*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

**SWK 541: SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR OPPRESSED POPULATIONS**
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    **INSTRUCTOR:**
    **OFFICE:**
    **OFFICE HOURS:**
    **OFFICE PHONE:**
  **E-MAIL:**

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**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)

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F 2.2  Apply social work ethics & principles (2.1.2)

F 2.3  Engage diversity in practice (2.1.4)

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:**

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES:**

**TEXTS:**

Rothenberg, P. S.  (2007).  Race, class and gender in the United States: An integrated study (7th ed).  New York: St. Martin's Press.

*RECOMMENDED TEXT:*

Devore, W. & Schlesinger, E. G. (1996).  *Ethnic sensitive social work practice* (5th ed). MA: Allyn & Bacon.

**GRADING:**

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**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.

| | |
|---|---|
| Reaction Papers (2) 3 pages | 50 pts |
| Organizational interview | 75 pts. |
| Review of the Literature Paper | 100 pts |
| Mid-term exam | 100 pts. |
| Final exam | 100 pts. |
| Completion of and participation in in-class exercises/discussions | 50 |

Total:  500

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

**OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

1.  <u>INTERVIEW OF ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE</u>

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 <u>paraphrased summary</u> of the interview that includes information received and personal reflections on the experience.
(Obj. 1,2,3,4)

2.  <u>LITERATURE REVIEW</u>

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.  (Obj. 1,2,3,4)

The paper will be graded using the following point system:

| Issues of Form: | Percentage of Grade |
|---|---|

Required length                            10%
Professional grammar, punctuation, spelling/ APA format    25%

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: Covering class lectures and readings from 09-01-10 through 10-13-10
Format: short answer and essay (Obj. 1,2,3,4)

5. Final Exam: Covering class lectures and readings from 10-20-10 through 12-01-10
Format: short answer and essay (Obj. 1,2,3,4)


**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.

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

| Weekly | Up to 2 absences No penalty | 3 absences 1 letter grade drop | 4 absences Class grade of "F" | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bi-weekly | Up to 3 absences No penalty | 4 absences 1 letter grade drop | 5 absences 1 letter grade drop | 6 absences Class grade of "F" |
| Summer 10-week | Up to 1 absence No penalty | 2 absences 1 letter grade drop | 3 absences Class grade of "F" | |

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 Internet without paraphrasing content AND proper referencing is regarded as plagiarism. Professors have the right to use electronic review programs (such as Turn It In") to identify plagiarism.

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".

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**ACCEPTABLE 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**

| Week | Reading(s) | Assignment/Activities | Link to Comp. | SLO |
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Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

**WEB SITES**
Amnesty International
http://www.amnesty.org/

Black Family Development, Inc.
http://www.eurekalearning.org/

Bureau of Justice Statistics
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/

Bureau of Labor Statistics
http://www.bis.gov/

California Association of Human Relations Organizations
http://www.cahro.org/

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

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

Census data and publications on race
http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race.html

Census data and publications on Hispanic origin
http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic.html

Center for Public Policy Priorities
http://www.cppp.org

Department of Housing and Urban Development
http://www.hud.gov

FedStats: The gateway to statistics from over 100 U.S. Federal agencies
http://www.fedstats.gov/

National Center for Education Statistics
http://www.nces.ed.gov

National Center for Health Statistics
http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
http://www.nih.gov
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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/

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