1. Course Description:

This course will explore the origins and development of selected social variables characterizing racial, ethnic, gender, religious, class, ability 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 will be studied. Students will use a multidimensional, social justice, and multicultural framework to examine power, privilege, discrimination, and oppression. This 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 ethnic community.

2. Course Content:

The course content will include 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 current status of these cultural groups will be reviewed, 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. This course will also explore the impact of multiple social group memberships on social roles, help-seeking and coping behavior, attitudes, and values. In addition, this course will contain a review of the contemporary conceptual frameworks influencing social science knowledge about intergroup relations and conflict, including but not limited to, culturally sensitive, and ethnoconscious practice. 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 will be covered. Individual and small group activities related to the construction of critical consciousness and praxis in social work will also be included.
Spring/Summer 2010

Our national and global realities provide us with excellent opportunities for understanding the role of intersectionality in our lives and practice. In order to operationalize key constructs for the term and examine their implications for praxis, we will focus on four contemporary issues: (a) returning Veterans and their families, (b) economic and social interdependence; (c) complex interactions among race, ethnicity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, and (d) immigration.

3. Course Objectives:

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

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. gain and apply knowledge about social group memberships and identities, their histories and meanings, how they interact with each other in people’s lives and the larger society, and how they are affected by particular social contexts;
   c. reviewing one’s own social group memberships and how they have influenced 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 gay/lesbian/bisexual, racial/ethnic, gender, transgender, religious/spiritual, differently abled, and social class groups;
   b. identifying sources of intragroup and intergroup conflict stemming from cultural group membership;
   c. describe the forces that create and maintain individual, group, organizational, and community differences in power, privilege, and oppression.
   d. demonstrate skills in negotiating differences and conflicts at system interfaces.

3. Review the characteristics of selected ethnic and racial groups in the United States and identify key variables to be considered by social workers attempting to work with these populations by:
   a. examining historical, social, and political forces influencing the construct of family for these groups;
   b. locating the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, and ability status for these groups;
   c. critiquing the social science literature on social identity groups;
d. examining variables, such as immigration and migration, cultural norms and roles, acculturation and assimilation, help-seeking behaviors, employment and income, educational attainment, and the establishment of informal and formal institutions within these cultural groups;

4. Course Design:

This course will include such pedagogical strategies as small group exercises, role plays, case analyses, video demonstrations, and didactic presentations. **Experiential activities will be central to the structure and process of this course.**

5. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:

- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** issues will be central to this course, which will provide students with a foundation for examining these issues within advanced practice courses.
- **Social Justice and Social Change** issues will be discussed throughout this course; however, those skills listed under the second course objective are particularly pertinent to this curricular theme. The relationships among injustice, conflict, and social change will also be discussed.
- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** approaches will be addressed within the section examining selected social identity groups in the United States. Students will use a strengths approach which links professional human service delivery systems with those formal and informal systems historically and currently available to these diverse cultural groups.
- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be used throughout this course and will provide a foundation for evaluating the knowledge base on ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, ability, and social class constructs in research and practice.

6. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:

This course will operationalize the NASW Code of Ethics, as it applies to ethical responsibilities to service consumers (clients), colleagues, and organizations. Other social work codes of ethics will also be examined in the treatment of these ethical responsibilities for selected cultural groups nationally and internationally.
7. Source Materials:

**Required Texts:**


**Strongly Recommended:**


**Supplementary Required Readings:**

There are a number of resource materials on the course CTools Resources site for your use. You will also find a set of suggested readings on the site in that section of the site.

**Assignments and Grading:**

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. UPON COMPLETION, ALL ASSIGNMENTS OTHER THAN THE PRIMARY TAPE MUST BE SUBMITTED ON CTOOLS. 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. Please be especially conscious of the appropriate methods for citing references so that inadvertent plagiarism does not occur. (If you didn’t initially complete the analysis or write it, you should probably cite it!! ) Remember that each submitted assignment should integrate course reading materials with any other content. Two points per day are deducted from late assignments. Papers not received by 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.
“How are my papers graded?”

A fully credited assignment would critically and succinctly cover all of the points in the original assignment description, use course or other readings to demonstrate an understanding of the main issues, and include personal reflections on the integration of this material in professional social work practice. The page limit will be enforced and will require you to choose your words carefully. No matter how brilliant you might be on page 10 of your assignments, the instructor will only read the number of pages cited below as the maximum. Your later brilliance will, therefore, not be included in the determination of your grade for that assignment.

Only those papers receiving failing grades may be revised and resubmitted for review. A contract between the instructor and student will be created in these cases.

Assignment 1: Attendance and small group participation
These are required and will constitute 30% of your final grade.

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 involvement in the class CTools discussion group. You will be assigned to a small group during the first week of class, and will have at least one in-class, graded group assignment. Once during the term, each group will also lead the class in a half hour discussion of the subject for that week, drawing on the week’s assigned readings and those of previous sessions. Feel free to bring in additional readings and/or media for your presentation that week. Given the brevity of your presentation, additional guest speakers are not encouraged, without prior approval. The main purpose of the small group activity is to generate questions and observations drawn from the conceptual model and readings, and to link those observations to a particular course session; examining the ways intersectionality alters an understanding of the subject matter. Recognize that the contemporary United States is part of a global village, and consider the ways in which the remedies you recommend may influence other parts of the world. Students will be randomly assigned to groups, and class participants may use the CTools small group site provided, both for dialogue and planning their activities.
ASSIGNMENT #2  Taping Assignment Part 1: (10 Points Due May 24th)

Please interview yourself, using the questions found on the Ctools site in the Resources Section and labeled “First Taping Assignment.” This is your personal interview and while it will be collected by the instructor, it will be heard only by you. Bring your completed tape to the May 24th class session. No tapes will be accepted after June 7th. No credit will be given for the final paper to those who have not submitted a tape by the due date.

ASSIGNMENT# 3: COMMENTARY (30 Points DUE June 21st)

The first paper is designed to promote the integration of praxis (critical self-reflection) and recognition of the multidimensional contextual practice model as it has influenced life in the United States. This first commentary invites you to integrate personal experiences and course content. Using Figure 2.3 on p. 49 of the Guadelupe & Lum text, respond to the questions associated with the various dimensions. As you complete the questions, reflect on the similarities and/or differences between your life experiences and those of your grandparents in the United States as young adults. (You may have to contact these family members or others who have the knowledge of their experiences). Finally, place both your generation and your grandparents in their social, political and historical contexts, considering the influences these have had on the micro-intrapersonal, meso-interpersonal, macro-environmental, and magna-spiritual. The instructor will read a maximum of 9 pages. COMPLETE CITATIONS MATTER

ASSIGNMENT #4: Taping Assignment Part 2 (30 Points, Due July 26th)

This assignment is designed to use praxis as the primary method for describing how your own behavior throughout the semester (in and outside of class) has promoted or inhibited your understanding of an aspect of culture you were unfamiliar with before the term began. Describe your personal struggles and accomplishments this term regarding this aspect and the ways it is moderated by intersectionality. It will include your analysis of how specific information from at least two of the four topic areas discussed in depth this term might be incorporated in your practice. There is a nine page limit for the final paper. COMPLETE CITATIONS MATTER

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Schedule of Topics and Readings for the Term:

**Week 1. May 10, 2010 - Beginnings**

Introductions: Ourselves and the Primary Organizing Framework for the Course
Course and syllabus overview
Ground rules
Hopes and fears

**Reading:**

**Week 2. May 17th Intersection 1a. The Social Construction of Whiteness – Guest Speaker – Professor Richard Tolman**

- Understanding “whiteness” as a social construct in the U.S.
- Levels of Power and Privilege
- Confounds of Race and Class, Ethnicity and Class

**Readings:**
Week 3. May 24th Intersection 1b  Racial or Ethnic? Models of Oppression

- Social Oppression Model
- Video The Color of Fear
- Fishbowl Discussions

Readings:
- Zinn: Ch. 5,6,9,10, 17,19– A catastrophic silence. Editorial, New York Times, November 26, 2008
- Zinn, Chapters 1,2 and Afterword for 20th Century Edition
- Guadelupe & Lum, Ch. 1-3,5,12-13

MAY 31 MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVED

Week 4. June 7 Intersection 2: Immigration

- Group 1 Leads Discussion
- Video: A Beautiful Blend

Readings:
Week 5. June 14th Intersection 3: Classism Lost and Found

- Group 2 Leads Discussion
- Video: People Like Us
- “We don’t have class in the United States”
- Relationship of Social Group Memberships to Rates of Incarceration
- “Nice” women don’t

Readings:

- Zinn: Ch. 7, 8, 13
- Guadalupe & Lum, Ch. 4
- Zinn: 13, 15, 25

Week 6. June 21st Intersection 4: Veterans, Families and “Dis”Ability

- Group Three Leads Discussion
- Assignment 3 - Commentary Due
- We are all temporarily abled
- Differences among “dis” abilities
- How “dis”ability impacts the individual, family, group, community, societal and international levels – the case of traumatic brain injury
- National and International Responses

Readings:

- Teaching Tolerance: The ABCs of Disability Rights
- Guadalupe & Lum: Ch. 10 People living with disabilities
Week 7. June 28th Intersection 5: Religion and spirituality

- Religiosity Vs. Spirituality
- Sources of strength, privilege, or oppression?
- Dimensions of spiritual well-being
- The Role of Rituals
- Peace Circles

Readings:

- Guadelupe & Lum: Ch. 6 Spirituality and Multidimensional Contextual Practice

July 5th Fourth of July Observed
Week 8. July 12th Intersection 6a: Gender Identity

- Group Four Leads Discussion
- Act like a man/woman activity
- Ending dichotomous thinking about gender
- Gender Identity and Gender Expression Disaggregated
- U.S. Feminism: Who’s missing?
- What is marriage?

Readings:
  o Guadelupe & Lum Ch 7, 8,9, 14,15

Week 9. July 19th Intersection 6b: Gender Expression

- Group 5 Leads Discussion
- Our Transgendered, bisexual, lesbian, gay and heterosexual lives
  o Hate Crimes
- What is marriage?
- Gender Oppression, Social Policy and Social Workers
- Readings:
Week 10. July 26th What Works, For Whom, Under What Conditions and At What Costs?

- Final Taping Assignment Due
  - Individual, group and community examples
  - Can we legislate decency?
  - The Multicultural Contextual Practice Continuum: Moving from individual through global change
  - The Transitions Initiative

Readings:
- Guadalupe & Lum Ch 12,
- Zinn: 19-22
- The Transitions Initiative Primer (http://transitionnetwork.org/Primer/TransitionInitiativesPrimer.pdf)

Week 11. August 2nd Wrapup, Unanswered Questions, and Closing Exercise

- Sphere of Influence
- Being an Effective, Ethical Ally
- Readings:
  - Thompson, Allison (2009), Radical social work in these contemporary times. Journal of Progressive Social Services 20(2)110-111.
Supplementary Readings


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


