



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

COMMUNITY ACTION & SOCIAL CHANGE  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SW

### **300: Understanding Community Action and Social Change (DECLARE)**

#### **Develop, Engage, Challenge, Learn, Act, Reflect and Empower**

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**Course Summary:** This course is an intensive learning experience designed to support students in beginning the deep work of reflection that will be built on throughout all CASC coursework. The specific goals of the retreat are to: (1) Develop student understanding of social identity to lead to deeper, more intensified classroom and out-of-classroom learning, (2) Help students explore and articulate individual passions and their role in broader movements towards community action and social change, (3) Challenge ideas and provide space for students to learn how to engage across differences, (4) Reflect on individual's experiences and skill sets, and the power individuals bring into a community, and (5) Empower students to build a toolbox of skills, learning and experiences that will help them throughout their lives.

#### **Retreat Curriculum: Course Background**

The SALT Leadership mini-course is modeled after previous iterations of social justice program developed by the CASC minor, namely the Declare Social Justice Retreat. The course is a structured two-day retreat that applies experiential learning, critical reflection, discussion, and lecture through a social justice education model. Participating students will critically engage SALT model elements of capacity for empathy, critical consciousness, commitment to justice, equity in purpose, the value of collective action, controversy with courage, and coalescence, to promote leadership skills and knowledge. Opportunity for additional co-curricular opportunities will be offered following course completion, with the Trotter Multicultural Center

#### **Course Objectives**

- **Develop a Social Justice Vision.** understanding how to create a participatory and equitable vision of social justice rooted in the voices, experiences, and leadership of historically marginalized communities.
- **Examine Systems of Social Inequality.** unpacking and analyzing systemic oppression, power and privilege in context, as well as fostering shared language of social justice concepts.
- **Promote Identity and Critical Consciousness Raising.** building identity awareness in relation to social systems; developing skills to contextualize social identity and positionality in changing environments.
- **Understand Transformative Justice and Collection Action.** engaging transformational leadership (guided by seven capacities), unpacking root causes of harm and conflict, and practicing skills toward collective action.

## **Core Competencies:**

Students will gain exposure, knowledge and practice in each of the following competencies

- Capacity for Empathy: the ability to empathize gives leaders the ability to understand other peoples' experiences, perspective, and life situations
- Critical Consciousness: an understanding historical and contemporary forms of oppression that negatively affect marginalized communities
- Commitment to Justice: a motivation to advance the well being of historically oppressed communities, and the prioritization of efforts to achieve a more just society, where all groups are equally valued, validated, and empowered
- Equity in Purpose: when groups develop "commons" purposes, they often inherently privilege the voices of those in power and marginalize other interests
- Value of Collective Action: working with diverse communities to collectively resist multiple forms of oppression and advance justice for all historically underserved and marginalized communities
- Controversy with Courage: engaging controversy courageously by embracing discomfort, acknowledging privilege and oppression, and contributing to conversations about significant social problems
- Coalescence: individual and groups develop a shared understanding that systematic equity or justice is beneficial for all groups

**Course Expectations & Assignments:** Students are expected to attend the retreat in full, complete a pre/post survey, complete reflection and final paper assignments, and attend a one on one appointment with a Declare peer facilitator.

- Pre Survey Completion (5 points) 2.6.20
- Attendance and Active Participation: (50 points) 2.15.20
- Day 1: Reflection Paper (10 points) 2.8.20
- Day 2: Reflection Paper (10 points) 2.9.20
- Post Survey Completion (5 points) 2.14.20
- Final Paper (20 points) 2.14.20

**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 Guide, Vol. 1, Sec. 8.01 states that an "I" grade is used when illness or other compelling reasons prevent completion of work, and there is a definite plan and date for completion of course work approved by the instructor. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.

**Students in Need of Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please notify the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources,