

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SOWO 501
Course Title: Discrimination and Inequality, Spring 2008
Time and Location: Mondays 2:00- 4:50 pm, Tate-Turner-Kuralt Building
Instructor: Marilyn Ghezzi, MSW, LCSW
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Course Web site: <http://blackboard.unc.edu>

Course Description: This course examines discrimination and its implications for social work practice. Particular attention is paid to issues of gender, race, and the consequences of social inequality on individuals and families.

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of prejudice and effects of discrimination on individuals and groups, especially with regard to race and gender. Other populations to be considered are ethnic groups, older persons, gays and lesbians, disabled persons, and persons who reside in rural areas.
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 role played by advocacy groups in minimizing barriers to opportunities and services for populations who experience discrimination.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics of excluding and being excluded at the individual, group, and familial level.
5. Identify and manage their own feelings of difference and similarity as they relate to the development of self and their own practice skills.
6. Identify and consider ways of addressing institutional discrimination as it appears in social welfare policy and in the management and practice of human services.
7. Demonstrate an ability to apply social work values and ethics to practice with diverse populations.

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

Course Rationale:

This course recognizes the fact that all social workers have a responsibility to meet the needs of diverse client systems in our society; and, therefore, all social workers should have some specific knowledge about these groups. 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 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. Although institutional racism and sexism are the main thrust, the course also explores the implications and connections of discrimination for other special populations, including ethnic groups, older persons, gays and lesbians, and the disabled. The common denominator for all of these groups is the fact that they have been constantly affected by social, economical and legal biases—they have been made to feel different from the majority or dominant group.

Required Texts:

Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W, Castaneda, R., Hackman, H., Peters, M., & Zuniga, X. (2000). (Eds.) *Readings for diversity and social justice*. New York: Routledge.

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

Other readings required for the course are either available online or will be posted on our class blackboard site.

Attendance and Participation:

Since many controversial topics will be discussed it is very important to create a safe classroom environment. You can contribute to this environment by listening respectfully to other's ideas and by presenting your own ideas in a clear and respectful manner. It is also helpful if you can understand and appreciate a point of view different from your own even if you do not agree with it. Class participation also involves linking experience and opinion to the course readings.

Attendance at all class sessions is expected; it is important to be on time so as not to disrupt class. In order to fully participate in and benefit from each class session, students must complete required readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. **Class participation is 10% of your grade.** Points will be deducted from the base score if you miss class, are late, leave early or are unprepared.

Assignments:

Heritage gallery assignment (5 pts) Will be presented on Jan. 28 and Feb. 4

Each of us has our own rich heritage and it is ever present in our lives and actions. Heritage shapes us in varied and profound ways. Heritage exists in foods, clothes, gardens, art, music and language. Heritage exists in rituals, symbols, festivals, ceremonies, technologies, architecture and artifacts.

This assignment is designed to honor the heritage of each class member by showcasing it. Bring an expression of your heritage for display and discussion (of about 10 minutes) . You should describe the significance of this piece of heritage and why social workers should know about this aspect of your heritage. This can be an artifact, a recipe, a glossary of terms, a tradition, a performance, an art form-- anything that comes out of your group identity.

Midterm Exam (20 pts) March 3

This will be an in class, closed book exam consisting of short answers and true/false questions and very brief essay questions.

Advocacy Organization Analysis (25 points)- Due March 17

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, American Obesity Association, Triangle Native American Society) that works to address the discrimination or oppression faced by a subgroup of the population. This subgroup 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 subgroup's 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 to the instructor no later than **February 11** .

In a 6-7 page 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. To what extent are members of the subgroups involved ?
6. What major work has the organization accomplished in the past year? What plans are currently underway?

7. What are the major barriers the organization faces in meeting its objective?
8. Has America's consciousness level been raised because of this organization's work? Describe the organization's success or failure in this area. Use specific examples to buttress your response.
9. If you were serving as a board members or executive director for this organization, what would your objectives be for the next year? How (be specific) will you work to achieve them? What tools and resources will you need to achieve them?

Book review (15 pts) Due on March 31

Read one book which examines a diverse group **to which you do not belong**. You can choose from a list prepared by the instructor. An outline for the Book Review follows:

1. Summarize the book in one page or less,
2. Analyze the book using concepts from this class-- include citations. (2-3 pages)
3. Present your personal assessment of the book and explain how this assignment will affect your professional practice. (1-2 pages)

Paper length should not exceed 6 pages.

Clinical application paper- (25 pts) Due February 18 and April 21

Choose a client from a diverse/oppressed group that you are working with this semester. In one page please describe the client and your role with them-- **due February 18**. Identify the client by a fictitious first name only and leave out identifying information such as where the client works, what city they live in, etc. (More information on disguising case material will be provided in class)

How has your work with this client been affected by what you have learned in this class? Do you see this client any differently now than at the beginning of the semester? How would you assess this client? What are the client's strengths? Discuss your personal reactions to this client and how that may affect your work with them. **Please cite specific course readings and identify at least one additional resource which would aid your work with this client** (such as APA guidelines, NABSW guidelines, etc) which can help you to assess or intervene with this client in a culturally competent manner.

If you are not working with clients this semester or cannot identify a client from an oppressed group, you must talk with me about it. An alternative assignment based on a case study is possible.

Paper length should not exceed 6 pages.

APA and 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, Fifth Edition (2001)* that is available at most bookstores. The following web sites provide additional information:

<http://juno.concordia.ca/help/howto/apa.php> (general information about documentation using APA style)

<http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html> (APA Style for material in electronic formats).

The *UNC School of Social Work Style Guide: A Writing Manual for Social Work Students* (<http://ssw.unc.edu/currentStudent/writingguide.pdf>) also contains basic APA information and a

section on how to avoid misuse of the words and ideas of others in your written work. **Students are strongly encouraged to review the section on plagiarism carefully.** All instances of academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary measures pre-established by the School of Social Work and the University.

Honor Code

The Student Honor Code is always in effect in this course. The *Instrument of Student Judicial Governance* (<http://instrument.unc.edu/>) requires that you vouch for your compliance on all your written work. You must write the following pledge in full on each document title page: **“I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”** Sign and date your statement.

Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that affect their participation in the course must notify the instructor if they wish to have accommodations in instructional format, examination format, etc. The instructor will work with the Office of Disabilities and the student to make appropriate accommodations.

Grades

The School of Social Work uses an evaluation system of Honors (H), Pass (P), Low Pass (L), and Fail (F). For this class, the numerical value of an H ranges from 94 - 100; a P is 80 - 93; an L is 70 - 79. A grade of P is considered 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. A student receiving nine or more Low Passing credits is ineligible to continue in graduate school.

Late Papers

Late papers are strongly discouraged. All papers and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates noted on the Schedule, unless a change in date has been announced by the instructor in class. **Five points will be deducted for each day that a paper is late regardless of the reason for the lateness.**

Schedule and Course Outline, Spring 2008

Class 1- January 14- Overview of the Course, review of syllabus and assignments

NASW code of ethics- <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

NASW cultural competence standards for social work practice-

http://www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/cultural_competence.asp

Holiday- January 21- MLK Birthday

Class 2- January 28- Definitions and conceptual overview

Adams text: Section 1 Conceptual Framework. pp. 1-60

McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School*, 49 (2), 31-35. (online)

Class 3- February 4- Racism

Adams text: Section 2, Racism, pp. 61-132.

Lincoln A. (1863). The Emancipation Declaration. (online)

Class 4- February 11- African American historical legacy

King, M.L. (1963). Letter from a Birmingham City Jail. (online)

Billingsley, A. (1992). The African American heritage of African-American families. In *Climbing Jacob's ladder: The enduring legacy of African-American families* (Chapter 3, pp. 83-95). (Farrell e-reserves)

Mosley-Howard, G.S. & Burgan Evans, C. (2000). Relationships and contemporary experiences of the African American Family: An Ethnographic case study. *Journal of Black Studies*, 30 (3), 428-452. (online)

Morris, A.D. (1999). A retrospective on the civil rights movement: Political and intellectual landmarks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 25, 517-539. (online)

Class 5- February 18- Race/ Ethnicity

Bordewich, F.M. (1996). We ain't got feathers and beads. In *Killing the white man's Indian* (pp. 66-90). New York: Doubleday. (blackboard)

Truth, fiction and Lou Dobbs, NY Times, May 30, 2007

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/30/business/30leonhardt.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

Johnson, J.H., Johnson-Webb, K.D. & Farrell 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>

Lee, E. (1997). Overview: The assessment and treatment of Asian American families. In *Working with Asian Americans: A guide for clinicians*, 3-36. (blackboard)

Class 6- February 25- Gender

Adams text: Section 4, Sexism, pp. 199-260.

Willis, E. (1983). Abortion: Is a woman a person? In A.Snitow, C. Stansell & S. Thompson (Eds.), *Powers of desire: The Politics of sexuality*. New York: Monthly Review Press. (blackboard)

Class 7- March 3- Mid term exam

March 10- Spring Break

Class 8- March 17- Issues of sexual orientation

Adams: Section 5, Heterosexism, pp. 261-318

Cerbone, A.R. (1991). The effects of political activism on psychotherapy: A case study. In C. Silverstein (Ed.), *Gays, lesbians and their therapists*. New York: W.W.Norton. (blackboard)

Class 9- March 24- Anti-semitism and Religious Oppression

Adams: Section 3, Anti-Semitism, pp. 133-198

Levine, J. (2001). Working with victims of persecution: Lessons from Holocaust survivors. *Social Work*, 46 (4), 350-360. (online)

Hodge, D. (2002). Does social work oppress Evangelical Christians? A “New Class” analysis of society and social work. *Social Work*, 47 (4), 401-414. (online)

Class 10- March 31- Ableism, Classism

Adams: Section 6, Ableism, pp. 317-378.

Adams: Section 7, Classism, pp. 379-425.

Snow, K. (09/2005). People first language. [online] www.disabilityisnatural.com

Class 11- April 7- Ageism

Carlton LaNey, I. (1992). Elderly black farm women: A population at risk. *Social Work*, 37 (6), 517-523. (online)

Carlton LaNey, I. (2005) African Americans Aging in the Rural South.

Class 12- April 14- Advocacy and Social Justice

Adams: Section 8, Working for Social Justice, pp. 447-498.

American Psychological Association. (1998). Hate crimes today: An age-old foe in modern dress. [online]. <http://www.apa.org/releases/hate.html>

Abromsky, S. (1999). Crime: When they get out. *Atlantic Monthly*, 283 (6). 30-36. (online)

Gibelman, M. (2000). Affirmative action at the crossroads: A social justice perspective. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 27 (1), 153-174. (online)

Class 13- April 21- Practice skills

Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (1999). Sociopolitical considerations of trust and mistrust in multicultural counseling and therapy. In *Counseling the culturally different: Theory and practice* (pp. 27-49). New York: John Wiley. (blackboard)

Swigonski, M. (1996). Challenging privilege through Africentric social work practice. *Social Work*, 41 (2), 153-161. (online)