

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
SW 518 Social Work and Oppression

Instructor: Christy Hickman, CMSW (Monday sections)
(865) 805-1664 (cell)

Juan Barthelemy, MSW, MAE (Wednesday section)
jbarthel@ utk.edu
974-9134 (office)

Office hours: as arranged in class

Code of Conduct:

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook (www.csw.utk.edu)

The Honor Statement:

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics*, 2001).

Disability

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

This course is a required Foundation course that examines the sources, dynamics, and impact of oppression in U.S. society as it is manifested in both social ecological systems with an emphasis on economic systems, and personal experience. At the level of social ecological systems, the course examines the ways in which oppression and discrimination are institutionalized in the various sectors of American society in forms such as racism, sexism, classism, ageism, physical and mental ability and heterosexism. At the level of individual experience, the course examines the impact of oppression on individuals who vary in such characteristics as race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, age, and religion. The course also considers connections among forms of oppression; the ideology of domination and subordination which supports and perpetuates oppression; and social work's role in challenging oppression and promoting a socially and economically just society and responsive, humane social agencies through strategies such as grassroots organizing and political activism.

Course Rationale

By virtue of its historical traditions, values, and professional code of ethics, social work has a commitment and responsibility to challenge oppressive social systems and to work with individuals and groups who experience the impact of all forms of oppression. In order to meet this professional commitment, students need to understand the forms and consequences of oppression and institutional discrimination; they must be able to analyze and identify oppression and privilege in all institutional and organizational contexts; and they must know appropriate strategies to challenge and change oppressive conditions.

Course Objectives:

Through course assignments, class activities, and class discussion, students are expected to:

1. describe the ways in which the intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other identifying characteristics shape both individual experience and social systems of privilege and inequality in United States society;
2. describe the mechanisms and effects of institutional forms of discrimination and oppression, including racism, sexism, social classism, economic classism, heterosexism, ableism, and ageism;
3. explain how the ideology of domination and subordination underlies, links, and perpetuates various forms of oppression;
4. describe between-group and within-group variations in individuals' experiences of and responses to oppression;
5. articulate social work's vision of an inclusive, socially and economically just society;
6. identify the role of strategies such as grassroots organizing and political activism in social change efforts to counter oppression within and across institutional sectors;
7. describe the role of social workers in agency accountability to counter oppression in service delivery settings and organizations; within and across institutional sectors;
8. analyze the mechanisms and effects of oppression and institutional discrimination within social agencies and service delivery systems and devise strategies for countering discrimination and creating responsive and humane agencies and service systems.

Required Texts:

Andersen, M.L. & Collins, P.H. (2000). *Race, class, and gender (4th ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

Collins, C. & Yeskel, F. with United for a Fair Economy (2000). *Economic Apartheid in America*. New York: The Free Press.

Tatum, Beverly Daniel. 1999. "*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? " and Other Conversations About Race* (revised version). New York: Basic Books.

Course Requirements:

1. Attend all scheduled classes and arrive promptly. After two absences, each additional absence will lower your final course grade one unit. (For example, if your final average is a B and you have three absences, your final grade will be a C+). Two "late arrival" entries (i.e., coming to class after attendance has been taken) is equal to one absence.
2. Come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings for that class session.
3. Participate in class discussions and exercises *evidencing respect for the beliefs and experiences of others*.
4. Complete all written assignments by their due date; permission for late submission of assignments will be granted IF the student notifies the instructor in writing or by phone message to the College (865-974-3351) at least ONE hour prior to the date/time when the assignment is due. A penalty will be applied to the grades of assignments received after the due date.

CONTRACTING

Each student will contract for a final course grade. Students may contract for a "B" in the class or may contract for a higher grade (a "B+" or an "A").

To receive a “B” in this course, all students are to write six (6) brief papers. Credit will be given for a paper if it is responsive to the assignment, clearly written, and generally free of grammatical errors. That is, the paper must merit a grade of **AB@** or better. In the brief papers, students are to respond to the question or questions distributed in class that address specific course readings. Each paper is to be two pages long (typed, double-spaced, 12 point font). Questions for each paper will be distributed in class one week prior to its due date.

Credit will be given for each paper if it is responsive to the requirements of the assignment(s), if it is well-organized and clearly written. That is, each paper must merit a grade of "B" or better. Any paper that does not merit a grade of at least a “B” will be returned to the student for revision.

To receive a “B+” or an “A” in this course, students must complete the six brief papers AND write an analytical paper on a social welfare issue of your choice, applying the concepts and frameworks used in this course. This paper must also include a *community involvement* component. Specifically, you must investigate the local manifestations of your issue and local efforts to address the issue. The community involvement component might consist of attending lectures, workshops, or organizational meetings related to your issue. Your paper should address: how the issue is defined and who has "definitional power" in defining it; the scope of the problem overall; local manifestations of the problem; and a thorough analysis of the problem from the perspective of "the matrix of domination and subordination" and other course concepts. You must clearly specify how you completed the community involvement component of the assignment and what your involvement contributed to your understanding and analysis of the issue. The paper should be between 12-15 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, APA format). Grading criteria: Your analytical paper will be evaluated based on the clarity and strength of your writing (including grammar, punctuation, and syntax), the breadth and strength of your analysis (including the appropriate use of source material and application of course concepts), and the integration of community involvement into your research and analysis. If you need help in writing and editing, you are encouraged to make an appointment at the UT Writing Center at 974-2611.

Course Outline:

Unit I. Diversity; Social Inequality and Social Justice; Discrimination and Oppression

Session 1: (Wed. Section 8-21) (Monday sections 8-26)

Syllabus and introduction to the course

Video: Affluenza

Assignment for next class: Oppression in the news

Session 2: (Wed. section 8-28) (Monday sections 9-9)

Oppression in the News

Readings:

- Andersen & Collins- Introduction and Part I, "Shifting the Center and Reconstructing Knowledge" (pp. 1-20); Madrid, "Missing People and Others: Joining Together to Expand the Circle" (pp. 23-28); Garvey, "My problem with Multicultural Education" (pp. 361-365)
- Flowers, N (Ed.) (1998). *Human rights here and now*. Chicago: The Human Rights Educators' Network and Amnesty International USA. "What are human rights", "A short history of human rights", "The International Declaration of Human Rights", and "The Bill of Rights"

Session 3: (Wed. section 9-4, Mon. sections 9-16)

Oppression in the news

Readings:

- Anderson & Collins- Moraga, "La Guera" (pp. 28- 35); Jordan, "Report from the Bahamas" (pp. 35-44).
- Wallis, J. (1992). *By accident of birth* (pp. 64-68). In *America's Original Sin* (2nd. Ed.). Washington, DC: Sojourners.

Unit II. Race, Ethnicity and Nationality; Racism and Ethnocentrism

Session 4: (Wed. section 9-11, Mon sections 9-23)

Oppression in the news

Video: "Shadows of Hate" The Southern Poverty Law Center

Readings:

- Anderson & Collins- Introduction to Part II, "Conceptualizing Race, Class, and Gender" (pp. 67-87); Frye, "Oppression" (pp. 48-52); Atkin & Rich, "Slapping: The Politics of Scapegoating" (pp. 201-205).
- Tatum - Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 3-28)

Session 5: (Wed. Section 9-18, Mon. sections 9-30)

Oppression in the news

Video: "Psychological residuals of slavery"

Readings:

- Anderson & Collins - West, "Race matters" (pp. 119- 124); McIntosh, "White privilege and male privilege" (pp. 95-105); Martinez, "Seeing More than Black and White" (pp. 108-115); Yamato, "Something About the Subject Makes it Hard to Name" (pp. 90-95).
- Tatum - chapters 3, 4 & 5 (pp. 31-90).
- Swigonski, M. (1996). Challenging privilege through Afrocentric social work practice. *Social Work, 41*, 153-161.

Session 6: (Wed. section 9-25, Mon. sections 10-7)

Oppression in the news

Video: "Skin Deep"

Readings:

- Tatum - chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (pp. 93-206)
- Olsson, J. "Detour spotting for White anti-racists: A tool for change". Cultural Bridges.

Unit III. Poverty and Wealth; Social and Economic Class; Classism**Session 7:** (Wed. section 10-2; Mon. sections 10-14)

Oppression in the news

Video: "Roger and me"

Readings:

- Anderson & Collins- Langston, "Tired of Playing Monopoly?" (pp. 125-134); Ehrenreich, "The Silenced Majority" (pp. 143-146); Newman, "Working Poor, Working Hard" (pp. 259-263)
- Mantsios, *AMedia Magic: Making Class Invisible* (pp. 333-342); Jennings & Kushnick *APoverty as Race, Power and Wealth* (pp. 139-143)
- Collins & Yeskel - chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 13-67)

Session 8: (Wed. section 10-9; Mon. sections 10-21)

Oppression in the news

Readings:

- Anderson & Collins- Conley, *AWealth Matters* (pp. 134-139); Collins, *AAid to Dependent Corporations: Exposing Federal Handouts to the Wealthy* (pp. 395-400).
- Collins & Yeskel - chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 68-140)

Session 9: (Wed. section 10-16; Mon. sections 10-28)

Oppression in the news

Video: "Fast food women"

Readings

- Anderson & Collins- Introduction to Part III, *ARethinking Institutions* (pp. 213-228); Zinn & Eitzen, *AEconomic Restructuring and Systems of Inequality at Century's End* (pp. 229-234); Vanderstaay, *AThe Armstrongs: Oral history of a Homeless American Family* (pp. 263-268); Moore & Pinderhughes, *AThe Latino Population: The Importance of Economic Restructuring* (pp. 251-259).
- Collins & Yeskel - chapter 5 (pp. 141-214)

Unit IV .Gender and Sexual Orientation; Sexism and Heterosexism; Age and Ageism; Mental and**Physical Ability and Ableism****Session 10:** (Wed. section 10-23; Mon. section 11-4)

Oppression in the news

Video: A Conversation with Brian McNaught: Growing Up Gay

Readings:

- Andersen & Collins- Introduction to Part IV, *AAAnalyzing Social Issues* (pp. 405-417); Steinem, "If Men Could Menstruate--" (pp. 365-368); Espiritu, *AIdeological Racism and Cultural Resistance* (191-201); Palakow, *AThe Shredded Net* (pp. 389-395); Zinn et.a., *AGender through the Prism of Difference* (pp. 168-177); Kokopeli & Lakey, "More Power Than We Want: Masculine Sexuality and Violence" (pp. 508-514); Rubin, *AIIs This a White Country, or What?* (pp. 419-427).

Session 11: (Wed. section 10-30; Mon. sections 11-11)

Oppression in the news

Video: "Killing her softly- 3"

Readings

- Andersen & Collins- Mickelson & Smith, *Can Education Eliminate Race, Class, and Gender Inequality?* (pp.376-389).
- Adams, C.J. (1995). "Women battering and harm to animals" (pp. 55-84). In C.J. Adams & J. Donovan (Eds.) *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*. Duke University Press.

Session 12: (Wed. section 11-6; Mon. sections 11-18)

Oppression in the news

Readings

- Andersen & Collins- Dill, "Our Mothers' Grief: Racial Ethnic Women and the Maintenance of Families" (pp. 268-289); Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" (pp. 177-185); Jordan, "A New Politics of Sexuality" (pp. 466-470); Gluckman & Reed, "Where has Gay Liberation Gone: An Interview with Barbara Smith" (pp. 470-474).
- Barrios, P., & Egan, M. 2002. *Living in a bicultural world and finding the way home: Native women's stories.* *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 17(2), 206-228.
- Bricout, J. 2001. *Making computer-mediated education responsive to the accommodation needs of students with disabilities.* *Journal of Social Work Education*, 37(2), 267-281.

Unit V. Challenging Oppression: Expanding Awareness and Compassionate Action

Session 13: (Wed. section 11-13; Mon. sections 11-25)

Oppression in the news

Readings:

- Andersen & Collins- Introduction to Part V, "Making a Difference," (pp. 531-539); Anner, "Having the Tools at Hand: Building Successful Multicultural Social Justice Organizations" (pp. 573-583).
- Beckett, J., Dungee-Anderson, D. 1996. A framework for agency-based multicultural training and supervision. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 4(4), 27-48.
- Chaskin, R., Joseph, M., & Chipenda-Dansokho, S. 1997. *Implementing comprehensive community development: Possibilities and limitations.* *Social Work*, 42 (5), 435-443.
- Padilla, Y. 1997. *Immigrant policy: Issues for social work practice.* *Social Work*, 42 (6), 595-606.

Session 14: (Wed. section 11-20; Mon. sections 12-2)

Student presentations of analytical papers on social welfare issues

Course evaluation