



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

COMMUNITY ACTION & SOCIAL CHANGE  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

### **SW 300: Develop, Engage, Challenge, Learn, Act, Reflect and Empower (DECLARE)**

Faculty: Amber Williams

Office: SSWB 3833 | 734.763.5733

Office Hours: Wednesday 1 – 4PM

#### **Course Summary:**

This course is an intensive learning experience designed to support students in beginning the deep work of reflection that will be built on throughout all CASC coursework. The specific goals of the retreat are to: (1) Develop student understanding of social identity to lead to deeper, more intensified classroom and out-of-classroom learning, (2) Help students explore and articulate individual passions and their role in broader movements towards community action and social change, (3) Challenge ideas and provide space for students to learn how to engage across differences, (4) Reflect on individual's experiences and skill sets, and the power individuals bring into a community, and (5) Empower students to build a toolbox of skills, learning and experiences that will help them throughout their lives.

#### **Retreat Curriculum**

The curriculum builds on multidisciplinary approaches to explore individual social identity and diversity within the CASC community, and to offer students an opportunity to consider the skills and experiences they bring to the CASC minor. Through this retreat, students will begin to understand the opportunities and barriers their social identities bring to different academic and professional situations.

#### **Core elements of the retreat will include:**

1. Social identity development and reflection: understanding one's self, exploring power and privilege within social identity, and reflecting on the link between social identity, social change, and collective action.
2. Exploring and examining social justice: asking what it means to work for change, what are our passions and interests in being community action and social change minors.
3. Challenging ideas: creating opportunities to challenge ideas about the world, listen and reflect on the experiences of others, be open to learning from diverse perspectives and viewpoints.
4. Learning and developing personal action plans: exploring skills needed to be community action and social change agents, reflecting on what one brings to the minor, setting goals for one's self, preparing a personal plan for skill development and accessing engaged action learning experiences within CASC and the broader campus community.
5. Empowering voices: providing the space and environment for students to be empowered to speak out on campus and classroom issues and to develop relationships with other students to support campus action, community change, and social justice issues.

### **Course Expectations & Assignments**

Students are expected to attend the retreat in full, complete a course survey, and are required to complete 5-7 page, double-spaced reflection on their experience at and takeaways from the retreat. A

Please use the guiding questions below, but know that this reflection is meant to be a space for you to process the experience and think about what was important to you. This assignment is due on February 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM submitted to [Canvas](#)

#### *DECLARE Retreat Assignment Guiding Questions*

- Where am I in my social change journey? What have I done thus far and where do I see myself going?
- What are the skills and competencies I need to continue my social change work? Where can I gain those skills?
- What meaningful connections did I build over the weekend? Who can I connect with to help move my social change work forward?
- What do I need to be more aware of as I develop my leadership and social change skills?

### **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.