COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will apply African-centered values and principles in historical and contemporary context to the implementation of methods in broadly-defined practice with African-descent client systems. The course is bounded by an affirmative framework in which students will 1) obtain an overview of the African worldview and the history, culture, and contributions to world civilization of African-descended people; 2) become familiar with literature that exemplifies the integration of the African-centered perspective in practice with African-descent clients; and 3) demonstrate application of knowledge gained. Throughout the course, students examine values and ethics as well as issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, religion, and ability as these relate to practice with African American individuals, families and communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the pre-colonization and pre-enslavement history and contributions of indigenous African people
2. Explain the history and residual effects of colonization, enslavement, and continued oppression on Black people
3. Explain traditional African Affirmative values and principles (i.e. African-centered world view or perspective) and their potential or implications for the healing of the residual effects of historical and contemporary race-based oppression
4. Discuss the African-centered world view or perspective from a broader social justice standpoint (beyond people of African descent)
5. Demonstrate the integration of the student’s current knowledge of African-Affirmative values and principles with the student’s historic experience as it relates to African-descent people.
6. Discuss the elements (principles and methods) of at least one published theory-based model of African Affirmative (African-centered) social work practice.
7. Describe a published example of the application of African Affirmative/African-centered practice in each of four methods concentration areas - interpersonal, community, nonprofit management, and social policy and evaluation.
8. Describe actual or planned application of African Affirmative/African-centered practice to a case study situation in your chosen method and practice concentration areas.
RELATIONSHIP TO THE 4 CURRICULAR THEMES

**Multiculturalism and Diversity** are included in the topics of relationship building, communication, assessment, intervention, termination and evaluation. These topics explore how the difference between worker and client impact and shape these critical dimensions of social work practice. Critical consciousness about power imbalances between worker and client and between client and agency are explored.

**Social Justice and Social Change** is central to the topic of various roles assumed by social workers and in the clienthood process in social agencies. The focus of the course is on small system change (individuals, families, and groups) but the larger social context and implications for change is reflected in assessment and in the experience of applicants as they enter social agencies. These 3 themes are integrated into this course through the use of case examples and case scenarios that students will submit and the instructor will supplement to exemplify skills in practice.

**Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** are themes reflected in various purposes and models of contemporary social work practice. In addition, this course emphasizes skills that can be implemented with promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation as practice goals and outcomes.

**Behavioral and Social Science Research** is reflected in the theoretical base developed in this course to support practice methods, skills, and assessment procedures.

---

**SOCIAL WORK ETHICS & VALUES**

Social work ethics and values will be addressed within the course as they pertain to issues related to working with clients and colleagues and with and regarding African American clients. The NASW Code of Ethics and other ethical codes are available to give students direction about these ethical issues. This course focuses on personal and social issues as they have implications for African American clients in particular. Examples are confidentiality, privacy, client rights and prerogatives, the client’s best interest, proper and improper relationships with clients, and sensitivity to culture and to clients’ own competence as sources of knowledge and experience in African and African American culture. ‘Client’ is defined from a micro and macro perspective. Students are required to abide by the [NASW Code of Ethics](https://www.nasw.org/ethics/code) while enrolled in the program.
INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS

Please review the syllabus and expectations in its entirety prior to committing to complete this course under my instruction. The syllabus is considered a working document and may be changed or altered at the discretion of the instructor.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Students should plan to attend each class prepared to participate. If students are unable to attend or participate in the scheduled session, an email to the instructor is required. If more than two absences occur without contacting the instructor, the student will not receive 50% of the credit for points earned throughout the course of the semester.

Students are expected to respect others opinions and comments and be prepared to learn and educate in a respectful manner. Students that are unable to participate in respectful dialogue will be asked to exit the classroom and will not receive points for attendance or participation.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

Students needing to contact the instructor are asked to do so via email at daiciars@emich.edu. Students will need to communicate utilizing professional standards and include their name, course and if they are requesting a response.

Communications requesting a response will be addressed within 72 business hours during the semester. Communications that utilize informal language such as Hey, What’s Up, etc, will not receive a response. Students that wish to meet with the instructor should email the instructor with the preferred date and time frame (before or after class).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments and/or accommodations as necessary.

Confidentiality:
Any oral and written material or discussion pertaining to clients is to be strictly confidential. The identity of clients is to be concealed in whatever format they are taken or written about. Further, discussion about agency clients should never happen without there being some professional purpose, and never in hallways, etc. Violation of confidentiality will be grounds for failure in the course.

University Closings: Information about campus-wide closings and cancellations due to weather or other circumstances is available online. In the event of a session cancellation, an announcement will be posted via Canvas.
Seminar Structure and Format
The seminar component of the course is a weekly 2hr 45min class session. Seminar is devoted to integrating materials from the text and other sources with the practice framework. There will be lectures, individual and group exercises, films, occasional guest speakers, trips, attending campus events, etc.

Students are expected to contribute to each lecture by providing information from personal or professional experiences, current events, and/or reading material.

REFERENCE TEXT:

Other written materials may be assigned during the course, and will either be handed out in class, e-mailed, or made available on Canvas.

This course is in alignment to the Council on Social Work Education EPAS (Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards). The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate- and master’s-level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. It permits programs to use traditional and emerging models of curriculum design by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to differentiate.
GRADING STANDARDS

Students will be evaluated on their overall success in integrating course content with their final presentation. The degree of participation in the weekly seminars, individual commitment to the course goals and reflective practices, together with demonstrated learning that results from the experience, is key to my evaluation of each individual student's course progress and final grade.

GRADING

Note: Students are eligible to receive a bonus of 3 points toward your overall score if you do not miss a class. In the case of habitual lateness, the instructor reserves the right not to award this bonus.

Please see the section on Seminar Expectations for additional guidance on getting a good participation grade.

GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72%</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-66%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62%</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 200 total points possible, allocated as follows:

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation/Attendance</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term philosophy statement</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of term presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Possible 200
INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS
ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION
65 points

The purpose of classroom work and participation is to encourage a setting in which students share information and learn from each other.

CLASSROOM AND PARTICIPATION grades will be based on the following requirements for EACH class session:

A. Student attends class on time and prepared for class. (2 points)
B. Student participates in classroom discussion and activities (3 points)

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT
35 points

3-5 page paper should include:
1. What the student came into the course with, with regard to experience with and in African American communities.
2. The student’s understanding of the values, beliefs, and/or “core” strengths, acquired since coming into the course and up to the time of the writing of the paper, that underlie the student’s approach to practice with African American individuals, families and communities.
3. A method or theory that has been explored in other courses that can be adapted to utilize an Africentric Approach. How can the method/theory be adapted using principles outlined in course?
4. The sources through which this knowledge was obtained and how those have been integrated in formulating thinking about practice in African American communities. At least three literature sources should be included. However, video clips, lectures, and in-class discussions may be included as well.
Select an African-descent client or client system for whom you have a professional responsibility. As a ‘client system,’ this client may be an individual, small group, or family (interpersonal), a neighborhood or community or a neighborhood or community group (community organization/community-based practice); an agency or segment of an agency - non-profit or public management (e.g., staff committee or other group; board or board committee); an internal policy you’ve been asked to develop or an internal or external policy that has implications for affecting service recipients and that you’ve been asked to review for advocacy direction or an internal or external policy you’ve been asked to evaluate or to serve as a participant in its evaluation (social policy and evaluation).

1. Elaborate on the basis for your selection.
2. Provide detailed anonymized case study information about the client system.
3. Explain how you applied (or can apply) African-centered knowledge, values, and methods, in an affirmative context, in developing a plan for implementation related to the service goals. a. It is essential here to explain and document your knowledge base, using relevant conceptual and research-based literature. References to lectures and/or videos are acceptable but not sufficient here!
4. Explain your implementation of the plan and how you applied (or could apply) African centered knowledge, values, and methods in an affirmative context to: a. Engaging b. Assessing c. Setting goals d. Intervention e. Evaluation f. termination
5. Include instances in which you integrated other social work knowledge, skills, and values (i.e. knowledge, skills, and values beyond African-centered work).
6. Elaborate on the outcome(s).
7. Explain the rewards and challenges of the experience.
8. Explain implications for approaching termination and evaluation.

Note: If you were not in a field placement this term, select an eligible client or client system from an earlier placement and go through the assignment in that way.
STUDENT RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

ACCOMMODATIONS

If students think they may need an accommodation for a disability, they need to let the Field Faculty Facilitator know as soon as possible. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-seminar activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate a student’s participation and progress. The earlier students make their Field Faculty Facilitator aware of their needs, the more effectively they can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD) (734) 763-3000 to help determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information students provide is private and confidential, and the seminar facilitators will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential.

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 feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 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 consult University Health Service (UHS) at 734-764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources.

References and Referencing Style

When using others’ work, it is mandatory to cite the original source. Social work publications generally follow the referencing format specified by the American Psychological Association (APA); therefore you are expected to follow this referencing style. Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition) is accessible via internet. Additionally, you may access APA examples at: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/ for further help citing references in course assignments.

Intellectual Honesty and Plagiarism

It is your responsibility to be familiar with and abide by the School of Social Work’s standards regarding intellectual honesty and plagiarism. These can be found in the MSW Student Handbook.

SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any cell phone or campus phone. All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-SSWB(7793) for up-to-date School closure information.

Be Prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least (2) emergency exits nearest the classroom.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services and/or email ssw-ADAcompliance@umich.edu.

Office of Student Services
School of Social Work | Room 1748
734-936-0961
For more information view the annual Campus Safety Statement HERE!
Register for UM Emergency Alerts HERE!