



SWK 541: Practice with Social Work Populations

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Rachel Stankus

Office Location: Virtual/Teams

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2PM – 3PM or by appointment.

University Email Address: Rachel.stankus@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: Within 2 Business days

COURSE INFORMATION

MATERIALS – TEXTBOOKS, READINGS, SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

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

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Software Required:

- D2L (in MyLeo)
- Microsoft Office

Access at: Student Instructions to Sign Up Free for Microsoft Office

Optional Texts and/or Materials:

All MSW students must purchase the following study materials to **prepare for the Graduate Comprehensive Exam** 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.

To purchase access: [https://swes.net/all-](https://swes.net/all-products/#:~:text=Masters%2C%20Clinical%2C%20Adv.%20Generalist)

[products/#:~:text=Masters%2C%20Clinical%2C%20Adv.%20Generalist](https://swes.net/all-products/#:~:text=Masters%2C%20Clinical%2C%20Adv.%20Generalist)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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 of 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 for empowering these diverse groups.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The 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 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

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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

course, you will utilize the Learning Management Systems (LMS) D2L for instructional and learning opportunities, submitting assignments, participating in online synchronous and asynchronous discussions, accessing resources, and completing quizzes/tests. Additionally, you will need the knowledge and skills to use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook Email. If you have any issues with using the various systems or software, you must contact support services and notify the Instructor of the technical issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

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

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES OR TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

As a student in this course, you are responsible for engaging in active learning and reaching out to the Instructor if problems or challenges interfere with optimal learning. Communication is vital when engaged in a fully online, virtual environment.

Expectations for success include:

1. Always demonstrate professional behavior, including respect for the Instructor and peers; being open to feedback and guidance throughout this class and the program.

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2. Adhered to the School of Social Work and University student code of conduct and NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Begin reading the assigned text and supplemental readings as soon as possible, focusing on completing all readings prior to engagement with the Instructor or peers.
4. Prepare to engage in live class sessions, discussions, and other activities so you can be a contributor as well as a receiver of knowledge and skills.
5. Actively participate in engagement activities, including 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 the due date so you are prepared to submit on the due date.
7. Sign in to the D2L course shell multiple times weekly to access updated announcements or posted resources.
8. Check your university email daily. This is the university, department, and Instructor's official method of communication.
9. Be open and focused on the "process" and not the "product," as earning this degree requires time, effort, work, growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities, along with personal and professional attributes.

GRADING

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

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Assessments	Value
Reaction Papers (3 @ 25 pts.)	75 pts.
Interview of Social Justice Advocate	75 pts.
Mid-term Exam	100 pts.
Final Exam	100 pts.
TOTAL	350 pts.

ASSESSMENTS

No late work will be accepted thus, you will need to submit assignments within the designated timeframe.

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1. **REACTION PAPERS**

See Rubric: Appendix A

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.

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 the 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.

Significance- Be sure to describe the significance of the concepts. Provide an 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 the reading 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**

See Rubric: Appendix B

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 to 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.

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 importance to the topic	Describe some importance to a discrete group of individuals	Describe importance to immediate and extended groups	Describes local and wider importance. Some explanation of why the topic of issue is important to more than the immediate group 4 pts

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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

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Grading Rubric: 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 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? 5 pts.

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

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. 15 pts.

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

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

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

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

Writing— 10 pts.

Total-75 pts.

Course Outline/Calendar

Weeks	Class Meetings (Zoom)	Topics & Instructional Materials	Activities, Assignments & Examinations
Week 1 6/1-6/7	1 st Zoom Meeting Monday at 6pm	Part I– The Social Construction of Difference: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality	- Read pages 5-46 - Read pages 48-100 - Discussion #1 - Read Syllabus
Week 2 6/8-6/14	ONLINE	Part II– Understanding Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, and Class Privilege	- Reaction Paper # 1 (Any chapter from Part I) - Read pages 103-165 - Read pages 166-195
Week 3 6/15-21	2 nd Zoom Meeting Monday at 6pm	Part III– Complicating Questions of Identity: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration	- Read pages 199-264 - Discussion #2
Week 4 6/22-28	ONLINE	Part IV– Discrimination in Everyday Life	- Read pages 367-346 - Reaction Paper #2 (Any chapter from Parts II, III of IV) - Advocate needs to be identified for interview
Week 5 6/29-7/5	3 rd Zoom Meeting Monday at 6pm	Review for Exam!	Mid-term Exam due
Week 6 7/6-12	ONLINE	Part V– The Economics of Race, Class, and Gender	- Read pages 349-400 - Read pages 403-438 - Discussion #3 - Reaction Paper #3 (Any chapter from Part V)

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Weeks	Class Meetings (Zoom)	Topics & Instructional Materials	Activities, Assignments & Examinations
Week 7 7/13-19	4 th ZOOM Monday at 6pm	Part VII– How it Happens: Legal Constructions of Power and Privilege	• Read pages 503-585 • Advocate Interview due
Week 8 7/20-26	ONLINE	Part VIII- Maintaining Race, Class, and Gender Hierarchies	• Read pages 589-677 • Discussion #4
Week 9 7/27-8/2	5 th ZOOM Monday at 6pm	Part IX– Social Change: Revisioning the Future and Making a Difference	• Read pages 679-755
Week 10 8/3-8/6	ONLINE	Review for finals!	• Complete online class evaluation • Final Exam due

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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@etamu.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

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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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID AND PASSWORD

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@etamu.edu.

TECHNOLOGY-RELATED ISSUES

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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS) – D2L

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

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).

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- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTOR STATEMENT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EMAILS WITH INSTRUCTOR:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
 - Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
 - Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
 - Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)
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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY 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.

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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

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ETAMU ATTENDANCE

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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

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

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

East Texas A&M University 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

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
East Texas A&M University

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Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu
Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 ETAMU 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.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

EAST TEXAS A&M SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH – COUNSELING SERVICES

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, 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

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code or go to https://studentsupport.telushealth.com/us/about#download_app to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

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As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

DEPARTMENT AND ACCREDITING AGENCY STATEMENT:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

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