Course Description
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 inter-sectionality of race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, class, color, culture, ability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, and religion, and how this inter-sectionality 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 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 intra-group and inter-group 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, multi-cultural and ethno-conscious frameworks in social work, (b) critically evaluating organizations, community, and societal structures and processes that seek to promote social and economic justice.

Course Design
Required readings will be selected by the instructor. Suggested references will be included for each session, along with a list of books related to this course. Selection of required readings, course-pack items, and texts will be made in coordination with instructors of the other HBSE foundation course instructors. Class room activities may include lectures, discussion, simulations, videos/films, group projects, case analyses, etc.

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.
- **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 the Four Curricular Themes
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.

**Accommodations**
If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities and the way that the course is taught can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. Available resources include, but are not limited to the services for Students with Disabilities and the Adaptive Technology Computing Site. I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat your disability disclosure as private and confidential.

**Required Reading**
The following books are required for the course. The books are available for purchase at Ulrich’s Bookstore (across the street from the School of Social Work). Texts:


Other readings (articles and other book chapters) will be available through the social work library web site (Mirlyn course reserves) or distributed in class.

**Assignments**
There are three (3) graded assignments for this course. They are summarized below with their relative weight in parentheses. Details follow the course outline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theories of Change</td>
<td>Oct. 25th</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Experience Interview</td>
<td>Nov. 15th</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Manifestations</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance and participation**
Attendance and active participation are very important components of this class and will reflect 20% of your overall grade. Active participation includes asking and answering questions, participating in group exercises, and doing the reading before class. For classes missed, you will need to complete a make-up assignment (to be determined with the instructor).
**Grading**
Grades are earned by successfully completing the work on the assignments. A 100 point system is used. At the end of the term, the numerical grades earned for each written assignment will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLEASE NOTE:**
- Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal limits of the course. The student must formally request in writing an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final week of class.
- All assignments are to be completed by the date due. Exceptions will be granted with the permission of the instructor in advance of the due date for the assignment. Assignments submitted late without such permission will be downgraded.
- Students are to use APA “citation format” for each of the assignments. Each assignment needs to include appropriate attribution of authorship for paraphrases or ideas acquired from another source or appropriate citations, including page numbers, for direct quotes. Please review the Student Guide section on “Ethical Conduct in the University Environment.” This section specifically addresses plagiarism and the possible consequences for engaging in this behavior. The University of Michigan Library system has an on-line resource that can assist you in preparing proper citations for assignments using APA format. Go to: [http://www.lib.mich.edu/ug/research/citation guide/AP5thed/pdf](http://www.lib.mich.edu/ug/research/citation guide/AP5thed/pdf)

**Assignments**
For all assignments, students will develop the grading rubric in class with the instructor. All assignments are single-spaced, type-written in 12 point font. The products will be written and presented in a professional style appropriate for a professional social work setting.

1. **Theories of Change**
Students will select a published newspaper article describing a social or economic justice effort. Using a one-page logic model, students will articulate the macro intervention theory of change. A short narrative will include the system conditions that led to the need for the action, the intended action and the expected outcomes. Students will critique the intervention design using contrasting ideologies and theories. Paper length including logic model will be 3-4 pages.

2. **Life Experience Interview**
Students will explore how intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation have impacted their own life experiences, their relationships with colleagues and supervisors, and their relationships with agency clientele and community groups. Students will interview another student in class to compare social identities, experiences and the impacts on their life experience. The results from the interview will be documented in a 3-4 page report.
3. Contemporary Manifestations
Students will work in small groups to complete this assignment. They will begin by selecting a population-at-risk, vulnerable or oppressed group. Students will identify major processes and contemporary manifestations of oppression, discrimination, prejudice, power and privilege as they impact on populations-at-risk, vulnerable and oppressed groups by describing (a) a brief contextual history, (b) theories used to better understand barriers to organizational and community competence, (c) sources of intra-group and inter-group conflict stemming from group membership, (d) the role of macro social work in moving toward social/economic justice. Students will provide classmates with 20-minute presentation to the class including a one-page summary handout. Presentations will be scheduled throughout the course.

Course Schedule

Session 1, September 6th
*Introductions, course expectations, student expectations.*

Session 2, September 13th
*Introduction to theories*
Readings:
- Payne Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Session 3, September 20th
*Theoretical perspectives on communities: systems, ecological, and resiliency*
Readings:
- Payne Chapter 7

Session 4, September 27th
*Feminist perspectives, empowerment theories, Tipping Point Book Club*
Readings:
- Payne Chapters 10 and 14
- Gladwell Parts One, Two and Three
- Lordes, Audre. Age, race, class, and sex: Women redefining difference. Pp. 64-71 in *Race, Class, and Gender*.
Session 5, October 4th
Using ideologies, paradigms, political economy theory to understand societal structures/processes
- Mullaly Chapters 3, 4 and 5

Session 6, October 11th
Using structural social work theory to explore social change and social worker roles
- Mullaly Chapters 7 and 8

Session 7, October 18th (FALL BREAK – NO CLASS)

Session 8, October 25th
Structural social work practice, *Tipping Point Book Club*
Readings:
- Mullaly Chapters 9 and 10
- Gladwell Parts Four and Five

Session 9, November 1st
Theoretical perspectives on organizations, barriers to organizational competence
Readings:
- Bolman, Lee G. & Terrence E. Deal. (2003). Chapter 3, Getting Organized (pp. 43-67); Chapter 6, People and Organizations (pp. 113-132) in *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*.

Session 10, November 8th
Impact of organizational structures/processes on practice settings, leadership
Readings:
*Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*. Bolman and Deal
- Chapter 9, Power, Conflict, and Coalition (pp. 183-201)
- Chapter 12, Organizational Culture and Symbols (pp. 241-269)
- Chapter 17, Reframing Leadership (pp. 334-366)
Session 11, November 15
Defining PODS and the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexual orientation...personal impacts
Readings:
- Johnson Chapters 2, 3 and 4
- McIntosh, Peggy. White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. Pp. 103-108 in Race, Class, and Gender.

Session 12, November 22nd
Manifestation of PODS in structures/processes of society, community and organizations.
How do different groups experience privilege and oppression?
Readings:
- Johnson Chapters 5, 6 and 7

Session 13, November 29th
Promotion of social and economic justice, understanding culturally sensitive, culturally competent, multi-cultural and ethno-conscious frameworks, Tipping Point Book Club
Readings:
- Johnson Chapter 8 and 9
- Gladwell Parts Six, Seven, and Eight

Session 14, December 6th
Contemporary manifestations of oppression, discrimination, prejudice, power and privilege, Student Presentations
Readings:
- Payne Chapter 13

Session 15, December 13th
Student Presentations, Wrap-up