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 orientated 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 one textbook for this course, Digital Portfolio Construction: A guide for showcasing Social Work Skills (First Edition), by Fitch, Ruffolo and Austin (2021). You will use portions of this book for this class, and portions in your capstone course that you take in your final semester (so you don’t want to purchase the limited access e-book). You can purchase this book directly through the Cognella, Inc student store to receive discounted pricing and expanded format options. Purchase your course material here: https://store.cognella.com/95864

If you need any help with ordering from Cognella, feel free to email orders@cognella.com or call 858-800-2675.

All other 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45-3:45 pm</td>
<td>Session 1: Welcome, Introductions and Course Overview</td>
<td>Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments: None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00-7:00 pm</td>
<td>Session 2: Core Values of Social Work</td>
<td>Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Discussion prompt: Grounding in the MSW Program</td>
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<td>● Master Assignment, Milestone 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00-7:00 pm</td>
<td>Session 3: Centering Justice</td>
<td>Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Master Assignment, Milestone 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 5th</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00-7:00 pm</td>
<td>Session 4: Anti-Racism and Social Work Practice</td>
<td>Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Discussion prompt: Grounding in the MSW Program</td>
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<td>● Master Assignment, Milestone 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00-7:00 pm</td>
<td>Session 5: Preparing to Practice Social Work, Part 1</td>
<td>Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>● Master Assignment, Milestone 1</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>November 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00-7:00 pm</td>
<td>Session 6: Preparing to Practice Social Work, Part 2</td>
<td>Readings: Noted on Canvas Assignments:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Nothing due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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.

a) Milestone 1
Due: September 7, 2022 by 8pm.

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 21, 2022 at 8pm
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 apply to the decision about the area of social work in which you would like to practice?
- If you have a BSW, which apply 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 19, 2022 at 8pm.

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 16, 2022 at 8pm

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?
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
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
Scholars must attend each scheduled class meeting. If there is an emergency or illness, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. If a class is missed, assignments must still be completed by posted deadlines unless prior permission is given. Participation is worth 20 points. If students attend all classes and turn in all assignments on time, they will receive full credit. Students can miss one class without explanation. Four participation points will be deducted for any additional class missed. See Policy on Class Attendance found in the MSW Student Guide.

In addition, our class will have a Canvas website where other required updates and announcements will be posted. Login to the Canvas portal at: https://canvas.umich.edu to find the course materials.

e. Grading
The point value for each assignment is noted in Canvas. At least 71% is necessary to pass the class.
Grading for the seminar will be satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U).

Please Note:

**Safety and emergency preparedness:**
All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-7793 for up-to-date school closure information.

Be prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least two emergency exits nearest the classroom.

Each SSW classroom is equipped with door locks. Pressing the Lock button (the only button located on inside of the door handle) to lock the door from within the room.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services and Enrollment Management (Room 1748) at (734) 936-0961 or via email at ssw-adaccompliance@umich.edu.

All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. [Click here to read more about the School of Social Work's emergency policies and procedures](#).

Additional resources:
- Report a hate crime or bias-related incident
- Register for UM Emergency Alerts
- View the annual Campus Safety Statement

**b. Mental health and well being:**
Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact me so that we can find solutions together. For personal concerns, U-M offers many resources, some of which are listed at [Resources for Student Well-being](#) on the Well-being for U-M Students website. You can also search for additional resources on that website.

The Office of Student Services and Enrollment Management's Health and Wellness Program provides supportive services to MSW students which promote wellness, self care and
maintenance of a healthy academic and mental health balance, as well as to increase disability awareness.

- Contact the Health and Wellness Program at ssw.wellness@umich.edu
  Wolverine Wellness is an integral part of UHS. Wolverine Wellness’ primary purpose is to foster personal and community well-being or U-M students, in college and beyond.

- For questions, please email ContactUHS@umich.edu or call (734) 763-1320
  - Community Wellness for Students

**c. Teaching evaluations:**

Students are strongly encouraged to complete teaching evaluations at the end of each term. Teaching evaluations are administered via Canvas and will be emailed to students during the last week of classes. Student identity is completely anonymous, and instructors cannot view evaluation reports until after grades are submitted.

**d. Proper use of names and pronouns:**

All students will be referred to by the names and pronouns they use (e.g. she, they, ze, he). If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform the instructor before the second class period so that they use your correct name and pronouns. **Students can designate their personal pronouns on the class roster via Wolverine Access:** Student Business > Campus Personal Information > Gender Identity.

There are two inclusive restrooms in the SSW building: room 1784 (1st floor, near Registrar's Office) and B833T (Lower Level). [Click here for the Spectrum Center’s map of gender inclusive restrooms on campus.](#)

**e. Accommodations for students with disabilities:**

The University of Michigan recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students with disabilities. Students who are experiencing a disability-related barrier should contact Services for Students with Disabilities; (734) 763-3000 or ssdoffice@umich.edu. For students who are connected with SSD, accommodation requests can be made in Accommodate. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your SSD Coordinator or visit SSD’s Current Student webpage. SSD considers aspects of the course design, course learning objects and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Further conversation with SSD, instructors, and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.

*For more information, contact:*

**Services for Students with Disabilities**
G-664 Haven Hall
505 South State St.
**Phone:** (734) 763-3000
**Email:** ssdoffice@umich.edu
Students with disabilities may also contact the SSW Office of Student Services and Enrollment Management at ssw.oss@umich.edu / (734) 936-0961. For field instruction related questions, students may contact Amy Burandt at aburandt@umich.edu.

**f. Religious/spiritual observances:**

The University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays, however it has long been the University's policy that every reasonable effort should be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Please click here to find out more about student expectations around conflicts between the academic and religious calendars, as well as a non-exhaustive list of religious holidays.

**g. Military deployment:**

Please click here for more information and resources for students called to Active Duty status while enrolled at the University of Michigan.

**h. Writing skills and expectations:**

Strong writing and communication skills are essential to students' academic success and professional career. The Writing Coordinator for the School of Social Work is open to meeting with students during any phase of the writing process. The Writing Coordinator's office is housed within the Career Services Office. The Career Services Office also offers workshops, resources and individual assistance to help improve skills and confidence in written communication.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact:

**SSW Writing Assistance**  
Career Services (Room 1696)  
1080 S University Ave.  
**Phone:** (734) 763-6259  
**Email:** ssw-cso@umich.edu

**APA formatting:**

Any social work assignments presented as professional papers or presentations should utilize APA formatting. Review the MLibrary APA Citation Guide as needed. The Purdue Owl website is another helpful resource for assistance with APA formatting.

**i. 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.

j. 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.

k. Academic integrity and plagiarism

Plagiarism is prohibited in any academic writing at the University of Michigan. More information on academic integrity policies can be found in the MSW Student Guide.