentation (10%)

Presentations are a core part of many social work jobs. Social workers must also often work with groups. For this assignment, the instructor will divide the class into two groups. Group A will present on readings for 9/27. Group B will present on readings for 10/4. The instructor will further divide each group into smaller sub-groups to present on certain groups of readings for each day. Thus, Group A-1 will present on selected readings on 9/27. Group A-2 will present on different readings on 9/27. Each group will need to summarize the readings and facilitate discussion for 20 minutes.

For the group presentation, I will provide each member with a self-assessment form for evaluating their own group contributions and a form to evaluate the contributions of each team member.

I will also evaluate the substance of the presentations according to the following criteria:

| Criteria | Exemplary Performance | Points (10 max) |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Teamwork: | Team worked well together, and each member contributed in a valuable way to the project. Presentation reflected a high level of mutual respect and collaboration. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team Member Input (3 points)• Instructor Assessment (3 points) | 6 |
| Subject Knowledge & Contribution | Team met all requirements and objectives, and demonstrated mastery of the course material assigned. The group facilitated lively discussion that showed preparation, critical thinking, and depth of the topic(s). | 10 |
| Clarity and Presentation | Team presented a clear presentation that was well-organized and easy to follow. Team responded to questions from classmates and instructors well. | 4 |
| Total | | 20 |

Final Project (50%)

Students will select one theoretical perspective as a lens through which to analyze an issue of social justice or the conditions of a marginalized population group. Students will select from one of four available formats for their final project product. The final project assignment has four components: (1) proposal; (2) class presentation; (3) final project product; and (4) final project paper reflection. Each component has different due dates. The final project assignment is an individual assignment. The instructor will provide a more detailed rubric for each component throughout the class.

(1) Proposal (10%) (Due by 5pm 11/1/16)

Students must submit a 2-page proposal of their final project. This proposal must address the type of format you will use for your final project and how it will address course concepts and theories.

(2) Class Presentation of Final Project (20%) (Various due dates)

Students must provide a 10-minute presentation to the class about their final project.

(3) Final Project Product (40%) (Due in class 12/13)

Students can choose one of several formats for your final project, including (1) a concept map; (2) TED talk; (3) podcast; or (4) VoiceThread. Another format may be possible, but you must seek instructor permission.

(4) Final Project Paper Reflection (30%)

(Hard copy due in class 12/13; electronic copy due by 5pm 12/13 on Canvas)

Each final project must be accompanied by a 3-page paper that will provide a reflection on your final project and discuss how it integrates with course concepts and theories.