1. Course Description:

This course explores the origins and development of selected social variables characterizing racial, ethnic, religious, class and other cultural groups in contemporary U.S. society. Social and behavioral science theories and research findings on the allocation of different roles, status and opportunities to these populations are studied. A multidimensional, social justice and multicultural framework is established to examine privilege, discrimination and oppression. The course will emphasize that effective social work practice with diverse cultural groups involves understanding professional ethics in the context of the values of both the dominant society and the cultural community.

2. Course Content:

The course content includes an exploration of historical, social, and political contexts for the study of diverse cultural groups, as gleaned from contemporary social science theories and conceptual frameworks. The various components that make up a culture will be examined in conjunction with a survey of selected racial, physical or mental ability, ethnic, class, immigrant, sexual orientation, and gender groups in the United States. The status of these cultural groups is studied, including constructs such as the family, economic and educational attainment, development of informal and formal institutions within the cultural community, and modes of spiritual expression. The course also explores the impact of multiple social group memberships on social roles, help seeking and coping behavior, attitudes and values. In addition, the course contains a review of the contemporary conceptual frameworks influencing social science knowledge about intergroup relations and conflict including, but not limited to, culturally sensitive, culturally competent, and ethnoconscious practice. The course examines the relationships among privilege, discrimination and oppression for selected cultural groups, and the implications of these forces for social work practice, the administration of human service organizations, and the formulation of public policies. Individual and small group activities related to the construction of critical consciousness in social work are also included.
3. **Course Objectives:**

   Upon completion of this course, students will be able to perform the following skills:

1. Identify the historical, social, and political forces influencing the social constructions of diverse cultural groups in the United States by:
   a. Evaluating social science frameworks for the discussion of culture
   b. Distinguishing differences among culturally sensitive, culturally competent, multicultural and ethnoconscious frameworks in social work;
   c. Differentiating the experiences of indigenous and immigrant populations;
   d. Reviewing one’s own social group memberships and how they have influenced students’ opportunities and challenges.

2. Discuss the influences of discrimination, oppression and privilege on life experiences of diverse cultural groups by:
   a. Labeling forms of discrimination, prejudice and oppression as these differentially affect U.S. cultural groups including the poor, gay/lesbian/bisexual, ethnic, gender, racial, physical and mental ability, and social class groups;
   b. Identifying sources of intragroup and intergroup conflict stemming from cultural group membership;
   c. Describing social welfare policies and programs designed to address issues of differential treatment of cultural groups. Contrast these social welfare policies with those of other countries.
   d. Testing ones group participation and conflict management skills in an educational setting.

3. Review the potential between- and within-group similarities and differences among ethnic and racial groups in the United States and identify key variables to be considered by individuals attempting to work with these populations by:
   a. Examining historical, social and political forces influencing the current contexts these groups;
   b. Locating the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, ability, and sexual orientation for these groups;
   c. Critiquing the social science literature on ethnic and racial groups;
   d. Examining such variables as immigration and migration, cultural norms and roles, acculturation and assimilation, help-seeking behaviors, spirituality, employment and income, educational attainment, and the establishment of informal and formal institutions within these cultural groups;
   e. Comparing and contrasting the experiences of at least two different racial and/or ethnic groups discussed in class, using an ethnoconscious framework.

4. **Course Design:**

   This course uses various pedagogical strategies, including lecture, video, group work and guest presentations.
5. Source Materials:

Required Texts:


All Books Are Available at Shaman Drum Bookstore on State Street. Please notify the clerks at the bookstore so that they can bring the correct volumes to you if they are not readily accessible. There are also a number of resource materials on the class CTools site for your use.

Assignments and Grading:

Attendance and participation is required and will consist of 20% of your final grade. You will be assigned to a small group during the first week of class. Participation includes being present, on time, active, and prepared for class and group discussions. Reading the assigned materials prior to class is also required. Active discussion includes asking questions or providing critical perspectives on the readings, but may also include e-mail contact with the class’ CTools discussion group (which will be created the first week of class).

All Assignments must be typed, double-spaced, use a clear, readable 12 point font, one-inch margin, page numbered, and edited for spelling and grammatical errors. Points will be deducted from a paper that is difficult to read or one containing numerous spelling or grammatical errors. In addition to the stated criteria, papers will be graded for quality and clarity. Refer to “General Requirements for Class Papers in the School of Social Work” section of your Student Guide. Please be especially conscious of the appropriate methods for citing references so that inadvertent plagiarism does not occur. Remember that each submitted assignment should integrate course reading materials with other content. Two points per day are deducted from late assignments. Papers not received at the beginning of the class period are considered late. If you have any concerns about your paper, you should see the instructor before the paper is due.

ALL PAPERS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CTOOLS SITE.

ASSIGNMENT 1 (REQUIRED 10 Points DUE 1/24/05). On January 17, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day, the University of Michigan will host a series of programs commemorating the birthday of the Rev. Dr. King. This is not a holiday for members of this academic community, but a day of reflection and action. You are expected to attend at least one of the activities on the campus (see the website link on Ctools) and write a 2 page paper summarizing the major themes as they relate to forms of intersectionality. In the event that you will not be on campus that day, you must message the instructor and plan to complete the assignment with another program or activity outside of your home related to intersectionality as we use the term in this class. Do not forget to integrate course readings.
ASSIGNMENT 2: COMMENTARY (20 Points)- DUE February 14, 2005

This paper is designed to facilitate your reading and to promote the integration of praxis (critical self-reflection) into your personal and professional lives. A fully credited commentary would critically and succinctly cover all of the points outlined in the assignment, and use readings to demonstrate an understanding of the main issues, as well as personal reflections on the integration of this material in courses, professional practicum or any other spheres of influence. The page limit will be enforced and will require you to choose your words carefully. No matter how brilliant you might be on page 8 of your first commentary, the instructor will only read 7 pages and your brilliance will not be included in the determination of your grade for that assignment. Your commentary must be typed, double-spaced, and not smaller than 12-point font, with no less than 1-inch margins around all edges. Complete and accurate citations must be included.

This first commentary invites you to integrate personal experiences and course content. Please address the following points:

- How have historical, social, and political forces influenced your extended family’s opportunities and challenges?
- How have the interactions of multiple social group memberships differently affected outcomes for family members?
- What specific family influences are currently present in your own interactions with others?
- When did you learn that you were not “just an individual”?

When completing this assignment, please go back to at least two generations behind your own and consider migration, immigration, and class issues explicitly.
The instructor will read a maximum of 7 pages. DUE February 14, 2005

ASSIGNMENT 3: LINKING THE READINGS TO CONTEMPORARY CULTURES IN THE UNITED STATES (25 Points, to be completed between March 7- March 28, 2005)

Each class participant will be assigned to a group on the first day of class. The purpose of that group is to generate questions and observations drawn from the readings, and to link those readings to the contemporary world. Once during the term, each group will also facilitate a discussion of the pertinent readings for that week, linking these to pertinent literature and current affairs. The group is expected to discuss each reading but may link multiple readings when appropriate. Again, linkages to the lived experience of social workers and community advocates will be presented. In the first weeks of the term, some time will be allotted to the small groups for discussion. However, most of the work will need to be done via discussion groups or outside meetings to be determined by the group. The instructor will not engage in conflict management with a group. If the total membership comes to the consensus that one member has not been engaged in the group process and outcomes, then they will have to jointly approach me and be willing to provide evidence (unattended planning sessions, failure to complete tasks, etc.)

For the class presentation, the small groups are asked to do the following:

1. Describe the role(s) of culture and intersectionality as defined broadly in the course (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, spirituality, nation) as it relates to this topic. What kind of research has been done? What hypotheses have been offered?
Are all groups equally affected, or do particular intersectionalities (e.g. ability and/or religion) differently impact some groups? What evidence exists for the knowledge generated in this area from your readings? From other sources? In what ways does this issue influence culturally competent social work practice? Are there instances when it is less important?

2. Oppression—Critically analyze and reflect on the ways in which oppression and oppressive practices affect the environments of the targeted group using a contemporary resource from recent popular newspapers, magazines or websites. (Unfortunately there will not be time to show a film during these presentations, and any external speaker asked to attend will be limited to the group’s presentation maximum of 45 minutes.)

3. Social Change/Social Justice - What roles are available to you as a social worker intent on reducing or eliminating oppression? How do the interactions between your personal multiple identities, professional roles and oppression potentially affect your practice? How do social change and social justice relate to your topic? Describe at least two ways in which you feel you will personally be able to promote social change and social justice in this area.

ASSIGNMENT #4: Taping Assignment (25% of final grade). This assignment is designed to critically analyze how your participation in the course and outside of class this term has promoted the process of better understanding the role of culture in your interest area, in others, and in yourself. Describe your personal struggles and accomplishments this term regarding self-reflection. You will be supplied with a set of questions for this taping assignment.

First Tape DUE: January 24, 2005 (Credit will be given for submitting your tape on time. You must submit a tape in order to be given credit for the final paper.)


ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENTS: I view all students as responsible for their learning experience. As a part of the community of learners, I contribute to the experience, but the student is ultimately responsible for the depth, challenge, and enjoyment of learning. If you are interested in discussing alternative or additional assignments, I welcome you to speak with me about the ideas you have. I must approve all alternative assignments. If you choose to do an alternate in place of one of the assignments listed above, a written proposal must be presented for approval at least three weeks prior to the date the above assignment is due. No alternative assignments will be given for missed or late assignments. All alternative assignments will need to be presented to the class and none will substitute for the group assignment listed above.

Evaluation:

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Schedule of Topics and Readings for the Term:

Week 1. January 10, 2005
Beginnings
☐ Introductions
☐ Syllabus overview
☐ Ground rules
☐ Hopes and fears

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 1, Missing people and others

Week 2. January 17, 2005
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day Activity – See Syllabus

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 6, A different mirror, Ch 11 Seeing More than Black and White, Ch 14 Economic Apartheid in America, Ch 21 A White woman of color
Zinn: Ch. 1 and 2

Week 3. January 24, 2005
Culture: Historical, Social, Political and Global Perspectives on Ethnicity

☐ Film collage
☐ Oppression: A primer
☐ Reflections on the King Day Assignment
☐ Submit Tape for Taping Assignment

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch 2, La Guera; Ch 4, Angry Women are Building, Ch 5 Oppression; Ch. 12 What white supremacists taught a Jewish Scholar, Ch 46, Optional Ethnicities: For whites only? Ch 47 “Mexicanness” in New York: Migrants seek new place in old racial order; Ch 48 Migration and Vietnamese American women: Remaking ethnicity; Ch 40 The first Americans: American Indians; Ch 20 Ideological racism and cultural resistance: Constructing our own images
Zinn: Ch. 3 and 4

Week 4. January 31, 2005

Contemporary Culture: Multiple Identities, Power & Privilege

- Understanding “whiteness” as a social construct
- Culture box exercise
- Privilege read around
- I am exercise
- Levels of Power and Privilege

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins.  Ch. 45, Is this a white country, or what?; Ch 57 Just walk on by: A Black man ponders his power to alter public space  Ch 49 Chappals and gym shorts: An Indian Muslim woman in the land of Oz, Ch 44 Policing the national body: Sex, race and criminalization, Ch 8 Something about the subject makes it hard to name

Zinn:  Ch. 5, 9-10.


Week 5. February 7, 2005

Crossing Boundaries

Film: The Color of Fear
Fishbowl Discussions

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 9: White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack  Ch. 3, Report from the Bahamas; Ch 56 More power than we want: Masculine sexuality and violence.

Zinn: Ch. 6, 17,19

Week 6. February 14, 2004

Racism and oppression

- Oppression and methods to offset it
- Commentary 1 Due

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins Ch. 7 Something about the subject makes it hard to name; Ch. 13, Race matters; Ch. 34, Racist stereotyping in the English language; Ch. 62, Korean Americans vs. African Americans: conflict and construction. Ch 35 Crimes against humanity; Ch 10 Of race and risk

Zinn: Ch. 7 and 8
Week 7 February 21, 2005

Guest Speaker, Pierce Beckham

- Classism: “We don’t have class in the United States”
- Understanding the relationship between race and socioeconomic status
- Video: People Like Us

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 15, Tired of playing monopoly?; Ch. 16, Wealth matters; Ch. 17, Poverty as race, power, and wealth; Ch. 18 Black picket fences: Privilege and peril among the Black middle class Ch 32 Racial safety and cultural maintenance: The child care concerns of employed mothers of color. Ch 43 Aid to dependent corporations: Exposing federal handouts to the wealthy; Ch 41 Can education eliminate race, class and gender inequality?

Zinn: 13,15


February 28 – SPRING BREAK!!!

Week 8. March 7, 2005

Ableism: Visible and invisible privilege

- Group One Presents
- (Dis)ability defined
- Markers of “ability privilege”
- Mental illness and Traumatic brain injury
- Parenting
- U.S. social and political responses
- International responses

Readings:
http://www/c-c-d.org/doors.html (Disability and Housing)

http://www.mpas.org (Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, Inc.)


Week 9. March 14, 2005

Religion and spirituality

- Group Two Presents
- A source of strength, privilege, and oppression?
- Definition of terms
- Dimensions of Spiritual Wellness
- Rituals: The Peace Circle
- Practitioner Self-Awareness

Readings:


Week 10. March 21, 2005

Heterosexism and the politics of sexuality

- Group 3 Presents
- Pink Triangle Assignment
- Act like a man/woman activity
- Male/Female caucus groups
Body image exercise

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 19, Gender through the prism of difference; Ch 50 The gender of sexuality; Ch 53 Globalizing sex workers’ rights; Ch 54 Getting off on feminism; Ch 51 Black sexuality: The taboo subject; Ch 38 Gladiators, gazelles and groupies: Basketball love and loathing; Ch 22 Masculinities and athletic careers; Ch 23 Just choices: Women of color, reproductive health and human rights; Ch 31 Countering the conspiracy to ignore Black girls

Zinn: Ch. 19.

Week 11. March 28, 2005

Sexual Orientation

- Group 4 Presents
- Pink Triangle Exercise Debriefed
- The intersectionality of sexual orientation and other social group memberships
- Ending dichotomous thinking about gender
- What is marriage?
- Hate crimes
- Public Policy and Sexual Orientation

Readings:
Andersen and Hill Collins Ch. 52, Where has gay liberation gone? Ch 7 Age, race, class and sex: Women redefining difference; Ch 61 “Whosoever” is welcome here; Ch 33 Straight is to gay as family is to no family; Ch 58 Where race and gender meet: Racism, hate crimes and pornography, Ch 30 The diversity of American families

Others TBA

Week 12. April 4, 2005

Social Justice and Public Policy: Theme Semester

- Gratzi v. Bollinger and the University of Michigan: Where do we go from here?
- Affirmative Action
- Can we legislate decency?
- Middle Eastern cultural icons and the Global North

Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch 24 Race, class, gender and women’s work; Ch 64 Can I get a witness? Ch 41 Can education eliminate race, class and gender inequality?

Zinn: Ch. 21 and 22

Week 13. April 11, 2005

Models of Change and the Promotion of Justice Part 1
- Action Continuum: from individual through global change
- Sphere of Influence
- Being an Effective Ally
- Final Taping Paper Due

Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 43, Can education eliminate race, class, and gender inequality?; Ch. 39, Taking multicultural, antiracist education seriously; Ch. 60, Women of Color on the front line; Ch. 63, Having the tools at hand: Building successful multicultural social justice organizations

Zinn: 19 and 20

Week 14. April 18, 2005

Social Justice and Social Work Practice Part 2

- How can we manage intersectionality?
- What roles do social workers play?

Readings
Zinn: Ch. 23, 24

Others TBA

LAST CLASS: April 25, 2005

Overview of Semester and Evaluation

- Speak out exercise
- Evaluations

Readings:
Andersen and Hill-Collins: Ch. 22, Ideological racism and cultural difference

Zinn: Afterword for the 20th Century Edition

**Recommended Reading List: Books and Articles**


Berman, Gary (2002). A spiritually sensitive social work response following a traumatic event. Reflections, 8 (2), 14-17.


