This is a seminar about the nature of interdisciplinary research and scholarship for the first year cohort of students admitted to the joint Ph.D. program in Social Work and Social Science. The basic motivating question concerns the nature, place and practice of scholarship in a complex multidisciplinary context that emphasizes learning, developing basic knowledge as an end in itself, and developing the skills, processes, procedures and routines associated with the use of that knowledge to help solve problems that impinge on, or directly disrupt the quality of peoples lives. A central assumption is that expertise in scholarship in a combined professional/academic context is not automatic, but it involves the purposive acquisition of habits, skills and attitudes that enable people to contribute to professional and academic advances in their chosen field. This seminar focuses on the early stages of this development. It seeks to establish an orientation to the development of scholarship that will continue once the seminar is over and to engage students in an examination of the practices, styles and domains of scholarship in the multidisciplinary contexts of social work and social welfare so that they may begin to evolve an approach to scholarship suited to their own interests, inclinations and capabilities.

Throughout this term, various topics pertinent to making explicit the requirements and practices of scholarship will be discussed, based on focused readings on each topic. Next semester, a number of faculty will make presentations about their own work and the research domain in which their research is located. We will discuss theoretical and empirical advances that have been made in these various domains and consider their implications for policy and practice. In addition faculty will describe their own research, how its was conceived, executed and disseminated, so as give students a direct sense of different styles of scholarship, as well as increased knowledge of domains of research with which they may wish to be associated in the future.

**Design**
This course is a seminar. The emphasis is on discussion and on the exchange of ideas and information. We will be meeting every two weeks over the next two semesters (fall and winter). Each class will require reading from the assigned texts or from other assigned readings. We will also engage in discussion and exchange with a number of faculty who will talk to us about different fields of scholarly inquiry, as well as about their own work as scholars and researchers. Before each class you will write about an assigned topic to get you engaged in the theme of the session or in the faculty member’s domain of scholarship.
Text and Readings
There are two books for the course available for purchase at Shaman Drum Bookstore on State Street. All additional readings will be available through electronic reserves at the Social Work Library Website. The books will be on 4-hour reserve in the Social Work Library.


Grading and Requirements
The overall grade for the course will be based on class participation and completion of bi-weekly assignments. Their respective weightings are 20% and 80%. There are weekly writing assignments that are due each week before class. These are to be submitted electronically via our ctools website by no later than noon on the day they are due.

SCHEDULE FOR READING, WRITING AND DISCUSSION

1. Monday, September 12: Getting oriented and getting started
   Introductions, distribution of the course syllabus, and discussion of first writing assignment.

2. Monday, September 26: Background on social work, social science, and the joint PhD program
   Invited speakers: Rosemary Sarri and John Tropman

Readings:


Tucker, David J., Garvin, Charles, & Sarri, Rosemary. 1997. “Evolution and Change in the Relationship between Social Work and Social Science.” In Integrating Knowledge and Action:
Reflective Essay

The title of this paper is “Seeing the Present in Light of the Past: What good is History?” In this paper focus on yourself and the reasons why you decided to come to U-M. What did you learn from these readings about the joint program and interdisciplinary scholarship that was new or different? What “model or relevance” do you believe underpins the joint program? What effect, if any, does this information have on how you feel about your decision to come into the joint program? What are the implications for your development as a scholar? Discuss. Use no more than 4 double-space pages.

3. Monday, October 10: What is social work/social welfare scholarship?
Invited speakers: Trina Shanks, Michael Resich

Readings:
Fabricant & Fischer, Part I

Reflective Essay

The title of this paper is “Forming Opinions about Scholarship in Social Work and the Joint Program.” In this paper focus on yourself and your experience of getting to know about social work and the joint program. What do you think these authors would say about the joint program and its implications for scholarship in social work? What can you use from these readings that will make you a better scholar within the multidisciplinary context of the joint program, as you understand it currently? What points/depictions/arguments from these readings do you think the scholars (students and faculty) you have meet at UM so far may have
forgotten, ignored, or not yet learned? Discuss. What other reactions do you have? Use no more than 4 double-space pages.

4. Monday, October 24: Multi-, cross-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary approaches
Invited Speakers: Meyer Award Winners: Diane Miller, David Dobbie, Elana Buch

Readings:
Henry Meyer Award Papers – Available on the ctools website
Buch, E. Giving Care: Personhood, Morality And Exchange In The Constitution Of Relatedness
Dobbie, D. Building Solidarity through Difference.


Reflective Essay
The title of this essay is “Multi/Cross/Inter or Trans-Disciplinary Research and Social Work/Social Welfare Research.” In this paper discuss your reaction to the type of integration of disciplines that is at the foundation of this PhD program. How have the Meyer Award papers and their authors integrated social work and social science theory? To what degree does this reflect an approach different from social work/social welfare research or social science research? What are the tensions involved in this kind of scholarship?

5. Monday, November 7: Choosing Interdisciplinary (public) Scholarship
Readings:
Burawoy, Michael (2005). For Public Sociology American Sociological Review. Vol. 70, Iss. 1, p. 4-28 (25 pp.)
Reflective Essay
The title of this essay is “Public Scholarship within/between the Disciplines.” Public scholarship is the focus of growing interest and debate within the disciplines. How do you see the approach taken by the Joint PhD program relating to these debates? How would you position yourself within this discussion on public scholarship?

6. Monday, November 21: The skills of scholarship

Readings:
Booth, Colomb and Williams, pp. 3-72.

Fabricant and Fischer, pp 99 – 167

Reflective Essay
The title of this paper is “Behind the Specifics: General Rules for Research?” What did you learn about doing research from these pages that you did not know before? What in these reading struck you as particularly stimulating and valuable, as boring and irrelevant? Would you recommend these chapters to others? Discuss your answers? Use no more than 4 double-spaced pages.

7. Monday, December 5: Semester reflection

Reading:
Fabricant and Fischer, pp. 168 - 290

Reflective Essay
The title of this paper is “A Review of Settlement Houses under Siege: Reflections and Future Directions.” Now that you have finished reading the Fabricant and Fisher book, write a review summarizing your evaluation. In the review, you should comment somewhere on the suitability of the book for use in orienting students to social work and social welfare scholarship and the requirements of research and scholarly work in the joint PhD program. Briefly describe, with rationale, what was not included in the book that would be particularly valuable for students to learn as they begin the task of becoming interdisciplinary social work/social welfare scholars. Use no more than 5 double-space pages.