

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number:	SW 325/WGS 340	Instructor:	Erin MacDonald, LCSW-S
Unique Number:	60807	Email:	erin.ebert@austin.utexas.edu
Semester:	Fall 2024	Office:	
Meeting Time/Place:	M/W Mornings	Office Phone:	512-465-2022
	9:30-11:00AM	Office Hours:	By appointment only
	PAR 308		

FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on recognizing injustice and constructing socially conscious responses to inequity using generalist social work practice. You will gain skills to identify and communicate about inequality affecting various identities and social statuses. You will understand different forms of marginalization by dominant groups and how unequal power relations adversely affect individuals, groups, and communities. You will also learn about frameworks that support discourse about inequity, marginalization, injustice, and exclusion, including the cycle of socialization, the tension between private troubles and public issues, systemic oppression, human rights, and strategies for socially conscious change. You will have the opportunity to explore your role in the promotion of social, racial, and economic justice.

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. The purpose of the Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag is for students to explore in depth the shared practices and beliefs of one or more underrepresented cultural groups subject to persistent marginalization. In addition to learning about these diverse groups in relation to their specific contexts, students should engage in an active process of critical reflection. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one underrepresented cultural group in the U.S

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the history and heritage of marginalized groups in the United States, including familiarity with the impact of racialization, ethnic origin, class, gender, gender identity and expression, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical and mental disabilities, caste, immigration/refugee status, national origin of communities and tribal sovereign status, and intersectional links of oppression.
2. Understand the social construction of difference and how social construction factors into oppression by dominant groups.
3. Analyze basic principles and critiques of various social justice and human rights

theories, perspectives, and practices, including, but not limited to, perspectives of anti-racism and anti-oppressive theories, critical theories such as critical race theory, lat-crit and queer-crit, dis-crit, and feminist and narrative theories.

4. Examine anti-racism, centering racialization, using perspectives developed by Black, Indigenous and other scholars of color.
5. Critically examine use of ecological systems theory and strengths-based practice, and analyze factors of these perspectives that support or hinder equity, in the pursuit of social, racial and economic justice.
6. Using a social justice lens, identify policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist and other oppressive ideas and actions and suggest strategies for change.
7. Critically examine how experiences of marginalization and oppression are similar and different in countries outside of the United States.
8. Critically examine personal and professional values, cultural perspectives and use of self in ethical, culturally humble, and socially just social work practices and leadership.
9. Identify and apply strategies to mitigate the ways in which historical and current marginalization is manifested in public policy, institutional structures, service delivery (including clinical assessment, planning, and intervention), and social work research.

EPAS Competencies

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, the UT SHSSW engages in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS).

Using a common evaluation instrument, this course measures the implementation of knowledge, skills, values, and/or cognitive and affective processes to assess the following competencies:

Competency 2: Advance Human Rights and Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

- a. advocate for human rights at the individual, family, group, organizational, and community system levels; and
- b. engage in practices that advance human rights to promote social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

Competency 3: Engage Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (A DEI) in Practice

- a. demonstrate anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practice at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, research, and policy levels; and

- b. demonstrate cultural humility by applying critical reflection, self-awareness, and self-regulation to manage the influence of bias, power, privilege, and values in working with clients and constituencies, acknowledging them as experts of their own lived experiences.

III. TEACHING METHODS

The primary teaching methods will be in-class lectures, group discussion, video and live demonstration, group activities, and written assignments. Each class contains reading or video assignments that are expected to be completed prior to class. Students are expected to ask questions, share experiences, and actively participate in class discussions.

IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

1. **Skyepack Digital Course Pack:** An electronic course materials packet that includes articles and links to videos. Purchase instructions will be provided.
2. Additional reading and video links will be assigned and available to you electronically via Canvas.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to attend all classes, complete all preparatory work and assignments, turn assignments in on time, and participate meaningfully in class discussions and activities. Reading assignments will provide the basis for discussions. Students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments during lectures. Students' questions and comments provide the professor an important assessment tool for whether readings are being completed before class.

Course Assignments: Course will be comprised of 100 points broken down as follows:

First Reflection/Self-Interview (5 points)

Conduct an interview-style initial assessment of your own ideas and attitudes about diversity, privilege, and oppression.

Implicit Bias Test (5 points)

An online test that measures bias by revealing implicit associations.

Culture Chest Collage (10 points)

Create a PowerPoint collage that includes the identities assigned to you in society and those that may be invisible using pictures of items that represent those ideas. Please don't include subjects such as past trauma experiences.

Culture Discussion Board (3 points)

Choose one culture chest presentation to look at from your fellow students and write a paragraph about what you noticed that was familiar/similar to yours, and what was different.

Oppression Frameworks Analysis (10 points)

Analysis of two frameworks of oppression. Additional details / guidelines will be posted in canvas.

Social Justice Common Assignment(s)

This assignment is REQUIRED for all sections of the course, regardless of professor. There will be a universal rubric and assignment description provided on canvas.

Common Assignment Part A (13 points): Social identity map

Common Assignment Part B (15 points): Community observation

Common Assignment Part B Event Submission (5 points)

Final Reflection (5 points)

Reflection on self-interview

Skyepack Questions (14 points)

There are weekly questions in skyepack. You'll receive 1pt per week for completing these as you complete the reading and activities.

Attendance/Participation (15 points)

The richness of the learning process in this course is enhanced by the participation of all members of the class. Participation will be assessed by attendance as well as oral comments and questions during class. Each unexcused absence will result in a reduction of one point for the participation grade. Three late arrivals or early departure equal one absence. Three or more absences may result in a one letter grade reduction in your final grade.

VI. GRADES

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C

70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

A = 100 – 90 points/Superior work: The assignment significantly exceeds expectations. Student exceeds what is required in the assignment and demonstrates a high level of in-depth critical thinking and analysis (i.e., writing is coherent, ideas synthesized and logical, discussion well developed).

B = 89 – 80 points/Good Work: The assignment meets all the requirements and demonstrates evidence of in- depth critical thinking and analysis.

C = 79 – 70 points/Average Work: The assignment meets the requirements, but has gaps, and lacks evidence of in-depth critical thinking and analysis.

D-failing = 69 and below/Poor/failing Work: The assignment has important gaps, both in terms of not meeting the requirements and lacking critical thinking and analysis.

VII. CLASS POLICIES

1. Conduct and Civility: Social work students adhere to the Student Standards for Professional Conduct of the NASW Code of Ethics and assume responsibility for their conduct. Scholastic honesty and integrity are to be consistent social work values. The instructor will comply with University guidelines regarding scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Social work practitioners respect others; therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected. Students will help create and support a learning environment that does not interfere with the learning of fellow students. When students voice an opinion with which you do not agree, feel free to voice opinions in a civil manner that can enhance the flow of ideas and dialog.

2. Readings and Preparatory Assignments: Students are expected to be active and participate in the learning process, and in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are also expected to complete readings and preparatory assignments whether or not the material is covered in class.

3. Professional Communication and Interactions: Disrespect toward the professor, students, or others is unacceptable and will be handled directly and in the context it occurs. Disrespectful behavior includes overt acts, such as making derogatory remarks based on another person’s age, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religious preference, and ability.

4. Assignments and Grades: Assignments should be turned in online on the date they are due, barring serious, unforeseen medical illness or family emergencies. There is a 5% penalty for each day past the due date.

5. Writing Style: The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Sixth Edition (APA) is the style manual to be used by all students. The manual is available at the library or for purchase at the UT Co- op. A free, online resource for APA formatting is: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

6. Course Modification: To ensure achievement for course objectives, the professor reserves the right to make modifications to any part of this syllabus related to schedule and assignment due dates. Should any modifications be made, students will be notified via Canvas. Students should check their email frequently. Note that some of the links to documents and videos on Canvas may change. Documents, new links or alternate options will be provided.

CLASS ATTENDANCE: Class attendance is required. Students may miss no more than 2 class sessions. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than 2 classes without a valid documentation, e.g., medical, death, etc.) will receive one course grade lower than their final grade when points are totaled. Students who miss more than **4** unexcused classes may receive two grades lower than their final grade. Repeated tardiness will result in an absence. If you believe you will be late to class, please alert the instructor via email or canvas message.

If a student cannot attend a class (or need to leave early/arrive late), they should notify the professor ahead of time. Students should also notify the professor as soon as possible after a **documentable, unforeseen emergency** that has caused them to miss class with no prior notice. If a student has a documentable, unforeseen emergency that affects their attendance in this course, they should be prepared to approach the professor about it with official documentation of the unforeseen emergency.

It is expected that you will participate in class discussions. Participation in class discussion includes: summarizing content, thinking critically, and respecting others' opinions regarding the reading assignments—though this does not mean agreement!

STUDENT CONCERNS: Students who would like to discuss a concern with the professor related to the class should make an appointment at time mutually convenient.

USE OF THE CANVAS WEBSITE: Web-based, password-protected class sites using Canvas software are available for all accredited courses taught at The University of Texas. Syllabi, handouts, assignments and other resources are types of information that may be available within these sites. Site activities could include exchanging email, engaging in class discussions and chats, and exchanging files. In addition, class e-mail rosters will be a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these electronic class rosters must restrict their directory information in the Office of the Registrar or online. For information on restricting directory information see: https://registrar.utexas.edu/schedules/199/print/front#P97_11126

This class will utilize Canvas for the distribution of class readings and any other multi-media content. Assignments may be submitted via Canvas. The primary mode of communication for this course will be email via the Canvas course website. Note below (in University Policies) that email is an official form of communication for The University of Texas at Austin and students are strongly encouraged to check their email daily.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM: Electronic Devices are discouraged from being used in the classroom unless it's for academic purposes. Collaborative conversation and participation are essential elements of this course, and electronics can distract from the ability to be fully engaged. Points will be taken away from participation grade if electronic devices are being misused.

VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Grading Scale

[No A+]		87.0 to 89.999	B+	77.0 to 79.999	C+	67.0 to 69.999	D+
94.0 and Above	A	84.0 to 86.999	B	74.0 to 76.999	C*	64.0 to 66.999	D
90.0 to 93.999	A-	80.0 to 83.999	B-	70.0 to 73.999	C-	60.0 to 63.999	D-
				<i>*minimum to pass course</i>		Below 60.0	F

Attendance and Academic Behavior. At the University of Texas at Austin, regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. See more information at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/>. Furthermore, students are expected to abide by the Standards for Social Work Education (available at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/student-resources/bsw/policies-and-procedures/>). The student shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements.

Religious Holy Days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Center for Access and Restorative Engagement at <https://community.utexas.edu/care/>. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

The University of Texas Honor Code. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Policy on Academic Integrity. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and / or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

Use of Course Materials. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

University Electronic Mail Student Notification. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

Professional Conduct and Civility in the Classroom. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

Classroom Confidentiality. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

Unanticipated Distress. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what

kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling and Mental Health Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

Policy on Social Media and Professional Communication. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

Resources, Prevention of Discrimination, and Safety

Disability Accommodation Statement. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <https://community.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

Behavior Concerns and Covid-19 Advice Line (BCCAL). If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>. The Behavior Concerns and

COVID-19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

Covid-19 Related Information. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

Title IX Reporting. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

Title IX Accommodations for Those Pregnant, Nursing and Parenting. Pregnant, nursing and parenting students, faculty, and staff are eligible for accommodations through the Title IX Office that support equal access to education and work and prevent discrimination. Students may reach out to the Title IX Office for help with accommodations to make up missed classes, complete missed coursework, keep them safe in the classroom, apply for leaves of absence, receive priority registration and other related support. Faculty and staff, including undergraduate students who work on campus and graduate student employees, may reach out for assistance with job or schedule restructuring and obtaining modified or additional work equipment. Visit the [Title IX pregnancy and parenting resource page](#) for more information or contact the [Title IX Support and Resources team](#) connect with a Case Manager.

Campus Carry Policy. The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

Safety. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

Emergency Evacuation Policy. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department,

the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

● **IX. COURSE SCHEDULE**

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
Week 1 08/26/24 & 8/28/24	Introductions Syllabus Review Class Values “What’s the problem”		Skyepack Module 1
Week 2 NO CLASS 9/2 09/04/23	“What is privilege?”	<i>Self Interview</i> <i>due 9/4 11:59pm</i>	Skyepack Module 2
Week 3 09/09/24 & 09/11/24	Cycles of Socialization Oppression		Skyepack Module 3
Week 4 09/16/24 & 09/18/24	Implicit Bias & Racism Structures that Influence Society & Classism	<i>Implicit Bias Test</i> <i>Due 9/15</i> <i>11:59pm.</i> <i>Complete before</i> <i>coming to class</i> <i>9/16</i> <i>Culture Chest</i> <i>presentation</i> <i>Upload by 9/17</i>	Skyepack Module 4 Skyepack Module 5
Week 5 09/23/24 & 09/25/24	Culture Chest Presentation Day 1 & 2		
Week 6 09/30/24 & 10/02/24	Culture Chest Presentation Day 3	<i>Culture Chest</i> <i>Reflection</i> <i>Due 10/2 11:59p</i>	

	NO CLASS 10/2—you will have an asynchronous assignment		
Week 7 10/07/24 & 10/09/24	Using Frameworks Religious Oppression	<i>Common Assignment Part B Event submission due 10/9</i>	Skyepack Module 6
Week 8 10/14/24 & 10/16/24	Cultural Competence Gender Oppression	<i>Oppression Framework assignment due ANY TIME in OCTOBER</i>	Skyepack Module 7
Week 9 10/21/24 & 10/23/24	Positionality & Intersectionality		Skyepack Module 8
WEEK 10 10/28/24 & 10/30/24	Othering & Belonging Heterosexism		Skyepack Module 9
Week 11 11/04/24 & 11/06/24	Size Diversity & Healthism Ableism Age Oppression		Readings on canvas
Week 12 11/11/24 & 11/13/24	Awake, Allying, & Allyship	<i>Common Assignment Pt. A due 11/13 11:59p</i>	Skyepack Module 10 & 11
Week 13 11/18/24 & 11/20/24	Advocacy		Skyepack Module 12
WEEK 14	HOLIDAY BREAK NO CLASS		

11/21- 11/29			
WEEK 15 12/02/24 & 12/04/24	Activism	<i>Common Assignment Pt. B due 12/6 11:59p</i>	Skyepack Module 13
WEEK 16 12/09/24	What are you going to do? Last Day of Class	<i>Reflection Paper Due 12/9 11:59p</i>	Skyepack Module 14

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