COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides students with knowledge about social work with diverse populations, mechanisms of social oppression, and social work’s efforts to bring about social justice.

The emphasis in this course will be on developing an understanding of (a) those client groups who, because of factors of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability status are particularly oppressed in our society, and (b) those client groups who perpetuate such oppression against individuals due to race, ethnicity, gender or disability status. In addition, the course will also develop culturally relevant macro and micro strategies of empowering these diverse groups.

GOAL & COMPETENCIES:

1. Prepare MSW graduates for professional advanced generalist practice that reflects application and integration of critical thinking, theoretical frameworks, and differential interventions. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:
   
   F 1.1 Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication (2.1.3)
   
   F 1.4 Engage in change strategies with individuals, families, groups, organizations & communities (2.1.10)

2. Enable MSW graduates to apply ethical reasoning to advance equality, justice, and social change. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

   F 2.1 Engage in policy practice (2.1.8)
   
   F 2.2 Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)
   
   F 2.3 Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)
SWK 541: Social Justice for Oppressed Populations

F 2.4 Promote human rights and social and economic justice (2.1.5)
3. Promote leadership and service that is relevant to individual contexts of practice and enhances well-being and quality of life. Students will be able to reflect the following competencies:

F 3.1 Engage as professional social workers (2.1.1)
F 3.2 Respond to professional contexts that shape practice, demonstrating qualities of leadership for the profession. (2.1.9)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will expand their awareness of the significance of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and disability as they impact individual and group opportunities for success and well-being in this country.
2. Students will examine their self-identity and values as regards to social work values, ethics and professional practice.
3. Students will learn to critically analyze individual and group strengths based on respect for and appreciation of cultural differences.
4. Students will learn to identify historical, political, and socioeconomic forces that maintain racism, sexism, socioeconomic status and biases toward populations at risk.
5. Students will develop specific intervention micro, mezzo and macro strategies that promote economic and social justice for populations at risk.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Have knowledge and skills to understand issues relating to diversity, discrimination, oppression and social justice.
2. Apply social work values to analyzing issues concerning diversity, discrimination, oppression and social justice.
3. Understand how American cultural values affect social justice.
4. Be able to use critical thinking to analyze and apply the results of policy research, including placing such research in a global perspective – that is, what implications might current or proposed U.S. policy have on other countries or populations outside the U.S.
5. Apply a model of social justice in analyzing policy related to poverty or inequality.
6. Identify, critically evaluate, and apply appropriate evidence-informed social justice interventions at the agency or community level.
7. Understand and demonstrate policy practice skills, particularly in terms of critical thinking, research analysis and writing.
8. Demonstrate skills in ethical and empowerment-based social work practice, taking into account the impact of diversity (socio-economic status, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, culture, religion, national origin, and other characteristics) on individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:

This course builds on foundation courses and enhances all subsequent/additional social work courses by providing a basis from which development and analysis of social work interventions may be formed.

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SWK 541: Social Justice for Oppressed Populations

TEXTS:


RECOMMENDED TEXT:


GRADING:

Course Requirements: To complete this course, students will be required to successfully complete class assignments. Attendance for all class meetings and participation are essential to integration of course material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers (3)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview of Social Justice Advocate</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the Literature Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points:                        Grade:
450-500                        A
400-449                        B
350-399                        C
300-349                        D
Below 300                      F

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **REACTION PAPERS (3 AT 25 POINTS)** (Outcomes 1 – 8)
   Students will write three brief reaction papers (1-2 pages, double-spaced). Students will react to three chapters selected by each student, from the Rothenburg text. The due dates for the different sections of the book are listed in the course outline. Students will upload the paper to Drop Box and provide a one paragraph summary of their reaction under Reaction Discussion during the Module with reading was assigned. For example if you choose to react to a chapter from Part III of the book, then you will post under Module Two’s Reaction Discussion. Please read each other’s reactions, and add to the discussion for Class Participation points.

2. **INTERVIEW OF ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE** (75 points) (Outcomes 1-8)
Students will interview a leader or employee of an organization that advocates for or assists an oppressed or special needs population group. The student will write a 3 - 4 page paraphrased summary of the interview that includes information received and personal reflections on the experience, and share the key findings with the class. Upload to Drop Box and post a one-paragraph summary under Advocate Interview Discussion. A suggested outline for questions will be available in Doc Sharing.

3. **LITERATURE REVIEW** (100 points) (Outcomes 1 – 8)

Students will write a paper, which provides current statistics and a literature review focused on a specific ethnic or oppressed population. The conclusion should contain suggestions on possible micro, mezzo and macro interventions based on the student’s research. The literature review must include at least eight professional journal articles as well as information from web sites that are related to government or professional organizations. The student must use at least ten references. The paper should follow APA style and be 10 to 12 pages in length.

The paper will be graded using the following point system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues of Form:</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required length</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional grammar, punctuation, spelling/ APA format</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Issues of Content:                     | 65%                 |
| Evidence of scholarly research         |                     |
| Subject thoroughly covered, e.g. a complete bibliography with footnotes in the text which reflect the breadth of research done | |
| Evidence of critical analysis and practice application | |
| Connections made to various social, economic and/or political theories, which have been presented in the course | |

4. **MID-TERM EXAM** (100 points) (Outcomes 1-8)

The mid-term exam will cover all course material from class “lectures”, class discussions, eCollege postings, and readings to date. Multiple choice, T/F, short answer, and brief essay:

5. **FINAL EXAM** (100 points) (Outcomes 1 – 8)

The final exam will cover all material from class lectures, class discussions, eCollege postings, and readings from the mid-term to date. Multiple choice, T/F, short answer, and brief essay:

**CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

Students are expected to attend class, reflecting responsibility, which is inherent in the development as a social work professional. Roll will be taken regularly. Students are expected to be on time and prepared to participate when class begins as well as be present throughout the entire class meeting. Classroom exercises, discussions, role plays, guest speakers and other in-class experiential exercises are essential for a student’s professional learning and continued development of self-awareness. Tardiness (or early departure) of more than 15 minutes will count as .5 absence (2 tardies/early departures = 1 absence). A student is considered absent if he/she arrives more than 30 minutes late to class, leaves 30 or more minutes early or does not come to class.

Updated version 12.12
The following penalties for absences (unexcused, or excused, according to university policy) will be administered:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Up to 2 absences</th>
<th>3 absences</th>
<th>4 absences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No penalty</td>
<td>1 letter grade drop</td>
<td>Class grade of “F”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bi-weekly</td>
<td>Up to 3 absences</td>
<td>4 absences</td>
<td>5 absences</td>
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<td>No penalty</td>
<td>1 letter grade drop</td>
<td>1 letter grade drop</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 absences</td>
<td>Class grade of “F”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Up to 1 absence</td>
<td>2 absences</td>
<td>3 absences</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-week</td>
<td>No penalty</td>
<td>1 letter grade drop</td>
<td>Class grade of “F”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ONLINE OR WEB-ENHANCED CLASSES: Just as students are required to attend face-to-face classes, students are required to log in and participate in online components. To receive credit for attendance online via eCollege, students must log in and complete assignments in a timely manner. Not logging in to eCollege (which can be monitored by the instructor) and completing assignments online during the appropriate time is the equivalent of an absence for each week this occurs.

Final evaluation and grades depend on both presence and participation. Students’ grades will be significantly impacted by inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment each week. Students are expected to spend a comparable amount of time in the online learning environment as they would in class (3 hours a week in the classroom). In addition, just as in traditional F2F classrooms, students are expected to spend time reading and studying class materials.

NOTE: PROBLEMS WITH YOUR INTERNET CONNECTION AND/OR COMPUTER ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS REASONS FOR LACK OF PARTICIPATION. You have access to the university’s computer labs (in the social work department AND other campus facilities, including the library) as well as local libraries and other access to computers and ISPs.

If you believe that you are unable to fulfill the requirements for the course you should talk with your instructor about the possibility of dropping or withdrawing.

Class participation has three components: (1) Appropriate interactions with classmates, (2) Attentiveness, and (3) Active involvement in class activities. Evaluation of class participation is based on instructor observation. Students will be given feedback if problems are evident.

POLICY ON DUE DATES:

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Every student is expected to do his/her own work. Law, ethical standards, university policy, and departmental policy demand that students refrain from plagiarism and any form of cheating. Plagiarism is the "Act of appropriating the literacy composition of another, or parts of passages from of his [or her] writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the products of one's own mind." (Black's Law Dictionary, Abridged Fifth Edition, 1983). When using others' words, phrases, or ideas in writing, the original author should be given proper credit.

Cheating may take different forms. These include, but are not limited to, copying others' answers during an exam, using notes or other forms of help during an examination or quiz, except when explicitly permitted by the instructor, giving or receiving help on exams or assignments, or submitting work for one class which has already been submitted for another class for credit. Use of citations from
The department does not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. A student found to be engaging in such illegal and unethical conduct may receive a failing grade in the course and may be subjected to further disciplinary proceedings. Any assignment or exam that lacks honesty will be given a grade of "0".

ACECEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

“Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws, in addition to the regulations of the University. The standards of Student Conduct including disciplinary rules and procedures are designed to provide and conform to the basic tenets of due process, as developed by institutions of higher education. As such, the University distinguishes these procedures and regulations as an educational and growth process which is not intended to conform to adversary proceedings as in a court of law. (Student’s Guide Book, 2011, p. 35).

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

The Department of Social Work expects all social work students to conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner. Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession articulates its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics to guide social workers’ conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve. Accordingly, we expect social work students to demonstrate courtesy, respect and support for fellow students, instructors, clients, and all other persons.

All students enrolled in BSW or MSW classes are expected to observe the tenets of the NASW Code of Ethics and the Social Work Student Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct is reflective of professional and academic expectations – a student who cannot demonstrate appropriate behaviors will not be appropriate for practice in the social work profession. Students who violate these Codes may be asked to meet with appropriate Social Work faculty (instructors or Program Directors). In addition, the department’s Academic and Professional Issues (API) Committee is responsible for dealing with student issues when requested by faculty.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

It is the policy of Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Social Work Department to do everything we can to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University’s commitment to providing equal opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in accessibility, seating placement or in arrangements for examinations should not hesitate to inform the instructor. If required, large type, Braille or cassette recordings of syllabus or assignments can be provided.

Students with conditions that require special attention or accommodation should contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services at 903-468-5150 (located in the Library, Room 132).
## COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location/Topics</th>
<th>Assignments for the Week</th>
<th>Link to Comp</th>
<th>SLO</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
<td><strong>F2F CLASS:</strong></td>
<td>Read text, Part I View Module One MS Power Points under Doc Sharing</td>
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<td><strong>Module One: An Overview of Oppression</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>1. An Overview of Oppression</td>
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<td>2. The Social Construction of Difference</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3. Pluralism</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td><strong>F2F CLASS:</strong></td>
<td>Read text, Part II</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Understanding Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td><strong>ONLINE:</strong></td>
<td>1. Read through and complete all Activities and Resources for Module One</td>
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<td>If you have chosen one of the chapters from Parts I and/or II for your Reaction Paper, upload your paper to Drop Box and post a one-paragraph summary under “Reaction Discussion”. Both due by Sunday, 9/20 by 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Module/Activity</td>
<td>Tasks</td>
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<td>3. View Module Two MS Power Points under Doc Sharing&lt;br&gt;4. Read through and complete all Activities and Resources for Module Two&lt;br&gt;5. If you have chosen one of the chapters from Part III for your Reaction Paper, upload your paper to Drop Box and post a one-paragraph summary under “Reaction Discussion”. Both due by Sunday 10/4 by 11:59 p.m</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>ONLINE:</td>
<td>Module Two: Becoming an American, “Deviants” and Discrimination CONTINUED...</td>
<td>6. Read text, Part IV&lt;br&gt;7. Oct. 15 ONLINE: Module Three: Race, Class and Gender&lt;br&gt;1. People of Color and Poverty&lt;br&gt;2. The Economics of Race,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Read through and complete all Activities and Resources for Module Three&lt;br&gt;2. View Module Three MS Power Points under Doc Sharing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 8 | Oct. 22 | **F2F CLASS:**  
Module Three: Race, Class and Gender CONTINUED...  
1. People of Color and Poverty  
2. The Economics of Race, Class, and Gender  
3. Consequences of Race, Class, and Gender Inequality | 3. If you have chosen one of the chapters from Parts IV for your Reaction Paper, upload your paper to Drop Box and post a one-paragraph summary under “Reaction Discussion”. Both due by Sunday 10/18 by 11:59 p.m. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Oct. 29 | **ONLINE:**  
1. Read Text Part V  
2. Read through and complete all Activities and Resources for Module Three  
3. View Module Three MS Power Points under Doc Sharing  
4. If you have chosen one of the chapters from Parts IV, V and/or VI for your Reaction Paper, upload your paper to Drop Box and post a one-paragraph summary under “Reaction Discussion”. Both due by Sunday 10/26 by 11:59 p.m.  
5. **Mid-Term Exam due by Sunday, 11/1** by 11:59 p.m. | Read Text Part V  
**Interview of Advocate Due by 10/25** by 11:59 p.m. |
|    | Nov. 5    | **F2F CLASS:** | 1. Read text, Part VII  
2. View Module Four MS Power Points under Doc Sharing |
|----|-----------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Nov. 12   | **ONLINE:** Module Four: Race, Class, and Gender CONTINUED... Race, Class and Gender in the U.S. Law | 1. Read through and complete all Activities and Resources for Module Four  
2. View Module Four MS Power Points under Doc Sharing  
3. If you have chosen one of the chapters from Parts VI and/or VII for your Reaction Paper, upload your paper to Drop Box and post a one-paragraph summary under “Reaction Discussion”. Both due by **Sunday 11/15** by 11:59 p.m.  
4. **Literature Review Paper due.** Post paper to Drop Box and provide a one-paragraph summary under “Literature Review Discussion”. Post Bibliography to Doc Sharing. All due by **Sunday, 11/15** by 11:59 p.m. |
| 11 | Nov. 19   | **F2F CLASS:** Module Four: Race, Class, and Gender CONTINUED... Creating and Maintaining Race, Class, and Gender Hierarchies Women and Discrimination | **Literature Review Paper due.** |
|    | Nov. 26   | **ONLINE:** THANKSGIVING | **NO CLASS** |
| 13 | Dec. 3    | **F2F CLASS:** Module Five: Revisioning the Future & Strategies to Address Social Injustice | 1. Read text, Part IX  
2. Read through and complete all Activities and Resources for |
### BIBLIOGRAPHY:


Updated version 12.12


Lawson, J. (2003). The wounds we hide: The silent scars of racism are not limited to communities of color. Until we confront how racism shapes the lives of Whites, we will not be healed. *The Other Side, 39*(9), 10-17.


Updated version 12.12

**WEB SITES**

Amnesty International  

Black Family Development, Inc.  

Bureau of Justice Statistics  

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
[http://www.bis.gov/](http://www.bis.gov/)

California Association of Human Relations Organizations  

Census Bureau (U.S.)  
[http://www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

Census data and publications on population characteristics  
[http://www.census.gov/prod/www/titles.html#pop](http://www.census.gov/prod/www/titles.html#pop)

Census data and publications on race  

Census data and publications on Hispanic origin  

Center for Public Policy Priorities  
[http://www.cppp.org](http://www.cppp.org)

Department of Housing and Urban Development  

FedStats: The gateway to statistics from over 100 U.S. Federal agencies  

National Center for Education Statistics  

National Center for Health Statistics  
[http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww](http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)  

Updated version 12.12
Improving Services for Hispanics
http://www.dhhs.gov/about/heo/hispanic.html

Indian Health Service
http://www.ihs.gov

Online NewsHour – Race Relations Reports
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/race_relations/race_relations.html

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
http://www.samhsa.gov/

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
http://www.undp.org/fwcw/csw.htm

United Nations Development Fund for Women
http://www.unifem.undp.org/

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
http://unhchr.ch/

United Nations Population Fund
http://www.unfpa.org/