



Course title: Diversity and Social Justice in Social Work
Course #/term: SW 504 Section 016, Fall 2018
Time and place: Wednesday, 5pm – 8pm; Room 3752 SSWB
Credit hours: 3
Instructor: Alethia J. Battles, LMSW, JD
Pronouns: [She-Her-Hers]
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You may expect a response within 24-48 hours
Office: 2738 SSWB
Office hours: By appointment

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 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 and competencies:

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. (4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7)
3. Describe the dynamics of difference and dominance/oppression and how they impact human functioning and social relations within and across diverse groups. (4.1, 4.5)
4. Describe how structural differences in society are shaped by historical, psychological, social, and political factors. (4.1, 4.5)
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)
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 (4.2, 4.3)
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. (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, life experiences, and hinder our work with diverse populations. Special attention will also be given knowledge about justice and change, and principles of change towards justice. All assignments are expected to be submitted via Canvas.

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; race/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, 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.

TEXT: "So You Want to Talk About Race" by Ijeoma Oluo*

Available in various platforms including written, e-book and audiobook formats.

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/You-Want-Talk-About-Race/dp/1580056776>

Suggested reading: "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/New-Jim-Crow-Incarceration-Colorblindness/.../159558643...>

Additional articles/readings and/or video clips will be posted in canvas.

To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required readings.

Class Schedule and Assignments

(*This roster is subject to change)

Date/Time	Topic	Required readings	Assignments
Week 1 9/5/18	INTRODUCTION to SW 504 Definitions	NONE	*Personal Statement
Week 2 9/12/18	<i>Social Justice Soundoff (SJS)</i> Theoretical Frameworks	Intro and Chapter 1 (Oluo)	IDI Online Assessment DUE TODAY: Personal Statement
Week 3 9/19/18	NO CLASS	Chapters 2 & 3 (Oluo) <u>Blink: "Thin-Slicing and Rapid Cognition" On Canvas</u> <u>Intellectual Empathy: Critical Thinking for Social Justice:</u> <i>"The Web of Belief"</i> (Linker, M. pp 23-46) On Canvas	*Introspective Analysis Assignment
Week 4 9/26/18	Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) - Group results/discussion <i>SJS</i> Exploring Race and Racism: Pt1	Chapters 4 & 5 (Oluo) <i>"Racism and White Privilege"</i> (Bell, et.al) On Canvas	DUE TODAY: Introspective Analysis Paper
Week 5 10/3/18	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Race and Racism: Pt2	Chapters 6 & 7 (Oluo)	None
Week 6 10/10/18	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Diversity and Social Justice related to Privilege	<u>Intellectual Empathy: Critical Thinking for Social Justice: "The Usual Suspects: Keeping People Engaged" (Linker, M. pp 50- 76) On Canvas</u>	*Thinking & Writing Exercise
Week 7 10/17/18	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Social Justice Issues in Education	Chapters 8 & 9 (Oluo)	DUE TODAY: Thinking & Writing Exercise *Final Project/Presentation
Week 8 10/24/18	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Social Justice Issues in Law Enforcement	Chapters 10 & 11 (Oluo)	DUE TODAY: Final Project/Presentation Proposal
Week 9 10/31/18 (Halloween)	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Diversity and Social Justice Issues Among the Elderly	Chapters 12 & 13 (Oluo)	*Elements of Oppression Paper

Week 10 11/7/18	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Social Justice Issues in Immigration	Chapters 14 & 15 (Oluo)	DUE TODAY: Elements of Oppression Paper
Week 11 11/14/18	<i>SJS</i> Exploring Cultural Determinants of Health and Health Disparities	Chapters 16 & 17 (Oluo)	*Societal Norm Breach Assignment
Week 12 11/21/18	Thanksgiving Break	No Class	None
Week 13 11/28/18	Final Presentations-TBD (Q&A)	Final Projects/Presentations (Prep)	DUE TODAY: Societal Norm Breach Assignment
Week 14 12/5/18	Final Presentations-TBD	Final Projects/Presentations	DUE TODAY: Final Project/Presentation
Week 15 12/12/18	Final Presentations-TBD Wrap-Up Evaluations	Final Projects/Presentations	DUE TODAY: Final Project/Presentation

**Indicates when the assignment will be given/discussed*

Assignments at a Glance

ASSIGNMENTS	DUE DATES
IDI Assessment	9/12/18 (link to IDI will be provided)
Personal Statement	9/12/2018
Social Justice Soundoff	*See assigned due dates in Canvas
Introspective Analysis Paper	9/26/2018
Thinking & Writing Exercise	10/17/2018
Final Project Proposal	10/24/2018
Elements of Oppression Paper	11/7/2018
Societal Norm/Rule Breach	11/28/18
Final Project/Presentations	11/28/2018- 12/12/2018
Participation and Attendance	Continuous

Overall Grading: The University of Michigan School of Social Work Master's Program is on a 9.0 grading scale which is translated as follows:

- **A+ 9.0**
- **A 8.0**
- **A- 7.0**
- **B+ 6.0**
- **B 5.0**
- **C+ 3.0**
- **C 2.0**
- **C- 1.0**
- **D 0**

SW 504 Course Grading Scale -Total Points available: 220

A+	220-200	C+	148-139
A	199-189	C	138-129
A-	188-179	C-	128-119
B+	178-169	D	118-100
B	168-159	F	<99
B-	158-149		

Grading Rubric:

IDI Assessment	5 pts
Personal Statement	0 pts
Social Justice Soundoff	15 pts
Introspective Analysis Paper	25 pts
Thinking & Writing Exercise	25 pts
Final Project Proposal	10 pts
Elements of Oppression Paper	25 pts
Societal Norm/Rule Breach Paper	20 pts
Final Project/Presentation	75 pts
Participation and Attendance	20 pts

Late Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted. The due date and times are listed in Canvas. Please plan accordingly. Assignments received after the due date and time listed will receive a 0.

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 must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.

MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#).

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Attendance and class participation:

Attendance is a requirement. Students are able to miss two classes for any reason (e.g., personal, sick, religious holidays). There is no need to email the instructor with your reason for missing the class(es). Students who miss three classes will receive a full letter grade reduction. Four or more missed classes will result in a non-passing grade. Students who will miss more than two classes due to religious holidays must make arrangements with the instructor before the second class to avoid a grade penalization. **Please note**

that the student is responsible for all of the content missed during your absences. There will be no opportunity for assignments or quizzes to be made up.

[Policy on Class Attendance](#) found in the MSW Student Guide.

Participation:

Class participation is more than mere attendance. It is also arriving on time, reading the assigned material, preparing for class, contributing appropriately to class discussions, doing assignments, and participating in class activities and group activities. Participation does not mean you need to talk a lot in class. It is more about bringing a positive learning attitude to the class and being present for each session. Each of us participates differently, and I will strive to honor that diversity among us.

Students are expected to engage in an open and respectful dialogue, use the classroom environment as practice for professional interactions with clients and colleagues, and maintain civility in in-class, online, e-mail, video, and all other forms of communication with both the instructor and class colleagues. Inappropriate behaviors with regard to any of the aforementioned contexts could result in a loss of participation/engagement points (see below). ***NOTE:** Students who do not adhere to the stated course policies may be asked to leave class and be marked absent for the session.

The class participation grade is a subjective grade – I will use this matrix to determine the class participation grade:

(0) Poor Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not attend in-person class sessions • No effort, disruptive, and disrespectful • Uses harmful language in class and does not respect other students' identities
(0-5) Marginal Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not attend 1-2 in-person class sessions • Late most/all in-person class sessions • <i>Little effort, texting or web surfing (irrelevant to course)</i> • Demonstrates infrequent involvement in class or class discussions • Uses harmful language at times in class and sometimes does not respect other students' identities
(5-10) Moderate Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late to multiple in-person class sessions • Moderate effort, texting or web surfing on occasion (irrelevant to course) • Knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them • Rarely offers to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on • May seem occasionally distracted or uninterested • Uses inclusive language at times and respects other students' identities to an extent
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

(10-15) Strong Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely late and no in-person class absences • Engaged in classroom activities only while in the class • Has clearly read and asks pertinent questions about course material • Offers interpretations or analysis of course material (more than just facts) to class • Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way • Responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way • Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement by active visual and /or verbal engagement • Uses inclusive language in class and respects other students' identities
(15-20) Excellent Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently on time and no absences • Engaged in classroom activities only while in the class • Has analyzed course material exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.) • Participates actively and equally during in class discussions, and group activities • Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion keeps discussion focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative dialogue-building • Demonstrates ongoing active involvement and active visual and/or verbal engagement • Always uses inclusive language in class and respects other students' identities


Computers and Electronics:

Please place all electronic devices, such as phones, on vibrate or silent during class. Students should limit their tablet, laptop, or any other electronic device use for note taking or class related activities so as not to detract from the class. Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor.

Safety and emergency preparedness:

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)764-7793 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 two emergency exits nearest the classroom.

Each SSW classroom is equipped with door locks. Pressing the  button (located on the door handle) to lock the door from within the room.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services (Room 1748) at (734) 936-0961 or via email at ssw-ADA.compliance@umich.edu.

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. [Click here to read more about the School of Social Work's emergency policies and procedures.](#)

Additional resources:

- [Report a hate crime or bias-related incident](#)
- [Register for UM Emergency Alerts](#)
- [View the annual Campus Safety Statement](#)

Mental health and well being:

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and well being of all 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
 - The SSW embedded CAPS Counselor is Meghan Shaughnessy-Mogill, LLMSW. She is dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of social work students and the SSW community and offers short-term, solution-focused individual therapy. All services are free and confidential. Contact her at (734) 763-7894 or via email at mshaughm@umich.edu.
- [University Health Service](#) (UHS) at (734) 764-8320
- [Additional campus health and wellness resources](#)

The Office of Student Services' Health and Wellness Program provides supportive services to MSW students which promote wellness, self care and maintenance of a healthy academic and mental health balance, as well as to increase disability awareness.

- [SSW Health and Wellness Guide](#)
- Contact the Health and Wellness Program at ssw.wellness@umich.edu

Trigger Warnings:

Students may experience a range of emotions throughout this course. All feelings are acceptable, and important aspects of who we are. Our ability to regulate emotions and function and respond productively is a critical social work skill. Because of this, and the fact that we all may be triggered by a range of discussions, "trigger warnings" will not often be used during this course. Please assume positive intent when listening to the instructor and class colleagues. Mental health and wellbeing resources are listed above, and are available to you at any time.

Teaching evaluations:

Students are strongly encouraged to complete teaching evaluations at the end of each term. Teaching evaluations are administered via Canvas and will be emailed to students during the last week of classes. Student identity is completely anonymous, and instructors cannot view evaluation reports until after grades are submitted.

Proper use of names and pronouns:

All students will be referred to by the names and pronouns they use (e.g. she, they, ze, he). If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform the instructor before the second class period so that they use your correct name and pronouns. [Students can designate their personal pronouns on the class roster via Wolverine Access: Student Business > Campus Personal Information > Gender Identity.](#)

There are two inclusive restrooms in the SSW building: room 1784 (1st floor, near Registrar's Office) and B833T (Lower Level). [Click here for the Spectrum Center's map of gender inclusive restrooms on campus.](#)

Accommodations for students with disabilities:

If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability, please let me know by the second class. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. [Additional information about accommodations for students with disabilities, as well as a list of appropriate accommodation forms, is available here.](#) Please present the appropriate paperwork at least two weeks prior to the need for the accommodation (test, project, etc.).

For more information, contact:

Services for Students with Disabilities
G-664 Haven Hall | 505 South State St.
(734) 763-3000 | ssdoffice@umich.edu

Religious/spiritual observances:

An overview of the process for students who have conflicts with religious observances:

- Students are responsible for work acquired during their absence
- Students will have a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete any academic work
- Reasonable notice must be given to faculty before drop/add deadline of term
- Any concerns or conflicts should be brought to the Dean or Ombudsperson

[Please click here to find more information about the University's policy concerning religious holidays as well as a non-exhaustive list of religious holidays.](#)

Military deployment:

[Please click here for more information and resources for students called to Active Duty status while enrolled at the University of Michigan.](#)

Writing skills and expectations:

Strong writing and communication skills are essential to students' academic success and professional career. The Writing Coordinator for the School of Social Work is open to meeting with students during any phase of the writing process. The Writing Coordinator's office is housed within the Career Services Office. The Career Services Office also offers workshops, resources and individual assistance to help improve skills and confidence in written communication.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact:

[SSW Writing Assistance](#)

[Career Services](#) (Room 1696; (734) 763-6259; ssw-cso@umich.edu)

APA formatting:

Any social work assignments presented as professional papers or presentations should utilize APA formatting. Review the [MLibrary APA Citation Guide](#) as needed. [The Purdue Owl website is another helpful resource for assistance with APA formatting.](#)

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Plagiarism is prohibited in any academic writing at the University of Michigan. [More information on academic integrity policies can be found in the MSW Student Guide.](#)