



Course Number: SOWO 501
Course Title: Confronting Oppression & Institutional Discrimination
Time and Location: Mondays 2:00-4:50 pm, Tate-Turner-Kuralt Building Room 135
Instructor: Travis J. Albritton, MSW, M.Div
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Course Website: <http://blackboard.unc.edu>

Course Description: This course examines institutionalized oppression and its implications for social work practice at all levels, emphasizing the consequences of social inequality and the social worker's responsibility to fight oppression.

Course Objectives – Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of prejudice and the impact of discrimination on individuals and groups, especially with regard to race, gender, disability, sexual identity, ethnicity, religion, economic status and age.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical and social forces that have worked for and against the exclusion of groups of people from opportunities and services at the institutional, community, and societal levels.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the roles played by advocacy groups in minimizing barriers to opportunities and services for populations who experience discrimination.
4. Identify and consider ways of addressing institutional discrimination as it appears in social welfare policy and in the management and practice of human services.
5. Demonstrate an ability to apply social work values and ethics to practice with diverse populations.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of differential assessment and intervention skills needed to serve diverse populations.
7. Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of human diversity and family and community strengths.

Course Rationale

Evidence based practice is defined as the use of the best available evidence to make practice decisions. It involves integrating the preferences of clients and one's own accrued practice expertise with current scientific information. Because "the evidence" is unlikely to ever be so robust as to fully inform practice with the diversity of human kind, the evidence must always be interpreted and, in some cases, extrapolated. It is in this crucial process that knowledge of the impact of discrimination and inequality on human behavior becomes paramount.

The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) stipulates that one of the ethical principles that must guide social workers is that "Social workers challenge social injustice" (1999, p.2). Specifically, the Code directs social workers to "pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice" (NASW, 1999, p.2) These activities are anchored to one of the fundamental missions of the social work profession, which is to "strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice" (NASW, 1999, p.1). The intent of this course is to prepare students to fulfill their responsibilities related to fighting injustice and oppression, as prescribed by the Code.

All social workers have a responsibility to meet the needs of diverse client systems in our society; therefore, all social workers must have knowledge and understanding of the structures, systems, and policies that create and maintain institutional oppression. The focus is on special population groups that should be understood in the context of not only problems that often accompany their particular status, but also from the richness of their heritage and the potential for their beneficial contribution to society.

This course serves as a foundation for the understanding of the nature, character, and consequences of being excluded or left out of many available opportunities and services. This course explores the implications and connections of discrimination for oppressed groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, women, older persons, people with disabilities and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) people. The common denominator for all of these groups is the fact that they have been constantly affected by social, economic and legal biases—they have been victimized by institutional structures and social policies that maintain and perpetuate their oppression.

Required Texts:

Adams, M. et al., eds. (2000). *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*. New York: Routledge. [hereafter referred to in the syllabus as Adams]

Carlton-LaNey, I. (2005). *African Americans Aging in the Rural South: Stories of Faith, Family and Community*. NC: Sourwood Press, Inc.

Evaluation:

The School of Social Work operates on an evaluation system of Honors (H), Pass (P), Low Pass (L), and Fail (F). A grade of P is “entirely satisfactory.” On a traditional grading scale, a P would range from B- to A-. The grade of Honors signifies that the work is clearly excellent in all respects.

Grade Scale

H	Clear Excellence	94-100 points
P	Entirely Satisfactory	80-93 points
L	Low Passing	70-79 points
F	Failed	<70 points

Each assignment comprises the following percentage of the total grade.

Class Participation	15
Community Meeting	10
Heritage Gallery	10
Institutional structures paper	40
Advocacy Paper	25
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

Honor Code

Students are expected to complete assigned and independent readings, contribute to the development of a positive learning environment, and demonstrate their learning through written assignments and class participation. Original written work is expected and required. The University of North Carolina has a rich and longstanding tradition of honor. If you have not yet done so, please see the Student Code of Honor. All submitted work must conform to the Honor Code of the University of North Carolina. For information on the Honor Code, including guidance on representing the words, thoughts, and ideas of others, please see: <http://instrument.unc.edu>

Please note that plagiarism is defined in the Code as “representation of another person’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own.” Violation of the Honor Code will result in an “F” grade, and referral to the Honor Court. From the Code: “It is the responsibility of every student to obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity. Students will conduct all academic work within the letter and spirit of the Honor Code, which prohibits the giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in all academic processes.”

All written work must be accompanied by a signed Honor Code statement, and work lacking this affirmation will not be accepted. The statement is to read as follows:

I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.

<Student’s Signature>

Class participation: To maximize everyone’s learning we will rely on the contributions and insights of all students when issues are discussed. The participation of each student is essential, and responsibility for class discussion will be shared by both the instructor and the students. Class participation includes

such things as being prepared to discuss readings and assignments, sharing your opinions on the topic at hand, facilitating the participation of other students, and engaging the guest speakers.

Attendance: Attendance is crucial to both your learning experience and the learning of your peers. **Students with more than one excused absence will not earn an H. Students with more than two excused absences will not earn a P.** It is your responsibility to notify the instructor *in advance* if you will miss class.

Readings: You are responsible for reading **ALL** assigned material before the class date for which they are assigned. This is imperative as these readings will provide the background you need to fully understand, benefit from, and participate in the class discussion.

Written assignments: The School of Social Work faculty has adopted APA style as the preferred format for papers and publications. The best reference is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA, 1994). Papers that do not follow APA guidelines may be returned to the student for revision.

Papers are due at the beginning of class, without exception. Late papers, including those needing revisions to conform to APA style, will be **reduced by 10 points for each day they are late**, without exception.

Students are expected to use good academic English; grades will be lowered for poor grammar, syntax, or spelling. Students of all writing abilities benefit from working with the Writing Center. Those who have difficulty writing are **STRONGLY** encouraged to contact the Writing Center (962-7710 or <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/>).

ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation - (15%)

Each student will participate in group discussions and will individually and collectively be responsible for contributing to class discussion and the analysis of issues. For each reading, students should be able to summarize its key elements, critique its relevance and strengths or weaknesses in the context of contemporary society, and discuss the implications for social work practice.

As a part of your class participation **grade** you are required to write three (3) 3 page (double spaced, 10-12 point font) critical reflections on the readings and or class discussions. The purpose of these reflections is for you to organize some thoughts on the readings for class discussion and to ensure that you are engaging the readings critically.

Heritage Gallery Assignment - (10%)

Heritage is rich, deep, and ever-present in people's lives and actions. It is often cherished and sacred, coming from those who have lived and died. Heritage names us and shapes us in profound ways. It is a piece of human essence. The ways we express heritage are numerous and varied. Heritage exists in food, clothes, gardens, art, music, and language. Heritage exists in rituals, symbols, festivals, and ceremonies. Heritage exists in technologies, architecture, and artifacts. Heritage tells of our past and our futures.

This assignment is designed to honor the heritage of everyone in class. For the second class, bring an expression of your heritage for display and discussion. This can be an artifact, food, glossary of terms, tradition, a performance, an art form—anything that comes from your group identity.

Community Meeting (10%) - Due: February 16th

Attend a community meeting of a population subgroup OTHER THAN YOUR OWN. You may attend a church service, AA meeting, concert, play, dance production, precinct meeting, or club meeting, for example, the Junior League or the Negro Business and Professional Women's Club. It is essential that *you go alone*. In 2 pages, describe the meeting, including the purpose, audience, setting, and elements of difference. Analyze your experience using concepts from this class. Present your personal response and explain how this assignment will affect your professional practice.

Your paper should be 3-4 pages.

Advocacy Paper (25%) – Due: March 23rd

The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize you with the political efforts and advocacy work currently being conducted to end discrimination or improve the quality of life of oppressed groups in the U.S.

Please select an advocacy organization (e.g., The Gray Panthers, NAACP, and Triangle Native American Society) that works to address the discrimination or oppression faced by a subgroup of the population. This group must lag behind the general population on specific social or economic indicators. You **MAY** be a member of this subgroup.

The organization you choose must be actively working to end at least one major facet of the subgroups' oppression, although this may be interpreted broadly. The organization can operate at the federal, state, or local level. The organization may NOT be your field placement agency. Professional trade associations with a secondary mission of advocacy are not acceptable organizational choices.

You must submit your choice of organization (along with an alternate, in case more than one student selects the same organization) to the instructor no later than February 23rd. No two students may complete the assignment for the same organization. If more than one student chooses the same organization, students will be randomly chosen for that organization.

In your paper, please address the following questions:

1. In a brief introduction, succinctly summarize the work done by the organization, including the level (federal, state, local) at which it operates.
2. What are the short-term goals the organization is pursuing? What steps is the organization taking to end the discrimination faced by its population of interest?
3. What are the longer-term goals the organization is pursuing? Are any activities being pursued currently to attain these goals?
4. What efforts are being made to secure the support of the public?
5. What major work has the organization accomplished in the past year? What plans are currently under way?
6. What are the major barriers the organization faces in meeting its objective (please use concepts from the class to describe these)?

7. Has America's consciousness level been raised because of this organization's work?
8. If you were serving as a board member or executive director for this organization, what would your objectives for the next year be? Why? How (be specific) will you work to achieve them? What tools and resources will you need to achieve them?

Your paper should be 6-8 pages

Institutional Structures Paper (40%) - Due: April 30th

This paper will give you the opportunity to think critically about the range of oppressive and discriminatory institutional practices that may be encountered by persons in our culture who are marginalized.

Please identify a focus population. Remember that marginalization can occur as a function of race, ethnicity, religion, age, poverty, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and others. Then, using the scholarly literature as your foundation, address the following questions:

1. How has this group been treated historically in our culture? Is there a history of oppression and discrimination or has this occurred more recently?
2. What assumptions, beliefs, or attributions appear to drive the oppression or discrimination of this group in our culture?
3. What are examples of specific oppressive or discriminatory practices that this group may encounter as they interact with various institutions? You may include social, economic, educational, faith and health care institutions in your discussion, as well as any others of relevance.
4. What are the outcomes or implications of these practices for the marginalized group? Consider the range of bio-psycho-social-spiritual outcomes and others of relevance.
5. What are implications of these oppressive practices for the social worker who works with individuals from this population? What are 2-3 specific understandings or actions that you see as crucial to supporting non-oppressive practices with the group you have chosen?

Your paper should be 10-12 pages.

Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to the course assignments and course readings when appropriate.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class and Date	Unit Topics Assigned Reading
Class 1 Mon. Jan. 12	<p>UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION-CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</p> <p>Introduction Rationale (Mission of Social Work and our School) Objectives and Requirements Definitions and Key Concepts</p> <p>Required Readings: NASW code of ethics – http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp</p>
Class 2 Mon. Jan. 26 Heritage Gallery	<p>UNIT 2: THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE & EFFECTS OF DISCRIMINATION</p> <p>Development of a Majority Racial Identity Personal Privilege Development of Minority Identity Theories of Discrimination and Oppression</p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 1, <i>Conceptual Framework</i>, pp. 1-60.</p> <p>McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack: <i>Independent School</i>. 49 (2), 31-35 (online)</p> <p>Johnson, A. G. (2006). Privilege, Oppression and Difference. In <i>Privilege, power, and difference</i> (pp. 13-40). Boston: McGraw Hill.</p> <p>Johnson, A.G. (2006). How Systems of Privilege Work. In <i>Privilege, power and difference</i> (pp. 90-107). Boston: McGraw Hill.</p>
Class 3 Mon. Feb. 2 Heritage Gallery	<p>RACISM</p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 2, <i>Racism</i>, pp. 61-120.</p> <p>Cuadros, P. (2006). <i>A Home on the Field</i> (pp.19-57). New York: Harper Collins</p> <p>West, C (1994). Introduction. In <i>Race Matters</i> (pp. 3-13). Boston: Beacon Press.</p> <p>Winerip, M (2000). Why Harlem Drug Cops Don't Discuss Race: Color Can Give Anonymity. But looking like a suspect has its risks. Retrieved November 20, 2008 from New York Times Web site: http://www.nytimes.com/library/national/race/070900winerip-cops.html</p> <p>Recommended:</p> <p>LeDuff, C. (2000). At a Slaughterhouse, Some things Never Die: Who Kills, Who Cuts, Who Bosses can Depend on Race. Retrieved November 20, 2008 for New York Times Web Site: http://www.nytimes.com/library/national/race/061600leduff-meat.html</p>

<p>Class 4 Mon. Feb. 9</p>	<p>Race and Ethnicity</p> <p>Johnson, J.H. Johnson-Webb, K.D. & Ferrell W.C. (1999). A Profile of Hispanic newcomers to North Carolina. Popular Government, [online]. http://ncinfo.iog.unc.edu/pubs/electronicversions/pg/f99-0212.pdf</p> <p>Lee, E. (1997). Overview: The assessment and treatment of Asian Americans Families: In <i>Working with Asian Americans: A guide for clinicians</i>, 3-36 (blackboard)</p> <p>Tatum, B. D. (1997). The Complexity of Identity. In <i>Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria</i> (pp. 18-28). New York: Basic Books.</p> <p>Tatum, B. E. (1997). Critical Issues in Latino, American Indian, and Asian Pacific American Identity Development, There is more than just black and white you know. In <i>Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?</i> (pp. 131-166). New York: Basic Books.</p> <p>Recommended:</p> <p>Tatum, B.E. (1997). Identity Development in Multiracial Families: But don't the children suffer. In <i>Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?</i> (pp: 167-190). New York: Basic Books</p>
<p>Class 5 Mon. Feb. 16</p>	<p>Race and Ethnicity Continued</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Dyson, M. E. (2004). When You're a Credit to Your Race the Bill will Come Due: O.J. Simpson and Our Trial by Fire. In <i>The Michael Eric Dyson Reader</i> (pp. 46-56). New York: Basic Civitas Books.</p> <p>Dyson, M. E. (2008). Black Kennedy. In <i>April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Death and how it Changed America</i> (pp. 223-243). New York: Basic Civitas Books</p> <p>Obama, B. (2006). Race. In <i>The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming The American Dream</i> (pp. 227-269). New York: Crown Publishers.</p> <p>Obama, B. (2008). A More Perfect Union. Retrieved November 20, 2008, from MSNBC Web site http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23690567</p>
<p>Class 6 Mon. Feb. 23</p>	<p>UNIT 5: GENDER DIFFERENCES</p> <p>Gender Role Socialization and Identity Feminism and Violence against Women Alternative Health & Healing</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Adams: Section 4, <i>Sexism</i>, pp. 199-260.</p> <p>Collins, P.H. (2005). Get your freak on: Sex, Babies and Images of Black Femininity. In <i>Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism</i> (pp. 119-148). New York: Routledge.</p>
<p>Class 7 Mon. Mar. 2</p>	<p>ISSUES OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Adams: Section 5. Heterosexism , pp. 261-318</p> <p>Additional readings to be announced</p>

<p>Class 8 Mon. Mar. 16</p>	<p>ANTI-SEMITISM AND RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION</p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 2. Anti-Semitism, pp. 133-198</p> <p>Levine, J. (2001). Working with victims of persecution: Lessons from Holocaust survivors. <i>Social Work</i>, 46 (4), 350-360. (online)</p> <p>Hodge, D. (2002). Does social work oppress Evangelical Christians: A “New Class” analysis of society and social work. <i>Social Work</i>, 47, (4), 401-414. (online)</p> <p>Additional Readings to be announced</p>
<p>Class 9 Mon. Mar.23</p>	<p>CLASSISM</p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 7, Classism, pp. 379-406</p> <p>Brantlinger, E. (2003). Affluent Mothers Narrate Their Own and Other People’s Children. In <i>Dividing Classes: How the middle class negotiates and rationalizes school advantage</i> (pp. 35-60). New York: Routledge. Falmer.</p> <p>Collins, C. & Veskel, V. (2004). Economic Apartheid in America. In P. Collins and M. Anderson (Eds.) <i>Race, Class and Gender</i> (pp. 127-139). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.</p> <p>hooks, b. (2000). Introduction. In <i>where we stand: class matters</i> (pp. 1-9). New York: Routledge.</p> <p>hooks, b. (2000). Being Rich. In <i>where we stand: class matters</i> (pp. 70-79). New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Langston, D. (2004). Tired of Playing Monopoly? In P. Collins & M. Anderson (Eds.) <i>Race, Class and Gender</i> (pp. 140-148). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.</p> <p>Recommended:</p> <p>Sidel, R. (2000). The Demonization of Poor Women. <i>Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare</i>, 27 (1), 73-84.</p>
<p>Class 10 Mon. Mar. 30</p>	<p>AGEISM</p> <p>Required Readings Carlton LaNay, I. (1992). Elderly black farm women: A population at risk: <i>Social Work</i>, 37 (6), 517-523. (online)</p> <p>Carlton LaNay, I. (2005). African Americans Aging in the Rural South.</p>
<p>Class 11 Mon. Apr. 6</p>	<p>ABELISM</p> <p>Required Readings Adams: Section 6, Abelism, pp. 317-378.</p> <p>Snow, K. (09/2005) People first language. [online] www.disabilityisnatural.com</p> <p>Additional readings to be announced.</p>
<p>Class 12 Mon. Apr. 13</p>	<p>ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE</p> <p>REQUIRED READINGS Adams: Section 8, Working for Social Justice, pp. 447-498.</p> <p>American Psychological Association. (1998). Hate crimes today: An age-old foe in modern dress. [online]. http://www.apa.org/releases/hate.html</p>

	<p>Abromsky, S. (1999). Crime: When they get out. <i>Atlantic Monthly</i>, 283 (6). 30-36.</p> <p>Gibelman, M. (2000). Affirmative action at the crossroads: A social justice perspective. <i>Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare</i>, 27 (1), 153-174. (online)</p> <p>Dyson, M (2004). Debating Affirmative Action In <i>The Michael Eric Dyson Reader</i> (pp. 69-85). New York: BASIC CIVITAS BOOKS</p>
Class 13 Mon. Apr. 20	<p>PRACTICE SKILLS</p> <p>REQUIRED READINGS</p> <p>Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (1999). Sociopolitical considerations of trust and mistrust in multicultural counseling and therapy. In <i>Counseling the culturally different: Theory and practice</i> (pp. 27-49). New York: John Wiley. (blackboard)</p> <p>Swigonski, M. (1996). Challenging privilege through Africentric social work practice. <i>Social Work</i>, 41 (2), 153-161. (online)</p> <p>Additional Readings to be announced</p>
Class 14 Mon. Apr.27	<p>CLASS WRAP-UP</p> <p>REFLECTIONS ON LEARNING</p>

