



<b>Course title:</b>	Theories of Change	
<b>Course #/term:</b>	SW 873	
<b>Time &amp; place:</b>	Thursday, 2 to 5 pm, virtual	
<b>Credit hours:</b>	3	
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Doctoral student or permission of instructor	
<b>Instructor:</b>	Beth Glover Reed	
<b>Pronouns:</b>	[She, her, hers]	
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<b>Office hours:</b>	Wed afternoons and Thursday AM's most open, but can find time any day	

## 1. Course Statement

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### a. Course description

This course focuses on change, particularly social change, with an emphasis on examining its characterization, explanation and perpetration. The objectives of the course are to deepen and broaden theoretical and empirical understanding of change, and to enhance capacity to pose and address analytic questions about change as well as critically considering the viability of analyses for suggesting policy adjustments or initiatives of plans of intervention.

Academic disciplines tend to be interested in explaining or understanding change while professions are likely to be interested in applying theory and doing change, not just studying it. Most professions develop their own epistemologies and bodies of knowledge and practice models. Often, these are called practice theories, with articulation of underlying assumptions about change that often inform practice research and evaluation goals and methods. Relevant knowledge for social work practice often draws on principles and theories from

- a) knowledge generated in different disciplines, identifying principles for change, and
- b) practice-based research and experience used to guide and evaluate practice in the profession.

One social work researcher described these as “bench to trench” and “trench to bench” (Proctor, 2003, *Social Work Research*), or practice-based research (in addition to evidence-based practice);

The profession of social work is diverse in terms of the goals and social problems of concern, the different populations and issues addressed, and varied types and levels of “interventions” in varied settings and contexts. Multiple epistemological and theoretical orientations are relevant for this course, including core theories in each discipline, postmodern and other critiques of these

approaches, and a number of frameworks that endeavor to bridge and integrate across different perspectives.

- Each of the social sciences has epistemologies, methodologies and methods which overlap (and there may be sub-fields) but also have distinctive elements.
- Many types of theories and assumptions underlie different models and approaches to social work practice and *doing* change.

Additional theories may be relevant for different types of settings, goal areas, and types of practice (e.g., change in organizations, communities, families, individuals, groups, policies),

**b. Course objectives and competencies**


- To define what we mean by change, different types and components of change, and what kinds of change are of most interest.
- To explore different types of theory, and history and components of theory.
- To consider implications for how different disciplines use theory, define change, and how to connect, critique, compare and contrast with social work (interdisciplinary and applied), and subareas of social work.
- To consider change towards what ends, how?, for whom? (e.g., theories of justice, critical intersectionality]. Need to consider positive goals and not just combatting privilege/oppression.
- To determine stages and challenges for different types of change.
- To develop skills in theorizing to inform work for change, and using research and knowledge development methods on social work change interventions to inform theory development. e.g., “bench to trench and trench to bench”.
- To determine epistemological and methodological issues in conducting research and evaluation to understand, inform, and monitor change.

**c. Course design.** The objectives will be achieved through readings, class discussions and presentations and written work. We will use a seminar and highly interactive and collaborative framework, with students helping to identify key questions and approaches, and working to develop skills in theorizing to understand and inform desired change. We will use methods of praxis, temporary social systems and adult learning to explore linkages between theories, theorizing, change, and implementing change.

**d. Intensive focus on P.O.D.S.** Social work is about change, and about reducing or eliminating social problems and working for justice. Thus Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice need to be core themes in this course that infuse all topics. We will emphasizing critical theories, different types of power, what impedes change, and how these differ in different contexts and with different interacting systems of power and oppression.

**Schema for the 873 course. Stages of temporary social systems**

<b>Stages of temporary social systems</b>	<b>Course activities and assignments in each stage</b>
Unfreezing, creation of temporary social system climate	Key concepts from “building blocks” Identify goals. Anticipate challenges. Build climate Assist participants to anticipate what to carry forward, what new

	<b>First assignment: Key concepts, linking with MLK, own goals</b>		
Working on key elements of the course. Learning, applying, etc/	Excavating theories (about change). ID categories, learn one in depth, others less so, how to extract, apply <b>Theorizing project</b>	 Moving back and forth between theorizing, applying, considering implications for action, evaluation	Applying theories FOR change. Different stages for different contexts and goals <b>Change project</b>
Re-freezing, re-entry, identifying who you are leaving temporary social system	Reflecting activities in class. How put pieces together. What have we/I learned. What do I still want to learn? How am I going to use in the future? How to I keep learning? <b>Final analysis, principles going forward, remaining questions, how keep learning?</b>		

**2. Class Requirements**

Readings for each week are posted in Canvas, in both the files and module sections. Some readings should be read thoroughly while others will be optional, indicated in instructions for class each week. Students should come prepared to discuss and apply resource materials. We will engage in interactive activities each week, intended to assist students to link how theories are approached and developed within disciplines and how theorizing informs social work practice models. Assignments are designed to practice skills useful to learn and apply theories new to you, and to link across different types of theories, and to apply different conceptual frameworks in change projects relevant to student interests.

a. Class schedule

**Overview of Schedule for assignments.**

- First four weeks are “building blocks” and climate building. 1.22 through 2.18
- Next three weeks are different types of theories with implications for different kinds and stages of change. Feb.25 through March 11.
- Next four weeks are using theorizing towards different kinds of change, with consultations
- Last week is reflection, integration, implications.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Analytic short papers</b>	<b>Theorizing assignment</b>	<b>Change analysis/plan</b>
Jan 21—overview of course, key topics, concepts, goals			
Jan 28. Philos of science, Disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, applied/action			
Feb 4. Modern SW Theory			
Feb 11 Social Justice Frameworks, issues			

Feb 18—Power, intersectionality, different farmeworks	First paper due		Change project proposal due
Feb 25. Defining social change, different types of theories		First draft resource materials	
March 4. Enacting change. Innovation, implementation			
March 11—Linking theorizing and change			First change paper due
March 18—Theory-based planning and evaluation		Revisions due	Consultations begin
March 25—combining action for change and research			
April 1—Navigating boundaries and consciousness for change			
April 8—Review and development of principles			Last consultations
April 15—identifying learning across assignments	Last class		Abstract and Second Change Project Paper due
April 22	Last paper due		

b. Assignments

Assignment	Due date	% of grade
Participation—preparation, contribution to learning of others, critical thinking	Throughout	20%
Analytic paper: introductory frames for course— disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, application change, theory, justice18,	Includes attending an MLK event. Due Feb 18	15%
Learning about and applying a theory/theorist(s)	To be scheduled over multiple weeks, start week 2, first draft, 2/25	25%
Change Analysis and Application	Several stages—plan/frame, consultation, act (goals, steps) Proposal due Feb 11	30%
Final principles and integration	Week after last class, 4/22	10%

More details follow about all assignments.

**Attendance and class participation.** I assume that you will attend and participate unless extenuating circumstances interfere.

Epistemological curiosity”, from Freire, refers to eager exploration of knowledge about our worlds, theorizing about justice issues, and reflecting on ourselves in interaction with others. I hope that

everyone will contribute to developing a climate in the classroom in which we can teach each other from our different disciplines, modes of practice, perspectives and experiences. It's important to have a flexible and empowering classroom if we are to explore social justice issues and approaches to change most productively. We will engage in *praxis*, iterative cycles of theorizing, acting, and reflecting

You are all adult learners who bring much experience and knowledge to the class. Approaches to adult education assume that students need to be proactive about defining and pursuing your own goals, and will need to link new knowledge and learning with what you already know (which may involve some unlearning). We will also use principles and methods of appreciative, generative, reflective learning. These will allow you to formulate goals for yourself, consider how to implement and integrate these goals with your experience and knowledge, and to identify, reflect on, and showcase accomplishments. I will work to create opportunities for you to identify and incorporate your own perspectives and goals, and to identify what you already know, and what assumptions you may want to question and modify.

We will spend some time at the beginning developing norms for ourselves, and getting to know each other's backgrounds and interests. We will revisit our procedures periodically, to be sure they are working well, and revise them if they aren't. Theorizing and considering change can be scary and difficult, exciting and challenging. We are likely to differ in how we believe change should or does happen. We need to be able to challenge and assist each other if the learning experience is to be optimal. We need each of you to articulate what is clear, uncomfortable, problematic.

Somehow we have to be able to share with each other basic approaches in our disciplines and fields, while also developing shared language and frameworks, and using these analytically and strategically.

**Grading/ General evaluation criteria:** Assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- Degree of description, comparisons, critiques, and application of several types of theories about change.
- Use of theories relevant to particular goal and problem areas, and critique of their strengths and limitations, for a change project and in relation to social justice. Clear application and integration of particular theories to different areas of practice. Critique should include their assumptions, origins, relevance for different social problems and social justice issues, dynamics that recreate power differences, and appropriateness for privileged, marginalized and oppressed groups.
- Appropriate use of evidence, use of relevant literature and concepts, with citations;
- Breadth (scope), depth, and integration of course concepts, from class and readings (with citations)
- Discussion of ethical concerns related to social change theories and planned change.
- Consideration of your own positionalities, visions of justice, goals, and social and role locations.
- Systematic & logical presentation of arguments, with appropriate documentation;
- Clarity of presentation;
- Originality & creativity;

Student grades will be based on a grading scale in which an A reflects very excellent performance, with high degrees of theorizing and analysis, integration across theories and contexts (incorporating a

range of concepts from course readings, with appropriate citations), clarity of writing and thinking, grasp of subject matter, well-organized and creative. An A will also represent a strong scope of theories used, accurate application of those theories and strong theoretical analysis of the applied situation. It needs to have consistent use of social justice lenses, high class participation and contributions to the learning of others, and clear inclusion of citations from multiple course sources. A+ is possible, for exceptional work across assignments and criteria, although this rarely happens.

An A- will be assigned for strong, very good work that is well written and conceptualized, uses a reasonable number of course sources, with appropriate citations, includes interesting insights, and clearly links relevant theories to applied situations. An A- also includes strong course participation and contribution to the learning of others.

B indicates achievement of basic course goals, with acceptable work. This includes clear writing, good use of course resources, use of several theories in appropriate ways, including application to a well-described planned change project, analytic in orientation with some insights, and an acceptable grasp of the subject matter. A B+ includes some components that are more analytic and go beyond basic course expectations.

C range includes at least some elements of what is described in B, with some acceptable elements and some marginal ones. D or below is likely to be missing key components, poorly organized, and without clear linkages between theories and planned change.

Different assignments may emphasize some of these criteria more than others. I will try and be clear about how I am using these in evaluating assignments, and in giving you feedback about them. In some instances, you will evaluate yourselves and give feedback to your classmates.

What follows are some additional resources about course evaluations. [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances](#).

#### c. Class Recording and Course Materials

I will try and remember to record most sessions since we will be entirely on-line. You have the right to ask that recordings be turned off, if there are things you prefer not to record. If you record the session, please get my permission first. 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. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. 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.]

#### d. 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.

#### e. Health-Related Class Absences

We will be entirely virtual, so coming to campus is not necessary. 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.

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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*

#### **More Details about Assignments.**

(Additional details and resource materials are on Canvas, in both modules and files sections)

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**First Assignment.** Analytic Reflection. Explore key topics in early parts of the course, initial resource materials, and link with MLK education day event(s). 5 to 8 page paper, 15% credit. Due Feb 18.

Goals are to engage and start to link some themes from the course with actions in the world, related to theories, change and justice goals, and your own interests.

Analyze and reflect on key topics and questions in the course so far, including the MLK session(s) you attended or learned about, readings/resource materials and activities. Remember to use and appropriately cite ideas and concepts from our readings to support and illustrate your points. Both scope and depth in use of concepts is important.

This should be not just a description, but an application analytically of the concepts and readings from the course. Sources should be cited. Scope and depth are relevant criteria as well as reflexivity. For the MLK pieces within this, say enough of a description of the activity to inform the analysis, and describe what interests and goals of your own led you to choose this activity—your own history, interests, intersectional positionalities. You can interweave the topics above in identifying themes, strengths, challenges in the event, or handle the MLK pieces separately from thinking about your interests in other areas (your discipline, particular theories, particular change agendas). What types of change are specific of implied (or not), and any theories/assumptions about change, either explicit or implied. Any theories relevant to change directly on indirectly discussed, or you could apply? You may want to critique the event through these lenses.

MLK Holiday and Events as a Case Study on Theorizing Change. Some background about MLK Jr birthday as a holiday/education day. Establishing the MLK holiday was a national strategy intended not only to honor Martin Luther King, Jr., but also to be another and on-going step in the struggle for human rights, peace and civil rights for which he was an advocate and spokesperson. At the UM, establishing the MLK symposium was part of the University's response both to a set of "demands" made as part of an on-going set of mobilization and protests by a well-organized group of students, with many components, as well as internal advocacy and commitment by some administrators and faculty. It was intended to be an education day (the "holiday" itself), but with sessions spread over a number of weeks, and both institutionalized and decentralized throughout the University, with links to the community.

Class session overview and resource materials. May be adjusted as new issues arise, and depending on how many consultations there are per week from mid-term on.

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### **Analyze and Prepare Resource materials on Theory/Theorist**

#### **Goals:**

- To explore and learn skills for theorizing, using theories to understand change (or lack of it) and to influence change.
- To learn how to learn about and apply a theory to inform social change
- To share key elements of what you have learned about your theory with your classmates. To consult with individuals and groups as they work on their social justice analyses and planned change projects, helping them to consider what your theory would illuminate (or not) in their analyses, and implications from your theory for a) analysis and b) planned change.

This project will occur in multiple phases, while you are also working on your change projects.

- select a theory and form a group, and develop plans for how you will work together.



- Create and post resource materials to assist your classmates to learn about an apply the theory(ies)/theorists you selected (components listed below).
- Classmates and the instructor will review and provide feedback on various aspects of the materials and how well they are able to apply them.
- Then each theory group will make revisions responding to the feedback
- Finally, the class and each group will identify and assess learning.

### **What you should consider/include in your work:**

Consider components of philosophy of science when relevant.

1. What are key elements in this theory (theories, or types of theories)? How are these important in considering change (e.g., what creates and sustains stability, implications for change)?
2. What does this theory illuminate? How can it be helpful? What are its limitations?
3. What is the history of the concept(s)/theory—its roots, key people in its development, what they were trying to explain. Some implications of this history for the current relevance of the theory?
4. What “research”/knowledge development methods have been used to produce the body of knowledge? What are the strengths and limitations of these methods and the implications of these for change and research/evaluation of change?
5. In what ways can this theory/set of concepts inform analysis of research about change or planning/acting for change, within social justice frameworks? What are the theory’s limitations with regard to social justice?
6. Consider how your theory(ies) are relevant for different types of change and your classmates change projects, and assist classmates to apply them.

### **Responsibilities**

1. To prepare resource materials on your theory which will allow your classmates to understand key elements and potential implications of your theory for their projects. This should be a several page handout that covers the above 6 topical areas, with some useful references for future learning. We will also make some time for each workgroup to share these materials with classmates, by applying them to examples, and provide additional examples of how these approaches are helpful or not for theorizing change. This will occur in several phases:
  - a) prepare the initial resource materials (Feb 11);
  - b) give and receive feedback on all resource materials (Feb 25—we may adjust time));
  - c) groups revise/add to them in response to the feedback (March 18—may adjust).
2. To assist your classmates to understand and apply your materials, by contributing to class activities and discussion from that perspectives and providing consultation to collaboration groups and individuals/groups working on social justice analyses or planned change projects (especially planned change projects) to assist them to consider how to make use of your theory.

**Evaluation:** This will have four parts. First will be the written resource materials. Second is the clarity and usefulness of the sharing and application of materials. Third, is an assessment of how well group members provide useful consultation to other groups in the classroom. Fourth is your own reflection on your learning and performance. We will evaluate this by giving and receiving feedback across groups, gathering information about ways in which different theories are being used, and generating reflections on your accomplishments and learning.

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### **An Analytic and Applied Project on Theories, Theorizing and Change**

Note: the outlines below may need to be modified depending on the type(s) of projects you propose, but should get you started. Once you complete a project proposal form, we can then figure out what revisions might be useful for particular topics. The project will occur in three stages:

- for prospective projects, an initial change goal and strategy development analysis using theories of change, a class consultation session, and then a component focused on theories of change towards implementation and evaluation.
- For retrospective projects the first paper usually provides an overview of the project and its components and stages, with initial analyses. The class consultation session then usually helps to flesh this out and deepen analyses, and then the last paper expands and deepens analyses and critiques, and may add some components.

For prospective projects, you may want to ultimately write them as one integrated project, especially if you are thinking you might want to head to publication. Parts I and III may have figures, tables, etc. and should be at least 10 and no more than 15 pages each of narrative.

**Part I:** Understanding and analyzing change. Historical contexts, major component areas (using different theoretical frames for change), “causes”/risk/protective factors, facilitators, inhibitors of change. Social justice issues, goals, theories, definitions. Use multiple relevant theories, identify implications for research questions and methods. Use course concepts and readings.

- Describe a change arena of interest to you—outline key definitions, elements, explore goals, relevant history, different components, what types of change have/are occurring.
- Identify social justice issues, goals, theories, definitions.
- What types of change have occurred, or might you want to stimulate?
- Consider desired/social justice goals and processes to consider, develop. Identify key areas of oppression and privilege, and components”causes”, etc. Include analyses of power, resistance, and other relevant components that theories suggest are important.
- Use multiple theories and perspectives to analyze, help with understanding (at least the five perspectives, to explore “causes”/risk/protective factors, facilitators, inhibitors of change)
- Consider forces working for and against desired change, using particular theories to identify and analyze these.
- Analyze these forces to identify potential options for promoting desired change or preventing undesired change.
- Identify important questions for research and evaluation. Consider how you could increase understanding in a way that might further desired change.
- How do your own positionalities, social locations, and roles influence possibilities?

**Part II:** Class Education and Consultation. Analysis and Critique—Consider how the class can collaborate/consult to deepen your analyses and application, and learn from your project and

theorizing. To share and critique your work to date on your change project, identify questions and goals you'd like the class to assist you with as you reflect on first and second components.

This component has three purposes and steps:

- First, articulate some goals and questions you have as you are grappling with your change arena.
- Second, develop some brief materials (to be distributed the week before your consultation is scheduled) to orient the class, including your focus and goals, how you have used theory, and key questions and topics you would like to discuss. You may want to recommend some short background readings.
- Third, facilitate some class discussion that helps you to grapple with the goals and questions and next steps in your change arena.

**Part III:** Planning and implementing/steering change—strategies, tactics, methods. Using multiple relevant theories, implications for research questions and methods, issues for evaluation/monitoring.

- Considering what you learned in Part I and the consultation, using relevant theories about understanding and implementing change, identify what seems like a feasible goal for change, and relevant strategies for moving towards that change.
- Use theories about steering, implementing, furthering change to illuminate components, strategies, tactics, steps, etc. of change, plus cautions, issues to anticipate.
- It will probably be useful to identify a particular context or setting for a change project.
- You may want to compare and contrast various theoretical approaches, identifying similarities and differences.
- You may again want to identify forces for and against desired change
- Develop some sort of “model”, set of strategies that might be pursued.
- What research and evaluation questions and methods will increase knowledge about change in this arena?
- Form a concluding section—social justice and other issues related to change, relevance of theories, limitations and strengths, learnings...You as agent of/theorizer about change.

Initial proposal for this is due Feb 11, even if you still have several ideas, and they are very much still evolving. The proposal is on the next page, on Canvas, and I can make paper copies available.

### **Some ways to link course readings, concepts, & theories about change to application project**

Consider different theories, topics, principles, skills from this course. The process of making linkages can go in at least two directions and is likely to be iterative.

1. From class readings and activities **to** application in the change project. Systematically ask, in what ways are each of these relevant in my project? How could they be relevant?
  - To guide background analyses. To determine feasibility of change options.
  - To frame assessments, to identify potential questions, change options
  - To guide change goals and methods, develop principles for understanding, identify steps and benchmarks
  - To inform evaluation and monitoring
2. Identify elements **from** the change project and explore how readings and class activities can help you to understand and consider next steps.

- What are the critical elements of my project? What phase is it in?
  - What course readings, concepts, theories, etc. can help me to understand the project and its contexts more completely, and help me to explore possibilities.
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**Applying Theory for Analysis/Understanding and Change: Project "Proposal" (Ideas) 873**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe own learning goals, priorities and objectives. Please tell me why these are important to you; how they are relevant for change and relevant theories?

2. Briefly describe the project ideas you are considering (potential arenas, fields, goals, processes. If you have some specific ideas, describe locations, current state of change, brief contexts, your relationship to it)

3. What types of theories about change are you most interested in using? Why?

- Theories for analyses and understanding
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Theories relevant for approaches to justice
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Theories relevant for planning, steering, creating, sustaining desired change (or preventing undesired)

4. How do you think you will define change, and what do you know about change already occurring?

5. How will you link your social work theorizing/models, goals, approaches, practice areas and methods with theories, in general and about change in your discipline?

6. What level(s) of intervention, target systems and action systems are possible in this project?

7. Would you work with others? With whom? How?
  
8. Why are you interested in this? How does it incorporate your goals? What do you want to get from tackling this project?
  
9. What kinds of “research” will you need to do to conduct your analyses, current state, social justice issues, potential facilitators, inhibitors?
  
10. How will your own positionalities be relevant in this project? How they inform your interests, issues that might arise.
  
11. What kind of publication might you consider coming from this work? What venue?
  
12. What assistance might you want from the instructor? Others?
  
12. Anything else??

**Proposed outline for abstracts, 873.** You may need to tailor some of these to your project or add things. Try and stay within two pages for the narrative, but you should feel free also to add in addition any diagrams (figures) or tables/other schemas you used to help you with your analyses, or how to apply theory to analyze conditions for change, feasibility of particular changes, implementation issues, or evaluation/learning from the change implementation. Please post to the course folder for this purpose on Google.drive at least the day before class so people can review them.

1. Title of the project (to convey change arena, goals, justice implications)

2. Description of the Project

A brief overview or description of the project and its intents and components. Include how you defined change, any theories and analyses employed. Can include why you chose the topic, type of change, theories, etc) If it includes action components, include the contexts in which the experiences/activities occurred.

3. Importance of Project/Issue

A description of why the project is important (in a particular arena in the world, for your social science, for social work, for your own work). This includes a description of the larger issues and contexts that framed the project

4. Methods/strategies employed. Describe how you approached the analyses, planning and construction of the paper, and in conceptualizing implementation of the change...steps, strategies, detours encountered and decisions made.

5. How you used theories and methods of theorizing to: [May not be a separate section, but threaded throughout]

- a. conceptualize justice issues and goals?
- b. analyze larger contexts in your change arena.
- c. Identify priorities and feasibility for change and particular goals and approaches to change
- d. Inform implementation of a particular change (could be to plan, or to critique/modify)
- e. Tracking, monitoring and evaluating change
- f. Informing future change

6. Impact(s) of the Project. (planned, unexpected)

7. Lessons Learned

A summary of what you learned about change, theory, justice, theorizing, working for change, about yourself, others, the particular contexts of your change, and anything else relevant.

8. Skills and/or Capacities Gained/Demonstrated

A few phrases describing (with specific action verbs) the knowledge and skills that you developed and/or demonstrated through the work. Also what you learned about topics and skills important in this course.

9. Successes, problems and challenges encountered, how you handled them, and what you learned from them. Anything you have not been able to include anywhere else.

**Last analytic essay (10%) {5 to 8 pages}. Due no later than April 22. [we will engage in reflections in last several classes that should assist you with this]**

- a) Reflect on various definitions and theories of change, about justice and other goals and processes, those focused on understanding/analyzing, and those that can inform actions for change.

- b) Develop a set of principles for employing theories of change at different stages of scholarship and/or working for change or creating knowledge for change, grounded in theories relevant for your research and change arenas of interest. Be sure you consider theories that help you to consider yourself as an actor for change, and/or a researcher studying change.
- c) If useful, place these in the contexts of navigating disciplinary, multi and interdisciplinary, and applied contexts.
- d) Identify areas of major learning, goals for future learning, and
- e) Link all the above with relevant course concepts, readings, etc.

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## Overview of Class Sessions, with some goals and resource materials

### Overview of Schedule for assignments.

- First four weeks are “building blocks” and climate building. 1.22 through 2.18
- Next three weeks are different types of theories with implications for different kinds and stages of change. Feb.25 through March 11.
- Next four weeks are using theorizing towards different kinds of change, with consultations
- Last weeks start reflection, integration, implications.

### Overview, key concepts,

#### January 21, 2021. Overview, key concepts, beginning to identify goals, perspectives, questions.

- Pre-course assessment
- Attend an event for MLK Symposium, or in community
- Mullaly, B. (2010) Theoretical and conceptual considerations, *Challenging Oppression and Confronting Privilege, A Critical Social Work Perspective*. Oxford U Press.

#### January 28, 2021. Key elements of theory/philosophy of science, disciplinary/interdisciplinary, action for change, and critical approaches (that foreground power and justice).

- Critical vs traditional approaches, implications for analytic approaches and types of change.
- Disciplinary/interdisciplinarity. Social Work as action science.

Choose theory to learn, apply and teach. **Select theory/theorist to emphasize. Start work on these**

- Mertens, D. M. (2012) Transformative mixed methods: Addressing Inequities. *American Behavioral Sciences*, 56(6) 802–813. [important points here are less about mixed methods, and more about operationalizing axiology, ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods].
- Bradley J. Macdonald (2017) Traditional and Critical Theory Today: Toward a Critical Political Science, *New Political Science*, 39:4, 511-522, DOI: 10.1080/07393148.2017.1378857 [power and justice in different theoretical approaches]
- Schmidt, J. C. (2011) What is a problem? On problem-oriented interdisciplinarity. *Poiesis Praxis* (2011) 7:249–274 DOI 10.1007/s10202-011-0091-0 [disciplinarity (your social science), interdisciplinarity (social work), and applied (change)]
- Sommerfeld, P. (2014) Social work as an action science: A perspective from Europe. *Research on Social Work Practice* 2014, Vol. 24(5) 586-600

(another resource: Klein, J. T. (2006) Resources for Interdisciplinary Studies, *Change* (March/April)



Feb 4, 2021: Modern Social Work Theory: Categories, criteria and change. Work on theory analysis and change project.

1. Social Construction of SW Theory and evaluating SW theories. Payne, M (2020) *Modern Social Work Theory*, Oxford, .5<sup>th</sup> ed.
  - Ch 1: The social construction of social work theory. 3-31.
  - Ch 2. Evaluating social work theory, 32- 66.

consider how he is defining change, and how he selected and organized the various theories he included. What criteria and approaches he has used to create how he has defined, organized and categorized theories, and identified and classified their goals and approaches. How does he understand uses of theories, and compare and contrast with how you may be interested in using theories—in your discipline, as a joint social work student, in your future career?

February 11, 2021. Social Justice frameworks, theories, and social work practice models. Work on theories. Proposal for change topic? First draft, theorizing materials due.

- Two chapters from Reisch & Garvin, *Alternative Concepts of Justice*, 26-71, *Social Justice and the Social Work Profession*, 72-97. M. Reisch & C. D. Garvin (2016) *Social Work and Social Justice*, Oxford University Press.
- very short video that provides a number of important questions about social justice and answers from a diverse array of people.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z754lhcX6qw>

Think about how you would answer the questions posed in this video—

- What does social justice mean to you?
- What affects how you define social justice, for whom, in what circumstances?
- In addition to the above, if you have time, the module for this week also contains the **lesson on social justice in the SSW's module on Centering Justice**. This is being used for faculty development, and focuses on definitions and applications of Privilege, Oppression, Diversity (defined intersectionally), and Social Justice [P.O.D.S.].

February 18, 2021, Power, Intersectionality, and analytic frameworks. First paper due. We will use these topics to talk about how power works and different types of power and how they interact. We will also start to dig in different categories of theories.

Note, there are many videos and TED talks relevant for this topic as well, including by Kimberle Crenshaw, legal scholar, who first used the term intersectionality, although (mostly) Women of Color have been discussing these topics under many other names for more than 100 years before Crenshaw. Patricia Hill Collins also has some videos relevant. The Combahee River Collective Manifesto is an example of a call to action from these perspectives. The authors of the article and chapters below are major contributors to these traditions in the social sciences. Liz Cole is a psychologist here at the UM, and Hancock Alfaro is a political scientist (who has also done some very good work on quantitative methodologies).

- Moradi, B., & Grzanka, P. R. (2017). Using intersectionality responsibly: Toward critical epistemology, structural analysis, and social justice activism. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 64(5), 500–513. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000203>

- Fenstermacher, S. & Stewart, A. (2020). *Gender Reconsidered: Feminist Reflections Across the US Social Sciences*, Palgrave/Macmillan.
  - Cole, E. R. Opening doors for the insurgent, 9-28.
  - Hancock Alfaro, Ange-Marie, Stewardship of intersectionality: A complex proposition. 363-380

**Types of theories and implications for change— analyses of conditions and components for change—contexts, feasibility, options.**

February 25, 2021. Defining social change and theory. Theories for historical, contextual analyses, and types of change.

- Parton, N. (1996) Social theory, social change and social work, from book of same name .Routledge, 4-18. This short chapter provides a window into many social controversies and also shifts to post-modernism in many theories.
- Massey, G. (2012) Understanding and explaining social change,. 91-129. From *Ways of Social Change: Making Sense of Modern Times*. Sage.
- Harper, C. H. & Leicht, K. T. (2011) Social theory and social change, 43-65, *Exploring Social Change: America and the World*.

Note, for the two texts about social change, I included the table of contents so you can see the theories and topics they cover, and how they are organized. You might consider how many of these topics you have studied, and what questions you have about them.

This week begins the stage of the course in which we work on various ways to make connections between theories about change (or that can be applied to analyze and/or inform, and/or assess/evaluate change) and plans and actions for change. Within these, we will pay particular attention to power and justice.

In last week's session on intersectionality, I identified multiple frameworks about power—temporal, structural, cultural/interpretive, disciplinary (social processes), interpersonal, intrapersonal, and political. Please look for examples of these in the chapters for this week and consider implications of each of these for your change projects (or other examples of change or applications for change).

One can make connections between theory and change in multiple ways. Two important ones are:

- Start with a theory, or concepts in and components of the theory and look for examples and implications in a situation in which you wish to understand or work for change. [from theory to action]
- Start with an arena in which you want to or are working for change and consider what frameworks and concepts are present and what theories will help you to illuminate, analyze, [action/change to theory]

March 4, 2021. Theories about enacting change. Innovation approaches include innovation diffusion and innovation dissemination.

I am going to be emphasizing innovation dissemination since I think it is closer to how you will use it in social work, but the Wikipedia overview of innovation diffusion in the file gives a lot of background about diffusion approaches and is very clear. I would like you to read two articles, and then feel free to

browse the others. I am only going to include the articles I most want you to read in the Modules section but will list others below that apply innovation approaches in various arenas that may be of interest to you.

Please read one of the first two, and the Sandler one which raises questions of power and justice within innovation dissemination theory.

There is a lot of overlap in the articles that follow, but they focus on different target system and fields.

Please read **EITHER**

- Greenhalgh, T., Robert, G., MacFarlane, F., Bate, P, Kryiakidou (2004) Diffusion of innovations in service organizations: Systematic review and recommendations, *Millbank Quarterly*, 82(4), 581-629. [this is more organizationally focused]

**OR**

- Mayer, J. P., & Davidson, W. S. (2000). Dissemination of innovation as social change. In J. Rappaport & E. Seidman (Eds.), *Handbook of Community Psychology* (pp. 421-438). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers. **This is more community focused**

**Everyone read this one:**

- Sandler, J. (2007) Community-based practices: Integrating dissemination theory with critical theories of power and justice, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 40, 272-289.

These are additional applications in different fields, in case you want to see some other applications. [These are only in the files section of Canvas, not in Modules]

- Jain, R. (2010) Innovation in organizations: A comprehensive conceptual framework for future research, *South Asian Journal of Management*, 17(2), 81-111.
- Raukis, M. E., McCarthy, S., Krackhardt, D., & Cahalane, H. (2010) Innovation in child welfare: The adoption and implementation of Family Group Decision-making in Pennsylvania, *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32, 732-739.
- Gotham, H. J. (2004) Diffusion of mental health and substance abuse treatments: Development, dissemination, implementation, *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 11(2), 160-176.
- Palan, R. (2007) Transnational theories of order and change: Heterodoxy in International Relations scholarship, *Review of International Studies*, 33, 47-69.

March 11, 2021. Linking theorizing and change. **First change paper due. First consultations.**

Payne, M (2020) 5<sup>th</sup> ed. *Modern Social Work Theory*, chapter 3, Linking practice and theory, 67-94. Models and principles. Plus an overview of the different ways of categorizing social work practice theories.

March 18, 2021. **Using theories/theorizing for planning/clarifying goals and components, and monitoring/assessing change**

- Theory-based planning and evaluation, and why important?.

- How to use evaluation as a strategy to create change?
- And I included a couple of resources on Participatory Action Research (PAR, with other versions: CBPR, AR, CBPAR, etc). These combine theorizing and working for change and research, and an explicitly collaborative approach to theorizing.

evaluation as social change, to provide an introduction.

- Cook, J. R. (2014) Using evaluation to effect social change: Looking through a community psychology lens, *American Journal of Evaluation*, 1-10.

There are also several folders in the file for March 19:, one with several short articles on theory-based evaluation, that you should review. (they are short, and overlap, so should not take you long to get through). For some of you, these concepts may be useful immediately for your change papers if your project is already engaged in change or retrospective, but for those doing projects that are more contextual, heading for a menu of options, these will be more useful for the second installment.

These are short and easy to review.

- E. June Davidson (2005) The “bagging” of theory-based evaluation. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation* (JMDE:4) [evaluation.wmich.edu/jmde/](http://evaluation.wmich.edu/jmde/)
- Carol Hischon Weiss (W2003/04) On theory-based evaluation: Winning friends and influencing people. *Evaluation Exchange*, IX(4)
- Birchmayer, J.D. & Weiss, C. H. (2000) Theory-based evaluation in practice: What do we learn? *Evaluation Review*, 24, 407-431.

This one is longer, and a good resource for the future.

- Government of Canada, Theory-based approaches to evaluation: Concepts and practices. [www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hgw-cgf/oversight.../ae-ve/.../tbae-aeattb-eng.asp](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hgw-cgf/oversight.../ae-ve/.../tbae-aeattb-eng.asp)

March 25, 2021. Consultations continued. Combining action for change and research

For those of you who are especially interested in policy and evaluation, one folder contains more in-depth resources about evaluation and implementation analyses, which I thought you might like for future reference, but are less likely to be immediately relevant. Here is one of these...

- What is policy evaluation? Magenta Book, Chapter one. [www.policyhub.gov.uk/evaluating\\_policy/magenta\\_book/chapter1.asp](http://www.policyhub.gov.uk/evaluating_policy/magenta_book/chapter1.asp)

(1995) Those of you interested in Community Practice (and also others) may also be interested in Participatory Action Research, which combines action for change and research/knowledge development. We will not focus particularly on these on March 18, although I may reference them, but there are some readings in a folder for those of you interested.

- Nygreen, Kysa (2009) Critical dilemmas in PAR: Toward a new theory of engaged research for social change, *Social Justice*, 36 (4), 14-35.
- Cahill, C., Cerecer, D. A. Q, Bradley, M. (2010) “Dreaming of...”: Reflections on Participatory Action Research as a feminist praxis of critical hope, *Affilia*, 25, 406-416.

April 1, 2021 Navigating boundaries and maintaining consciousness for change. Consultations continued.

- Meyerson, D. E. & Scully, M. A. (1995) Tempered radicalism and the politics of ambivalence and change. *Organization Science*, 6(5), 585-600.
- Keenan, E. K. & Michls, D. (2008) Third Space Activities and Change Processes: An Exploration of Ideas from Social and Psychodynamic Theories, *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 36, 165-175.

### **Integrating, reflecting, applying going forward.**

April 8, 2021— Last consultations. Starting review of topics and identifying principles for linking theorizing and change, making connections in both directions. **second change paper due.**

April 15, 2021 (last class). Review, **sharing projects** and learning, future goals.

#### **1. Theorizing resource materials.**

- a) We will share and try and capture key elements in the following arenas and articulate principles for the various steps in theorizing and applying theories, including theories you are just learning about.
  - o How did you (and your partner) approach learning about the theory/cluster of theories/theorist(s). What did you learn about how to do this? How did you work together and who contributed what?
  - o What criteria and methods did you use to identify/create resource materials for the class? Why did you use the methods you did?
  - o How did you go from understanding the theory/frameworks to considering how to apply them in various stages of change—
    - analyzing historical and current contexts,
    - identifying needs and goals for change and driving and restraining forces for change,
    - assessing feasibility of different specific goals and methods for change
    - selecting and developing methods and steps for change, and
    - considering how to monitor and evaluate actions for change.
  - o What did you learn from the feedback you got about the materials (from me and classmates), and from providing feedback to others
  - o What did you learn from making revisions in your materials in response to this feedback?

#### **2. Change Projects.**

- a) In whatever stage you are in, please complete the analytic abstract (artifact summary) of the change project. It is also very useful for you to add some brief materials that indicate steps you have taken since you consultation, and where you are now. Post these materials in the 873 class folder on Google.drive (in assignments, change project, under your name).
- b) During class, we will a) review these, b) continue to identify principles for theorizing change (using theories analytically and for different purposes at different stages of change), c) continue to provide consultation to assist classmates on formulating the change projects, and d) learning from each other's work.
- c) Some questions to consider, as you review the progress you are all making.

- a. How did you identify, inter-related, and apply theoretical components at different stages of the change project?
  - b. How did this evolve through different stages of the project?
  - c. How did class consultations influence this? Your consultation, your review of classmate's projects.
  - d. What struggles did you experience and how did you address these?
  - e. What have you learned about theorizing and acting for change?
  - f. What questions and issues remain?
  - g. How will you continue to learn in these areas?
3. **General analysis of and reflections on course.** Reflect upon the various topics of the course and consider linkages among them, what you have learned, remaining questions and concerns, how you will keep learning and applying.
- a. Disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, applications of theories and acting for change
  - b. Definitions of change, types of change
  - c. Definitions and types and levels of theories [philosophy of science categories—axiology, ontology, epistemology(ies), methodologies, methods, applications.
  - d. Theories about stability, about change, different types and levels of change
  - e. Critical/conflict vs stability; reform, challenge, transform
  - f. Multiple types of power and how they work together. Seven component analytic framework, and theories and perspectives that inform these. Intersectionality as an example.
  - g. Different classifications of theories
  - h. Practice theories and frameworks within social work—principles for mixing and matching theoretical elements to address goals for change. Different paradigms.
  - i. Steps and principles in learning about and applying theories (from disciplines), within practice models and contexts.
  - j. Practice in integrating all of the above into an arena of change important to you
  - k. Consultation with each other to inform and learn from change projects

April 22, **final paper, principles and any revisions.** Let me know if you need more time.