



**SW 401, 001 Winter 2017 Syllabus**

*Room B760*

*Course Instructor: Amber Williams ([ambnicol@umich.edu](mailto:ambnicol@umich.edu))*

*Office Hours: By appointment, or Wednesdays 1 – 4PM*

*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. Develop a framework for integrating their social justice learning, both in and out of the classroom.
2. 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.
3. Identify, explore and link knowledge and skills across educational, professional, and personal experiences.
4. Demonstrate basic skills for integrative learning, generative interviewing, appreciative inquiry, giving and receiving professional feedback, and personal reflection.
5. Reflect on how social justice principles and processes are reflected in their work and how this can be strengthened.
6. Develop meaningful relationships with student peers, capstone instructors, and other mentors who can be utilized as sources of inspiration and support.
8. Create or further develop an e--portfolio that synthesizes their social justice experiences, learning and future goals. Students will present this at a showcase at the end of the course.

## **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/intstagraming/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, contact the instructor *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 five times; missing one class means you are missing twenty percent of the entire course, and will result in a significant reduction in 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, 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,

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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>

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, notify the instructor so we can discuss appropriate arrangements.

### **Student Mental Health and Wellbeing**

University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is in need of support, services are available. For help, contact **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** at [\(734\) 764-8312](tel:734-764-8312) and <https://caps.umich.edu/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also find **Wolverine Wellness**, located in University Health Service (UHS) to be a useful resource: <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/wolverine-wellness>.

### **Assignments**

All assignments should be double---spaced, use one inch all around margins, 12 pt font, times new roman. Grading is based primarily on content, quality, and depth of reflection.

#### **Due 1/10, 5PM:**

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

#### **Due 1/13, 11:59 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? *\*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, consult with the instructor.*

#### **Due 1/17, 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, (**times new roman, double spaced, one inch all around margins**). If you are choosing a more creative option, see instructor 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. It should be 2-3 pages in length, (**times new roman, double spaced, one inch all around margins**). If you are choosing a more creative option, see instructor for length requirements.

#### **Due 1/24, 5 pm:**

- **For Standard option:** Cluster Reflection Drafts. 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. 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 prompt should be 2 pages double spaced.

- **For Pathway/Legacy option:** Meaning-Making or Legacy Project Drafts. There is no page minimum for this assignment. Consult with the instructor if you are choosing this option about expectations for the assignment.
  - Meet with Amber for a mid-point review of your work.

**Due 1/27, 5 pm:**

- All portfolio materials should be uploaded to Seelio and to Canvas. 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 5-7 minute presentation, based on their portfolio, to a group of their peers.

**Due 2/7, 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 and Reflection. The summary and reflection should be in narrative form. The reflection should be 3-4 pages. Guiding questions for the assignment: Provide an overview of the conversation with your alum. 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 2/15, 11:59 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?

**See assignment checklist on final page of syllabus.**

## **SW 401 Assignment Checklist**

*All students must complete the following assignments:*

Project Proposal

- Uploaded to Canvas (Due 1/13 11:59 pm)

Showcase

- In Class Presentation (Due 1/31, 5 pm)

Alumni Interview Assignment

- Uploaded to Canvas (Due 2/7, 5 pm)

Final Reflection

- Uploaded to Canvas (Due 2/14, 11:59 pm)

**Portfolio Assignment:** *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 Canvas (Due 1/17, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 1/27 5pm)

Cluster Reflections

- Draft uploaded to Canvas (Due 1/24, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 1/27 5pm)

### Option 2: Pathway

Portfolio Inventory

- Draft uploaded to Canvas (Due 1/17, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 1/27 11:59pm)

Meaning Making Project

- Draft uploaded to Canvas (Due 1/24, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 1/27 11:59 pm)

### Option 3: Legacy Portfolio

Inventory

- Draft uploaded to Canvas (Due 1/17, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 1/27 5pm)

Legacy Project

- Draft uploaded to Canvas (Due 1/24, 5 pm)
- Final uploaded to Seelio (Due 1/27 5pm)

