



Course title:	Introduction to Social Work Practice	
Course #/term:	590, 015, Fall Term 2020	
Time and place:	Fridays 9-12pm. Room #B760	
Credit hours:	1	
Prerequisites:	N/A	
Instructor:	Daniel Fischer,	
Pronouns:	He, him, his	
Contact info:	Email: dfischer@umich.edu	Phone: (734) 647-2543
	You may expect a response within 24 hours	
Office:	2660D	
Office hours:	By appointment (please email me to schedule an appointment)	

Any student who feels that they may need an accommodation for any sort of disability, please make an appointment to see me.

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

Introduction to Social Work Practice will prepare students to successfully approach both social work education and social work practice. The course will introduce social work students to key social work ideas, values, concepts, and skills, including the code of ethics, social work's grand challenges and P.O.D.S. (privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice). Students will be oriented to social work education at the University of Michigan, including how professional graduate education may differ from past educational experiences, specialization options available, and the role of lifelong learning. Students will be introduced to a professional portfolio that they will use throughout their time in the program.

b. Course objectives and competencies

- Understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice (Essential 26, EPAS 1)
- Know the grand challenges of social work (Essential 31; EPAS 2)
- Understand the importance of ethical practice including the role of the NASW Code of

Ethics and others, and relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice (Essential 36; EPAS 1)

- Recognize, set and maintain appropriate boundaries (Essential 40; EPAS 1, 6)
- Learn how to collaborate professionally and interprofessionally (teamwork), including the appropriate use of multi-directional communication (Essential 41; EPAS 1, 6, 8)
- Enhance emotional intelligence (Essential 42; EPAS 1)
- Develop skills for professional resiliency (Essential 43; EPAS 1)
- Understand frameworks of ethical decision making and how to apply critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research and policy arena (Essential 44; EPAS 1)

c. Course design

This course will use multiple methods including but not limited to: lectures, demonstrations, case studies, readings, guest speakers, discussions, written assignments, individual and group exercises.

d. Course Relationship to P.O.D.S.

This course will introduce students to P.O.D.S. (privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice) as the framework through which social work education and practice can be viewed. Students will explore how these concepts manifest in social work practice, including in such places as the grand challenges or the code of ethics.

This course integrates P.O.D.S. content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice 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 P.O.D.S. learning.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

There is no textbook for this class. All readings for this course will be copied or linked, and made available on Canvas – the University online course management system. Information and instruction on how to use Canvas is already provided by the university; therefore, no class time will be devoted to instruction on how to use this system.

Students are expected to have completed all assigned readings prior to class, as these will serve as the basis for class discussion, activities, assignments, quizzes and examinations.

b. Class schedule

Topics may be modified throughout the course, but ample notice will be provided. Refer to Canvas for the most updated class schedule.

Date/Time	Topic	Readings and Assignments Due
Week 1 9/4/2020 9-12pm On-line	Lesson 1: Course Welcome and Overview	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: None
Week 2 9/18/2020 9-12pm In-person	Lesson 2: Core Values of Social Work	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Assignment, Milestone 1
Week 3 10/9/2020 9-12pm In-person	Lesson 3: Centering Justice	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Assignment, Milestone 2
Week 4 10/30/2020 9-12pm In-person	Lesson 4: Preparing to Practice Social Work	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion prompt • Master Assignment, Milestone 3
Week 5 11/20/2020 9-12pm In-person	Lesson 5: Professional Portfolios	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to yourself • Master Assignment, Milestone 4
Post Week 5	Portfolio Due: 12/9/2020	Readings: None Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio

c. Assignments

There are three categories of assignments for this class. The major assignment is a “What, So What, Now What” reflection assignment with a series of milestones. The second are regular,

brief assignments, usually (but not always) taking the form of online discussions through Canvas. The third is the initiation of your portfolio. Each of these three are described below.

1. Master Assignment: Social Work Ethical and Professional Behavior

Assignment Summary: The master assignment for the Introduction to Social Work course is a set of cumulative, reflective responses that will result in a final paper related to social work ethical and professional behavior. It will use the *what, so what, now what* format. The assignment will span the semester, with milestones throughout the semester. (50 points of overall grade)

- a) Milestone 1 (10 points)
Due: 9/16/20

Describe why you selected social work as a profession. To help you, consider:

- Why social work rather than a different helping profession
- What it was about the profession of social work that differentiated it and influenced your selection.

Suggested length, 1 page single-spaced.

- b) Milestone 2: *What* (10 points)
Due: 10/7/20

The purpose of this milestone is to think about the values and ethics that drew you to social work or the type of social work you want to practice. Write a reflective essay about your values and ethics. Specifically, what social work values and ethics apply to your decision to become a social worker, and/or the decision about the area of social work in which you would like to practice. Rely heavily on course content, including a thoughtful integration of lectures and readings, to identify these values and ethics and how they might be relevant to this area of practice. Move beyond simply listing them, but rather, dig in, describe, and provide a context for the anticipated application of these values in practice.

Suggested length, 1 page single-spaced.

- c) Milestone 3: *So what* (10 points)
Due: 10/28/20

The purpose of this milestone is to think about why values and ethics matter and how they are put into practice around us. Use the following questions as a guide:

- Now that you have spent some weeks in the social work program, how have the values and ethics you identified in Milestone 2 further emerged as important/relevant?
- How have you seen them play out in class? In relationships with others in the School? At work? In social situations? In the news?
- Why and when do they matter?

Suggested length, 1-2 pages single-spaced.

- d) Milestone 4: *Now what* (10 points)
Due: 11/18/20

The purpose of this milestone is to take your reflections on your values to the next level and start thinking about future growth. The Code of Ethics discusses our ethical obligations to our clients, our colleagues, our profession and our employers. As you reflect on your responses to the questions above:

- What are some next steps for you in your learning to further understand and implement your social work values and ethics in each of these areas?
- Where are your growth areas and how might you stretch yourself to further understand and practice ethically?
- How might this shape your future path, including entering a field placement?

Suggested length, 1 page single-spaced

- e) Completion of all 4 elements (10 points)
Due: 11/18/20

2. Two Brief Assignments (each worth 10 points of overall grade)

After week 3, you will complete a discussion prompt through Canvas. In week 4, you will write a letter to your future self. Details for each of these assignments/discussions can be found on Canvas site under assignment.

3. Portfolio

In this assignment, you will initiate the development of a web-based portfolio using Portfolium. Portfolios are a collection of your accomplishments, skills, and experiences that can be shared digitally to promote your abilities. Even when students do not share their portfolios with others, the act of collecting products and reflecting on them helps students build a narrative that aids students in conversations with future employers.

This assignment has three steps:

- **Step #1:** Complete [the training module](#), which teaches you about building an ePortfolio in Portfolium.
- **Step #2:** Begin setting up your profile on the Profile tab by completing the *introduction* as described in the training module. You are welcome to add your resume, education and other information to your portfolio, but this is not required in this assignment.
- **Step #3:** Upload your master assignment as a “project” in your Portfolium portfolio in the Portfolio tab.

d. Attendance and class participation (10 points)

Attendance is a requirement. Students are expected to attend each of the four in-person classes and fully participate in the one on-line session. Students may request to participate on-line for some or all class sessions through advanced communication with the instructor.

Participation does not mean you need to talk a lot in class. It is more about bringing a positive learning attitude to the class and being present for each session. Each of us participates differently, and I will strive to honor that diversity among us. You will be required to engage in in-class exercises and discussions that includes engagement, providing collegial support, the use of active listening skills, initiating and participation in dialogue within group discussions. Please refer to the [Policy on Class Attendance](#) for further clarification.

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.

e. Grading

Master Assignment – 50 points (credit, no credit)

Brief Assignments – 20 points (credit, no credit)

Portfolio – 20 points (credit, no credit)

Attendance and Participation -10 points

Please review these policies in regard to grades. [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances](#).

Course Grading Scale (*Total points available 100*).

A	(100-95 points)	C+	(79-77 points)
A-	(94-90 points)	C	(76-73 points)
B+	(89-87 points)	C-	(72-70 points)
B	(86-83 points)	Fail	(below)
B-	(82-80 points)		

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*

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 Students Rights and Responsibilities](#), which includes a COVID-related Statement Addendum.

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as Assistant Dean for Field Instruction. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on U-M's campus with the University. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting SAPAC's Crisis Line at (734) 936-3333.

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.