



***SOWO 501 – Confronting Oppression & Institutional Discrimination
(Discrimination & Inequality)***

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CLASS	Tuesday: 9-11:50 Friday: 2-4:50
Office Hours Day & Time	Monday 10:00-12:30
Accessibility	To obtain disability-related academic accommodations, students with disabilities must contact the instructor and the Department of Disability Services as soon as possible. You may reach the Department of Disability Services at 919-962-8300 (Voice/TDD) or http://disabilityservices.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 responsibilities to fight oppression.

Course Outcomes:

- (1) Students will understand how contemporary social work practice is situated in cultures in which oppression is institutionalized.

Suggested measurement of this outcome:

- a. Students will write a paper in which they select a population and critically analyze existing institutional structures that maintain the oppression of this group.

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, and ethnicity.

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.

The instructor WILL distribute and assign additional required readings throughout the course of the semester.

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	10
Community Meeting	10
Heritage Gallery	10
Institutional structures paper	35
Final Exam <u>Mon. March 24/Fri. March 28</u>	35
Total	100

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, will be **reduced by 5 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 (10 %)

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.

Heritage Gallery (10 %) Due: Tue. Jan. 20/Fri. Jan. 23 (between 8 & 10 minutes each)

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 pts.) – Due: Last day of class

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 cannot exceed TWO pages.

Institutional Structures Paper (35 %) – Due: Last day of class

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 cannot exceed six pages.

Exam (35 %) Tues. March 17 or Friday March 20

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class and Date	Unit Topics Assigned Reading
Class 1 Fri. Jan. 16 Tue. Jan. 13	<p>UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION-CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK</p> <p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale (Mission of Social Work and our School) Objectives and Requirements Definitions and Key Concepts <p>Required Readings: National Association of Social Workers (1996/1999). <i>Code of Ethics</i>. Washington, DC: Author.</p>
Class 2 Fri. Jan. 23 Tue. Jan. 20 Heritage Gallery	<p>HERITAGE GALLERY</p> <p>UNIT 2: THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE & EFFECTS OF DISCRIMINATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Majority Racial Identity Personal Privilege Development of Minority Identity Theories of Discrimination and Oppression <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 1, <i>Conceptual Framework</i>, pp. 1-60.</p>
Class 3 Fri. Jan. 30 Tue. Jan. 27 Heritage Gallery	<p>UNIT 3: RACISM HISTORICAL & SOCIAL FORCES IMPACTING EXCLUSION</p> <p>Video: <i>Awakenings, 1954-1956</i>, Vol. 1 of <i>Eyes on the Prize</i></p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 2, <i>Racism</i>, pp. 61-132.</p>
Class 4 Fri. Feb. 6 Tue. Feb. 3	<p>In lieu of the regular class times--both classes will meet February 3 @ 5:30 to view film: "Walls that Bleed"</p> <p>Where: TTK Auditorium / Sponsors: School of Social Work, Diversity & Multicultural Affairs-UNC, & NASW-NC</p>
Class 5 Fri. Feb. 13 Tue. Feb. 10	<p>Required Readings:</p> <p>Morris, A. D. (1999). A retrospective on the civil rights movement: Political and intellectual landmarks. <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i>, 25, 517-539.</p> <p>King, M. L., Jr., (1963, April 16). <i>Letter from Birmingham City Jail</i>. [Online]. http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html [Retrieved 01/12/09].</p> <p>King, M. L., Jr., (1963, August 28). <i>Address at March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom</i> (I have a dream). [Online]. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEMXaTktUfA [Retrieved 01/12/09].</p>
Class 6 Fri. Feb. 20 Tue. Feb. 17	<p>UNIT 4: DYNAMICS OF EXCLUSION AND NORTH CAROLINA'S RACIAL & ETHNIC MINORITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native Americans in North Carolina Identifying Our Racial Heritages Understanding Socialization into a Racist Culture <p>Required Readings: Bordewich, F. M. (1996). We ain't got feathers and beads. In <i>Killing the White Man's Indian</i> (pp. 66-90). New York: Doubleday.</p> <p>North Carolina American Indian tribes film: Tribal chiefs introduce the tribes in the state</p>
Class 7 Fri. Feb. 27 Tue. Feb. 24	<p>UNIT 5: GENDER DIFFERENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Role Socialization and Identity Feminism and Violence against Women Alternative Health & Healing

	<p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 4, <i>Sexism</i>, pp. 199-260.</p>
<p>Class 8 Fri. March 6 Tue. March 3</p>	<p>UNIT 7: ANTI-SEMITISM AND RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION Adams: Section 3, <i>Anti-Semitism</i>, pp. 133-198</p> <p>Sternberg, M., & Rosenbloom, M. (2000). "Lost childhood"—Lessons from the Holocaust: Implications for adult adjustment. <i>Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal</i>, 17, 5-17.</p>
<p>Class 9 Fri. March 20 -Exam- Tue. March 17 -Exam-</p>	<p>UNIT 8: CAPACITY</p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 6, <i>Ableism</i>, pp. 317-378 Adams: Section 7, <i>Classism</i>, pp. 379-425</p> <p>Recall the Williard Suitcase Project Exhibit http://suitcaseexhibit.org/indexhasflash.html</p>
<p>Class 10 Fri. March 27 Tue. March 24</p>	<p>UNIT 9: AGEISM UNIT 10: OTHER ISSUES OF DIFFERENCE</p> <p>Required Readings: .Henderson, D., & Tickamyer, A. (2008). Lost in Appalachia: The unexpected impact of welfare reform on older women in rural communities. <i>Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare</i>, 35, 153-171. http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=4&hid=113&sid=ed9c1162-c1ed-48b4-9aa6-6f5f782d3d03%40sessionmgr3 (pdf)</p> <p>Carlton-LaNey, I. (2005) <i>African Americans Aging in the Rural South</i></p> <p>(As you read these vignettes think about the lessons to be learned from their histories. What commonalities do you see in the actions they took—values significant issues, etc. What types of just-oriented principles emerged and how would you apply them to social work practice today?)</p>
<p>Class 11 Fri. April 3 Tue. March 31</p>	<p>Unit 11: The Role of Advocacy Groups in Combating Discrimination Video: <i>The Two Towns of Jasper</i></p> <p>Required Readings: Adams: Section 8, <i>Working for Social Justice</i>, pp. 447-498</p>
<p>Class 12 Fri. April 17 Tue. April 7</p> <p>Class 13 (final Class for both sections)</p>	<p>UNIT 13: CONFRONTING DISCRIMINATION IN POLICY AND MANAGEMENT Identifying Personal Issues Managing Differences & Wielding Power within an Organization</p> <p>(FRIDAY, APRIL 17) SPEAKER: Ms. Cynthia Brown—co chair of the <i>Greensboro Truth & Reconciliation Commission</i></p> <p>Required Readings: Swigonski, M. (1996). Challenging Privilege through Africentric Social Work Practice. <i>Social Work</i>, 41, 153-161.</p>
<p>Fri. April 24 Tue. April 14</p>	<p>(TUESDAY, APRIL 14) SPEAKER: Ms. Cynthia Brown Co-Chair of the <i>Greensboro Truth & Reconciliation Commission</i></p> <p><u>Last day to hand in final papers and community visit reports</u></p>

MANDATE FOR THE GREENSBORO TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

There comes a time in the life of every community when it must look humbly and seriously into its past in order to provide the best possible foundation for moving into a future based on healing and hope. Many residents of Greensboro believe that for this city, the time is now.

In light of the shooting death of 5 people and the wounding of 10 others in Greensboro, North Carolina on November 3, 1979, and

In light of the subsequent acquittal of defendants in both state and federal criminal trials, despite the fact that the shootings were videotaped and widely viewed, and

In light of the further investigations, passage of time and other factors which allowed a jury in a later civil trial to find certain parties liable for damages in the death of one of the victims, and

In light of the confusion, pain, and fear experienced by residents of the city and the damage to the fabric of relationships in the community caused by these incidents and their aftermath,

The Greensboro Truth and Community Reconciliation Project, including the signers of its Declaration, calls for the examination of the context, causes, sequence and consequence of the events of November 3, 1979.

We affirm that the intention of this examination shall be:

- a) Healing and reconciliation of the community through discovering and disseminating the truth of what happened and its consequences in the lives of individuals and institutions, both locally and beyond Greensboro.
- b) Clarifying the confusion and reconciling the fragmentation that has been caused by these events and their aftermath, in part by educating the public through its findings.
- c) Acknowledging and recognizing people's feelings, including feelings of loss, guilt, shame, anger and fear.
- d) Helping facilitate changes in social consciousness and in the institutions that were consciously or unconsciously complicit in these events, thus aiding in the prevention of similar events in the future.

This examination is not for the purpose of exacting revenge or recrimination. Indeed, the Commission will have no such power. Rather, the Commission will attempt to learn how persons and groups came to be directly or indirectly involved in these events; it will assess the impact of these events on the life and development of this community. It will seek all possibilities for healing transformation.

In addition to exploring questions of institutional and individual responsibility for what happened, as a necessary part of the truth-seeking process we urge the Commission to look deeply into the root causes and historical context of the events of November 3, 1979.

Members of this community, young and old, still find the events of November 3, 1979 nearly incomprehensible. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to explain what happened and why. Many citizens and institutions of this city have acknowledged the wisdom of, and necessity for, such a process.

It is in this spirit that we affirm the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission's motto: "Without Truth, no Healing; without Forgiveness, no Future."

Therefore, toward these ends,

1. The Greensboro Truth and Community Reconciliation Project (referred to here as "the Project") hereby establishes a Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission (GTRC), charged with the examination of the context, causes, sequence and consequence of the events of November 3, 1979.

2. The GTRC will consist of seven (7) Commissioners who shall be persons of recognized integrity and principle, with a demonstrated commitment to the values of truth, reconciliation, equity and justice.

The majority of the commissioners will be current residents of the Greensboro area; at least two commissioners will be from outside the Greensboro area. All will be selected in accordance with "The Selection Process for the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission" document, which is attached. The Commission will designate its chair(s).

Commissioners will serve on an honorary basis and in their personal capacity, but may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the discharge of their responsibilities.

3. The Commissioners will carry out their mandate by reviewing documents, inviting people to come forward with information, consulting with experts and by any other means, public or private, they consider appropriate.

4. The Commission may decide to carry out some activities in private in order to protect, to the extent possible, the security and privacy of individuals and the integrity of its ongoing truth-seeking, but in general the Commission's activities will be carried out in a manner that is as public and transparent as possible.

5. The Commission will issue a report to the residents of Greensboro, to the City, to the Project, and to other public bodies, encompassing the items outlined in paragraph 1 and in keeping with the intentions and spirit of the mandate. The Commission will ensure that its findings are fair, based on the information compiled and reviewed, and adequately documented in its report. The Commission may take steps to protect the identity of individual sources, if requested. The Commission will also make specific, constructive recommendations to the City, to the residents of Greensboro, and to other entities as it deems appropriate, particularly to further the intentions set forth in the mandate.

6. The Commission will have no authority either to pursue criminal or civil claims or to grant immunity from such claims. Its focus is reconciliation through seeking, understanding and reporting the truth.

7. The Commission will convene a first meeting, as determined by the Commissioners, no later than 60 days from the date on which the Selection Panel confirms and announces the

selection and acceptance of its members. From its first meeting, the Commission will have a period of 15 months to fulfill the terms of its mandate. This period includes initial planning and set-up, the determination of its internal procedures and selection and appointment of its key staff. The Commission may call upon the Project staff and other resources for administrative support during its initial planning and set-up phase. If absolutely necessary, the period of the Commission's mandate may be extended for up to 6 more months, with the permission of the Project.

8. The Commission will carry out its mandate while operating independently from any external influence, including the Project. It may reach cooperative agreements with organizations, institutions and individuals in order to strengthen its capacity and resources, in so far as such agreements do not compromise the Commission's independence. The Commission will have full authority to make decisions on its spending, within the limits of available funds, and may elect to have a fiscal sponsor through another institution so long as that relationship is consistent with the spirit of the mandate and the Commission's substantive independence.

9. At the completion of its work, all documents of the Commission, its notes, findings, exhibits and other collected materials, shall be permanently archived in Greensboro in an institution whose purpose and tradition is in keeping with the objectives and spirit of the Commission mandate. The identity of this institution and the structure of the archive will be determined by agreement between the Commission and the Project. If deemed appropriate, multiple institutions and locations may be used for archival purposes. Such an archive shall, to the extent feasible and respectful of any recommendations by the Commission with regard to the continued confidentiality of records, be accessible to the public.

The passage of time alone cannot bring closure, nor resolve feelings of guilt and lingering trauma, for those impacted by the events of November 3, 1979. Nor can there be any genuine healing for the city of Greensboro unless the truth surrounding these events is honestly confronted, the suffering fully acknowledged, accountability established, and forgiveness and reconciliation facilitated.