

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number: SW 360K/395K AFR 374 ANT 324
UGS 119 International Learning Seminar (1 CREDIT)
Unique Number: 61590
Office Hours: TH 3-4 or By Appt
Semester: Spring 2015

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South Africa---- COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

I. Course Description

This course engages students in discussions and learning about cross-cultural understanding, poverty, power, race and apartheid as these relate to current socio-economic dynamics in South Africa, with a specific focus on the historical and contemporary conditions of South Africa's townships near Cape Town, South Africa. As a pre-requisite for the 4-week Cape Town, South Africa Maymester study-abroad program, this seminar prepares students for the cultural experience and service-learning component of the Maymester program. During this spring seminar preceding the program, students meet once a week and complete weekly modules designed around readings and interactive exercises that address three critical domains: (1) students' cultural self-awareness (*understanding one's own cultural background*); (2) knowledge and understanding of South Africa's history and culture (*understanding sociocultural context, history and contemporary strengths and shortcomings of South Africa*); and (3) guidelines and expectations for the international service learning projects (*understanding best practices for international academic service learning*). In addition to learning about the context of poverty and power and empowerment in post-apartheid South Africa, students plan for a service-learning project that will involve working alongside social entrepreneurs in South Africa's townships who are driving social and economic development in their own communities. At the end of the spring seminar, students submit a learning record summary of their preparation for the study abroad experience and their expectations for further growth once on site in South Africa. Note: The course includes an international **Service Learning Component**, a pedagogical model that intentionally integrates reciprocal community service, academic and civic learning, and reflection. This course carries the **Global Studies Flag**.

II. Learning Objectives

By the

end of this course, students will demonstrate:

- **Ability to engage in complex analysis** based on knowledge of significant social, political and economic problems confronting South Africa, particularly township communities near Cape Town.
- **Collaborative community engagement** by developing innovative culturally grounded solutions in partnership with other disciplines, South African community members, and organizations in concert with peers.
- **Understanding of complex issues involved with academic service learning** based on readings and experience in a service-learning project.
- **Application of methods, theory & research** using CRAFT model of community engagement to implement "best practices" for Service Learning Project.
- **Civic imagination & action** in building sustainable change through the Service Learning Project.
- **Transformative critical thinking** through integrated self-reflection, intercultural maturity, commitment to public service, and ability to effectively relate to others.

III. Teaching methods

My philosophy of teaching is based on the belief that every student is an active and responsible participant in his/her learning, and that meaning and knowledge acquisition are built on the praxis of study, reflection, dialog, and action. I emphasize building knowledge within context, applying theory to practice, and encouraging students to assume responsibility for their education. To accomplish these goals, I utilize the Learning Record (LR) method of assessment. Informing my teaching is John Dewey's philosophy of experiential education that posits significant learning occurs when critical problems are examined, reflected and acted upon in their contextual complexity. This course incorporates a variety of teaching methods built around a service learning project including reflection through blogs, lectures, readings, group work, in class and online discussions, guest speakers, audiovisual materials, and a final student group presentation.

IV. Required Course Readings

On-Line Course Readings: Readings will be posted to BLACKBOARD.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment

Active Participation & Demonstration of Learning through Activities and Discussion

Blogging

Completion of Weekly Modules (which include brief readings and activities)

Active Participation & Demonstration of Learning through Activities and Discussion

This course involves a significant amount of required reading and classroom interaction. Students should expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. Social work tenets and intercultural maturity require us to address and deal 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, such as race, racism, power, privilege and cross-cultural interactions.

Blogging

Each student will create a blog and make weekly entries that reference the readings, classroom discussions, and responses to relevant issues. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate understanding of course content as well as:

- a) Clarify students' understanding of course content covered by the readings, videos, activities and discussion;
- b) Examine the personal and professional use of self in ethical, culturally competent, and culturally mature work;
- c) Reflect on the impact of discrimination and oppression on public policy, institutional structure, and one's own role in promoting social and economic justice.
- d) Extend the dialog outside the classroom in a reflective and thoughtful manner

The professor will provide specific questions related to the readings or class discussions for students to respond to in their blog posts. Blog posts can include photographs, video, and poetry, etc. as well as written reflections and responses to the readings. You are also required to comment on at least two blogs of fellow students each week. While blog posts are candid and honest portrayals of your reflections and experiences, they must be respectful and are not an arena for digression on unrelated issues or personal attacks. If you are referencing readings or data, cite sources using APA format (see Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition).

Completion of Weekly Modules

Each week students will complete modules, which generally consist of brief readings and/or activities and processing of these readings and activities via blog posts. Instructions for completing the modules are found under Blackboard Course Documents.

GRADING SCALE: 100 - 94 = A/ 93 - 90 = A-/ 89 - 87 = B+/ 86 - 84 = B/ 83 - 80 = B- / 79 - 77 = C+/ 76 - 74 = C/ 73 - 70 = C- / 69 - 67 = D+/ 66 - 64 = D/ 63 - 60 = D- / 59 and below = F

VI. Class Policies

1. **Attendance:** Attendance and prompt arrival to class is mandatory. Individual exceptions are made only in the event of *properly documented* extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control and prior notice of reason for absence and/or tardy. Poor attendance/participation will impact grade and ability to participate in the Maymester program.
2. **Late Assignments:** Two points per day will be deducted for late assignments.
3. **APA format:** We will use APA editorial style as the standard format for all written assignments. Details of the APA style are included in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition.
4. **Small group work:** Groups are expected to resolve challenges. The instructor serves as consultant on group dynamics and teamwork. Groups are not penalized in their grade for consulting with the instructor.
5. **Respect and Civility:** The instructor and classmates have the ethical responsibility to see that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and inviting place to grow together. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.
6. **Technology in the classroom:** Laptops, phones and use of social media devices in class is strictly prohibited.
7. **Student feedback:** Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during office hours and at mid-term review.
8. **Blackboard:** Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400.

OTHER POLICIES:

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.

Professional conduct in class. 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. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

Classroom civility. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as 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. Social Work 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.

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 instructor. The instructor 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 can contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/.

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.

Students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by peers, clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material that could be considered inappropriate. Because of this, 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.

Policy on scholastic dishonesty. Students who violate University rules on scholastic 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 scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

Use of class materials. The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor 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 includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

Documented disability statement. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the

beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/dce/ssd/>.

Religious holidays. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of e-mail for official correspondence to students. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

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.

Behavior concerns advice line (bcsl). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among 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 <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

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: (1) Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building; (2) If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class; (3) In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions; (4) 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.

VII. Course Schedule UGS 119 South Africa: PRE-DEPARTURE SEMINAR **(Note: Schedule may be adjusted to accommodate best learning opportunities)**

DATE	TOPIC AND READINGS
Week 1 – Week 4	<i>Who am I?</i> Readings and Activities for cultural self-awareness Completion of Modules 1-4
Week 5 – Week 8	<i>Where am I going?</i> South Africa: History and Contemporary Issues Completion of Modules 5-8
Week 9 – Week 14	<i>How can I contribute to social justice and empowerment in SA?</i> Learning about best practices for International Service Learning Projects Completion of Modules 9-14
Week 15	Project Presentations/Complete Final Module/ Pre-departure celebration