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 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
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 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
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
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**
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**
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**
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

Required readings are located in the “Files” section on Canvas, arranged in the “Modules” section. Students are expected to have completed all assigned readings prior to class.

Readings may be changed due to visits by guest lecturers, special circumstances, and student needs. I will aim to make any changes to readings two weeks in advance.

b. Class schedule

Refer to the “Modules” section on Canvas for the class schedule. Readings, assignments, and other activities are organized by class session in that section.

c. Assignments

Assignment instructions and rubrics will be posted on Canvas in the “Assignments” section. All assignments are due by 11:59 PM on the dates listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Percent of overall grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Am I?</td>
<td>9/24/19</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice Dialogue Group</td>
<td>11/19/19</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Justice &amp; Diversity Capstone</td>
<td>12/10/19</td>
<td>30%</td>
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d. Attendance and class participation

Both class attendance and active purposeful participation in class discussion and activities are paramount for the successful completion of this course. This course covers
a content domain that is extensive, and given the time framework of the course each class moves quickly in discussing information.

e. Grading

Please review the MSW Student Guide policies on Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction as well as Student Grievance procedures.

Final grades will be determined on the basis of performance. Letter grades will be allocated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100+</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
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<td>77-79</td>
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<td>&lt;60</td>
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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