502 has four major and inter-related streams

- Knowledge and concepts for organizations, community, society (esp the State, government, structures and processes of policy-making)
- Social justice, barriers to that (privilege/oppression) and what sustains and disrupts these—knowledge and theories related to PODS
- Theories about society; skills for theorizing; learning about and applying macro theories
- Social change, and what helps larger social systems to change. Prevention and promotion of justice and well-being within this.

This section of the course is divided roughly into overlapping thirds. The first introduces all the major areas of the course, with an emphasis on laying the groundwork for theorizing and PODS and why these and knowledge about macro systems are important for all types of social work practice. In the second, we will examine knowledge and theories about communities, organizations and society/government/policy making, and begin work on group projects on different theories. For the last third, we will explore selected theories more deeply, consider how to apply various types of knowledge and theories, and work on integrating across course areas.

**Sept 12— Overview of the course. Introductions to the course and each other.**

**Sept 19: What are theories and paradigms? Conceptualizing power and privilege. Poverty and economic class.**

  - You should have and hopefully have read a brief article by McIntosh on privilege in the readings you got at the Diversity and Social Justice session in orientation.

**Sept 26: Theories and Paradigms (continued). Conceptualizing social justice, and barriers to justice. Begin community simulation?**

• Text: Payne, Chapter 2: Using social work theory in practice (25-40)

• Text: Johnson. You should eventually read the whole book—it’s quick and easy. For this session, in 2nd Ed, please read chapters 4-5 [54-75] (making privilege happen and the trouble with the trouble, and 7 – 8 [90 – 124] (how systems of privilege work and getting off the hook) [first ed, chapters 5 to 6, making privilege happen, and the trouble with the trouble (42-82), and chapters 8 & 9, how systems of privilege work and getting off the hook (96-136)].

• Text: Mullaly, Chapter 8, Oppression, 138 - 159.


**Oct 3: Community components, resilience, and competence**

*Assignment one due*


Text: Payne, Chapter 3 issues in social work practice theory (41 - 69) and Chapter 7, Systems and ecological perspectives, 142-160.

Text: Payne, Chapter 10—Social and community development, 208-226.

Oct. 10 Interorganizational issues, defining and negotiating boundaries. Some frameworks for organizations, and different approaches to understanding organizations


Bolman & Deal (2003). We will compare and contrast these difference frames, using case examples.
  - Structural Frame (41-67)
  - Human Resource Frame (111-132)
  - The Political Frame (181-201)
  - The symbolic frame (239-269)

Oct 17—Fall break

Oct 24: Some PODS-related questions with regard to theory and Paradigms in action [we will divide up the paradigm chapters]

deAnda, D (1997) Are there theories that are sufficiently “culture-free” to be appropriate and useful for practice with multicultural clients? Controversial issues in multiculturalism, Allyn and Bacon, 142-152.

Mullaly, Chapters 2 to 6, pp 23-96. Social work vision: A progressive view; the neo-conservative paradigm; the liberal paradigm; the social-democratic paradigm; the Marxist paradigm. Small groups will take one of these in more depth.
  - Chapter 7, Structural social work theory and oppression, 99-137.

Oct 31: The context for social policy: Relationships with the state: government and political economic perspectives.
  - Assignment two due


Nov 7: **Social justice and frameworks for change**

• Text: *Tipping Point*, Introduction and chapters 1 to 3, Three rules of epidemics, the law of the few, the stickiness factor


• Text: Payne, Chapter 11—From radical to critical perspectives, 227-250.

• Text: *Tipping Point*, Introduction and chapters 1 to 3, Three rules of epidemics, the law of the few, the stickiness factor

Nov 14: **Additional frameworks for change, gender as an example**


• Text: Payne, Chapter 13, Anti-discrimination and cultural and ethnic sensitivity, 269-294.


• Text: *Tipping Point*, Chapters 4-5, The power of context (one and two)

Nov 21: **Some frameworks for change (continued), racism as an example**  
*Assignment three due*

• Text: *Tipping Point*, Chapters 6 to 8, plus afterword

• Text: Payne, Chapter 14, Empowerment and advocacy, 295-315.
• Bonilla-Silva, E. (2003) Racism without racists (color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the US). Rowman & Littleman. The strange enigma of race in contemporary America (1 – 24), the central frames of color-blind racism (25 – 52) and conclusion: “The (color-blind) emperor has no clothes”: Exposing the whiteness of color blindness (177-187)

Nov 28: Linking theories and theorizing with social justice


Dec 5: Application of theories and concepts to complex community situation. Comparing and contrasting theories and models

• Text: Tipping Point, Chapters 6 to 8, plus afterword


• Text: Mullaly—chapters 9 & 10—working within (and against the system): radical humanism, and working outside (and against the system): radical structuralism. 164-203.

Dec 12: Last class: Catch-up on topics we postponed because of theory presentations, continued application across topics and domains
Dec 16—Final assignment due—portfolio of concepts/concept map, application to self and a community/organization situation [you do not need to wait this long to turn these in, altho we will use some of the Dec 12th session to work on tasks relevant for this assignment]
Social Work 502: Organizational, Community, and Societal Structures and Processes

Section 001: Monday, 1 to 4PM
Section 006: Tuesday, 8 to 11 AM

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Course Description

What follows is the course description approved by the faculty during the 04-05 academic year.

This theory and research based course is designed to support the foundation practice method courses which are taken concurrently in the first semesters. The general focus of this course is to present the various processes, connections and consequences that institutional structures and arrangements have on the various communities and at-risk-populations that are served by the social work profession. Students will develop an understanding of key professional and theoretical foundations for practicing social work. This course will also introduce students to the curricular themes and PODS concepts (i.e. Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice) that are infused in the advanced practice areas.

Course Content:

The course uses the central social work values of social justice, multiculturalism, empowerment to generate a framework for the critical examination of theoretical perspectives of organizational, community, and societal structures and processes. The key theoretical foundations that will be discussed include social ecology, structural theory, risk/resiliency perspective, theories of poverty, social change and social justice, theories of political economy, and organizational theory. In examining these theoretical foundations, students will explore the intersectionality of race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, and religion, and how this intersectionality plays out in discrimination, oppression, and privilege.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1) Identify, describe, and critique selected theoretical perspectives on organizational, community, and societal structures and processes.
2) Describe and analyze:
   a) The impact that organizational structures and processes have on practice settings
   b) How community and societal structures and processes impact the client groups served by social agencies
3) Describe how (PODS) privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice are manifested in the structures and processes of society, communities, and complex organizations.

4) Analyze how the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation impact their own life experiences, their relationships with colleagues and supervisors, and their relationships with agency clientele and community groups.

5) Identify major processes and contemporary manifestations of oppression, discrimination, prejudice, power and privilege as they impact on populations-at-risk and vulnerable and oppressed groups by:
   a) describing barriers to organizational and community competence;
   b) identifying sources of intragroup and intergroup conflict stemming from cultural group membership;
   c) identifying the role of risk and protective social factors in relation to social problems and social/economic justice.

6) Apply professional values and ethics by:
   a) distinguishing differences among culturally sensitive, culturally competent, multicultural, and ethnoconscious frameworks in social work;
   b) critically evaluating organizations, community, and societal structures and processes that seek to promote social and economic justice.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:

- Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed through presentation of theory and research about oppressed and at-risk populations, and the impact that community, organizational and societal functioning has on the well-being of these groups. [We will also examine what various macro knowledge, theories and perspectives illuminate or obscure in relation to diversity (and social justice)]
- Social Justice and Social Change will be covered in the empirical and theoretical literature that document socially just organizational, community, and societal structures and processes. Social change theories and strategies will be presented that demonstrate how we move toward a more socially just society.
- Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through discussion of programs and systemic interventions to prevent stress and oppression of individuals, families, and groups and enhance their quality of life and well-being. The role of risk, resiliency, and preventive social factors will be discussed in relations to social problems.
- Behavioral and Social Sciences Research will be reflected in the organizational, community, and societal theories that are presented in order to analyze the impact that the social environment has on individuals, families and groups.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:

This course will address ethical and value issues related to working with organizations, communities, and societal structures and processes. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used
to inform practice in this area. Examples of ethical and value related issues will include: the social worker’s responsibility to promote the general welfare of society by preventing and eliminating discrimination, ensuring equal access to resources, expanding choices and opportunities for all persons, encouraging respect for diversity, advocating for changes in social policies, and encouraging informed participation by the public. In addition, issues related to organizations will be covered, such as preventing discrimination in the work place, improving agency policies and procedures, and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations.

This is the end of the approved course description

Texts:


There are also a number of websites that are likely to be relevant, especially as you get into your theory projects. The social work library has a section for 502 under resources on their website. Every year, students find other web resources that are relevant.

Some other and older resources (all available in the library):


In a few weeks, I will set up a Course pack at Excel Copy and put a copy in the Library

More about the Course, my Philosophy of Teaching, and Assignments and Grading (Reed, 502)

This course is part of the HBSE (Human Behavior and Social Environment) component of the foundation, generalist component of the curriculum. As such, it focuses on the “macro” knowledge base for social work practice in all methods and fields, emphasizing mid to large size systems. It draws from some areas of psychology, but more from sociology, political science, and anthropology, with some economics and history (and a little humanities and “hard” sciences). We will emphasize what evidence is available to support particular perspectives and theories, and on analyzing the strengths and limitations of each. A major goal is to develop the
knowledge to see, think/theorize, plan, problem-solve, and create change at larger systems levels, and to understand how larger systems impact individuals, families, and groups.

I use principles of adult learning whenever I can, with an understanding that new knowledge has to build upon and “fit” with knowledge you already have, and that you have to be able to “unlearn” or revise previous knowledge to accommodate new perspectives. Also, we know that adult learners often learn differently from those who are learning everything for the first time. I lecture much less than many faculty members, although often provide handouts to help you to organize and digest different types of material, and I am happy to spend some time explaining particular readings or concepts that I had not intended to lecture about if there are requests for this. I rely on you (as adult learners) to set your own learning goals, and to let me know if some discussion or clarification of readings in class would be useful. Your learning will be directly correlated with the effort you expend in taking responsibility for your own goals and agendas. We will discuss many of the readings, but I will not discuss them all. You need to take responsibility for letting me know if some discussion of a particular reading or concept would be useful or interesting, if you have a question or aren’t sure you see the relevance of something.

I use class time to engage you in activities that allow you to apply and examine course readings and topics, and we will go beyond course readings through group presentations and class exercises. I pay attention to who is there and how engaged you are. If you find class time or other course components un-useful, I expect you to tell me that and work with me to make it better. **On days that assignments are due, I would rather you come to class and participate even if the assignment isn’t done;** you can get it to me later in the day. I am also more concerned about what you know at the end of the course than how you do initially, and am happy to have you redo/add to an assignment if you are unhappy with your first try or wish to try and raise your grade.

**Individual issues and needs in the course.** I am very concerned that this course is accessible and relevant for everyone. Please let me know (either in person in class or in office hours, or via email) if you have some particular goals or needs for the class. These may be related to your past experience or your interests, or to special challenges you face as a learner or in the classroom. I will be asking you about your preferences in terms of learning, and we will work to negotiate these among us. Some of you may face particular challenges in terms of learning or other disabilities and I am happy to work with you on ways to accommodate these. Some of you may want to propose a modification of assignments to meet your goals or interests better. Lots of options are possible if I know what you need or want, but I prefer that we discuss these ahead of time so I can be sure that what you propose is consistent with course objectives.

**General evaluation criteria** (special elements will also be delineated for particular assignments):

- Demonstrate understanding of and ability/apply to use macro knowledge and theory;
- Systematic & logical presentation of arguments;
- Appropriate use of evidence with citations; use of relevant literature and concepts;
- Scope of concepts used; degree of integration across topics, levels, and different readings
- Clarity of presentation;
- Originality & creativity;
• Attention to diversity and social justice issues across different populations and situations.

I want you to use actual terminology and concepts from the course and its readings and to cite your sources, even if this feels awkward—for a number of reasons.
• First, one of the goals of a professional education is to assist you to learn and use the language of the profession—because people communicate using that language within professional contexts (although you may want to translate into day-to-day language with those from other disciplines and from the community).
• Second, it requires specific types of terminology to be able to conceptualize the macro components of the “world” and your practice environments, and it requires a language to be able to theorize.
• Third, in terms of my understanding and being able to evaluate your work, you will discover that many of the authors use different terms for similar things and similar terms for different things. If I don’t know which version of concepts you are using, I will not be able to evaluate whether you are using it accurately—specific use of terms and citations of where they came from will help me identify their sources.
• Finally, accurate use of concepts and citations of the sources of these are important for ethical and practical reasons—it is important not to plagiarize other people’s work. It is plagiarism whenever you take credit for work that is not your own—whatever the source of that work. You are taking credit for someone else’s work whenever you do not cite the sources of your ideas or points, whether you do this deliberately or because you are being sloppy about where ideas came from.

Citation guidelines. When you quote someone, you should include the source and the page number. When you paraphrase, you should include the source. For papers in this course, when you are citing sources from the texts or syllabus, I do not require a full citation, but you should cite the authors (in parentheses right after the concept, phrase, or paragraph) and if it is a large source (e.g., a book), you should cite the relevant chapter at minimum).

Note that this requirement to cite sources also applies to the contributions of your classmates. I encourage people to work together—to discuss readings and class activities, to brainstorm together about assignments, to divide up and teach each other about readings, etc. You will have one group assignment in which I will assist you to develop group norms and roles to support working together. I expect you to tell me in writing when you have discussed assignments with others, and with whom, when you turn written work into me.

Some Suggestions

1. You may want to keep an informal journal throughout the semester to track and record your reactions and thoughts—partly for yourself so you can see recurring themes and growth through the semester, and partly to collect information that will be useful for the initial self-analysis paper and subsequent inclusions in other assignments. Pay particular attention to what excites, disturbs, puzzles, or angers you—or leaves you feeling defensive. Sometimes we have to discover our values, biases, preferences through fairly indirect ways.
2. You will benefit also by forming a discussion group with some of your classmates, to divide up readings, teach each other the main points from them, and consider how to apply them. If enough of you do this, I will give you class time for short meetings.

**Assignments and Requirements.** You will have two major assignments (in the middle and end of the course) plus a number of in-class and shorter do-at-home activities that you need to complete to satisfy course requirements. Since I try and use class time to apply and augment material in the readings, I expect that you have read them before class, and will attend and participate in class and have developed ways to give you some credit for this (this will be folded into the shorter assignments). The work-on-outside-of-class shorter assignments allow you to identify and apply core concepts and theories over several submissions, ending up with a portfolio of materials you should be able to use in the future.

Specific requirements and their contribution to your grade:

a) developing annotated list of concepts and theories (15%), and  
b) applying them to yourselves to further your critical consciousness (15%).  
c) in-class elements (including class participation) will provide opportunities for you to reflect on within class activities and apply course concepts to these (15%).  
d) a group project in which you will work together to understand and apply a particular macro-level “theory”/framework, and be responsible for teaching the rest of the class what you have learned (35%).  
e) a final assignment designed to assist you to review, integrate, and apply the major course content (20%).

At various intervals, I will ask you to set your own goals and evaluation criteria, and then assess your own performance in the class, the effort you have expended, and how much you have learned. You will also evaluate each other in your small groups and class presentations. Your evaluations will be incorporated with mine and considered in on-going and final grading.

**Early assignments.**

1. Begin to make a list, with definitions and descriptions, of key a) concepts and b) theories/theoretical frameworks. Consider how to organize these into relevant categories, and in ways that you can use them (you may want to be explicit about how you expect to use them). I will ask you to turn in some summary of these at four different intervals within the course, so don’t let yourself fall behind. These should probably not be more than 5 pages pf new material each time, and the sources for each should be cited.
   
   For section 006 (Tuesday) due Sept 27, Oct 25, Nov 15, Dec 13  
   For section 001 (Monday) due Oct 3, Oct 31, Nov 21, Dec 16

2. Critical consciousness one: Self within communities. Write no more than 4 pages (with reasonable margins, 12 point font, double spaced) on your communities (describing them and their components briefly) and how they shaped who you are and your awareness of concepts important in the course. Emphasize especially cultural and ethnic values and ethics, definitions of self, what is expected in different situations, privilege and oppression, and sense of social justice. Consider different definitions of community and community
memberships (e.g., geographic, identity-related, interest-related, other?). Don’t forget to cite sources for relevant concepts and ideas. Due Sept 23 for section 006 (Tues), for section 001 (Monday). Later installments of this critical consciousness assignment will focus on yourself in organizations, and within policy, activist and theoretical contexts.