



Course title:	Introduction to Social Work Practice	
Course #/term:	590, Section 018, Fall, 2021	
Time and place:	Friday, 2:00pm-4:00pm Dates: 8/26 (online); In person: 9/10, 9/24, 10/8, 10/22, 11/5, 11/19	
	SSW Bldg. Room 2752	
Credit hours:	1	
Prerequisites:	N/A	
Instructor:	Miriam Connolly, LMSW	
Pronouns:	She/Her	
Contact info:	Email: mtaylor@mich.edu	Phone: 734-764-5331
	You may expect a response within 2 business days.	
Office:	SSW Bldg. Rm 2660J	
Office hours:	By appointment - Please email me to schedule	

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. 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 SEED Week Orientation 8/26/21 12:45pm-3:45pm Online Via Zoom	Session 1: Welcome, Introductions and Course Overview	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: None
Week 2 9/10/21 2pm-4pm In Person	Session 2: Core Values of Social Work	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion prompt: Grounding in the MSW Program ● Master Assignment, Milestone 1
Week 3 9/24/21 2pm-4pm In Person	Session 3: Centering Justice	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Master Assignment, Milestone 2
Week 4 10/8/21 2pm-4pm In Person	Session 4: Anti-Racism and Social Work Practice	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion prompt: Centering Justice
Week 5 10/22/21 2pm-4pm In Person	Session 5: Preparing to Practice Social Work, Part 1	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Master Assignment, Milestone 3

Week 6 11/5/21 2pm-4pm In Person	Session 6: Preparing to Practice Social Work, Part 2	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing due
Week 7 11/19/21 2pm-4pm In Person	Session 3: Your Professional Portfolio	Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to yourself • Master Assignment, Milestone 4
Post Week 7	Portfolio Due: 12/3/21 by 5:00pm	Readings: None Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio • Course evaluations • Extra credit (optional)

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

Master 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 throughout the semester. (50 points of overall grade)

- a) Milestone 1
Due: September 9, 2021 by 5:00pm

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*

Due: September 23, 2021 by 5:00pm

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). Write a reflective essay about your values and ethics. Specifically, consider:

- What social work values and ethics apply to your decision to become a social worker?
- Which applies to the decision about the area of social work in which you would like to practice?
- If you have a BSW, which applies to your decision to practice at a graduate level?

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 anticipated application of these values in practice.

Suggested length, 1 page single-spaced.

c) Milestone 3: *So what*

Due: October 21, 2021 by 5:00pm

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 field (if you are in field)? In relationships with others in the School? At work? In social situations? In the news?
- Reflect on ethical decision making. Why and when does this matter?

Suggested length, 1-2 pages single-spaced.

- d) Milestone 4: *Now what*
Due: November 18, 2021 by 5:00pm

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

After each class session, you will be asked to do a brief assignment related to the content from the class. For weeks 1-3, these take the form of 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.

3. Portfolio

Due: 12/3/21 by 5:00pm

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

Attendance is a requirement. Students are expected to attend each of the six in person classes and fully participate in the one on-line session. 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

Assignments are weighted by group as outlined below:

Master Assignment – 50%
Ongoing Assignments – 20%
Portfolio – 20%
Attendance and Participation -10%
Total: 100%

90 - 100% - A

80-89% - B

70 - 79% - C

<70% Fail

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](#).

All assignments must be submitted online via Canvas at or before the time it is due. If you are unable to submit online for any reason, [e-mail me](#) your assignment directly. Any late assignment will lose 1 point for each day it is late unless arrangements are made with me for an extension prior to the due date.

Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances arise (e.g., illness, mental health, personal, or family related) which may make it difficult for you to complete an assignment by its designated due date or time. Should this happen, please notify me to discuss options. Your request for an extension should take place MORE than 24 hours before an assignment is due whenever possible.

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. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including [properly wearing a face covering in class](#) and compliance with the [University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#). Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the [Campus Maize & Blueprint](#). Your ability to participate in this course 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](#) and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through [WolverineAccess](#). 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](#).

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 a member of the faculty. 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. To obtain accommodations such as recording lectures, students can work with the [Office of Services for Students with Disabilities](#). Approved accommodation is required prior to recording. 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.

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*