1. Course Statement

**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 historical forces, societal structures, social constructions, group and interpersonal processes, and human understandings shape current experiences of privilege and oppression, 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:

- Describe community and organizational work for social change.
- 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)
- Describe the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression are and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups. (4.1, 4.5)
- Describe how structural differences in society are shaped by historical, psychological, social, and political factors. (4.1, 4.5)
- 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)
- Demonstrate skills in critical contextual thinking, applying multiple theories and frameworks to illuminate underlying assumptions, biases and possible opportunities, and engaging in praxis.
- 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)
- 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 interperseronal 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**
- 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? 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?
• 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]
• What creates and sustains inequalities, injustice, oppression, and 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?
• 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]
• 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)]
• What is the role of government (the State) in funding and regulating behavior and social institutions, maintaining or reducing inequality? 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?
• 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 REPEATEDLY 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.
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 chose to 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 https://ssd.umich.edu/.

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 visit the SSW Health and Wellness website 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.

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 childcare, 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 (https://ssw.umich.edu/msw-student-guide) 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.

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.

Inclusivity Policy
Social and economic justice is one of the key themes of social work practice, research, and education. As a social work community, we must encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. As a result, there will be class discussions, activities, or assignments that may be difficult or challenging. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, antipressive space in which each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions and interactions. It is important that we actively listen to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another and the learning environment, knowing the impact is more important than intent. It can be difficult to navigate the dual priorities of supporting authentic free speech, and holding active regard for one another being open to diverse perspectives and ideas. I recognize that microaggressions happen (by all of us, to all of us); however, overt slurs in relation to race, sex, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion/world view, immigration status, size, nationality, dis/ability status, marital status, political affiliation, or any other identities, will be addressed directly. Throughout the course, we will negotiate other guidelines about class discussions. Please bring your best selves to our classroom space.

Note: Course objectives are intentionally connected to School of Social Work/Council on Social Work Education Competencies and Practice Behaviors so that the School can measure/assess student outcomes at both the course and curriculum/program levels.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

Required Purchases (or loan from Library System)
- Mullally (1998), Structural Social Work (2nd edition); Ideology, Theory, and Practice

Guidelines for readings
- Readings will be posted to Canvas. Required texts can be purchased through Amazon
- It is expected that students will complete all required readings as an extension of their competency as skilled social workers
• Readings will be discussed in class, unless otherwise noted. Students should come to class prepared to engage discussion based on course readings
• Readings are assigned and posted on canvas – articles can be found under “files” and also linked to course “pages”

b. **Class schedule**: please review the course schedule at the end of this document. Review the “page” feature of the canvas website for a breakdown of learning objectives, competencies, questions, concepts, readings, and assignment due dates.

c. **Assignments**

Assignments, evaluation criteria or rubrics for each assignment as well its point or percentage value for the overall course grade can be found on canvas website. Below is an abbreviated overview of what to expect for assignment requirements for the term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Percent of overall grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Journals</td>
<td>Dates on Canvas</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>10.29.18</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>Dates on Canvas Assignment Page</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>12.10.18</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Media Project</td>
<td>Proposal Due 11.5.18</td>
<td>Project 12.10.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue Program or Events</td>
<td>12.10.18</td>
<td>Final Submission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. **Attendance and class participation**

Class attendance and active participation (large and small group discussion, individual reflection, oral participation, etc) account for 20% of your overall grade. Participation through student-student and instructor-student interactions are important considerations for optimal performance. Class will begin promptly at 6PM, and will conclude at 8:50PM, in accordance with university wide Michigan time policy.

Excessive absences, as determined by the instructor, may result in a reduction in grade or a failing grade, and will be brought to the attention of the student and the academic advisor by the course instructor.

While attendance is not always a part of a course grade, due to the nature of many course assignments,
in-class skill building activities and group projects, if a student fails to attend most class sessions, the student may be asked by the course instructor to withdraw from the course.

Please bear in mind the following considerations regarding course policies for attendance and participation:

- Be present at the beginning of class when attendance is recorded and remain for the duration of class.
- Instructor reserves the right to deduct 3% from the students' final grade per unexcused absence; **more than 2 unexcused absences** will result in grade deduction. Policy is subject to alteration in the event of severe illness (self and family), recent death in family, or other related circumstances. Should any such circumstance occur, request for modification of attendance policy must be discussed with instructor.
- Instructor must be informed of absence within 24 hours of unexpected absence resulting from an emergency.
- Students are expected to engage in active course participation (comments and questions directed at instructor and students).
- **Policy on Class Attendance**

**e. Grading**

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):**

- A- 90-93
- A 94-100
- B- 80-83
- B 84-86
- B+ 87-89
- C- 70-73
- C 74-76
- C+ 77-79
- D- 60-63
- D 64-66
- D+ 67-69

**Incompletes ("I"):**

Students must finish incomplete coursework within two semesters of enrollment in the class in which they received their initial incomplete. Please see the current Student Guide.

**I: (Incomplete)** is used when illness or other compelling reasons prevent completion of work, and there is a definite plan and date for completion of course or field work approved by the instructor/liaison. Any "I" grade remaining on a student’s record more than two terms after the conclusion of the term in which
the grade was awarded reverts to a permanent incomplete, and credit can be earned only by retaking the course. This limit includes the Spring/Summer term and applies regardless of the student's subsequent enrollment. However, if at the time the instructor agreed to the "I", an earlier date of submission and/or completion of final work was agreed upon, and then this date takes precedent over the two-term policy. A change in grade will not be accepted after two terms for any reason other than clerical error. The Associate Dean for Educational Programs must approve any exceptions to this policy.

Note: A grade of "I" stays on a student's academic record permanently. Even if the student makes up the course or field work according to the guidelines stated above, the grade for the course will appear on the academic record as, for example, IB+ or IS. If the “I” is not made up in the approved time frame the grade is changed to an IPL (Incomplete Permanent Lapse) and is final.

Please refer to the links below for additional information about course grading policy
- Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction
- Student Grievance procedures
- Policy for grading in special circumstances

Late assignments
Late assignments and rescheduled presentations are at the discretion of the instructor, and will only be considered for dire and unusual circumstances. Late assignments will undergo a half letter grade point deduction for each day past the assignment deadline.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources. They include:
- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Mental health and well-being
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns
- Accommodations for students with disabilities
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Writing skills and expectations
- Academic integrity and plagiarism
## Readings Guide: SW 504 Section 002

**Diversity and Social Justice in Social Work**

*Amber Williams, MA., LLMSW*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Competences</th>
<th>Course Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.10.18</td>
<td>Course Introduction, Dialogue</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Introduction of group process, dialogue, and course expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9.17.18  | Social Justice Frameworks, and Progressive Social Work | • Anti Oppressive SW Chapters 1 - 2                                      | Course Survey        | 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) | • 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? |
| 9.24.18  | Systematic Oppression and Social Power                 | • Mullaly Chapter 8                                                      | Journal Assignment 1 | Describe how structural differences in society are shaped by historical, psychological, social, and political factors. (4.1, 4.5)  
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) | What creates and sustains inequalities, injustice, oppression, and 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? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Sources</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10.1.18    | Structural Social Work, and Social Work Theory | • Antioppressive SW Chap 3  
• Mulally Chapter 4, 7                                               | Journal 2                                                                     | Demonstrate skills in critical contextual thinking, applying multiple theories and frameworks to illuminate underlying assumptions, biases and possible opportunities, and engaging in praxis.  
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? |
| 10.8.18    | Critical Race Theory and Social Work | • CRT and the Cultural Competence Dilemma in SW Education  
• Strengths-Based SW Assessment: Transforming Dominant Paradigms | Journal 3 Due  
Group Presentation 1  
Darlene Nichols Visit (?)                                                 | Demonstrate skills in critical contextual thinking, applying multiple theories and frameworks to illuminate underlying assumptions, biases and possible opportunities, and engaging in praxis.  
What factors within these levels and components of society keep re-creating and sustaining inequality? |
| 10.22.18   | CRT Cont: Intersectionality, and Critical Reflection, in SW Practice | • Continuum of Intersectionality Theorizing for Feminist SW Scholarship  
• Teaching Critical Practice: Resisting Structural Domination through Critical Reflection | Journal 4 Due  
Group Presentation 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)  
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? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Details</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10.29.18   | Heterosexism and Social Work Practice                                | • Sexual Orientation, Gender, and Gender Identity Microaggression: Toward an Intersectional Framework for Social Work Research  
• InterSexion: A Vision for a Queer Progressive Agenda | Research Paper Due  
Spectrum Center Workshop  
Demonstrate skills in critical contextual thinking, applying multiple theories and frameworks to illuminate underlying assumptions, biases and possible opportunities, and engaging in praxis.  
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] |
| 11.5.18    | Social Work Policy Advocacy and Social Work                           | • AntiOppressive SW Chapter 9  
• Maximizing Social Work’s Policy in a Changing Political Landscape  
• Mexican Workers and U.S Agriculture: The Revolving Door | Journal 5 Due  
Media Project Proposal  
Due  
Raul Gamez Lecture  
CRLT Visit  
Describe the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression are and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups. (4.1, 4.5)  
What is the role of government (the State) in funding and regulating behavior and social institutions, maintaining or reducing inequality? |
| 11.12.18   | Ability and Ability Status: Social Work Anti-Oppressive Practice       | • Exile and Pride Chapter  
• Social and Capabilities Model  
• Theoretical Approaches to Disability Content in SW Education | Journal 6 Due  
Group Presentation 3  
Possible Guest Speaker  
Describe the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression are and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups. (4.1, 4.5)  
How is social justice related to such concepts as promotion of health and well-being, individual and community resilience, prevention of various social problems? 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 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
<th>Extra Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.19.18</td>
<td>Organizational Change Processes</td>
<td>• AntiOppressive Social Work Chapter 7</td>
<td>Conflicting values, social structures, coercion and constraint</td>
<td>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]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.26.18</td>
<td>Revolutionary and Evolutionary Social Change (Boggs)</td>
<td>• Revolution and Evolution</td>
<td>Journal 8 Due</td>
<td>Describe community and organizational work for social change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• In class film</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.18</td>
<td>Transformative Justice and Social Work: Emergent Strategy</td>
<td>• Emergent Strategy</td>
<td>Journal 9 Due</td>
<td>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)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Youtube Clip</td>
<td>Group Presentation 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12.10.18 | Mullaly, Chapter 9  
Deray Mckesson on Hope  
Final Media Project  
Due Group Presentation 5 | 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) |