



SWK 541: Social Justice and Oppressed Populations

SEMESTER: Fall 2024

Sections: 03W & 04W

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Ms. Amanda L. Sargent, LMSW

Office Location: Virtual

Hours: Thursdays 9AM-11AM and By Appointment

University Email Address: Amanda.Sargent@tamuc.edu (preferred)

Preferred Form of Communication: (email)

Communication Response Time: within 24-48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

Rothenberg, P. S. & Accomando, C. H (2020). *Race, class and gender in the United States: An integrated study*. (11th ed). New York: Worth Publishers.

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (2019) 7th ed.
Washington, DC: American Psychological Association

Software Required

Optional Texts and/or Materials

All MSW students need to purchase the following set of study materials to prepare for the Graduate Comprehensive Exam that they will take in their final semester. You must pass the exam to receive your degree. It is never too early to begin studying for the exam.

**Comprehensive Study Guide (Masters, Clinical, Adv. Generalist) Version 9.0.
Social Work Examination Services.**

[www.https://swes.net/studymaterials/comprehensive-study-guide-lmsw/](https://swes.net/studymaterials/comprehensive-study-guide-lmsw/)

Devore, W. & Schlesinger, E. G. (1996). Ethnic sensitive social work practice (8th ed). MA: Allyn & Bacon

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, and gender or disability status. In addition, the course will also develop culturally relevant macro and micro strategies of empowering these diverse groups

Prerequisites: Must be admitted to the MSW social work program and in good standing

Relationship to Other Courses:

Student Learning Outcomes (Should be measurable; observable; use action verbs)

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires a competency-based approach to identify and assess what students demonstrate in practice. In social work, this approach involves assessing students' ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. Listed below are the competencies and associated knowledge, skills, values and/or cognitive and affective processes that comprise the expected outcomes for this course.

	Activity/Assessment	Dimension
Competency 2: Students will engage in diversity and difference in practice.		

Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels	Reaction Papers Mid-term Final Exam	Knowledge Values Skills
Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences	Reaction Papers Interviews of Social Justice Advocate	Skills Values Cognitive Affective
Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies	Reaction Papers	Values Cognitive Affective
Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice		
Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels	Mid-term and Final Exam	Knowledge Cognitive Affective
Engage in practice that advance social, economic, and environmental justice	Interview of Social Justice Advocate	Skills Values Cognitive Affective

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

In this class you will utilize the Learning Management Systems (LMS) D2L for instructional and learning opportunities, submitting your assignments, participating in

online synchronous and asynchronous discussions, accessing resources, and completing quizzes/tests. Additionally, knowledge and skills in using Microsoft Word PowerPoint and Outlook Email, if you have any issues with using the various systems or software, it is your responsibility to contact support services and to notify the instructor of the problem.

Instructional Methods

This course will be delivered via synchronous and asynchronous sessions via D2L and will consist of live class sessions, pre-recorded lectures, group engagement activities, various assignments with some including experiential learning and practical application of the content areas. In addition, small lectures, discussion activities and workshops may be utilized to provide instruction during this course.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

As a student in this course, you are responsible to engage in active learning and reaching out to the instructor if there are problems or challenges that is interfering in optimal learning. Communication is key when engaged in a fully online, virtual environment.

Expectations for success include:

1. Always demonstrate professional behavior, including demonstrating respect for instructor and peers; being open to feedback and guidance throughout this class and in the program.
2. Adhered to the School of Social Work and University student code of conduct, along with NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Begin reading the assigned text and supplemental readings as soon as possible, with a focus on completing all readings prior to engagement with instructor or peers.
4. Prepare to engage in live class sessions, discussions, and other activities so you can be a contributor as well as receiver of knowledge and skills.

5. Actively participate in engagement activities which will include live virtual class sessions, online discussions, and interactive learning opportunities -as this is vital for learning and success in both this course and the program.
6. Work ahead when possible, completing assignments ahead of due date so you are prepared to submit on the due date.
7. Sign into the D2L course multiple times during the week to access updated announcements or posted resources.
8. Check your university email daily. This is the official method of communication by the university, department, and instructor.
9. Be open and focused on the “process” and not the “product” as earning this degree requires time, effort, work and ultimately growth in knowledge, skills, abilities along with personal and professional attributes.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100% of total points

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Reaction Papers (3)	75 points
Interview of Social Justice Advocate	75 points
Mid-term exam	100 points
Final exam	100 points

Assignments

Total: 350 points

Policy on Due Date

(1) NO assignments will be accepted past the due date. If an assignment is not submitted by the specified due data and time, a 0 will be awarded. In the event of extenuating circumstances, (i.e. medical issues) and proper supporting

documentation is provided, an arrangement between the instructor and student will be made for submission of assignments.

(2). ALL written assignments will be submitted in the correct drop box, online in Bright Space D2L by the due date and time. **DO NOT** email an assignment to me. In the hordes of email I receive daily, many get lost. It is your responsibility to know how and if your computer software is compatible with Bright Space D2L for uploading assignments.

Assessments

1. REACTION PAPERS

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. Your reaction paper should follow APA guidelines. Your reaction paper will focus on a minimum of two concepts discussed in the readings. The reaction paper should include three sections: personal reaction, professional reaction, and significance.

Your personal reaction here you will identify specific feelings you experienced as a result of the chapter or specific concepts discussed in the readings, a clear and supported hypothesis of its origins development and connection to course.

Professional reaction- here you demonstrate your understanding of the reading material by discussing what you learned in comparison to prior knowledge, impressions and misconceptions. Be sure to use relevant skills, course knowledge, and specific quotations from the text to summarize your professional reaction.

The significance – Be sure to describe the significance of the concepts. Provide some explanation of why the topic of issue is important to more than the immediate group.

The due dates for the different sections of the book are listed in the course outline. Students will upload the paper to the appropriate submission folder on D2L Brightspace 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

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 the appropriate submission folder on Brightspace and post a one paragraph summary under Advocate Interview Discussion. Examine their advocacy efforts through the social, economic and environmental justice lens. Be sure to address each specific area.

3. MID-TERM EXAM

The mid-term exam will cover all course material from class “lectures”, class discussions, D2L Brightspace postings, and readings to date. Multiple choice, T/F, short answer, and brief essay.

4. FINAL EXAM

The final exam will cover all material from class lectures, class discussions, D2L Brightspace postings, and readings from the mid-term to date. Multiple choice, T/F, short answer, and brief essay.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements: <https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor via email. Instructor will respond to email queries within two business days

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses,

with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal

Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&MCommerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

School of Social Work and Council on Social Work Education Specific Policies

Course Engagement

Final Evaluation and Grade Depends on both Classroom attendance and Participation

Inadequate participation or lack of required time commitment in each class significantly affects students' grades. No matter the course venue, students must engage in a comparable amount of time. Expectations of both Face-to-Face classes and those with Online components include time spent reading and studying course material. To earn a level of competency within a specific course, students must demonstrate both mastery of content and active engagement.

Mastery of content areas is evidenced by successful completion of course assignments such as written papers, group project deliverables, tests/quizzes and other tangible products designed by instructors to evaluate knowledge and skills.

Additionally, the Social Work Profession is built upon human interactions and building human relationships – which is defined as engagement. Engagement is defined as meaningful involvement in interactions with instructor, peers, outside stakeholders as appropriate (such as contacting a social worker to interview for a required assignment). Within the classroom setting, whether virtual or F2F, students must actively participate in 80% of engagement activities as outlined by individual instructors. These activities may include, but are not limited to participation in live, synchronous virtual classes, attending a Face-to-Face course when appropriate, interacting with peers in posted discussions and collaborating in group interactive projects.

Students must meet standards for content mastery on tangible assignments and meet the threshold of active engagement of the time set during a semester by the instructor.

Instructors are experts in each course content area and set the standards for students to meet for successful completion of the course.

Student Conduct

Students preparing to become professional social workers must adhere to the *University Code of Conduct*, *Department Code of Conduct* and *National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics*.

Department Code of Conduct

"Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class/lab/internship practicum or to block access to online courses and may refer offenses to the [Academic and Professional Issues Committee (API)] or to the Department Head. More serious offences by be referred to the University Police Department and/or the Judicial Affairs Office for disciplinary action" (Student Guidebook p 35)

Social Work students conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner. Closely linked with professional recognition is the social worker's compliance with the profession's ethical standards. It is imperative for professional social workers to be competent and ethical in practice if the profession is to maintain the public trust. It is essential that each social work student gain a thorough understanding of the ethical principles that guide practice and actively demonstrate in behavior, both in and out of the classroom. Student conduct is to reflect the tenets of *NASW Code of Ethics* (located at <https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>) on the NASW website: <https://www.socialworkers.org>

University Code of Conduct *located in the Student Guidebook at*

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campuslife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf> (pp 34- 66). On the University Website under Campus Life Documents

To become aware of university policies related to student academic and behavioral expectations for students refer to the Guidebook.

APPENDIX A: GRADING RUBRIC

REACTION PAPER

Aspect	Beginning	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary
Personal reaction (Feeling)	Identifies some feelings	Identifies feelings and speculations and cause of it	Identifies feeling(s) & has a reasonable hypothesis about its origins	Identifies feeling(s), has a clear and supported hypothesis about its origins, development and connection to specific concepts from assigned reading 4 pts
Professional Reaction (Intellectual-knowledge and thoughts)	Knew little and had not thought about the topic	Comments on prior knowledge and interest in a global way-no specific related experiences/textural references	Describes prior knowledge and interests in specific terms relates topic to text	Outlines prior knowledge, impressions and misconceptions. Uses relevant skills, course knowledge, and specific quotations from the text (cite!)` 10pts
Importance/Significance	Has no idea of any	Describe some importance to a		

			Describe importance to immediate	Describes local and wider importance. Some
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	importance to the topic	discrete group of individuals	and extended groups	explanation of why the topic of issue is important to more than the immediate group 4 pts
Additional information	No further information sought or desired	Identifies possible additional sources but does not consult them	Refers to other sources of information but does not integrate them into the paper	Consulted other sources and integrated the information in the reaction paper 2pts
Writing	Sloppy report with numerous grammatical and punctuation errors	Sloppy report but few errors	Neat report: one or two errors	Error free Correct APA citation format 5pts

Rubric for

INTERVIEW OF ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (75 points)

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 D2L and post a one-paragraph summary under "Advocate Interview Discussion".

Mandatory Outline (headings are bolded)

Interviewee Background: Name, organization, job title and job duties, educational background, general social problem/population, how long have they been working in an advocacy role? 5pts

Specific Social Problem/Population: Describe the problem/population. How do they experience discrimination and/or oppression? Give some examples. 10pts

What **SPECIFIC social advocacy efforts and interventions** does the person/organization embark on in attempts to address the discrimination/oppression? Examine their advocacy efforts through the social, economic and environmental justice lens. Be sure to address each specific area. 15pts

What are some of the **challenges and barriers** in doing this advocacy work? 10pts

What **3 pieces of advice** does the advocate have for future social workers, in terms of doing effective advocacy work? 5pts


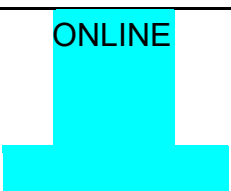
Do they know of any **resources** for addressing the social problem/population needs? i.e. laws, websites, education... 5pts

What are your **personal reflections** on the interview and what the advocate shared? 15pts

Writing – 10pts

Total-75pts

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Weeks	Class Meetings (Zoom)	Topics & Instructional Materials	Activities, Assignments & Examinations
Week 1 8/26-9/1	ONLINE 	Part I – The Social Construction of Difference: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 5-46 • Discussion #1 • Read Syllabus
Week 2 9/2-8	1 st Zoom Meeting Wednesday 9/4 at 7PM	Part I – cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 48-100 • Reaction Paper # 1 • (Any chapter from Part I)
Week 3 9/9-15	ONLINE 	Part II – Understanding Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Class Privilege	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 103 - 165 • Guest Speaker #1 /Recording

Week 4 9/16-22	2 nd Zoom Meeting Wednesday 9/18 at 7PM	Part II – cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 166-195 • Discussion #2
Week 5 9/23-9/29	ONLINE	Part III – Complicating Questions of Identity: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 199-264 • Reaction Paper #2 • (Any chapter from part II or III)
Week 6 9/30-10/6	3 rd Zoom Meeting Wednesday 10/2 at 7PM	Part IV – Discrimination in Everyday Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 272-319 • Guest Speaker # 2 /Recording
Week 7 10/7-13	ONLINE	Part IV—cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 320-346

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction Paper #3 (Any chapter from part IV) • Advocate needs to be identified for interview
Week 8 10/14-20	4 th Zoom Meeting Wednesday 10/16 at 7PM	Review Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm Exam
Week 9 10/21-27	ONLINE	Part V – The Economics of Race, Class, and Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 349-400 • Discussion #3
Week 10 10/28-11/3	5 th Zoom Meeting Wednesday 10/30 at 7PM	Part V—cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 403-438

<p>Week 11 11/4-10</p>	<p>ONLINE</p>	<p>Part VII – How it happens: Legal Constructions of Power and Privilege</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 503-585 • Advocate Interview due 12/3 by 11:59pm
<p>Week 12 11/11-17</p>	<p>Zoom Meeting Wednesday 11/13 at 7PM</p>	<p>Part VIII- Maintaining Race, Class, and Gender Hierarchies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 589-677 • Discussion #4 • Guest Speaker # 3 recording
<p>Week 13 11/18-24</p>	<p>ONLINE</p>	<p>Part IX – Social Change: Revisioning the Future and Making a Difference</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read pages 679-755
<p>Week 14 11/25-12/1</p> <p>Happy Thanksgiving!</p>	<p>ONLINE</p>	<p>Review for finals!</p>	
<p>Week 15 12/2-8</p>	<p>ONLINE</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete online class evaluation Final Exam due 12/10 by 11:59pm