In the spirit of healing and health, I acknowledge and honor that the University of Michigan resides on the traditional Territories of the Three Fires People - the Ojibwe, Odawa and Bodewadmi and that the Great Lakes region remains home to multiple tribal nations.

1. Course Statement

a. 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.

b. 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).

c. Course Competencies and Objectives

Competency 4: Engage diversity and difference in practice. Practice Behaviors:

4.1 Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.
4.2 Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.
4.3 Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences.
4.4 View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

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 are 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)

d. 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.

e. Curricular Themes

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 interpersonal 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.

f. Relationship to Social Work 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.
g. **Intensive Focus on PODS**

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.

## 2. Class Requirements

### a. **Text and class materials**

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings, including book chapters and journal articles are posted on Canvas under Files → Week # → Readings. Required multimedia sources are listed below with links to the material. *You will need to look follow the syllabus for all required reading/viewing materials.* Additional readings/materials may be posted on Canvas over the course of the semester. Please let us know if any of the materials are inaccessible (e.g., articles are not compatible with a screen reader or videos do not include closed captions).

### b. **Class schedule**

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is a working document. Changes to the schedule and any additional/changes to the readings will be announced via Canvas. Be sure that you have canvas announcements enabled (in Canvas under Account → Notifications → Announcement).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1: 9/3/19 – Introductions &amp; Orientation to SW 504</th>
<th>Readings: N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

|---|---|


Recommended


Week 3: 9/17/19 – Intersectionality & Troubling the Concept of Race

Readings:


Read two articles from this series: https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2015/06/16/how-fluid-is-racial-identity

Read one of the following:


**Recommended**


**DUE:** “Who Am I?” Paper

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**Week 4: 9/24/19 – Structural Racism/Inequality, Class, & Whiteness**


[Video] How to be an antiracist: Ibram X. Kendi on why we need to fight racism the way we fight cancer. Retrieved from https://www.democracynow.org/2019/8/13/ibram_x_kendi_class_race_capitalism


**Recommended**


**Week 5: 10/1/19 – Social Determinants of Health & Implications for Social Work Practice**

**Readings:**


[Ted Talk] How studying privilege systems can strengthen compassion: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-BY9UEewHw


**Recommended**


**DUE:** Journal Entry #1

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**Week 6: 10/8/19 – Accomplices and Allies, Cultural Appropriation, & Microaggressions**

**Guest:** Dr. Bethany Hughes: [https://lsa.umich.edu/ac/people/faculty/hughesbr.html](https://lsa.umich.edu/ac/people/faculty/hughesbr.html)

**Readings:**

Choose one:
- [Youtube Video] 5 Tips for Being an Ally: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dq86gQlM0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dq86gQlM0)
- [Youtube Video] How to be a good ally - Identity, privilege, resistance | Ahsante the Artist: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7ElX4GFQpI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q7ElX4GFQpI)


**Recommended:**


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**Week 7: 10/15/19 – Fall Study BREAK**

**Week 8: 10/22/19 – Settler Colonialism & Historical Trauma**


Pick one from this list:
Columbus Day readings (Oct 14)
- https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/10/14/232120128/how-columbus-sailed-into-u-s-history-thanks-to-italians
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=il5hwpdJMcg
- https://theoatmeal.com/comics/columbus_day

Recommended


Knock Off Native: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_zFOsd_pqA


Standing Rock Syllabus: https://nycstandwithstandingrock.wordpress.com/standingrocksyllabus/

**Week 9: 10/29/19 –**

**DUE:** Group Presentations (Part 1)

**Week 10: 11/5/19 – The Patriarchy**


Recommended
[Podcast] This American Life - Tell Me I'm Fat: https://www.thisamericanlife.org/589/tell-me-im-fat

[Youtube Video] The Dangerous Ways Ads See Women: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy8yLaoWybk

DUE: Group Presentations (Part 2)

Week 11: 11/12/19 – Heteronormativity and Cisnormativity

Guest: Racquelle Trammell, Love Her Collective (Community-based Research Initiative between the University of Michigan and Trans Sistas of Color Project): https://www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/

Readings:

Bauer, G. et al. (2009). “I don’t think this is theoretical; This is our lives”: How erasure impacts health care for transgender people. Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, 20(5), 348-361.


Recommended


DUE: Journal Entry #2
Week 12: 11/19/19 – Xenophobia & Immigration

Readings:


Recommended


Week 13: 11/26/19 – Disabilities

Readings:


Washel, E. (2016). People who are not disabled need to check out #ableismexists right now. Retrieved from [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/dominick-evans-ableismexists-twitter-discrimination-against-disabled-people_n_571902c9e4b0c9244a7b2eb9](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/dominick-evans-ableismexists-twitter-discrimination-against-disabled-people_n_571902c9e4b0c9244a7b2eb9)

Recommended


DUE: Proposal for Final Project

Week 14: 12/3/19 – Responding and Resisting; Anti-Oppressive Practice

Guest: Justin Hodge: https://ssw.umich.edu/faculty/profiles/clinical-and-research/hodjusti

Readings: Voting is Social Work (handout)


Recommended


DUE: Journal Entry #3

Week 15: 12/10/19 - What next?


[Youtube Video] Shit’s Totally FUCKED! What Can We Do?: A Mutual Aid Explainer by Dean Spade and Ciro Carillo: https://youtu.be/PopmGAvsggg
DUE: Final Project/Paper
Class Evaluations

c. Assignments
A brief description of each assignment is provided here. A more detailed description of assignments with grading rubrics are posted on Canvas (Files → Assignments). Assignments should be submitted via Canvas before the start of class unless otherwise specified.

Class Engagement and Professionalism (20%): Active, purposeful engagement in class discussion and activities and demonstration of professionalism are paramount for successful completion of this course. In addition to attending class, students are expected to arrive prepared to actively participate in their learning process.

“Who am I?” (15%): To prepare for engagement with course materials, students will be asked to reflect on their social location through a brief video or paper to consider what their answers reveal about who they are and how this shapes them as a person and as a current and/or future social worker.

Journal Entries (20%): The purpose of this assignment is to practice reflexivity by submitting three reflection papers in response to readings, activities, videos, guest speakers, or other course content (3 papers due).

Group Presentation Presentation (20%): Students will work in groups of 3-5 to prepare and deliver a presentation about the ways in which power has been and is currently used to define, subjugate and dominate the identity of targeted group/community through popular culture mechanisms, as well as how this targeted group/community resists oppression.

Final Project (25%): Students will analyze an issue of social justice or the conditions of a marginalized population group using concepts and frameworks described and discussed throughout the course. Students can choose one of several formats for your final project, including (1) TED talk; (2) podcast; or (3) an illustrated book/magazine with photographs and articles. Another format may be possible, but you must seek professor permission prior to the proposal. Alternately, students can participate in a 6-week long social justice dialogue groups and submit a reflective paper about their experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement and Professionalism</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Who Am I?”</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Entries</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Weeks 5, 11, and 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group Presentation | 20 | Weeks 9 and 10
---|---|---
Final Project | 25 | Proposal due Week 13
| | Project due Week 15 |

Grades will be posted to Canvas within two weeks of assignment due dates.

d. Attendance and class participation

I encourage you to attend courses to earn points for class participation. Engagement and professionalism is a graded assignment in this course (see Canvas under Files → Assignments → Engagement & Professionalism). Should something prevent you coming to class (i.e. illness, a conference, a religious observance, personal emergency) please notify your instructor (when possible at least 24 hours before an expected absence, or within 24 hours of an unexpected absence/emergency). Note: If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for any assignments due that day. Please review the Policy on Class Attendance found in the MSW Student Guide.

Please be considerate to me, guest speakers, and your colleagues by limiting the use of laptops, phones and other forms of technology for classroom purposes only. Misuse of these devices during class time will be reflected in your participation score. Relatedly, an interesting read on research concerning the personal use of technology in the classroom.

e. Grading

From MSW Student Guide policies on Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction:

Letter grades from A through E are given for class performance. Grades of A are given for exceptional individual performance and mastery of the material. The use of A+, A, and A– distinguishes degrees of superior mastery. 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 which carries credit. D grades indicate deficiency and carry no credit. E grades indicate failure and carry no credit.

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key grading criteria include: a) thoroughness and completeness of content; b) clarity and logic of presentation; c) evidence of critical thought and self-reflection; and d) writing and editing quality.
Late Assignment Policy: Please communicate with me as soon as possible if you anticipate problems with a due date. Unless this is due to an unexpected event/emergency, requests for an extension on an assignment must be made at least 48 hours in advance. Without advance arrangements, assignments turned in after the due date/time will receive a 5% deduction from your overall grade for each day past due and be considered incomplete after one week.

I will do my very best to assess and provide feedback on your work. If you believe you have been graded inaccurately or unfairly on an assignment, please submit in writing the mistake you believe has been made and the alternate grade you suggest. Challenges to a grade must be in writing, specific, and based on substantive arguments (or mathematical errors). I reserve the right to re-read and re-grade the work in its entirety in the case of a challenge. This may result in a higher or lower grade and that grade will be final.

Please review the Student Grievance procedures and policy for grading in special circumstances in the MSW Student Guide.

Please review Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources.

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. Click here to read more about the School of Social Work's emergency policies and procedures.

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. 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). Each SSW classroom is equipped with door locks. Pressing the Lock button (the only button located inside of 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-adacompliance@umich.edu.

Mental health and well-being
The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing 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) located at the Tappan Street Auxiliary Building on 609 Tappan Street across from the Ross Business School; (734) 764-8312
  - We also have an embedded CAPS Counselor at SSW, Alejandro Rojas, LMSW, who is dedicated to supporting the well-being of social work students and the
SSW community. All services are free and confidential. To contact Alejandro Rojas, please email aroja@umich.edu to set up an initial consultation.

- 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. Contact the Health and Wellness Program at ssw.wellness@umich.edu

Teaching evaluations

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 asked to share the name and pronouns they would like to use in our classroom space. Names and pronouns may change overtime. It is expected that we all commit to using the correct name and pronouns of each other and any guests throughout the semester. Should someone accidently use the wrong name or pronoun, acknowledge the mistake, apologize, and move on with the correct version. Example: “As he was saying. I’m sorry; I meant to say, as they were saying, that was a very interesting article.”

Accommodations for students with disabilities

If you are in need of any accommodations, please let me know at your earliest convenience. 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 or to schedule an appointment, contact:

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

Religious/Spiritual observances

The University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays, however it has long been the University’s policy that every reasonable effort should be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Please click here to find out more about student expectations around conflicts.
between the academic and religious calendars, 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 your 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. Their 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)
1080 S University Ave.
Phone: (734) 763-6259
Email: ssw-cso@umich.edu

Any social work assignments presented as professional papers or presentations should utilize APA formatting. I will assign points to your assignments based on proper use of APA formatting. Review the [MLibrary APA Citation Guide](#) as needed. The Purdue Owl website is very helpful resource for assistance with APA formatting.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Do not plagiarize - 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](#). Test your knowledge on plagiarism here: [https://sites.google.com/a/umich.edu/ssw-writing-help/academic-integrity-avoiding-plagiarism](https://sites.google.com/a/umich.edu/ssw-writing-help/academic-integrity-avoiding-plagiarism)