PART I: COURSE INFORMATION

SW 8821-Social Work & Difference, Diversity & Privilege
2 credits

Faculty Contact:
- Name:
- Email:
- Phone:
- Office Location:

Short Description:
Develops essential knowledge, awareness, and skills to support culturally competent social work practice.

Long Description:
An understanding of diversity and difference, power and privilege, and oppression—as well as an understanding of one’s self within these systems—is an essential foundation for culturally competent social work practice. Thus, this course is designed to teach students (a) about the systems which maintain differential access to power and privilege at the expense of marginalized others, (b) skills for understanding and interrogating their own multiple social identities (i.e., social locations), (c) knowledge and skills for competent social work practice taking into account student and client social locations, and (d) strategies for interrupting systems of oppression and other ways to work for the core social work value of social justice.

Major course topics include: bias and xenophobia (including the students’ own); systems of power and privilege, historically oppressed groups and the shifting landscape of marginalization; practice theories (e.g., ally models); practice techniques for advanced social work practice across difference (e.g., ethnographic techniques); and strategies for addressing injustice in the context of advanced social work practice. The themes of deconstructing systems of oppression, cultural wellness, intersectionality and practice strategies are infused through the course.

Pre-requisites:

1. This is an advanced social work class, and the material presented in this class is at an advanced level. Social Work students enrolled in this course should have completed the foundation classes listed below, or have advanced standing status.
   - SW 5051 - Human Behavior and the Social Environment
   - SW 5801 - Policies and Programs in American Social Welfare
   - SW 8151 - Social Work Practice Methods: Individuals and Systems
SW 8152 - Social Work Practice Methods: Families and Groups
SW 8153 - Models of Community Intervention
SW 8841 - Social Work Research Methods

2. If you are not a Social Work student, you need permission of the instructor

Clinical Licensure Hours:
This course contains some clinical content, as required by the Minnesota Board of Social Work for eligibility for the Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW). The number of hours in each required category is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differential Diagnosis</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment based treatment planning</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Intervention Methods</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation methodologies</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW values and ethics</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally specific clinical assessment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other areas</td>
<td>0</td>
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PART II: COURSE OUTCOMES

Course Objectives

The overarching objective of this class is to move from basic self-awareness to critical consciousness, from practice skill and assessment to intervention and social action in addressing diversity difference, privilege and oppression.

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Develop an understanding of ALLY relationships that can be used as a framework within which one can work across difference with clients and communities.
- Deepen their understanding of their personal social and cultural identities and how they relate to clients of similar and different social locations.
- Consciously recognize and attempt to reconcile dilemmas arising from potential conflicts between social work professional ethics and particular cultural values, beliefs, and practices.
- Understand and articulate concepts of culture, identity, privilege, ally behaviors, oppression, social justice, and “differentness” and integrate these concepts into their practice framework (micro or macro). Understand how these concepts operate in a global context and relate to human rights.
- Gain skills in having honest conversations about the intersection of social work practice and race, class, gender, ability, sexuality, gender, difference, oppression and privilege.
- Apply knowledge of culturally-based value systems and ideologies that influence behavior when planning and implementing policy, service delivery systems, programs, or intervention strategies.
- Utilize skills to combat social injustice, which is necessary for competent practice in diverse communities, including self-reflection, self-assessment, and consultation, and use these skills to understand and build ally relationships.
• Apply theories of oppression (social injustice) to assess the impact of systemic/institutionalized oppression on clients, develop culturally congruent services to reduce its negative effects, and empower client to challenge existing oppressive conditions by intervening at multiple systems levels.

• Apply theories of oppression to assess the impact of systemic/institutionalized oppression on clients, develop culturally congruent services to reduce its negative effects, and empower client to challenge existing oppressive conditions by intervening at multiple systems levels.

• Develop a level of understanding about social justice and its connection to privilege, power, oppression.

• Utilize skills to combat social injustice, which is necessary for competent practice in diverse communities, including self-reflection, self-assessment, and consultation.

Social Work Practice Competencies
Successful completion of this concentration course implies that the student has achieved competency in the following advanced practice behaviors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Behavior</th>
<th>Covered in class through (i.e., activity, reading, content)</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Engage in practice that challenges the systems of privilege and oppression by utilizing the culturally relevant assessments and interventions specific to the context of their area of practice | Content and readings for sessions: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 | - Ally Project  
- Dyadic presentation |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Behaviors</th>
<th>Covered in class through (i.e., activity, reading, content)</th>
<th>Assessed</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| • Gain a full comprehension about disparities and their development, contribute to knowledge about institutional barriers to equality and apply concentration-appropriate strategies to advance social and | Content and readings for sessions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 | - Ally Project  
- Action Project  
- Dyadic presentations |
PART III: COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Reading Materials

Textbook(s)


Journal Articles & Other Readings

Required and optional readings will be available via the course page on Moodle (see course outline for specific reading assignments). Once Moodle is functional, you will be responsible for locating, printing, and reading all required materials posted there, so be sure to check the site regularly.

Assignments

Overview and Grading Structure for Semester Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Dates*</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic/paired Class co-</td>
<td>See sessions for names according to assigned dates and issues and Attachments A and B</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ally Project</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 pts. total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Part 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Journal entry #1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Journal entry #2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Journal entry #3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Attendance & Class Participation**

   This course is based on the premise that understanding and grappling with diversity issues begins with self-reflection and mutual learning from one another. Such learning requires that students attend all class sessions. Constructive participation is both a right and a responsibility of each student. Therefore, class participation will be evaluated by:
   - Class attendance
   - Contributions of comments and questions in class
   - Participation in dialogues with others in small and large group activities in class and online

2. **Dyadic/paired Class co-presentation**

   Each student has been paired with a peer to collaborate and co-present in class on an aspect of the topic for that session. The specific issue related to the topic, assigned date, and identity of co-presenters are listed under “Course sessions and Reading Assignments” on the syllabus. Each student’s duties entail:
   1. Becoming familiar with the topic of the session by conducting a search of the literature. Discuss your results with your co-presenter. Select the most pertinent article to read and summarize in five - nine bullet points.
   2. Preparing a handout of your summary (#1) including one example of an ally behavior that MSW students could practice or adopt in Peters Hall or at their internship/work setting.
   3. Format your handout in the following manner: (a) have two pages or less, and (b) put your names, date of presentation, and information about the article (title, author, and year of publication) at the top of the first page.
   4. Collaborating with co-presenter to plan the class presentation. After each student has developed his/her summary, discuss how the articles intersect and plan for the presentation including structuring an experiential activity that will assist the class to understand content of your presentation.
   5. Emailing your handout and activity to me by noon on the Wednesday prior to the session in which you are presenting. Each student should email her/his handout. The activity ought to be in a separate document.
   6. Presentations by the pair will be include a brief summary of the individual article by each student, the facilitation of the experiential activity, and time for discussion, questions/answers/comments
   7. The entire presentation from start to finish should last between 20-25 minutes with the majority of the time being devoted to the activity
Grading criteria: See next page.

Grading process: You are to self-assess your performance using the scoring sheet on the next page (Attachment B). Pairs are asked to collaborate and provide one “voice” thus any disagreement must be reconcile before submitting the sheet (I’m available for a discussion Prior to submission of the sheet only). Place the sheet in my mailbox by the end of the following class (if beyond this period, the assignment will be considered late and incur a penalty—see late assignments under course policies). I will review your assessment, provide feedback, and assess a final score. The sheet will be returned to you on session 13 (last class).

3. Ally Project

This is a two part assignment, with two due dates.

Part I:
All of us, as we have discussed, have dimensions of our identities around which we are privileged, and dimensions of our identities around which we are oppressed. Start by speaking to these identities as they apply to your life and developing social work practice. Then, using conceptions of ally development and behavior provided by Edwards (Edwards, K.E. (2006). Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development: A Conceptual Model. NAPSA Journal43(4), 39-60) and Waters (Waters, R. (2010). Understanding Allyhood as a Developmental Process. About Campus 15(5), 2-8) as jumping off points, write 3-4 double-spaced pages (excluding cover page and references) analyzing the state of your own status and development as an ally, as this concept intersects with your life and your development as a social worker in the type of practice you envision for yourself. Using these sources, or others you find related to the topic (it is expected that you use at least two references besides the ones listed here. Discuss ally attributes you have or are currently working to achieve, as well as ones you find particularly challenging. Use an example from field or past social work practice to illustrate a challenge to acting as an ally in practice, and how you have worked to address that challenge. Address barriers in your life and practice to acting as an ally (e.g. fear, internalized racism or bigotry, lack of skill, courage or institutional support). Writing honestly about your struggles or incapacity thus far in your practice will not reduce your grade in this assignment.

Thus, all of us need to be allies, and all of us need allies. Students who approach this assignment from the point of view of identifying members of historically targeted groups, who may be working for the liberation of your OWN community, are directed to Waters’ assertion that “acts of allyhood’ maybe exhibited by both target- and agent-identified students”. You may also speak to the challenges of working with people from outside your community who seek to engage with you as allies, and the struggles involved.

Finally, describe one concrete action you plan to take to further your process of becoming an ally, DURING THIS SEMESTER. including a timetable for doing so, and details as to how you plan to hold your own “feet to the fire” (or elicit the help of colleagues or your OWN allies) in accomplishing it.

The point of this paper is not to be self-congratulatory. We are all on a path towards becoming good allies, and we all have a lot further to go. Neither is it intended to be self-flagellating. You
are asked to honestly evaluate where you are, what you struggle with, and what you commit
yourself to doing.

Part II:
This section comprises an online journal (to be completed on the Moodle site) describing your
completion of the action you committed yourself to in part one. There will be 3 dated entries
that detail both the course of events as you worked through your plan, and your reflections,
based on what you wrote in part I, on how this experience impacts the development of your
perspectives on functioning as an ally.

Grading criteria.
You will be graded on your ability to (a) provide the content requested, (b) link pertinent ally
concepts to the content requested, (c) use of the literature concerning ally concepts and
behaviors, and (d) present your ideas clearly.

4. Action Project  (Adapted from Zúñiga & Shlasko)

This assignment is designed to help students work collectively to make a practical link between
course content and practice-related social action outside the classroom. The parameters of this
assignment are intentionally broad to allow you to select a social change/justice issue that is
most compelling to you and your fellow group members. For this project, you will work
collaboratively with a group of (presumably) diverse peers to plan, implement, and evaluate an
Action Project to educate/challenge yourselves and/or others around issues related to your
diversity/social justice topic.

This semester-long project has several parts:

1. Develop your Action Project proposal
   • Select an issue that is relevant to the course topics & that the members of your action
     project group care about; Identify goals/objectives and describe what “next steps” you
     will be taking in terms of addressing/creating change around this issue

2. Document your group process
   • Take notes/minutes at each of your group meetings and post these to your private
     group space on Moodle

3. Implement your plan
   • (Will vary by group based on the plan proposed)

4. Evaluate your plan and reflect on the planning, implementation & evaluation process
   • This is done individually and as a group

5. Present your Action Project evaluation to the class
   • Overview of your project, what you learned from it (individually and as group), & your
     assessment of its effectiveness (or success, as you perceive it)

6. Submit a written final analysis of your Action Project
• This is to be written collaboratively with participation from all group members

**General Instructions:**
During the first two weeks of the course, find 2-3* other students with whom you share common interests in a diversity/social justice issue and with whom you believe you can work effectively. You will have two opportunities to meet briefly as a group in class to begin formulating your topic and your potential action plan; the instructor will be available to answer questions and assist with the initial development of your topic. You may also meet with the instructor during office hours (individually or as a group) to discuss your action projects as they develop. *A handout with detailed instructions, project time line, and grading criteria will be distributed in class during Week 2.*

**On-line Sessions:**

During weeks 8 and 13, class will be held via on-line sessions. In these on-line activities, students will have opportunities to “dig deeper” into the material covered thus far, exploring intersectionality, making connections, internalizing the material and exploring further, together and individually, how we incorporate what we are learning into our developing social work practice. The nature of these activities, including reading and other preparation for them, will be discussed in class prior to the on-line session dates.

**Course Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: To complete the course successfully all students must complete and receive a passing grade for each assignment.

**Course Policies**

There are many University and School of Social Work policies that govern this course. Please go to [http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/Documents/SSWCoursePolicies.pdf](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/Documents/SSWCoursePolicies.pdf) to see a complete description of all the policies.

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**PART IV: COURSE CONTENT**

**Session 1: Orientation, beginning, laying groundwork**

**Topics:** Introduction to course, students, and instructor
Overview of texts and assignments
Social work’s relationship to diversity and internal and external oppression
Social construction of difference

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Session 2: Context and approaches to working across difference

Topics: Social justice: Oppression and privilege
Social identity
Ally Model

Required Readings:

In Adams, et.al.-
Anzaldua, G.E.- Allies pp.475-477

In Anderson & Middleton:
-MacPhee, D. Yess, I see you’re committed to the cause…But where’s your credibility, and whay that angst?. Pp. 257-263
-Tuason, T- Deprivations and privileges we all have. Pp. 205-211

http://journals.naspa.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1722&context=jsarp

Recommended Readings:


Identity development: Ethnic and White

Session 3: Theoretical Frameworks

Topics: Cultural concepts: Social identity, Standpoint, intersectionality, Deconstructing “cultural competence” in social work Xenophobia

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


**Session 4: Systems of Oppression and Oppression based on sex & gender**

**Due:** Ally Assignment – Part 1

**Required Readings:**

In Adams, et. al.

In Anderson & Middleton-
- Foster, D.M.: *Supposed to know better: On accepting privilege* pp. 25-31


**Recommended Readings:**


Session 5: Oppression based on race, multiracial identity, and ethnic identity

Due: Ally Assignment – Journal Entry #1

Required Readings:

In Adams, et.al.-  
-Young, I.M.- *Five Faces of Oppression* pp. 35-49  
-Root, M.P.P.- *A Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People*  

In Anderson & Middleton-  


Note: The following reading is required only if you have never read it before!:  

Recommended Readings:
Session 6: Oppression of New Americans and Immigrants

Due: Ally Assignment – Journal Entry #2

Required Readings:


In Adams, et. al.:
- Cooper, C. The Heartland’s raw Deal: How Meatpacking is Creating a New Immigrant Underclass, pp. 99-104

In Anderson & Middleton:

**Recommended Readings:**


**Session 7: Oppression of older adults**

**Due:** Ally Assignment – Journal Entry #3
Action Project – Proposal Draft

**Required Readings:**


In Anderson & Middleton:

Peila-Shuster, J.J. *Ageism: The ‘-ism” we will all face one day*. pp. 165-170.

**Recommended Readings:**


**Session 8: Online Session #1**

“Digging Deeper”

**Session 9: Oppression of Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues and Identities**

**Required Readings:**

In Adams, et.al.:
- Blumenfeld, W.J. *How Homophobia Hurts Everyone*, pp. 267-275

In Anderson & Middleton:
  - “Head ladies center for teacup chain”- Exploring cisgender privilege in a (predominantly) gay male context. pp. 81-93

**Recommended Readings:**


### Session 10: Ability-based and mental health oppression

**Due:** Action Project - Final Proposal

**Required Readings:**


In Adams, et.al.:
- Shapiro, J.P. *A Separate and Unequal Education for Minorities with Learning Disabilities*, pp. 340-342;

In Middleton & Anderson:
- Priester, P.E. *Dirty secrets and unholy alliances: Disability-based oppression and privilege*, pp. 53-58

**Recommended Readings:**


**Session 11: Religious and faith-based oppression**

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Session 12: Oppression based on income/social class**

**Required Readings:**


In Anderson & Middleton:
Loomis, C. *Understanding and exploring class privilege*, pp. 39-47

**Recommended Readings:**


**Session 13: Online Session #2**

“Digging Deeper

**Session 14: Diversity and social justice: Putting it all together**

*Topics:* Reflections and lessons learned from the semester
Required Readings:

In Adams et al. (text): Harro, B. The cycle of liberation, pp. 463-469.

In Anderson & Middleton:
   - Liddle, B. Tales from the heart of Dixie: Using white privilege to fight racism, pp. 251-256.


Recommended Readings:


Session 15: Group Presentations, closure, self and course evaluation

DUE: Action Project – Presentation

Exam Week: Final Written Report & Documentation of Group Process due
Additional Bibliography

Books


Articles


King, Jr. (1963). "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"


Steinem, G. Revving up for the next twenty-five years, pp. 256-260.


