

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

**Course Number:** SW 381S

**Instructor's Name:** Mitch Sudolsky, LCSW

**Unique Number:** 63675

**Office Number:** SSW 3.104A

**Semester:** Fall 2009

**Email:** [sudolsky@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:sudolsky@mail.utexas.edu)

**Meeting Time/Place:** Thurs. 5:30-8:30 PM  
SSW 2.116

**Office Hours:** Thurs. 4-5 PM and by  
appointment

**FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:  
VALUES, DIVERSITY, POWER & OPPRESSION**

**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, and small group activities. 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

Fadiman, Anne (1997) The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Tough, Paul (2008) Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America, New York: Houghton Mifflin

Rothenberg, Paula (2007), Race, Class, and Gender in the United States, New York: Worth

Kidder, Tracy (2003) Mountains Beyond Mountains, New York: Random House

Selected required readings will also be placed on electronic reserve through the University of Texas Libraries web site, which may be accessed at:

<http://reserves.lib.utexas.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=2250>

The password is sjfall09

### V. Course Requirements

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

#### 1. Attendance, Preparation, Contribution (15% of grade)

**Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to participate in class discussion and exercises. Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class, and to be prepared to demonstrate their familiarity with major concepts and ideas from the readings during class discussions and experiential learning assignments.** For some students, this will mean learning to speak up, to volunteer comments or to raise questions. For others, it means being sensitive and allowing others to contribute.

Failure to regularly attend class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in determining the final grade. Students will be allowed **one (1) unexcused absence**. In cases where a student misses more than one class, the instructor reserves the right to lower the student's final grade by one point for each class missed. Students should not leave class during the break. In extenuating circumstances of absence, the student is to inform the instructor; documentation may be required. Students are responsible for any material (class notes, handouts, etc.) missed due to absence.

2. **Book review papers (40% of grade)**

Students will write book reviews of three of the required texts: Fadiman, The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down; Tough, Whatever it Takes; and Kidder, Mountains Beyond Mountains. The reviews will address **questions to be distributed in class as well as describe the student's thoughts on the relevant issues in each book**. Each review should be 5-7 pages in length, and should be double-spaced and typed in a 12 font. Students must use APA format to cite research to support factual assertions made in the book reviews.

3. **Social Justice in Action paper (25% of grade)**

The purpose of this assignment is to learn about a human services organization or agency in Texas that addresses social justice issues pertaining to a population-at-risk group as defined in the Standardized Course Description in this syllabus. Students should identify an organization or agency and research its mission, activities, and accomplishments in depth with respect to the population-at-risk which is its focus. This research should include some contact with the organization/agency, e.g., via visit, interview with staff, phone conversation, email, etc.

Subsequent to this, students are asked to write a 8-10 page paper about the organization/agency and the relevant population-at-risk, and answer the following questions:

- 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) Describe the social justice approaches which have been applied toward the issues discussed in (a) and (b). In your answer, you must include the following:
  1. An integration of what you've learned from the research literature and from course readings.

2. A brief description of the work of other organizations, agencies, groups, or individuals that are involved in social justice work related to this population-at-risk locally, regionally, and nationally. This should be integrated with a detailed discussion of the organization/agency which is the focus of the paper, and which includes the information noted in the first paragraph of this assignment.

d. Conclusions

5. **Quizzes (20% of grade)** Three quizzes will consist of short answer questions about readings and concepts discussed in class.

### **Overall Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments**

**The skills possessed by effective professional social workers include the ability to write well and to speak in an articulate and persuasive manner to groups. Your written work should be well conceptualized and researched, clearly organized, and supported by examples and details. Papers must be typewritten, proofread for spelling and grammatical errors, double-spaced and in 12 font, and must follow the APA style format. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) is the style manual to be used for all assignments. Incorrect use of APA style may result in a deduction of points on assignments. Appropriate referencing (authors, titles, page numbers, etc.) of assignments is required. This includes giving due credit to others when indirect quotes (paraphrasing) and direct (verbatim) quotes are used. Short direct quotes (less than 40 words) must be placed in quotation marks. Long direct quotes (40 or more words) should be indented. Paraphrasing requires more than changing a word or two in a sentence. Failure to give due to credit to others will result in a “0” for the assignment and/or an “F” for the course. Plagiarism is a form of scholastic dishonesty and will be addressed as such. If you do not know how to cite appropriately, please learn before you submit any assignments.**

### **Papers must include the following elements:**

- **Clear answers to all required questions**
- **Adherence to assignment parameters around length of paper (Note: papers less than the minimum length will receive no higher than a grade of 80; papers exceeding the maximum length will only be graded on a review of the maximum number of pages stipulated by the assignment)**
- **Evidence of independent, critical thinking**
- **Research from peer-reviewed professional journals and from recent books**
- **Integration of material from lectures and course readings**
- **Use of grammar, spelling, and punctuation appropriate to graduate level written work.**

## GRADUATE GRADING SCALE

100 - 94 = A
93 - 90 = A-
89 - 87 = B+
86 - 84 = B
83 - 80 = B-
79 - 77 = C+
76 - 74 = C
73 - 70 = C- (Class failed/no credit: 73 and below)
69 - 67 = D+
66 - 64 = D
63 - 60 = D-
59 and below = F

**A** = *Significantly exceeds assignment/performance expectations* (evidence of critical thinking, quality and quantity of research, and analysis that resulted in work additional to that set forth in the assignment directions);

**B** = Assignment/overall performance in course meets all the requirements with evidence of critical thinking, evidence of research effort, 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 and lacks evidence of research from professional journals or recent or influential books

**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 are expected to turn in assignments on the due date **at the beginning of class.** Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. 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) will be penalized one point per unexcused absence when points are totaled.
3. This course is part of a professional training program. The behavior that is expected of social workers in professional practice is also expected of students in this course. Students are expected to arrive at class punctually, to remain in class for its duration,

and to maintain focus upon course content during class. Eating in class is permitted only during breaks. Cell phones must be turned off. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.

4. During this course, the professor will ask students to provide feedback on their learning in informal as well as formal ways, including anonymous surveys about how the professor's teaching strategies are helping or hindering student learning. It is very important for the professor to know the students' reactions to what is taking place in class, so students are encouraged to respond to these surveys, ensuring that together the professor and students can create an environment effective for teaching and learning.
5. If students are concerned about their grades, the instructor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades prior to the end of the semester. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during office hours if you have any concerns or questions about the course material or about your performance in the course. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable.**
6. Course modifications: Should any modifications or changes need to be made to the course (e.g., calendar, assignments), students will be notified in class and/or by e-mail. Students should check their e-mail frequently, and students who are absent from class should check on announcements made in class during their absence.

### **The University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

### **Professional Conduct in Class**

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

### **Documented Disability Statement**

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and

Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

### **Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/academicintegrity.html>).

### **Religious Holidays**

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students**

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

### **Safety**

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 notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

### **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior.

This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

### **Emergency Evacuation Policy**

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description/Due Dates</b>	<b>Text / Readings</b>
Week 1 (8/27)	Course Overview	
Week 2 (9/3)	Culturally Competent Social Work Practice: Addressing diversity in mental health, social service, and medical settings	Sidel, "The Social Responsibilities of Health Professionals: Lessons from their role in Nazi Germany." <u>JAMA</u> (1996)276(20),1679-81  Begin Fadiman book  Saldaña, "Cultural competency;a practical guide for mental health service providers." <a href="http://www.hogg.utexas.edu/PDF/Saldana.pdf">www.hogg.utexas.edu/PDF/Saldana. pdf</a>  Smith, "Tests of trainee doctors find signs of bias in care," Boston Globe, 7/20/07 <a href="http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/07/20/tests_of_er_trainees_find_signs_of_race_bias_in_care?p1=email_to_a_friend">http://www.boston.com/news/local/a rticles/2007/07/20/tests_of_er_train es_find_signs_of_race_bias_in_care ?p1=email_to_a_friend</a>  Rothenberg: p. 182-95; 108-114; 92- 100; 230-35; 329-37; 438-41; 386- 90; 688-97

Week 3  
(9/10) Cultural competence in clinical mental health;  
ethical issues

Pachter, Lee (1994) Culture and clinical care, , JAMA 1994; 271(9): 690-694

Kleinman, A. Culture and depression, JAMA 2004;351(10): 951-953

Betancourt, J., Cultural competence-marginal or mainstream movement, , JAMA 2004; 351(10):953-55

Yellow Horse Brave Heart, M. The historical trauma response among natives and its relationship with substance abuse: a Lakota illustration, Journal of psychoactive drugs 2003; 35(1): 7-12

Bloch's ethnic/cultural assessment guide

Levine, C.,A fifteen year old translator, Hastings Center Report May-June 2004: 10-12

Mental health: culture, race and ethnicity: a supplement to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General (2001)  
[www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/cre/](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/cre/)

Chapter 2: Culture counts: the influence of culture and society on mental health

Blackhall, L. Ethnicity and attitudes toward patient autonomy, JAMA 1995; 274(10): 820-825

Green, A. et.al, Implicit bias among physicians and its prediction of thrombolysis decisions for black and white patients, Journal of General Internal Medicine, 22:1231-38

Week 4 (9/17)	Self Awareness: Ethnic Roots and Racial Identity Development; Racism	<a href="http://www.tolerance.org">www.tolerance.org</a> see links, Do something, Find a social justice group, explore your hidden biases, tolerance.org's tutorial
	<b>Quiz #1</b>	Tatum, Identity development in adolescence
		Rothenberg p.7-53; 117-152;177-182; 212-30;433-38
Week 5 (9/24)	The economics of race, class, and gender: power, politics, and populations at risk; psychosocial effects of inequality	<a href="http://www.cppp.org">www.cppp.org</a> Center for Public Policy Priorities. Links for Initiatives, Newsroom
	<b><u>First book review due (Fadiman)</u></b>	<a href="http://www.caction.org">www.caction.org</a> Community Action Network. See link to Issue areas
		Rothenberg p. 339-43;345-58;373-86; 255-62; 269-71; 287-89; 297-303
Week 6 (10/1)	Social Justice Framework and populations at risk; social work's historical context	Abramovitz, M. Social work and social reform, <u>Social work</u> 1998; 43(6): 512-528
		"Their Manners are Decorous and Praiseworthy" (from Brown, <u>Bury my heart at Wounded Knee</u> )
		Schlosser, In the strawberry fields, <u>Atlantic Monthly</u> , Nov. 1995
		Rothenberg p.403-406; 570-82; 610-12
		Articles, "Should Race Be A Consideration in College Admissions?"

Week 7 (10/8)	Social work and African-Americans	DiClemente,et.al.,Efficacy of an HIV prevention intervention for African American adolescent girls, <u>JAMA</u> 2004;292(2): 171-179
		Thomas, S. and Quinn. S., Public Health Then and Now: The Tuskegee Syphilis Study, 1932-1972: Implications for HIV education and AIDS risk education programs in the Black community, <u>American Journal of Public Health</u> 1991; 81(11): 1498-1504
		Grant, D., Evaluation skills with African American organizations and communities
		Articles, “Is affirmative action necessary to achieve racial equality in the United States?”
Week 8 (10/15)	Social work and African-Americans  <b>Quiz #2</b>	A Community Position Paper: On the City of Austin’s Study of the Quality of Life for African Americans, June 23, 2005
		<a href="http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/news/2005/downloads/community_aasreport.pdf">http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/news/2005/downloads/community_aasreport.pdf</a>
		Rothenberg p. 644-58
Week 9 (10/22)	Social work and Hispanics/Latinos/Mexican Americans; policy issues: immigration, bilingual education  <b><u>Second book review due (Kidder)</u></b>	Negroni and Morales, Individual and family assessment skills with Latino/Hispanic Americans
		Articles, “Is immigration good for America?”
		Rothenberg p. 358-61; 391-94; 418-22; 431-33

Week 10 Social work and Hispanics/Latinos/Mexican  
(10/29) Americans

Week 11 Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons  
(11/5)

Gomes, Homophobic?: Re-Read  
Your Bible, NY Times, Aug. 17,  
1992

Bodine, GLBT center is not in the  
University's domain, Daily Texas,  
6/13/03

[www.thetaskforce.org](http://www.thetaskforce.org) National Gay  
and Lesbian Task Force, links: Our  
projects→Policy Institute→The  
issues

Issue 6, Should Same-Sex Marriages  
Be Legally Recognized?

Week 12 People with disabilities  
(11/12)

**Third book review due (Tough)**

Hogsett, Not one for the sidelines,  
NY Times Magazine, 9/19/04

Johnson, The disability gulag, NY  
Times Magazine, 11/23/03

Corcoran, Barriers made of words

Rothenberg p. 476-80; 496-507;  
603-8

Week 13 Advocating for social justice: application to future  
(11/19) social work practice

**Quiz #3**

Putnam and Feldstein, Better  
Together pp. 1-33

Hamill, Alabamians professing faith  
in God have a moral duty to support  
tax reform

Rothenberg 724-30; 741-42; 744-49;  
755-57

Week 14 **Thanksgiving Holiday**  
(11/26)

Week 15    Advocating for social justice: lessons learned from  
(12/3)

Paul Farmer, Anne Fadiman and Geoffrey Canada

**Social Justice in Action paper due**