

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number: SW 381S

Instructor's Name: Darlene Grant, PhD

Unique Number: 63290

Office Number: SSW 3.130L

Semester: Fall, 2003

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**FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:
VALUES, DIVERSITY, POWER & OPPRESSION
(PREVIOUSLY HBSE: CULTURAL DIVERSITY)**

I. Standardized Course Description

This course is based the following assumptions: 1) membership in a population-at-risk group (e.g., people of color, women, gay and lesbian persons) significantly influences an individual's life experiences, world view, and increases risk factors for exposure to discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression; 2) professional social work ethics and values demand culturally competent practice; 3) it is necessary for students to learn to apply social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research; and 4) professionals and programs have strategies to critically analyze distributive justice, human and civil rights, and global interconnections of oppression. There is an emphasis in this course on the impact of discrimination and oppression by individuals and society on people of culturally diverse backgrounds and orientations.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the students will be able to:

1. Critique and apply culturally competent and social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access of resources, intervention, and research;
2. Demonstrate familiarity with the history and heritage of population-at-risk groups, including women and culturally diverse populations, globally as well as those prevalent in the southwestern region of the United States;
3. Understand the social construction of race and ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation;
4. Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and socially just social work practices; and,

5. Assess the impact of discrimination (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia), and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, service delivery, and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice.

III. TEACHING METHODS

The content of this course has the potential to be emotionally-charged. Guidelines will be established collaboratively by students and the instructor to create a respectful, safe and challenging learning environment. The instructor has the ultimate responsibility to manage differences and conflict that arise in the course. The instructor will incorporate a variety of teaching methods, including readings, lectures, discussions, audiovisual materials, guest speakers, small group activities, experiential learning exercises and student presentations. A variety of populations-at-risk groups will also be used to critically examine a social justice framework, with emphasis on values, diversity, power and oppression.

IV. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS, AND MATERIALS

Finn, J.L., & Jacobson, M. (2003). *Just practice: A social justice approach to social work*. Peosta, IA: Eddie Bowers.

Fong, R., & Furuto, S. (2001). *Culturally competent practice*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Recommended reference list provides examples of populations-at-risk groups to consider in completing course requirements.

The following selected readings will also be placed on reserve in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) (Social Work building, 1st Floor); and through the UT Electronic Library:

The following chapters are taken from the book, *Ethnicity and Family Therapy* by Monica McGoldrick, John Pearce, and Joseph Giordano (2001), The Guilford Press, New York: Ch 12 German Families, Ch 13 Greek Families, Ch 14 Iranian Families, Ch.15 Irish Families, Ch 16 Italian Families, Ch 17 Jewish Families, Ch 18 Polish Families, Ch 19 Portuguese Families, and Ch 20 Norwegian Families.

V. Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated on the following required assignments, as well as class participation and contribution.

1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (10% of grade)

Students are expected to attend all classes, participate meaningfully in class discussion and exercises, and call upon life experiences and course readings for contributions. Students may be asked to complete class learning forms before the end of selected class sessions.

It is important for social workers to be aware of group dynamics including peer groups in which they participate. It is also important to contribute to the group process. A portion of the grade for this course will depend on your level of attendance, preparation, participation, and contribution. For some, this means learning to speak up, to add comments or to raise questions. For others, it means being sensitive and allowing others to contribute.

2. Ethnic Roots Paper (25% of grade)

Each student will write a 5-7 page paper that explores his/her “family” ethnic roots and the unique experiences of parents, grandparents, and/or other significant caregivers in the student’s life. In the paper a) describe the “family” system, b) identify the variations that arise from cultural processes, such as race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, and/or urban/rural differences, and c) the implications of assimilation on social and economic justice for you and your family.

The purpose of this assignment is for students to explore their own ethnic roots and examine the unique experiences of parents/grandparents/great grandparents and beyond/or other significant caregivers that have shaped their path in life. This paper will allow students to look at their roots globally as well as those prevalent in the southwestern region of the United States, if applicable.

The paper should be double-spaced, in APA format, and responding to the following set of questions. Specific information from the McLemore & Romo and Baker (2001) reading should be incorporated and each student should personally address parts a) – d) below:

- a) Background: Very briefly describe yourself (age, birthplace, social class and status when you were growing up, current cultural orientation, etc.)
- b) Background of Parents/Grandparents/Great Grandparents and so on
 - description of what you know about your (1) mother, (2) father, (3) maternal grandparents, (3) paternal grandparents, (4) maternal and paternal great grandparents, and so on
 - How did ancestors enter into the United States (e.g., were they voluntary immigrants, involuntary through conquest, time of entry, etc.?)
- c) Experiences with Anglo Conformity and Factors Affecting Inclusion
 - By the standards of Anglo Conformity, were individuals related to you included or excluded in American society?
 - How did they avoid/attempt/ achieve assimilation and integration? (e.g., Were names changed to fit into mainstream American society? Were ethnic

roots emphasized or downplayed? Were traditions/language/customs suppressed or passed down?)

- What role did social class and social power play in their experiences?
 - Describe experiences of family members in terms of the presence or absence of (1) cultural assimilation by addition, (2) cultural assimilation by substitution, and (3) marital assimilation as referred to in the McLemore & Romo and Baker readings, Ch 1 & 2 (in LRC).
 - Does the “three-generations process” of assimilation described in the reading apply to your family’s experience in this country? Why or why not?
- d) Conclusion: What conclusions do you personally draw about your own current status of assimilation based on your ethnic roots, socialization, and personal experiences and its implications for culturally competent practice?

3. Immersion Experience and Reflection Paper (35% of grade)

Students will "shadow" a single/ same person from a population-at-risk group with which they are unfamiliar for three different events and write a paper about the experience and their learning. Students should cover the intersection between class-gender-power-privilege-race in their paper and immersion experience.

The purpose of this assignment is to observe and experience the life of a person from a population-at-risk group different from your own. Subsequent to the immersion experience, students are asked to write a 12-15 page final paper composed of a graduate level (i.e. reflecting critical thinking and informed by the research literature) reflection on the shadowing experience and implications for applying social justice approaches to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research. Grounded in how the “host” perceives such issues, examine the current day oppression for this group and privilege for other groups in relation to this group’s oppression.

Cogent integration of what was learned through research, thoughtful interaction/questions posed to the person shadowed, and a depth of consideration of micro, meso, and macro level challenges facing the group being studied should be reflected in the reflection paper.

Answer the following questions in 12-15 pages:

- a) Explore the history of oppression for this group and privilege for other groups in relation to this group’s oppression;
- b) What are the current day consequences of discrimination and oppression for this group and privilege for other groups in relation to this group’s oppression;
- c) Discuss whether or not there were any areas of conflict between why you chose this population, what you expected, and what you subsequently experienced;

- d) Integrate class readings and other research literature to analyze how social justice approaches should be applied to influence assessment, planning, access to resources, intervention, and research;
 - e) Critically examine what you learned from confronting this “dissonance” by applying this knowledge to personal and professional development.
4. Group Presentation: Analysis of Interplay of Social Justice, Values, Diversity, Power & Oppression (30% of grade)

For this presentation, small groups will explore some of the overt and covert ways difference/diversity is played out and negotiated in society. Small groups will focus on how members of one of the populations-at-risk groups negotiate life in light of economic deprivation, social power dynamics and oppression.

Small groups will:

- a) Select a current series of 8-10 news clippings and identify the main theme(s) encountered in the articles relating to social justice, values, diversity, and power;
- b) Examine why the theme(s) encountered is experienced by members of this group, how many, who in this group isn't affected, why?
- c) Analyze the impact of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression on this population specific to the theme(s) identified, as well as how this population-at-risk is perceived by the broader society;
- d) Analyze public policy, institutional structure, and/or service delivery factors/approaches discussed in your articles as it affects the group you have selected;
- e) Examine how group membership influences access to resources needed to ameliorate the theme(s) encountered and the dynamics of such risk factors in relation to society's responsiveness and strategies to redress the issue(s); and,
- f) Including the above research, present a **45 minute** presentation of your analysis about the role the small group believes the social work profession and individuals should take to intervene to ameliorate the problem in relation to the selected population-at-risk to impact discrimination and oppression and to promote social and economic justice. Students are encouraged to use power point or other media for ease of presentation of a condensed version of materials, findings, and analysis.

Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments

Your written work should be well-conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. Show evidence of your own creative and thoughtful

analysis. Papers should follow the APA style format. Additional criterion and evaluation guidelines will also be provided.

Grading and Weighting of Assignments

Attendance, Preparation, Contribution	10%
Ethnic Roots Paper	25%
Immersion Experience and Reflection Paper	35%
Group Analysis Presentation	30%

GRADES WILL BE ASSIGNED AS FOLLOWS:

A = 90-100 **B** = 80-89 **C** = 70-79 **D** = 60-69

A = Significantly exceeds assignment/performance expectations (evidence of critical thinking and analysis that resulted in work additional to that laid out in the assignment directions);

B = Assignment/overall performance in course meets all the requirements with evidence of critical thinking and analysis (i.e. coherence and integration of ideas);

C = Average. Assignment/performance meets all the requirements but lacks evidence of in depth thinking and analysis;

D = There are important gaps in the assignment both in terms of requirements and critical thinking and analysis.

VI. CLASS POLICIES

1. It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late. Any adjustments in due dates must be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled due date.
2. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than one class without a valid excuse, e.g., medical documentation) may receive one or more course grades lower than their final grade when points are totaled.
3. Social work practitioners assume responsibility for themselves. Therefore, it is expected that work handed in will be your own. Scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating during examinations, violates social work values and will result in recommendation for dismissal from the social work program and a referral to the Dean of Student's Office.
4. Social work practitioners are assertive and function as team members. Therefore, feedback about the course is welcome and the course will be viewed as a joint effort between students and the instructor.

5. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.
6. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.
7. The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
Week 1 8/29	Course Overview and Introductions	
Week 2 9/5	Culturally Competent Social Work Practice (Video: Gangs of New York Documentary)	Fong & Furuto, Chapters 1-2, 7 Reisch, M. (2002) Defining Social Justice in a Socially Unjust World
Week 3 9/12	Self Awareness: Ethnic Roots and Racial Identity Development (Video: Race—The Power of Illusion, Part 1: The Difference Between Us)	Fong & Furuto, Chapters 3-6
Week 4 9/19	Cultural Diversity: Identity Politics and Populations-at-Risk (Video: Race—The Power of Illusion, Part 2: The Story We Tell)	Fong & Furuto, Chapters 8-11

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
Week 5 9/26	<p>Power, Privilege and Oppression</p> <p>Social Work Action Alliance (SWAA) is sponsoring The Second Annual Social Justice Teach-In on Friday Sept. 26 from 8:30 - 2:30 a.m. here in the School.</p> <p>Instructors for all of the first year MSSW students in the Social Justice class (formerly Cultural Diversity) are incorporating this event as a part of their course requirements. Students, faculty and staff will be present. The day will include a number of presentations on environmental justice, the death penalty , GLBT issues, homelessness and living wage, the Colonias, Faith-based initiatives and amnesty. Also, a lunch will be provided which will be a "hunger awareness meal". SWAA will conduct a BOOK SALE again on that day as well, to help support the event. Kathy Armenta LMSW-ACP, Clinical Associate Professor, The University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work, email: karmenta@mail.utexas.edu, 512-471-8230</p>	Fong & Furuto, Chapters 12-15
Week 6 10/3	<p>Social Justice Framework: Distributive Justice, Human and Civil Rights and Global Interconnectedness</p> <p>Ethnic Roots Paper Due</p> <p>(Video: Race—The Power of Illusion, Part 3: The House We Live In)</p>	Finn & Jacobson, Introduction and Chapter 1
Week 7 10/10	Social Work's Historical Context	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 2

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
Week 8 10/17	Values, Ethics and Social Justice (Video: The Color of Fear)	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 3 and Appendix
Week 9 10/24	Social Justice Theoretical Perspectives Just Practice: An Integrated Approach (NASW-TX in Arlington) (Hillel Month of Kindness kick off Monday Oct. 27 th with key note by Arun Ghandi)	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 4 Texas Hillel at the University of Texas at Austin Location 2105 San Antonio Street, Austin, TX 78705 Telephone (512) 476-0125 Fax (512) 476-0128 E-mail Address , General Information: info@texashillel.org
Week 10 10/31	Engagement: Interpersonal, Organizational and Community Contexts (Video: Postville: When Cultures Collide)	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 5
Week 11 11/7	Assessment: Systematic Inquiry and Learning, Participatory Planning, Decision-Making, Practice Intervention and Accompaniment (Video: Winds of Change: A Matter of Choice)	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 6, 7
Week 12 11/14	Critical Reflection, Evaluation and Research Group Presentations Immersion Reflection Paper Due	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 8
Week 13 11/21	Instructor Evaluation, Wrap Up Group Presentations	

Date	Description/Due Dates	Text / Readings
Week 14 11/28	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
Week 15 12/5	Celebration: Social Justice Work and Futuring Group Presentations	Finn & Jacobson, Chapter 9

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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