1. Course Statement

a. Course description
This required foundation course is designed to increase students’ awareness, knowledge, and critical skills related to diversity, human rights, social and economic justice. The topics of this course include developing a framework for 1) engaging diversity and differences in social work practice and 2) advancing human rights and social and economic justice. We will explore the knowledge base that underlies skills needed to work towards justice. These include types and sources of power, multiple social locations, social constructions, social processes, social identities, conflicts, and how all these interact. A major emphasis is on developing skills in critical contextual thinking and analyses, and in praxis, learning to use knowledge and theory to recognize and critique underlying assumptions and paradigms, and inform working for change. Multiple kinds of boundaries are especially important—across groups, between organizations and system levels, and within and between people, related to intersecting social locations.

b. Course objectives and competencies

- CLO 1. Recognize the extent to which structures, policies, and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, create or enhance privilege and power (Essentials 14, 30, 33, 44).
• CLO 2. Explain the cumulative effect of structural discrimination on people with differing and multiple social identities and locations. (Essentials 11,14,29,33,38,45)
• CLO 3. Distinguish between health differences and health disparities and provide relevant examples of each. (Essential 5,11,15,30)
• CLO 4. Discuss the policy reform sought by modern social justice movements in response to police brutality. (Essential 6,13,14,30,32,44)
• CLO 5. Recognize how policy decisions at the local, state, and national levels can exclude and endanger the environmental health of citizens when their voices are not heard or heeded. (Essential 5,13,22,29,30)
• CLO 6. Utilize strategies and resources to advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice and change, while protecting human rights. (Essential 1,11,14,29,33,43)
• CLO 7. Define and apply your own positionalities and the importance of their intersections (Essential 38,42,45,46)
• CLO 8. Evaluate historical context and its current applications within the profession and practice as an ally. (Essential 6,11,15,29,39,44,45)

c. **Course design**
This class will strive to foster a learning environment where each student can reflect critically on sources of power and mechanisms of oppression and privilege, construct a framework for justice, and examine sources of their beliefs and perspectives. This course will work to create a climate that supports critical analyses, mutual learning, engaging within and across differences and examining sources of power and knowledge. It involves lectures, video, and participation in experiential activities. Additionally, this course will provide a forum to critically examine how our multiple status locations, societal constructions, and social processes shape our beliefs, assumptions, behaviors, and life experiences. Special attention will also be given knowledge about justice and change, and principles of change towards justice.

d. **Intensive focus on PODS**
This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of practice, theories 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 PODS learning.

e. **My Teaching Style / Healing-centered Teaching**

Hi Everyone, I’m Dr. Laura Yakas, your professor for SW 505! I completed my PhD in anthropology and social work here at the University of Michigan in 2018. My main areas of passion and experience include; Disability culture (including the Mad Pride movement), the Neurodiversity movement, and the Disability Justice movement) and how this connects to other forms of anti-oppressive resistance like intersectional feminism, antiracism, and decolonization. I have devoted a lot of time to studying and teaching about oppression using anthropology and the other social sciences. Anthropology is a discipline that aims to
deeply understand humanity and human evolution, and I am passionate about bridging this with social work, a profession that aims to change humanity.

**My Teaching Style:** Inspired by the work of Brené Brown, I am committed to radical authenticity, and this shapes my teaching style. I bring my full and vulnerable self into our class, and I invite this from you. This is not normative in academic culture (so it may feel odd at first!), but is an important aspect of practicing anti-oppression in classrooms. With authenticity, we can challenge the hidden curriculum of academia and the oppressive norms that ask us to be inauthentic. For example, you don’t need to pretend “I have a technology issue, so I can’t come to class” when you really feel overwhelmed and stressed - you can be honest, and I can reassure you that your need for rest and self-care is valid! Or, you don’t need to pretend you agree with what I or other students believe - you can be honest, and an exploration of our differences might lead to deepened empathy! In sum: in my classes, students are invited to speak their truths.

Another reason I bring and invite authenticity and vulnerability into our classroom is that I thrive best as an educator when I feel connection and a sense of community with students :)

**Healing-Centered (also known as Trauma-informed or Anti-oppressive) Teaching:** As a Mad/neurodivergent woman, radical accessibility is very important to me. This is why I aim to co-create accessible and healing-centered learning communities. I will talk more about this in our first class, but in brief, healing-centered teaching involves three things:

1) **Choice** – I believe it is important for students to have options / agency, and to feel ownership over their learning journeys. Therefore, I offer options in this class in the following ways; firstly, the “pre-work” for each Module features a list of materials designed to support your learning, and though you’re invited to use them all, depending on your capacity you can also choose which to prioritize (this is why I provide brief summaries of the assigned materials); secondly, for most of the weekly Discussion Posts, you are given multiple prompts to choose from; finally, in recognition of the fact that life often throws unexpected barriers our way, you may choose up to two (out of the eight) Journal Assignments to skip, and up to three (of the twelve) weekly Discussion Posts to skip, without any point deductions or need to speak with me.

2) **Flexibility** – radical accessibility means making room for all the unexpected barriers life throws our way, everything from the limitations of our own body-minds to the barriers we face because we live in a white-supremacist imperial-capitalist cis-hetero-patriarchy. Therefore, my classes are “punishment-free zones,” which means that course expectations and deadlines are flexible, and all you need to do is be open and honest with me about your needs and barriers so that I can more easily support your learning. I do not believe in “laziness” or “not-working-hard-enough” (see this article titled “Laziness does not exist: unseen barriers do”), I believe everyone learns at their own pace, and that life in an oppressive culture can create barriers to learning. These barriers are easier to move through when there is honest communication about them.

3) **Transparency / Authenticity** – speaking of honest communication, I aim to co-create learning communities that feature transparent and authentic communication. Not only does this help us connect better as a learning community, but it also supports healing and anti-oppression, and generally makes our time together more enjoyable! Therefore, I will bring my full and vulnerable self into our class, and I invite you to do the same :)

3
f. **Course Logistics**

1. **Announcements**: On every day that we meet for Zoom Class, you will receive a “Plan of the Day” Announcement on Canvas, which will tell you what to expect for our meeting that day. You will also receive a “Debrief” Announcement after the Zoom session has ended, where I will share the slides from the class.

2. **Content warnings**: in the service of our collective learning and growth, this course digs into a variety of potentially activating topics. It would be prohibitively labor-intensive for me to provide specific content warnings for each assigned piece, but I urge you to take care of yourselves however and whenever necessary, and please feel free to reach out to me if you need to process anything that comes up for you.

3. **Expected Time Commitment**: at our school a 3-credit class amounts to 135 hours of expected time commitment over the semester. This includes all synchronous and asynchronous work, such as Zoom classes, exploring assigned materials, and assignments. For our class, this averages to approximately **10 hours per week**.

4. **Email**: I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours, but please feel free to send me a reminder if you are feeling any urgency or anxiety.

5. **Accommodations for Disabled students / my fellow "spoonies"**: as mentioned in the previous section on Healing-centered teaching, I am committed to **radical accessibility** in my learning communities. Please let me know by email if you have any specific needs or accommodations. We can work together informally, or if you wish, you can include the [Services for Students with Disabilities Office/SSD](https://www.theservices.org).

6. **Religious observations**: please let me know if you have any religious observations that I should be aware of (for example, if you need to miss a Zoom class).

7. **Paywalls**: some of the readings for this course are on websites (like New York Times) that have paywalls. If you find that you can’t access a reading on the website due to a paywall, please search the title on our [Library website](https://library.sfsu.edu), as our school has paid subscriptions.

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2. **Class Requirements**

   a. **Text and class materials**
      - All required and suggested readings will be provided on Canvas in the form of links to external sites (e.g. news, video, podcast), or PDFs.

   b. **Class schedule**
      Whenever possible, necessary changes to the course calendar will be communicated via announcement in class and on Canvas at least a week in advance. Please turn on Canvas notifications. **NOTE: ASSIGNED MATERIALS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON CHANGING NEWS - SEE CANVAS MODULES FOR UPDATED LISTS!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Read-Watch-Listen (SEE CANVAS FOR LINKS)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Resources for Understanding Critical</td>
<td><strong>Read</strong> Racial Equity Tools Glossary</td>
<td><strong>DISCUSSION POST #1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Read</strong> NASW Code of Ethics</td>
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<td>Race Theory and Anti-Racism</td>
<td>Listen to The author of 'White Fragility' doesn't think 'most white people care about racial injustice</td>
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| **Week 2** Culture | **Read** Cultural Competence or Cultural Humility? Moving Beyond the Debate  
**Read** Cultural Relativism  
**Watch** assigned Robert Sapolsky videos  
**Watch** The "Other and Oppress" propensity  
**Watch** Cultural Appropriation vs. Appreciation  
**Watch** What is Culture? |
| **Week 3** Intersectionality | **Read** The intersectionality wars  
**Read** The Gender Unicorn  
**Listen to** On Being with Krista Tippett - Imani Perry: The Fabric of Our Identity  
**Watch** Unpacking Intersectionality  
**Watch** Intersectional Challenges  
**Watch** Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw: What is Intersectional Feminism? |
| **Week 4** Closing the Health Gap | **Read** Health Equity: Eradicating Health Inequalities for Future  
**Read** COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by Race/Ethnicity: Current Data and Changes Over Time  
**Read** Anti-ableism  
**Read** We Have Been Disabled: How The Pandemic Has Proven The Social Model Of Disability  
**Read** Broadband Internet Access Is a Social Determinant of Health  
**Listen** Ableism and Racism: Roots of the Same Tree  
**Watch** Bias in medicine  
**Watch** Social and Cultural Determinants of Health |
| **Week 5** Future Implications for Closing the Health Gap | **Read** Structural Competency Meets Structural Racism: Race, Politics, and the Structure of Medical Knowledge  
**Read** Advancing Health Equity: A Guide to Language, Narrative, and Concepts (Links to an external site.)  
**Read** Why Person-First Language Doesn’t Always Put the Person First  
**Read** Building a New Normal: Strategic Actions for Health Equity in a Post Pandemic World  
**Read** Strengthening Health Care Systems: Better Health Across America  
**Watch** A Conversation with Jaclynn Hawkins: Social Determinants of Health for Men of Color |
| **Week 6** End Homelessness | **Read** She’s 10, Homeless and Eager to Learn. But She Has No Internet.  
**Read** Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people  
**Read** She’s 91 and Is Being Kicked Out of Her Apartment  
**Watch** Home Saves Your Life: Bill’s Story |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Future Implications for Ending Homelessness</th>
<th>Watch</th>
<th>Gray Tsunami: More seniors filling homeless shelters</th>
<th>Watch</th>
<th>Housing Insecurity</th>
<th>COATS ON THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>End Homelessness Grand Challenge</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>How Health and Homelessness are Connected—Medically</td>
<td>DISCUSSION POST #7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Watch</td>
<td>What Happens If You Can’t Pay Rent?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Environment Justice</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>What is Environmental Justice?</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Key terms in Environmental Philosophy</td>
<td>DISCUSSION POST #8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>10 egregious examples of environmental racism in the US</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Environmental Justice: The Intersection of Social Equality and Environmentalism</td>
<td>JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT #5: ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE AND COLONIALISM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Patriarchy and speciesism</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Trump's EPA Concludes Environmental Racism Is Real</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Intersections of Police, Racism and the Environment</td>
<td>Watch</td>
<td>Environmental Justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Economic Inequality</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Axios: 10 myths about the racial wealth gap</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>College Made Them Feel Equal. The Virus Exposed How Unequal Their Lives Are.</td>
<td>DISCUSSION POST #9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Read</td>
<td>Why I Paid $50,000 for a Year of Child Care - The New York Times</td>
<td>Listen to</td>
<td>What it would take to end child poverty in America</td>
<td>JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT #6: ADDRESSING INEQUITIES WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Watch</td>
<td>Explained</td>
<td>Racial Wealth Gap</td>
<td>FULL EPISODE</td>
<td>Netflix</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Watch</td>
<td>Economic Inequality</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Future Implications for Reversing Economic Inequality</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Reversing Extreme Inequality Grand Challenge</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Teaching About King’s Radical Approach to Social Justice</td>
<td>DISCUSSION POST #10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Is Economic Inequality Really a Problem?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Policing &amp; Community Relations</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>How Did We Get Here?</td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>A Teenager Didn’t Do Her Online Schoolwork. So a Judge Sent Her to Juvenile Detention.</td>
<td>DISCUSSION POST #11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read</td>
<td>What Is Owed</td>
<td>Listen to</td>
<td>Podcast - The evidence on crime and policing</td>
<td>JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT #7: BARRIERS &amp; HARDSHIPS OF IMMIGRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listen to</td>
<td>Podcast - The Ezra Klein Show: Why Ta-Nehisi Coates is hopeful</td>
<td>Listen to</td>
<td>Podcast - A Conversation With a Police Union Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listen to</td>
<td>Podcast - A Conversation With a Police Union Leader</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live Meeting Participation</td>
<td>13 x 10 points = 130 points</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>See below (section d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>12 x 5 points = 60 points</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>See Canvas for Topics and due dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Assignment</td>
<td>8 X 10 points = 80 points</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>See rubric and templates (below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Trajectory Final Project</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>See rubric (below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300 points</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Journal Assignments Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Meeting the criteria looks like…</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>You have practiced the important social work skills of vulnerability/authenticity and self-reflection by sharing personal experiences and perspectives on the topic.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>You have made a clear argument/point with the paper, and/or mused about the topic in a meaningful way.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Full Credit</td>
<td>Partial Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of comments</td>
<td>Thoughtful, reflective, and respectful of others</td>
<td>Posts, but with minimal effort (“I agree with what Bill said…”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to the learning community</td>
<td>Attempted to motivate group discussion by asking questions or adding multiple replies to peers</td>
<td>Responds to peers, but with minimal effort.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion Post Rubric**

**Life Trajectory Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Meeting the criteria looks like...</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Introduce your interviewee with a compelling quote, statement, story, or other feature from your conversation.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual setup</td>
<td>Clearly establish where/when the story begins (e.g. in their early, middle, or late-life) and set your interviewee’s experiences in a socio-historical context (e.g. if they were born in the 1960s, you might identify that they are part of the post-WW2 Baby Boom)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of concepts from “SW Grand Challenges” or other social justice concepts</td>
<td>Their life trajectory should include their experiences with generational advantages or disadvantages / experiences with privilege and oppression (e.g. be sure to include their identities - what is their racial identity? Their class/SES background? Are they Disabled or non-disabled? What is their gender and sexual identity? etc.)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Lessons</td>
<td>What lessons, experiences, or new ways of thinking around your interviewee’s life story can readers learn from? What specific aspects of your interviewee’s experiences might have relevant implications for social workers?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Tone</td>
<td>Language should be genuine/authentic, and written so that a general audience can understand it (i.e. there's no need for formality here!). Please ensure that complex topics are communicated sensitively, protecting the identity of interviewees or people in their lives.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
d. **Attendance Policy and Zoom Class Participation**

You will get the most out of this course if you attend each Zoom session, however, my commitment to Healing-centered Teaching means that the **choice** is yours, and all I ask is that you are open and **transparent** with me about any barriers to your attendance. Attendance at each Zoom session is worth 10 points, but points **will not be deducted** for absences as long as you communicate the following:

- When possible, please email me in advance to let me know if you have to miss a Zoom class.
- If you are unable to let me know beforehand, please reach out to me afterwards to let me know what happened.

If you miss class without reaching out to me to explain what the barriers are, here is what will happen:

- Firstly, I will wait a couple of days to give you a chance to reach out to me, then I will reach out to you.
- Secondly, if I do not hear back from you and you continue to miss classes, I may decide to reach out to someone in the Office of Student Services to have them check in on you.

e. **Grading**

Final grades are based on 100 percentage points. Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the following schedule:

- Assignments and class participation total 100 points for the semester.
- 100 - 94 = A
- 93 - 90 = A-
- 89 - 87 = B+
- 86 - 84 = B
- 83 - 80 = B-
- 79 - 77 = C+
- 76 - 74 = C
- 73 - 70 = C-
- 69 - 67 = D+
- 66 - 64 = D
- 63 - 60 = D-
- 59 and below = E

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 of 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.

h. 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.

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