



Course Title:	The Power of Telling Your Story in Social Work Practice
Course Number:	510 (Section 16), Fall 2020
Time and Place:	Tuesday, August 25 (2:15-5:15 pm), Wednesday, August 26 (9 a.m. – 12 pm), Thursday, August 27 (9 am-3 pm) VIRTUAL
Prerequisites:	None
Instructor:	Ayesha Ghazi Edwin, LLMSW, CLSSGB
Pronouns:	She/her/hers
Contact Info:	Email: ayeshag@umich.edu Phone: 734-972-6416
Office Hours:	By appointment

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

During new student orientation, varied social work topics, or themes, will be presented as foundation-level mini-courses inviting students to share, explore, engage, and discover the vast world of social work. This course will emphasize experiential, active, and engaged learning components and operationalize the three SEED goals: 1) Strengthen connection and community at the School of Social Work, 2) Explore PODS (privilege, oppression, diversity, & social justice), and 3) Learn foundation-level social work skills. Each theme will begin by attending a shared welcome experience.

Learning, knowing, and being able to powerfully articulate our story of self, our movements, & our organizations is an essential skill used in fundraising, running for office, community organizing, building partnerships, and in various forms of social work practice. Often, our stories are narrated by others, taking away from each of us the opportunity to powerfully and personally articulate them.

This course will provide students with a historic framework of how one's heritage has been impacted by racist policies and sentiment throughout American history. "Othering" & the dominant narrative of native-whiteness renders nonwhite communities feeling disempowered, & leaves whites feeling demonized & homogenized. The course will explore the evolution of typecasting, the ever-evolving definition of "whiteness" & "citizenship," immigration quotas & how they have shaped the racial/ethnic demographics of our country, & the effect of anti-immigrant sentiment on the acculturation of various ethnic groups. Students will explore and understand that racist policies & sentiment have negatively impacted all of us, & have shaped our stories. Students will also learn about how white supremacy & nativism hinges not only on the oppression of people of color, but also on the over-simplification of whiteness as an ethnically homogeneous group. The necessity to learn your story will be emphasized, & how to share your story to connect with others in social work practice - whether it be your story of self, your organization, or your community - will be a focus of this class.

Course Design:

This course is entirely virtual, and will consist of a blend of synchronous (live virtual classroom sessions) and asynchronous (outside of class learning exercises and activities, videos, and readings etc.) content. Students will work in a small team throughout this mini-

course to help them construct their Story of Self, practice storytelling, and receive and providing positive feedback to their peers. Students will meet with their assigned group at least one time outside of class prior to the final assignment due date (Sunday, October 4th) to continue to gain and provide feedback on their Story of Self and that of their peers.

2. CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Text and Class Materials:

This class will utilize Canvas, which will include content for you to watch, read, and listen to, as well as our lecture slides and handouts. Login to the Canvas portal at: <https://canvas.umich.edu> to access the course materials. To help inform class discussions and facilitate engaged learning, students are expected to complete asynchronous content prior to the class session.

Required Content:

Please refer to the Module page of Canvas to see content that will be used both in and outside of class. Each module will open at the time of the given class period.

Class Schedule:

Date/Time	Agenda
<p>Day 1 Tuesday, August 25th 2:15 - 5:15 pm EST</p> <p>Zoom link: https://umich.zoom.us/j/98693632800</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome, Introductions • Review course syllabus, objectives, and schedule • Community building Activity • Othering & the Story of “U.S.” • Why storytelling matters and its use • Introduction to Story of Self assignment

<p>Day 2 Wednesday, August 26th 9 am - 12:00 pm EST</p> <p>Zoom link: https://umich.zoom.us/j/91057371537</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling & public narratives • Stories that move us • Meeting our Peer Groups • Exploring our challenges, choices, outcomes, and values
<p>Day 3 Thursday, August 27th 9 am - 3:00 pm EST</p> <p>Zoom link: https://umich.zoom.us/j/93119213999</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal narrative, collective action • Guest Presenter Jamie Simmons, student, President of ABSW, and certified IGR Facilitator: Effective listening, providing feedback, & Intergroup Dialogue • Guest Presenter Gabriela Santiago Romero, Policy Director at We the People Detroit • Practicing our personal narratives & receiving feedback • Wrap-up and next steps

Attendance:

In order to successfully pass this class, students should attend online sessions, and participate and engage in large and small group virtual discussions and activities.

However, as we are living in extraordinary times, I understand if your ability to attend live synchronous sessions may be

hindered or limited by a variety of reasons (including, but limited to, childcare responsibilities, caregiving, you or someone you care for is affected by Covid-19, unreliable internet access, etc.). If you find yourself in this or any other circumstances and it prevents you from attending or participating in a session, please **contact me** so we can do the best we can to accommodate you.

A follow-up brown bag lunch discussion will be planned for later in the Fall semester to review reflect, and share how we, and our stories, are continuing to evolve. The date for this session will be determined collectively based on students' availability.

Grading:

This course is offered Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.

Assignments:

Students who are enrolled in this course will complete the following assignments to successfully pass this course:

- 1) Participate in both virtual synchronous and asynchronous sessions, and attend a brown bag lunch later in the Fall semester (date TBD).
- 2) Students will develop a "Story of Self" (details are below).
Submit via Canvas no later than Sunday, October 4th, 11:59 pm.


Story of Self Recording, Reflection, and Group Work

“When you discover your personal narrative, it will not only guide you to find your life’s mission, but it will also serve as a lifelong source of strength and motivation to help you accomplish the mission.”

~ J. Christian Jensen

Composing your story of self is essential to knowing who you are. Each of us has a compelling story to tell that has the power to drive others to action. Connecting the past to your present provides you with a greater sense of understanding of your current circumstances, reaffirms the choices you’ve made that have led to this moment, and allows you to connect your present to your future. Those who understand their stories and practice storytelling have shown to have a stronger sense of identity, increased self-esteem, and greater resiliency in the face of stress (Jensen, 2017). **As you enter your career in social work practice, it is essential that you take ownership of your personal narrative, and begin learning the art of crafting and telling your story.**

This is a three-component assignment with all parts due via Canvas no later than Sunday, October 4th, at 11:59 pm. This assignment is meant to guide students through the process of building their Story of Self, which will begin during SEED week and continue outside of the classroom, and help students think about how their story is continuing to evolve and is impacted by new experiences and learning.

The assignment components are as follows: **1)** A 3 minute max. audio/video recording of one's Story of Self, **2)** Peer feedback forms  from at least two group



meetings (one of these meeting will take place in-class during SEED week) , and **3)** a 4-page double spaced individual reflection on the process of constructing your Story of Self, what you've learned, and how power, privilege, and oppression have shaped your story and identity.

More details for each component are below:

1) Story of Self Recording

Students will submit a 3 minute max. “Story of Self” audio or video recording. This can be video recorded or just audio.

2) Group Meeting Feedback Forms

Students are required to meet with their peer groups twice, one time in class, and at least one time outside of class. During these meetings, students are to share their Story of Self as detailed in the [Marshall Ganz's Public Narrative workshop forms](#) , provide [feedback](#)  on each persons story, and provide your team members with a copy of your written feedback. Students should review their peer's feedback of their story and use it to help them refine and polish their Story of Self prior to the final recording. **Your peers' feedback forms from both meetings should be submitted with your audio/video recording on October 4th, 11:59 pm.**

3) Individual Reflection

Students will submit a 4-paged double-spaced reflection via Canvas no later than October 4th, 11:59 pm, detailing:

- 1) The process of constructing your "Story of Self" and what you've learned
- 2) The process of receiving peer feedback and whether it was incorporated

3) How your identities are represented in your story, and how your story has been shaped by power, privilege, and oppression

4) What experiences you have had since SEED/are you having right now that continue to shape your story

5) How is your Story of Self connected to your choice to pursue social work practice and your future career plans

6) How will you use the skills and tools you learned in this class to benefit you in social work practice

3. ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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 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

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](#). 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
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment

COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#). Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#). If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a Doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Recording Class

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified in advance that a recording will occur and be provided with an option to opt-out. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.