



Course title:	Anti Oppressive and Transformative Justice Approaches to Community Change	
Course #/term:	SW 798, Section 001, Winter, 2023	
Time and place:	Tuesdays, 5-8, B780	
Credit hours:	1	
Prerequisites:	none	
Instructor:	Trevor Bechtel	
Pronouns:	he/his ...	
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	You may expect a response within 12 hours M-F	
Office:	Weil Hall, 5115 T-Th 10-4	
Office hours:	By Appointment	

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This course will focus on anti-oppressive organizing and transformative justice approaches to creating community change. It will explore the theory and concepts behind such approaches as well as the specific skills needed to engage in anti-oppressive, anti-racist and transformative organizing work with a focus on power and root causes analysis. The course will draw from contemporary grassroots and social movement models of practice including emergent strategy, healing and restorative justice, digital and arts-based justice efforts, and other related examples. Students will understand the frameworks, practices, skills, and concepts involved in anti-oppressive and transformative justice approaches. Particular emphasis will be placed on competencies related to critical storytelling and popular education, collective modes of organizing, and visionary approaches toward community change.

b. Course objectives and competencies

Students will:

1. Develop knowledge about anti-oppressive organizing and transformative justice approaches to creating community change
2. Understand theories and concepts of anti-oppressive, anti-racist and transformative organizing work
3. Gain skills and tools to work for transformative justice
4. Explore various approaches to work for transformative justice, eg emergent strategy, healing and restorative justice, digital and arts-based justice efforts

c. Intensive focus on PODS

This course integrates PODS 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 PODS learning.

2. Class Requirements

a. Text and class materials

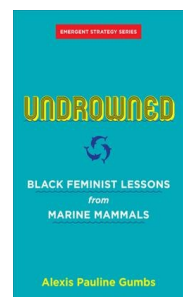
We'll begin each week with a time spent in reflection on Alex Pauline Gumbs, *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals*. Copies are available for loan or purchase from the instructor.

The main text is adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*. Both books are published by AK press.

Other material will be available on Canvas.

The main content will be provided by a series of guest lecturers.

This class will be more about resource collection than resource mastery.



b. Class schedule

Date	Time	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments
Week 1 January 24 Beginning	5:00 6:30 7:30	Undrowned Trevor's Introduction Syllabus Class Introductions, Norms Lauren Tatarsky Somatic Work as a Center for Organizing Multi-Modal Presentation Conversation	Syllabus <i>Undrowned Overview</i>
Week 2 January 31 Storytelling	5:00 5:30 7:00 7:30	Undrowned Discussion of Williams, Jemisin Lauren Slagter and Jennifer Erb-Downward Poverty Solution at U-M Storytelling at The Detroit Phoenix Center Emergent Strategy Discussion Multi-Modal Presentation Conversation	<i>Undrowned ch. 1-5</i> La'Ron Williams Changing our Stories will Change our World N.K. Jemisin, <i>Those who stay and fight</i> <i>Emergent Strategy</i> Fractal, Adaptive
Week 3 February 7 Creativity	5:00 5:30 6:30 7:00	Undrowned Emergent Strategy Discussion Resource Discussion Multi-Modal Presentation Practice Sam Cooper Youth Arts Alliance, Earthworks	Resource Assignment Due <i>Undrowned ch. 6-10</i> <i>Emergent Strategy</i> Interdependence and Decentralization, Nonlinear and Iterative

Date	Time	Agenda	Required Readings & Assignments
Week 4 February 14	5:00	Undrowned Emergent Strategy Discussion	<i>Undrowned</i> ch. 11-15
Transformative Justice	5:30	Transformative Justice Discussion	<i>Emergent Strategy</i> Resilience, Creating More Possibilities
	6:30	Multi-Modal Presentation Practice	
	7:00	Petals Sandcastle Express Your Yes Foundation ARTivism: Agency in Radically Inclusive Spaces (ECC 1840)	
Week 5 February 21	5:00	Undrowned Emergent Strategy	<i>Undrowned</i> 16-end
Presentation	5:45	Multi Modal Presentation Set-Up	<i>Emergent Strategy</i> Other Parts.
	6:30	Multi Modal Presentation	
	7:30	Debrief	

c. Assignments

Assignment	Due date	Percent of overall grade
Resources	February 7 Submit on Canvas, present in class discussion	20%
Multi Modal Presentation Contribution	February 21 or earlier Submission varies	60%
Participation		20%

Resource Assignment.

Find several resources related to this course and share them on the Resource discussion thread on Canvas. Prepare a 2 minute presentation of these resources to give in class on February 7th.

Multi Modal Presentation

The main work of this class will be a Multi Modal Presentation offered to the University Community on February 21st, the last day of class. During conversations in the first week of class, the class will together decide what topic to present on. The default topic is Transformative Justice in Social Work. Every class member will choose a way to be involved in the presentation in a way that makes sense to them. We will write and sing songs, create and display art, write and perform poetry, create and curate experiences, create posters, programs, and eat cookies. Class members are encouraged to work from existing strengths. Class members are encouraged to imagine how others could be involved in their contributions and ask for help. The class will spend time together each class developing and practicing the presentation together.

This assignment assumes that each class member is already capable of offering a valuable contribution and that the class is a community that can work together to offer the presentation within a month.

d. Attendance and class participation

This course is mostly experiential based on class conversation and focused on creating a public Multi Modal Presentation together. As a result missed classes will be challenging for both individual students, the class, and the instructor. We will work together to manage any needed absences.

Here is the Social Work [Policy on Class Attendance](#).

e. Grading

Since this course is so focused on our ability to come together as a learning community and create a Multi Modal Presentation together the aim will be for everyone to get the same high grade. Since grading creative work is subjective in Social Work, the grades for Resources and Multi Modal Presentation records completing the work on time. The participation grade is for class attendance and engagement. All grades will only be given as letter grades. Late work will be managed by the instructor and the student together, but given the assignments will be very difficult to accommodate.

Here are the MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#) and the [policy for grading in special circumstances](#). Here are some resources around [testing and grading from CRLT](#).

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

Here is the Social Work [Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ](#):

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.

The Multi Modal Presentation will be recorded using the in room recording system.

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. 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.

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*