

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 517 - Diversity, Social and Economic Justice, and Oppression  
(2 credit hours)  
Spring 2008**

**Instructor:** Leonora E. Foels, LCSW, PhD

**Phone:** 256-1885 ext. 136

**Class Time:** Monday, 1:00 to 4:50 pm  
Monday (online)

**Email:** [lfoels@utk.edu](mailto:lfoels@utk.edu)

**Office Hours:** Monday, 5:00 to 6:00 pm and by appointment.

**Office:** Room 280

**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.utk.csw.edu](http://www.utk.csw.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*, 2007).

**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. The course critically assesses theory and research about sources, forms, and outcomes of oppression in the context of the cultural, ecological, developmental, and transactional theories, social work values and ethics, and a human rights perspective. The course integrates local to international information about our global, diverse, multicultural society with evidence-based knowledge and skills that address oppression, are culturally affirming, and promote social and economic justice and human dignity.

**Course Rationale**

Social work's traditions, values, and code of ethics provide the basis for the professional commitment to work with client systems (i.e., individuals, families, groups, communities, organizations) that experience the impact of oppression and social injustice, and the responsibility to challenge oppressive social systems. Social work students, therefore, must understand and critically analyze theory and research concerning the forms, mechanisms, and consequences of oppression, discrimination, and social injustice. Students require evidence-based knowledge and skills in preparation for culturally competent practice in work with multicultural client systems, organizations, agencies, and communities.

## Course Competencies

By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to demonstrate (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1-Communicate affirmation & respect for the diversity and strengths across and within various cultures/cultural backgrounds (i.e., race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, family structure, relational status, national origin, age and religion) as detailed in the NASW Code of Ethics and the International Federation of Social Work Code of Ethics.

(Values/ethics- F.1, 2; Diversity-F.1). *(content: broad definitions of culture and diversity; the dimensions, such as gender roles, family structure, social rules, that may vary within and across cultures/cultural backgrounds (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, age, ableism, immigration status, sexual orientation, religion, social and economic class).*

2-Articulate the influence of personal belief systems and values concerning diversity and culture/cultural background(s) on their own social work practice. (CT/EBP-F.2; Values/ethics-F.1, F.2; Pops at-Risk & SJ-F.5; Diversity -F.2). *(content: social constructions of normality, values, and concepts; self-awareness and critical analysis of one's own culture, cultural identity(ies), beliefs, biases, values, privilege and status, and naiveties; personal epistemology).*

3- Formulate a four-year plan to begin developing cultural competence in a commitment to life long professional learning and to utilizing critical analysis for culturally affirming evidence-based practice. (Diversity- F.2, F.5; CT/EBP- F.1, F.2, F.3; Values/ethics-F.2, F.4; Pops at-risk & SJ- F.2, F.5)

*(content: critical analysis of research findings, and research; information technology skills for locating culturally specific knowledge for practice with multicultural populations (e.g., Afrocentric, feminist, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Asian American, religious, disability and/or GLBTQ ); critical analysis of the ongoing influence of one's own values, lifestyle, class, culture on client/client system-practitioner work; social constructions of normality).*

4-Explicate how culture/cultural background (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ethnicity, and disability and/or immigration status) interact to influence the formation of identity, belief systems, worldview, values, and feelings of clients/client systems, practitioners, group membership, and access to resources, social & economic justice. (Diversity-F.2, F.3; Pops at-risk & SJ-F.5, F.6; Practice-F.8). *(content: historical experiences of diverse cultures and how these shape world views, belief systems, values, expectations and feelings of clients and client systems; heterogeneity and homogeneity within and across cultures/cultural backgrounds; the role of socio-economic class in the interaction of culture/cultural background and the development of identity, beliefs, worldviews, acculturation, assimilation; the experience of multiple oppression {inter-sectionality}; the experience of biculturalism and liminality; promoting social and economic justice; strategies to combat discrimination and oppression).*

5-Explicate the role of power and privilege in institutionalized oppression, stigmatization, and discrimination, for example, in racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and ageism, locally, across the globe and in thinking about culture, cultural background and social issues and concerns. (Diversity-F.3, F.6; CT/EBP- F.1, F.4; Pop at-Risk & SJ- F.3, F.5; Practice-F.8).*(content: nature of power and privilege, and their roles in the dynamics of oppression;*

*current status of historically oppressed groups, including, for example, African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, Native American, females, religious minorities, the poor, and immigrating persons; institutional oppression and discrimination; the effect of oppression on access to societal resources, human and civil rights; theories explaining societal mechanisms in oppression, oppressive social systems and structures; the local, national, and global interconnectedness of oppression; cultural/national identity development, immigration/acculturation).*

6-Identify culturally acceptable resources for clients/client systems that build upon the strengths, resources, and inherent support systems of clients/client systems' cultures/cultural backgrounds. (Diversity- F.4, F.5; CT/EBP- F.3). (*content; information technology skills for locating culturally acceptable and culturally specific resources; critical analysis of resources for cultural competence/cultural affirmation; strengths and empowerment perspectives*).

### **Required Text**

Andersen, M. L. & Collins, P. H. (2007). *Race, class, & gender: An anthology* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

### **Supplemental Text**

Weaver, H. (2005). *Explorations in cultural competence: Journeys to the four directions*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Brooks/Cole.

### **Course Requirements**

Graduate level work includes an ability to synthesize one's experience and knowledge into an explanation that illuminates theory and an understanding of the course material. The writing of papers is expected to be organized, succinct in conceptualization and syntax and grammatically correct. Even if you use a word processing program with spell check, proof read your work. The usage of the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)** format including the use of headings/subheadings, reference list, and title page is expected to be used as a guide for writing and citing sources. The following criteria will be used for all graded assignments:

- Quality and clarity of writing and organization;
- Comprehensiveness;
- The extent to which course concepts,, discussion and readings are reflected in the writing; and
- Submission of assignments on the dates specified within the guidelines provided.

#### **1. Assigned Readings, Activities, and Attendance**

Students are expected to complete all readings assigned by the instructor before attending class; participate in all on-line and in class discussions; and demonstrate respect for all beliefs and experiences of others in all course activities and interactions with fellow

students. Students are also encouraged as they read and as they work in the field to bring their reactions and questions to class for discussion. The format for activities will be performed in class related to the course readings and lectures in small group exercises.

Regular attendance is essential. Students are expected to be on time and attend all class sessions. In the case of a medical or personal emergency, students should make reasonable effort to contact the instructor in advance via e-mail or voice mail. Students will only be excused for documented emergencies. Unexcused absences from the course and chronic lateness will result in reduction of the final grade by one grade level.

All class assignments are expected to be submitted on their specific due date. Any assignment **NOT submitted** on the specified due date is subject to a **penalty of two (2) points per day** until the assignment is turned in. **Any assignment that is more than 7 days overdue will not be accepted.**

## 2. Assignments

### **Interview and Self-Reflective Analysis; Due Week 2 (1/21/08)**

The purpose of this assignment is to develop an understanding what it means to live as a member of an ethnic group unlike the one(s) to which you yourself belong and to gain an insider's view of the world of the informant. Students will be asked to interview an individual from a culture different from their own. You may NOT use a relative, a colleague, a client or supervisor at your place of employment or field placement nor another UT student, staff or faculty member as your informant.

Although this interview should focus on the informant's story, students will be asked to write a paper describing what is it like to be a person with his/her demographic characteristics; his/her experiences in school, place of employment, social activities such as dating, meeting people, shopping centers, buying groceries, applying for work, and other general events/experiences. This is NOT a social work interview. Additional information regarding the guidelines for completing this written assignment will be discussed in class and available on the course website.

### **Cultural Literacy; Due Week 4 (2/4/08)**

The purpose of this assignment is to help students learn about a culture different from their own. Focusing on the culture of the informant used for the previous assignment (self-reflective analysis), students will conduct a search about this cultural group in order to learn as much as possible about this culture to figure out how to best meet the needs of a client from this culture using evidence based strategies.

Students will be asked to describe the information gathered, discuss how the information gathered helped understand this culture, how it will help meet the needs of a client(s) from this culture, and how their professional practice improved from having participated

in this activity. Additional information regarding the guidelines for completing this assignment will be discussed in class and available on the course website.

### **“To Market”; Due Week 6 (2/18/08)**

The purpose of this assignment is to expose students to the normal activities of a culture different from their own. Focusing on the culture of the informant used for the previous assignments, students will be asked to take a trip to a market that services the informant’s ethnic group and conduct an environmental analysis. The analysis will consist of concepts and symbols reflective of the culture in everyday life.

After visiting the market, students will be asked to report on their experience, what they learned about the culture, how their lives changed, and how their professional practice was enhanced from having participated in this activity. Additional information regarding the guidelines for completing this assignment will be discussed in class and available on the course website.

### **A Four Year Life Long Learning Plan; Due Week 7 (2/25/08)**

Students will develop self-awareness through a personal self-assessment or his/her own cultural competence. Upon examination of one’s values, lifestyle, class, culture on client/client system practitioner work, students will develop a detailed plan outlining an ongoing commitment to life long professional learning and professional development for culturally competence practice. Additional information regarding the guidelines for completing this assignment will be discussed in class and available on the course website.

### **On Line Class Assignments and Blackboard Discussions**

There will be web classes with assignments and discussion board activities throughout the semester. Details of each discussion board activity will be available in a timely manner. Every student is expected to complete ALL assignments prior to the date posted on the syllabus and discussion board activities by the specific date. Once the date has past, the material will not longer be available and you will receive a ZERO for any assignment or discussion board activity not completed.

### **Grade Distribution**

In-class and blackboard activities	10 points
Interview and Self Reflective Analysis	20 points
Cultural Literacy and Self Reflection	20 points
“To Market” and Self Reflection	20 points
Life Long Learning Plan	<u>30 points</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

\*Due dates are noted on each assignment as well as the attached course schedule.

## **Grading Scale**

The following grading scale will be used for final course grade.

- A (95-100) Outstanding/Superior – Exceptional performance. Consistently exceeds expectations.
- B+ (90-94) Very Good – Student consistently meets and occasionally exceeds normal expectations for the course.
- B (85-89) Good – Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.
- C+ (80-84) Average – There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting the normal expectations for the course.
- C (70-79) Poor - There is a lack of understanding of course content. Student does not meet course expectations.
- F (69-Below) Very Poor – There is a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments. Course expectations are not met.

## **Course Outline**

### **Week 1 (1/14/08)**

#### **Lecture**

Overview of course. Review of syllabus, discussion of assignments, blackboard and in-class activities, and library reserve information. Define and discuss evidence-based knowledge (empirical, expert, and experiential) of diversity, social and economic justice and oppression, dimensions of culture, cultural backgrounds, cultural competence, culturally competence practice, and oppression.

#### **Video**

*PBS: Race: The power of illusion*

#### **Required Readings**

Andersen & Collins

Part I, Why race, class, and gender still matter

Part I, Frye -- Oppression

Part I, Lorde -- Age, race, class, and sex: Women redefining difference

Part I, Takaki -- A different mirror

Part II: Systems of power and inequality

#### ***Supplemental Readings***

Weaver, H. (2005)

Introduction (pages 1-5)

Chapter 1: Social work history and cultural diversity

Chapter 2: Cultural identity: Theories and implications

**Week 2 (1/21/08)**

**Lecture** On observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, class will not be held. Students are responsible for the readings and completing web class 1.

**Web**

**Class 1** Cultural competence websites: READ AT LEAST ONE of the websites listed below and respond to discussion board posting on cultural competence and ethics.

National Association of Social Workers (NASW). (2001). *Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*.

[www.socialworkers.org/sections/credentials/cultural\\_comp.asp](http://www.socialworkers.org/sections/credentials/cultural_comp.asp)

National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University. Washington, D.C.

<http://www.georgetown.edu/eseach/gucdc/ncc/index.html>.

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Office of Minority Health. (2001). *National standards for culturally and linguistically appropriate service in health care: Final report*

<http://www.omhrc.gov/CLAS/index/htm>

**Activity** Step 1 in becoming culturally competent: Developing self-awareness. Critically analyze you own culture, cultural identity, beliefs, values, and implication to social work practice. Draft an outline of your four – year plan for developing cultural competence & life long learning.

**Required Readings**

Weaver, H. (2005)

Chapter 3: Self-reflection and beyond: The challenges of examining cultural diversity honestly

Chapter 4: Striving for cultural competence

**Week 3 (1/28/08)**

**Lecture** Nature of power and privilege: Institutionalized oppression, discrimination, stigmatization, social construction(s), societal influences, dynamics of oppression, and stereotypes.

**Activity** Critical analysis of media (Bring lay/'slick' magazines to class)

**Required Readings**

Andersen & Collins

Part II, Zinn, Mondagneu-Sotelo, & Messner -- Sex and gender through the prism of difference

Part II, Kilbourne -- "You talkin' to me?"

Part III: The structure of social institutions (only pages 275-277)

Part III, Mantsios -- Media magic: Making class invisible

Part III, Moore -- Racist stereotyping in the English language  
Part III, Snipp -- The first Americans: American Indians

***Supplemental Readings***

Weaver, H. (2005)  
Chapter 5: Native Americans  
Chapter 7: Latinos

**Week 4 (2/4/08)**

**Lecture** Nature of power and privilege continued: Institutionalized oppression, discrimination, stigmatization, societal influences and effects, dynamics of oppression, stereotypes, social systems and structures.

**Required Readings**

Andersen & Collins,  
Part II, Borilla-Silva -- Racism without "racists"  
Part II, Williams -- Of race and risk  
Part II, Martinez -- Seeing more than black and white  
Part II, McIntosh -- White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack  
Part III, The structure of social institutions (only pages 267-282)  
Part III, Arnott & Matthaehi -- Race, class, gender and women's works  
Part III, Newman -- The invisible poor

***Supplemental Readings***

Weaver, H. (2005)  
Chapter 6: African Americans – pages 110-134

**Week 5 (2/11/08)**

**Lecture** Nature of power and privilege continued: Effects of oppression, stereotypes, diversification of the older population, culturally-related values and attitudes

**Video** [PBS: Frontline: \*Living old: The modern realities of aging in America\*](#)

**Required Readings**

Andersen & Collins  
Part I, Madrid -- Missing people and others: Joining together

***Supplemental Readings***

Weaver, H. (2005)  
Chapter 8: Asian Americans  
Chapter 11: Arab Americans

**Week 6 (2/18/08)**

**Lecture** Critical analysis of informational technology of global/international issues

**Activity** Analysis of data gathered on cultures  
**Week 7 (2/25/08)**

**Lecture** Culturally responsiveness and understanding intra-cultural resources. Human and civil rights. The question of our borders and institutional oppression. International and global oppression & social justice

**Activity** Self-assessment: Professional life long plan

**Required Readings:**

Andersen & Collins

Part III, Childs -- Navigating interracial borders: Black-white couples and their social worlds

Part III, Lareau -- Unequal childhoods

**Websites:**

National Center for Human Rights Education: [www.nchre.org](http://www.nchre.org)

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights: [www.nnirr.org](http://www.nnirr.org)

**Supplemental Readings:**

Weaver, H. (2005)

Chapter 12: Immigrants and refugees

**Additional Resources**

Al-Krenawi, A., & Graham, J. (2000). Culturally sensitive social work practice with Arab clients in mental health settings. *Health & Social Work, 25*(1), 9-22.

Andersen, M. (2003). *Thinking about women: Sociological perspectives on sex and gender*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). NY: Metropolitan Books

Barnes, S. (2001). Stressors and strengths: A theoretical and practical examination of nuclear, single-parent, and augmented African American families. *Families in Society, 82*(5), 449-460.

Campinha-Bacote, J. (2002). The process of cultural competence in the delivery of healthcare services: A model of care. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing, 13*(3), 182-184.

Cohen, M. N. (1998). *Transforming the culture of intolerance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Collins, P. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). NY: Routledge.

Diamond, J. (1999). *Guns, germs and steel: The fates of human societies*. NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

- Dosser, D., Smith, A., Markowski, E., & Cain, H. (2001). Including families' spiritual beliefs and their faith communities in systems of care. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 5(3), 63-78.
- Freeman, J. (1994). *Women: A feminist perspective*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.
- Hodge, D. (2004). Working with Hindu clients in a spiritually sensitive manner. *Social Work*, 49(1), 27-38.
- Kimmell, M. S. & Messner, M. A. (Eds.). (1995). *Men's lives* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Kumashiro, K., (Ed.). (2001). *Troubling intersections of race and sexuality: Queer students of color and anti-oppressive education*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Lum, D. (2003). *Culturally competent practice: A framework for understanding diverse groups and justice issues* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Murguia, A., Peterson, R., & Zea, M. (2003). Use and implications of ethnomedical health care approaches among Central American Immigrants. *Health & Social Work*, 28(1), 43-52.
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW). (June 23, 2001). *Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*. Retrieved, June 9, 2005, from [www.socialworkers.org/sections/credentials/cultural\\_comp.asp](http://www.socialworkers.org/sections/credentials/cultural_comp.asp)
- Panos, P., & Panos, A. (2000). A model for a culture-sensitive assessment of patients in health care settings. *Social Work in Health Care*, 31(1), 49-62.
- Perkins, C. (1995). *The yellow wallpaper and other stories*. (Robert Shulman, Ed.). NY: Oxford University Press.
- Rothenberg, P. S. (Ed.). (1995). *Race, class and gender in the United States*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Rubin, L. B. (1983). *Intimate strangers: Men and women together*. NY: Harper & Collins.
- Rubin, L. B. (1976). *Worlds of pain: Life in the working-class family*. NY: Basic Books.
- Russell, D., & Harmes, R. (2001). *Femicide in global perspective*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Sout, K., & McPhail, B. (1998). *Confronting sexism & violence against women: A challenge for social work*. Chicago, IL: Longman Publishers.
- Sudha, S., & Multran, E. (2001). Race, ethnicity, nativity, and issues of health. *Research on Aging*, 23(1), 3-13.

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Office of Minority Health. (2001). *National standards for culturally and linguistically appropriate service in health care: Final report*. \_HYPERLINK "<http://www.omhrc.gov/CLAS/index/htm>" \t "\_parent" <http://www.omhrc.gov/CLAS/index/htm> .

Van Hook, M., Hugen, B., & Aguilar, M. (2001). *Spirituality within religious traditions in social work practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Weaver, H. (2003). *Voices of First Nations People*. New York: Haworth Press.

Williams, S., & Dilworth-Anderson, P. (2002). Systems of social support in families who care for dependent African American elders. *The Gerontologist*, 42(2), 224-236.