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 PODS (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 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.

e. Accessibility
Inclusion and accessibility are basic human needs and rights, and each student has a right to an inclusive and accessible education. I am passionate about fostering the academic success of all my students. By working together, we can help make sure that happens. 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 email ssdoffice@umich.edu. For students who are connected with SSD, accommodation requests can be made in Accommodate. If you have any questions or concerns, you can also directly contact SSD Coordinator Emily Wisler ewisler@umich.edu. 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. Start here to get connected with SSD. Please note that if this or any class is in the basement or upper floors of our School of Social Work Building, there is an elevator in the main lobby of the building near
the main entrance, as well as an additional elevator elsewhere that can be used, if needed. Please let me know how I can be of any assistance regarding accessibility in any way.

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/60339-1a-006

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

If there are ever any changes to this schedule, alerts will come via email and will be updated in Canvas. Please note class will be released approx. 10 minutes early every week to accommodate student transitions to other classes that start right on the following hour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Required Readings &amp; Assignments DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 24, 2023</td>
<td>Session 1: Welcome, Introductions and Course</td>
<td>Readings Due: Canvas Module 1 “Pre-Class work for Session 1” These should be read PRIOR to first class</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SEED WEEK)</td>
<td>Overview</td>
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<td>12:45-3:45PM</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 31, 2023</td>
<td>Session 2: Core Values of Social Work</td>
<td>Readings Due: Canvas Module 2 “pre-class work for Session 2” Assignments Due:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date/Time</td>
<td>Agenda</td>
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<td>▪ Canvas Discussion</td>
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<td>▪ Major Assignment Milestone 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Session 3: Centering Justice and Antiracism</td>
<td>Readings Due: Canvas Module 3 “pre-class work for session 3” Assignments Due:</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 7, 2023</td>
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<td>▪ Major Assignment Milestone 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-5PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Session 4: Preparing for Social Work Practice</td>
<td>Readings Due: Canvas Module 4 “pre-class work for session 4” Assignments Due:</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14, 2023</td>
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<td>▪ Canvas Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-5PM</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Begin Milestone 3 if you wish to start now</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Session 5: Professional Portfolio</td>
<td>Readings Due: Canvas Module 5 “pre-class work or session 5” Assignments Due:</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 21, 2023</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Major Assignment Milestone 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-5PM</td>
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<td>▪ Future Me letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Week 5</td>
<td>Portfolio Due: October 10</td>
<td>Readings: None</td>
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<td>Due October 10, 2023 by 11:59PM</td>
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<td>Assignments:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Portfolio</td>
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<td>▪ Course evaluations</td>
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<td>▪ Extra credit (optional)</td>
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c. **Assignments**

Assignment due dates are clearly marked in the class schedule above as well as in canvas. Basically, 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 with different due dates in steps. The second are regular, brief assignments, usually (but not always) taking the form of online discussions through Canvas. The third is the initiation of the portfolio.
*Assignments are expected on time; however, life happens. I give a 3-day grace period; no explanation is necessary. If you must submit past the 3rd-day grace, let me know. I reserve the option to reduce up to 3 points if turned in after the grace period up to 5 days late. Assignments submitted more than five days late will not receive any feedback and will be subject to up to 6 points deduction due to lateness. (The 2 Canvas discussion assignments are not subject to a grace period because these are interactive with other students and must be completed within the time frame specified on Canvas).

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 (competency 1). It will use a reflective practice widely used in education and in clinical settings, known as "what, so what, now what." See each milestone below for purpose and details. The assignment will span the semester, with 3 milestones throughout the semester.

This course connects to the social work competencies in the following ways:

**Course Outcomes:**
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).

**P.O.D.S. capacities:**
This assignment connects to the many P.O.D.S. capacities, including: Envision what social justice could look like in specific practice contexts., Incorporate insights from those with insider and outsider statuses into social justice planning and actions., Foster environments and processes that are supportive and generative among those working for justice.

**a) Milestone 1 “What” 10 points**
**Due: August 31, 2023 at 2PM**
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.

This is simply an upload, no new work is needed for Milestone 1.
b) **Milestone 2: “What + So what…” 20 points**  
**Due September 7, 2023 @ 2PM**

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."*

Specifically, consider:

- 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 applies to your decision to practice at a graduate level? (WHAT)
- AND
- 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/preferred length 2 pages single-spaced (minimum length 1 page, single-spaced)

c) **Milestone 3: “Now what…” 20 points**  
**Due: September 21, 2023 @ 2pm**

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?
2. **Regular, Brief Assignments**: All mini assignments **10 points each**

After each class session, you will be asked to do a brief assignment related to the content from the class. For some weeks, these take the form of a discussion prompt through Canvas. In one week, you will write a letter to your future self. Details and due dates for each of these assignments/discussions can be found on Canvas.

**Purpose:**

These series of small “mini” or “ongoing” assignments that help orient students to the field and school. This course connects to the social work competencies in the following ways:

**Course Outcomes:**

*This assignment provides documentation of student ability to meet the following course outcome: Develop a sense of belonging to the UM MSW program by interacting with fellow students and faculty.*

**P.O.D.S. capacities:**

*This assignment connects to the many P.O.D.S. capacities, including:*  
**Demonstrate intersectional humility in communication and interactions with others.**, **Analyze types, levels and sources of power in practice contexts, theories and actions.**, **Recognize how these intersect with each other and change in interactions with others and in different contexts.**

3. **Portfolio Assignment 20 points**

**Due: October 10, 2023**

In this assignment, you will initiate the development of a web-based portfolio using a website called *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.

**Purpose:**

This assignment helps students initiate their professional portfolio, which will be the basis for competency measurement at the end of the program.

**Course Outcomes:**

*This assignment provides documentation of student ability to meet the following course outcome: Identify how social workers ethically engage with technology practice (Essential 26; EPAS 1).*
P.O.D.S. Capacities:
This assignment connects to the many P.O.D.S. capacities, including:
Envision what social justice could look like in specific practice contexts., Foster environments and processes that are supportive and generative among those working for justice.

This assignment has three steps:
- **Step #1**: Complete the training module, which teaches about building an ePortfolio in Portfolium.
- **Step #2**: Begin setting up a profile on the Profile tab by completing the introduction as described in the training module. Students are welcome to add their resume, education and other information to your portfolio, but this is not required in this assignment.
- **Step #3**: Upload the major assignment as a “project” in your Portfolium portfolio in the Portfolio tab.

**Attendance and class participation  20 points**
This course is only 5 sessions, so in keeping with the SSW Policy on Class Attendance, students are required to attend all 5 class sessions. Please note that students who miss 2 full sessions (40% of the course) for any reason cannot be eligible for a Satisfactory grade since too much critical content would be missed, as there are only a total of 5 sessions of this course. Students are expected to attend all classes and fully participate. Participation does not specifically mean you need to raise your hand and talk a lot in class. To earn the full 20 points, students need to be engaged for the entire class period without distractions, bring a positive learning attitude to the class, and come open minded. Each of us participates differently, and I will strive to honor that diversity among us. You will be required to participate in the in-class exercises and discussions that include engagement, providing collegial support, the use of active listening skills, as well as initiating and participation in dialogue within group discussions. If any of the discussions are difficult for you for any reason, please schedule a time to talk with me so I can best support you and your learning.

- **Notifying the instructor about a missed session**: Because communication is so essential for social work practice (and is a professional technical standard for our program), communication is invaluable. Students MUST notify the instructor in advance PRIOR to a missed class. Neither a reason nor a doctor’s note is required. However, be mindful that 2 total absences will not be eligible for a Satisfactory grade due to missing 40% of the course.
- **Missed session make-up requirement**: If one session is missed due to an unavoidable reason, students are naturally expected to complete the course readings and assignments as listed for that week and review slides/notes (asking for them if
needed), and then complete an assignment due before the next upcoming class period. EITHER option 1 OR 2 below:

Option 1: Reflection paper on the readings/videos that were due that week (3 pages double spaced which equates to 1 page per hour of in-person time missed)

Option 2: Schedule a 1 hour zoom or in person meeting with the professor to engage in a meaningful dialogue/conversation about the readings and content missed to ensure understanding.

The reason for this policy is because this class is foundational to all social work as a profession, so students must demonstrate a critical understanding of all material presented in this course. Students who miss one class but do not complete the assignment as a make up (either option 1 or 2) above will lose 4 points for participation for the course.

- **Consequence of excessive attendance difficulties:** If a student fails to attend 2 class sessions, or arrives late, leaves early to the equivalent of missing 40% of in-person attendance, that will result in a non-passing grade. In addition, the student’s academic advisor will be contacted to discuss student support.
- **Late/incomplete assignments:** Assignments that are incomplete will be returned for completion. If you need more time for an assignment, notify me PRIOR to the due date and we can discuss an extension without penalty. Assignments that are late without communication with me prior to the due date will have one point deducted per day of lateness, and they will not be able to be uploaded to Canvas due to electronic cutoff, so they will need to be emailed to me directly.

### d. Grading

Assignments are weighted by group as outlined below:

- **Major Assignment (Including parts 1, 2 & 3)** – 50%
- **Ongoing Brief Assignments** – 20%
- **Portfolio** – 20%
- **Attendance and Participation** -10%

Total: 100%

**70%-100% Satisfactory**

**<69% Unsatisfactory**

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, email your assignment directly to me.
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.

e. **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. Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ

f. **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 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 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.

g. **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 and be provided with alternative assignment towards participation grade noted above. Please notify me by email about your absence prior to your absence. Please see absences section above for more information on absence. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is not required.

h. **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 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 The UM Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center (SAPAC) Crisis Line at (734) 936-3333.

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