



Course title:	Understanding Social Issues of Our Time
Course #/term:	Social Work 200, Section 001 – Winter 2020
Time and place:	Tuesday/Thursday 10-11:30 – G023 West Quad
Credit hours:	3
Prerequisites:	None
Instructor:	Joseph A. Galura
Pronouns:	He, his, him
Contact info:	E-mail: jgalura@umich.edu Phone: 734-763-6579 You may expect a response within 48-72 hours
Office:	3640c Social Work
Office hours:	Wednesday 1-4, and by appointment

1. COURSE STATEMENT

a. Course description:

The following seminar will feature a close reading and discussion of up to five contemporary bestsellers, with students choosing from a list including \$2 a Day, Hillbilly Elegy, March, Hidden Figures, American Born Chinese, Persepolis, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, Tuesdays with Morrie, and Just Mercy.

- How does the content of these books inform the public discourse on social issues such as poverty, rural America, civil rights, diversity, loss and grief, and the death penalty?
- Can the values, theories, and practices of Social Work broaden and deepen our understanding of these social issues, and if so, in what specific ways?

Students will also be introduced to the concept of integrative learning and develop an ePortfolio over the course of the semester.

b. Course content:

The particular social issues selected for discussion will change from year to year depending on faculty interest and the contemporary context. Selected topics may include poverty, homelessness, family violence, divorce, mental illness, juvenile delinquency, inequality, racism, child abuse and neglect, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, community development, and managed care. The opening sessions of the course will briefly overview the social context for the kinds of roles, interventions, and fields of service that the profession generally operates from, before

exploring in depth the professions response to each selected social issue. Important professional themes such as multicultural sensitivity, empowerment, prevention, and value based intervention will also be reviewed in this course. Note: this course is distinguished from a more traditional course on social issues since it focuses specifically on a limited number of selected social problems and probes social work's professional involvement in preventing and assuaging each issue.

c. Course objectives and competencies:

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

1. Articulate the various roles, levels of intervention, and fields of service from which social workers practice.
2. Describe the various value dilemmas, political controversies, and societal challenges that the profession of social work faces when it approaches selected social problems.
3. Explain why diversity, empowerment, and strengths-based perspectives are critical to the way social workers approach social problems.
4. Critique the social work profession's response to selected social problems.
5. Engage in activities that use integrative learning principles to facilitate knowledge transfer and link classroom, fieldwork, and personal experiences.
6. Identify, document, and link knowledge and skills across educational, professional, and personal experiences.
7. Create a beginning e-portfolio by completing the assignments listed below utilizing the Seelio platform, and present this to the class at the end of the course.
8. Demonstrate basic skills for integrative learning, generative interviewing, appreciative inquiry, giving and receiving feedback, and personal reflection.
10. Reflect on how social justice principles and processes are reflected in the readings and their lives and how this can be strengthened.

d. Course design:

Class sessions are scheduled for an hour and a half, twice weekly. Varied pedagogical strategies are utilized in this course including, but not limited to: traditional lecture/discussion format, small group activities, guest speakers, video clips and other online resources.

e. Curricular themes:

Multiculturalism and Diversity issues will be explored as students identify self-knowledge and skills for regularly monitoring their practice within the context of their work. The PODS (Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice) lens will be applied to practice situations and students will have an opportunity to discuss relevant field issues related to the diversity dimensions (ability, age, culture, economic class, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender identity and expression, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation).

Social Justice and Social Change issues will be addressed by helping students to critically assess their commitment to and skills for enacting change towards social justice goals. The role of the social worker will be discussed as reflected by their individual experiences and reflection.

Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation approaches will be addressed within the context of the student's orientation to practice. Small group discussions will allow the student to discuss, review, compare, and contrast alternative approaches and frameworks while reflecting on their individual work and experiences.

Behavioral and Social Science research approaches will be addressed within the context of the student's orientation and method. Small group discussions will allow the student to discuss, review, compare, and contrast alternative approaches and frameworks while reflecting on their individual work and experiences.

f. Relationship to social work ethics and values:

This course introduces the concept that professions act within a value and ethical framework. This framework shapes the kinds of interventions that the social work professions can employ in addressing social problems. Elements of the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics and other ethical frameworks are discussed to help students understand the opportunities and parameters of the profession.

g. Intensive focus on PODS:

See "e. Curricular Themes," first paragraph.

2. CLASS REQUIREMENTS

a. Text and class materials:

1. Required texts
March (ISBN: 978-1603093002)
Just Mercy (ISBN: 978-0812994537)
\$2 a Day (ISBN: 978-0544303188)
2. "Class Picks One"
Persepolis
Hillbilly Elegy
Hidden Figures
American Born Chinese
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
3. "Student Picks One" – each student, in consultation with the instructor, will pick an additional book to incorporate into the Final Presentation
4. Additional resources are available on Canvas

- “To fully engage in the course, it is expected that students will complete all required readings.”
- Required readings will be discussed/debriefed in class, as will the topics of written assignments and/or prompts for works to be posted your ePortfolio.
- Additional readings may be assigned and could be handed out in class or posted on Canvas.

b. Class schedule:

Following is an overview of each week:

Dates	Topic	Required readings & assignments
Week 1 9 & 14 Jan	The Spell Craft of Social Work...	Syllabus (9 Jan) Satterly (14 Jan)...Harry Potter & Social Justice
Week 2 16 & 21 Jan	March, vol 1	March, vol 1 March, Reading Guide
Week 3 23 & 28 Jan	March, vol 2	March, vol 2 Social Work, Some Starters
Week 4 30 Jan & 4 Feb	March, vol 3	March, vol 3 ePortfolios, An Introduction
Weeks 5 6 & 11 Feb	Evolution of Values...	Gamble & Weil (ch 3) ...Concepts & Community Practice Approaches
Weeks 6 & 7 13, 15, 20 & 25 Feb	Just Mercy	Just Mercy Just Mercy, Teacher’s Guide
Weeks 8 & 9 27 Feb; 10 & 12 Mar	Integrative Learning – “Who Am I?”	Midterm Presentation
Weeks 10 & 11 17, 19, 24 & 26 Mar	\$2 a Day	\$2 a Day \$2 a Day, Discussion Guide
Weeks 12 & 13 31 Mar; 2, 7 & 9 Apr	“Class Picks One”	Class Book Choice “You Pick,” Discussion Guide
Week 14 14, 16 & 21 Apr	“I Read, Therefore I Am?”	Final ePortfolio Presentation

c. Assignments:

This course is terraced or scaffolded around three types of questions, building towards midterm and final in-class presentations of students' ePortfolio. The three types are:

- **WHAT?** What does our close reading of these assigned texts say about particular social issues?
- **SO WHAT?** Can the values, theories, and practices of Social Work broaden and deepen our understanding of these social issues, and if so, in what specific ways?
- **NOW WHAT?** Who am I and how does this ongoing conversation affect my purpose and passion as a change agent?

Following are the specific assignments:

Journal 1: Due before class on 16 Jan (4 points)

Review the March Reading Guide. Select two or three questions you would like us to discuss as a class. In your selection process, please reflect on your interest in, motivation for, and/or experience with this particular content area. Please upload to Canvas a Word.doc - 1-2 pages, double-spaced, 11-12 point font.

Dive deeper (recommended) with Morris, *A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement* (1999)

Plan ahead - see Journal 8: Decide on the additional book you will incorporate into your final presentation. If you are interested in the Civil Rights Movement, besides the titles in the March Reading Guide, you might also consider:

Radical Equations; The Arc of Justice; Freedom Riders; The Gospel of Freedom; Kennedy and King; White Rage; A More Beautiful and Terrible History; Slavery by Another Name; The Dawn of Detroit; Sing, Unburied, Sing; Twelve Days in May

Journal 2: Due before class on 23 Jan (4 points)

Review *The Spell Craft of Social Work: Harry Potter and Social Justice* (2017). Inspired by Satterly and our class discussions about intersectionality, pick ONE social identity and develop a personal narrative, identifying three significant instances of how you have been socialized regarding what is or is not expected of that identity under those circumstances. Contextualize your takeaways about how power, privilege, and oppression are operating in each case. Format these instances as three Power Point slides, with an explanation of each expectation and circumstance in the notes. Upload to Canvas and be prepared to share with the class.

Dive deeper (recommended) into social work ethics and values with the NASW Code of Ethics (2017) and/or the Eye on Ethics archive from Social Work Today (link below).

http://www.socialworktoday.com/eye_on_ethics_index.shtml

Look ahead – the slides are a draft of your midterm presentation. At some point, consider adding:

- A Bookface slide, walk-up music, and/or your response to “I’m a Social Worker, what’s YOUR Superpower?”
- A framework of “If My Life Was A Movie...” Who would be cast in your role? Who would direct? What type of movie would it be – comedy, drama, musical, fantasy, science fiction, comic book, documentary?

Journal 3: Due before class on 30 Jan (4 points)

Browse examples of ePortfolios in Portfolium. On ONE Power Point slide, format a suitable “selfie” and “About” text. Be prepared to share the slide with the class and save it to Canvas.

Dive deeper (recommended) into integrative pedagogy with Huber, *Fostering Integrative Learning through the Curriculum* (2006); Richards-Schuster and Galura, *Navigating Multiple ePortfolios* (2017); Galura, *Service-Learning and Integrative Pedagogy for Engaging the Whole Student* (2017).

Plan ahead – In-class presentations on 29 & 31 Oct will feature the work-in-progress on your ePortfolio.

Journal 4: Due before class on 6 Feb (4 points)

Review Gamble and Weil - *Evolution of Values, Concepts, and Community Practice Approaches* (2010). On ONE Power Point slide, format an image(s) that connects you to at least one social work value, concept, practice or approach. Write out this connection in the “Notes” section of the slide. Be prepared to share the slide with the class and save it to Canvas.

Dive deeper with the (recommended) resources and prompts from Journal 2. Also recommended: Browsing the link below – which aspects of the MSW Program interest you most and why?

<https://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/overview>

Journal 5: Due before class on 13 Feb (4 points)

Review the Just Mercy Teacher’s Guide. Select two or three questions you would like us to discuss as a class. In your selection process, please reflect on your interest in, motivation for, and/or experience with posing these particular questions. Please upload to Canvas a Word.doc - 1-2 pages, double-spaced, 11-12 point font.

Plan ahead - see Journal 8: Decide on the additional book you will incorporate into your final presentation. If you are interested in Mass Incarceration, you might also consider:

Blood in the Water, The New Jim Crow, From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime, The Maximum Security Book Club, Writing My Wrongs, Women Doing Life, Monster, Makes Me Want to Holler, All God's Children, Fist-Stick-Knife-Gun

Journal 6: Due before class on 20 Feb (4 points)

Review the link below to the UHS web page, "Personal Well-being for Students" and the discussions about significant learning experiences. On at least new THREE Power Point slides, format images and text that speak to how you are developing your purpose and passion as a change agent. Please upload to Canvas and be prepared to share with the class.

<https://www.uhs.umich.edu/well-being>

Dive deeper (recommended) with these articles on "purpose":

<https://qz.com/1260478/this-college-is-moving-beyond-what-color-is-your-parachute-and-designing-for-students-to-find-purposeful-work/>

<https://blionline.org/2017/11/like-your-job-so-what-a-better-question-is-do-you-make-a-difference/>

Midterm: In-class Presentations 10 & 12 Mar (10 points)

"Who Am I?" - Each student will give a 5-7 minute presentation, taking the class on a virtual tour of their ePortfolio. A key element is their developing narrative as a change agent, demonstrating:

- An understanding of intersectionality, identity, power, privilege, and oppression
- An application of this understanding to a social issue discussed in class
- A forward-looking vision for social justice, contemplating their personal role in micro and/or macro-level efforts for change

Journal 7: Due before class on 19 Mar (4 points)

Review the \$2 a Day Discussion Guide. Select two or three questions you would like us to discuss as a class. In your selection process, please reflect on your interest in, motivation for, and/or experience with posing these particular questions. Please upload to Canvas a Word.doc - 1-2 pages, double-spaced, 11-12 point font.

Plan ahead - see Journal 8: Decide on the additional book you will incorporate into your final presentation. If you are interested in Poverty (and/or the Poverty Solutions Certificate), in addition to the links below, you might also consider:

Automating inequality, Nickel and dimed, Detroit resurrected, Banker to the poor, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Savage inequalities and Rachel and her children and Amazing grace (or pretty much anything else by Jonathan Kozol)

<https://www.bestmswprograms.com/50-best-books-on-poverty/>

<https://firstperson.oxfamamerica.org/2017/01/17-books-that-will-change-your-perspective-about-poverty-this-year/>

<https://ssw.umich.edu/offices/casc-undergraduate-minor/poverty-solutions-certificate-program>

Journal 8: Due before class on 26 Mar (4 points)

Decide on the additional book you will incorporate into your final presentation. Reflect on your selection process, especially on how you are developing your purpose and passion as an agent of community action and social change. Please upload as to Canvas as a Word.doc – 1-2 pages, double-spaced, 11-12 point font.

If you are still in the process of deciding, please consider one of these titles, recommended by the Council on Social Work Education and listed by genre.

https://cswe.org/CSWE/media/Diversity-Center/Book-List-by-Genre_Updated-2019.pdf

Journal 9: Due before class on 2 Apr (4 points)

Review the Discussion Guide for the book our class selected. Select two or three questions you would like us to discuss as a class. In your selection process, please reflect on your interest in, motivation for, and/or experience with posing these particular questions. Please upload to Canvas a Word.doc - 1-2 pages, double-spaced, 11-12 point font.

Journal 10: Due before class on 9 Apr (4 points)

How will you present your book's content to the class? Review the various Guides, see also the example from "Four Minute Books" at the link below.

<https://fourminutebooks.com/the-geography-of-genius-summary/>

Final: In-class Presentations 14, 16 & 21 Apr (15 points)

“I Read, Therefore I Am?” - Each student will give a 8-10 minute presentation, again taking the class on a virtual tour of their ePortfolio. The starting point will be the additional book selected for Journal 8.

- WHAT? What does your close reading of this text say about particular social issues?
- SO WHAT? Can the values, theories, and practices of Social Work broaden and deepen our understanding of these social issues, and if so, in what specific ways?
- NOW WHAT? Who am I and how does this ongoing conversation affect my purpose and passion as a change agent?

In addressing NOW WHAT? curate at least THREE elements from this class (or your broader undergraduate experience) into a cohesive, integrative, final presentation.

Dive deeper (recommended) with Schrand, et. al., “Reflecting on Reflections:” Curating ePortfolios for Integrative Learning and Identity Development in a Capstone Seminar (2018).

Journal 11: Final Reflection (8 points)

Prior to midnight on 22 Apr, please upload to Canvas your responses (a Word.doc - 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 11-12 point font) to the questions below.

- Feedback: which academic, co-curricular or professional mentor did you meet with, what feedback did you receive, and how did you use the feedback (or not use) in refining your portfolio and/or presentation?
- What did you learn about yourself through this process, class, and presentation?
- What are your top 3 takeaways from the other presentations and why?
- What did you learn about your overall experience at U-M?

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
Journal 1	16 Jan by 10 am submit Word.doc to Canvas	3
Journal 2	23 Jan by 10 am submit 3 slides to Canvas	3
Journal 3	30 Jan by 10 am submit 1 slide to Canvas	3
Journal 4	5 Feb by 10 am submit 1 slide to Canvas	3
Journal 5	13 Feb by 10 am	3

	submit Word.doc to Canvas	
Journal 6	20 Feb by 10 am submit 3+ slides to Canvas	3
Midterm Presentations	10 or 12 Mar by 10 am	7.5
Journal 7	19 by 10 am submit Word.doc to Canvas	3
Journal 8	26 Mar by 10 am submit Word.doc to Canvas	3
Journal 9	2 Apr by 10 am submit Word.doc to Canvas	3
Journal 10	9 Apr by 10 am submit Word.doc to Canvas	3
Final Presentations	14, 16, 21 Apr by 10 am submit link to Final Version of Your ePortfolio to Canvas	11.25
Journal 11	22 Apr by midnight submit Word.doc to Canvas	6

d. Grading:

Because this is a Social Work class, it will attempt to follow the School's [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#).

- Journals will be graded on a credit/no credit basis and given written feedback by the instructor. A student has the option of revising and resubmitting work for re-evaluation within one week of grading.
- My policy for incomplete and late assignments is to accept them within 24 hours of time and date due at one-half the specified credit – but not after 24 hours.
- Number grades convert to letters as follows:
A 100-94/A- 93-90 B+ 89-87/B 86-84/B- 83-80
C+ 79-77/C 76-74/C- 73-70 D+ 69-67/D 66-64/D- 63-60
- Extra Credit?
In a typical semester a number of events of particular relevance to the course content are staged on campus – one of the assigned authors, for example, might be invited to lecture. When possible, the instructor will announce these events in class or on Canvas. If you

attend, to receive 2 points of extra credit, upload a 1-2 page Word.doc to Canvas. Summarize the event (who spoke, when and where, who were the sponsors, what were your 2-3 key takeaways?) and reflect (how do you connect these takeaways with any specific point(s) on the syllabus?). Up to three events can be counted for a maximum of 6 extra credit points. Please your Word.doc within one week of attending and prior to our final class session.

3. ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

a. Teaching philosophy:

My teaching philosophy aligns with my research interests:

Integrative pedagogy, particularly how teaching the whole student with mind, heart, and spirit applies to service-learning, social work education, and ePortfolio development; diversity and social justice; the experiences of Filipino Americans, especially in metropolitan Detroit.

The essence of integrative pedagogy is inclusive teaching. I aspire to provide structure in the course such that each student knows what to do before, during, and after each session. I also hope to be thoughtful in facilitating each session so that everyone can participate because I believe, as a class, we are all teachers and learners together.


b. Attendance and class participation:

This is a Social Work class that subscribes to the School's [Policy on Class Attendance](#). Students are expected to attend all of their classes. Moreover, attendance, punctuality and class participation count for one-quarter of each student's final grade. Any absence of more than 20 minutes during a given session equates to the loss of class participation points on that date. Excessive absences will be brought to the attention of the student by the course instructor.

c. 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](#)

d. 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

e. 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.](#)

f. Accommodations for students with disabilities:

If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability, 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, contact:

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

g. 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.](#)

h. Military deployment:

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

i. 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.](#)

j. 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.](#)