SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Course title:	Introduction to Social Work Practice
Course #/term:	SW 590 Online, Spring/Summer 2021
Time and place:	May 18 – 23, live sessions held May 21 – 23, 2021
Credit hours:	1
Prerequisites:	none
Instructor:	Barb Hiltz
Pronouns:	She, her, hers
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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
- Develop a sense of belonging to the UM MSW program by interacting with fellow students and faculty.
- Describe ethical decision-making processes as applied to social work practice settings in a manner that reflects the laws, regulations, and code of ethics of social work (Essential 36, 44; EPAS 1).
- Identify how social workers ethically engage with technology practice (Essential 26; EPAS 1).

- Recognize how social work practice connects to the "Grand Challenges" (Essential 31; EPAS 2).
- Identify ways social workers can engage in social justice and anti-racism work (Essential 30, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5).
- Develop a self-care plan that includes elements across different domains (Essential 40, 43; EPAS 1, 6).

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. Intensive focus on PODS

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 and other forms of asynchronous learning 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 and other forms of asynchronous learning 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, based on the needs of the class. Because this class is offered as a part of your orientation, other activities to aid orientation will be interspersed with class learning. Please refer to Canvas for the most updated class schedule.

Date(s)	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments (from Canvas)
May 18-20 (Or sooner! The course site will be up and ready.)		● Review syllabus ● Review Canvas course site ● Complete "Getting Started" sections ● Complete all asynchronous work for Day 1 "Pre-Class Work for Friday"
Friday, May 21	Welcome & Introductions/ Core Values	● Pre-Class Work for Friday (ensure complete) ● Post-Work for Friday
Saturday, May 22	Centering Justice & Tips for Success	● Pre-Class Work for Saturday ● Post-Work for Saturday
Sunday May 23	Your Professional Portfolio	● Pre-Class Work for Sunday ● Post-Work for Sunday

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 in detail 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 a reflective practice widely used in education and in clinical settings, known as "*what, so what, now what*." The assignment will span the semester, with milestones to break it down.

a. **Milestone 1**
Due Midnight, Friday, May 21st

Upload the supplementary statement you submitted when you applied to the social work program. As a reminder, this statement asked you to accomplish a couple of things. Including:

- Discuss a social justice issue you would like to address in your career. What skills and knowledge would you like to obtain in the MSW program to support your career objectives?
- Describe how your personal and intellectual qualifications, past human service experience, and/or future goals are relevant to furthering social justice. Please use specific examples.

b. **Milestone 2: *What & So What***
Due: Midnight, Saturday, May 22nd (recommended); Midnight, Monday, May 24th (final date submissions are accepted)

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 (hint: this is why we had you dig out & post your application essay). This is the "What." You will also reflect on why these values and ethics matter and how they play out around you. This is the "So What." Write a brief reflective essay, using the following prompts as a guide. There is no need to use all of the prompts, but be sure you include reflections on both the "What" and the "So What."

- What social work values and ethics apply to your decision to become a social worker or to focus on your area of interest? (WHAT)
- If you have a BSW, which apply to your decision to practice at a graduate level? (WHAT)

- How have these values and ethics emerged in this class so far? In the news recently? While you were doing your BSW or the MTC/MM Certificates? (SO WHAT)
- Have you seen instances of ethical or value-based decision making? Why and when does it matter? (SO WHAT)?

Rely heavily on course content (especially our Code of Ethics), 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 application of these values in practice.

Suggested length, 1-2 pages, single-spaced.

c. **Milestone 3:** *Now what*
Due: Midnight Friday, May 28th

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, consider:

- 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, 1/2 - 1 page single-spaced.

2. Regular, Brief Assignments

Due: Multiple dates, see Canvas

You will be asked to do a brief assignment related to the content from the class. Two of these will take the form of a discussion prompt through Canvas. For the third, you will write a letter to your future self. Details for each of these assignments/discussions can be found on Canvas.

3. Portfolio

Due: Midnight Sunday, May 30th

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**: Combine Milestones 2 & 3 (no need to include Milestone #1) of your master assignment into a single document with headers to represent the various sections. Upload your master assignment as a "project" in your Portfolium portfolio in the Portfolio tab.

d. Attendance and class participation

Students must arrive on time, engage in all course materials, and attend all synchronous class sessions for the course. It is expected that students participate actively and equally in class discussion, class assignments, and group activities - both online and in live sessions. Failure to do so could result in a non-passing grade.

e. Grading

This class will be graded as Satisfactory (Pass) or Unsatisfactory (Fail). In order to pass this class (Satisfactory), you must fully attend all live class sessions, complete all pre and post class work, participate and engage in large and small group discussions, and submit class assignments (of satisfactory quality). The relative weighing of each course element is as follows:
- Master Assignment: 50%
- Brief Assignments: 20%
- Portfolio: 20%
- Participation: 10%

Extra credit is available. Details are available on Canvas.

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

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 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.

g. 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.

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*