

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, YORK UNIVERSITY
IDENTITY, DIVERSITY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE
SOWK 2050 6.0E

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How do we come to know who we are? How do we view ourselves in relation to others?

How are these perspectives and lived experiences rooted in historical and contemporary forms of privilege, conferred dominance, oppression and discrimination? How are we invited into and/or excluded from these structures? How do processes of colonization, state formation, imperialism, and globalization organize systems of oppression and domination?

In this course we will explore social theories about identity and diversity, and how they have profound, unequal and enduring material effects on us all - as individuals, as community members and in our daily practice as social workers. A critical analysis of identity formation, diversity and oppression is essential to how we view ourselves, our work with people and our ability to advocate for anti-oppressive practices.

This course will concentrate on issues related to sexuality, class, racialization, whiteness, gender, age, immigrant and refugee status, ability, language, culture, spiritual/religious affiliations, and other social divisions and categories. The course will provide a forum to engage in activities and assignments that seek to understand the ways in which colonial, imperial and global forms of power in the 21st century influence and contribute to inequality, oppression and the marginalisation of communities of people.

We will engage with these political ideas through an analysis of contemporary debates and readings / films / music from a wide range of theoretical locations and disciplines.

In

the latter section of this course, we will examine projects and policies that attempt to put

anti-discriminatory programs into practice. We will be exposed to the varied strategies that social workers use in their attempts to challenge discrimination(s). You must be prepared to participate fully in all levels of discussion and work together to create a positive community in the classroom. You will be encouraged to consider your personal and professional responsibilities in working across differences and to develop strategies

that support a transformative, anti-oppressive practice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Develop an understanding of how political, economic and social-cultural practice shape identity, power, privilege and oppression.
- Demonstrate a capacity for critical self-reflection of positionality as a social worker
- Explore personal agency within the context of oppression.
- Develop strategies and practices for working across difference.
- Explore and develop strategies for transformative anti-oppressive social work practice

COURSE FORMAT

The class format will include in-class exercises, audio-visual presentations, small group work, class presentations, guest speakers and lectures. A high degree of student participation is expected in the discussion of issues and in the small group activities. Students will work in assigned groups to research, discuss and present on the readings.

Attendance will be taken every class. If more than three classes per term are missed, you will lose the entire 15%. Attendance means coming to class on time and staying for the whole class. Please do not book appointments during class time. Please see the School's attendance policy. Participation includes reading the material for each class and preparing responses and observations to be shared in every class – this should include the overall argument, the main themes or evidence that supports the argument and your own reflection on and critique of the argument. Come with a question to every class.

Assignments are expected to be handed in on time. If you require an extension please contact me in writing 3 days prior to the deadline. If assignments are handed in late, 5% of the total will be deducted each day.

REQUIRED READINGS

The book *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice: Social Justice Social Work* (2017), ed. Donna Baines can also be purchased at the bookstore 3rd EDITION. The rest of the readings can be found online in the York library system or posted. Further articles may be added.

Weekly Assigned Articles

Week 1: September 9, 2019 - INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Week 2: September 16, 2019 - Oppression, the Self and Critical Reflexivity
Mullaly, Bob. (2002). Oppression: An overview, in *Challenging Oppression: A Critical Social Work Approach*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. (pp. 27-50). [posted]

Heron, Barbara. (2005). Self-reflection in critical social work practice: Subjectivity and the possibilities of resistance. *Reflective Practice*, 6(3), pp.341-351 [library online]
hooks, bell. (2009). Teaching Critical Thinking. [PDF available online] at :
http://cdn0.inwithforward.com/images/bell-hooks-critical_thinking.pdf?mtime=20140729104110

Week 3: September 23, 2019- Relating Across Difference

McKee, M. (2003). Excavating our frames of mind: the key to dialogue and collaboration. *Social Work*, 48(3), pp. 401-407. [library online]
Lorde, A. (1984) Age, race, class and sex: women redefining difference, in *Sister Outsider, Essays and Speeches*. New York: Ten Speed Press. [PDF available online]
Narayan, U. (1988) Working together across difference: some considerations on emotions and political practice. *Hypatia*, 3(2), pp. 31-47. [library online]

Week 4: September 30, 2019 - Liberalism and Neoliberalism

Howlett, M. and Ramesh, M. (1992). Liberal political economy. *The Political Economy of Canada: An Introduction*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, pp. 24-41. [posted] 5
Teepie, G. (2000). Chapter 5: Neoliberal policies and their rationale. In *Globalization and the Decline of Social Reform*. Toronto: Garamond Press, pp. 75-127. [posted]

Week 5: October 7, 2019 – Theories of Class, Race and Gender

Stevenson, L & D. Haberman.(2009) Marx: The Economic Basis of Human Societies. *Ten theories of Human Nature*, pp. 138-155. [posted]
Little, M. H. (2012). Just Another Neo-liberal worker: Tracing the state's treatment of low-income mothers. *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, 38(1), pp.1-18. [library online]

October 12-18, 2019 – no classes for fall reading week

Week 6: October 21, 2019 – Black Feminist Thought and Critical Race Theory

Collins, P. H. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, consciousness and the politics of empowerment*. Part 1, pp. 1-19. [library: ebook]
Aylward, C. (1999). *Canadian critical race theory: racism and the law*. Halifax: Fernwood Press, pp. 19-49. [library: ebook]
Bell, D. (1992) Introduction: divining our racial themes, pp.1-14. *Faces at the bottom of the well: the permanence of racism*. New York, NY: BasicBooks
[<https://uniteyouthdublin.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/facesatbottomofw00bellrich.pdf>]

Week 7: October 28, 2018 – Post-structural Theories

Healy, K. (2005). Chapter 10, Postmodern approaches in practice. In, *Social work theories in context: Creating frameworks for practice*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 193-215. [posted]
Layder, D. (2006). Chapter 6, Foucault and the postmodern turn. In, *Understanding social theory* (2nd ed.). London: Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, pp. 94-113. [posted]

Week 8: November 4, 2019 – Post-colonialism and anti-imperialism

Loomba, Ania. (2005). Situating Colonial and Postcolonial Studies. In Colonialism/postcolonialism, pp. 30-73. [library ebook]

Haque, E. (2010). Homegrown, Muslim and other: Tolerance, Secularism and the limits of Multiculturalism. *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, 16(1), pp. 79-101. [library online]

Week 9: November 11, 2019 –White Settler Societies

Barker, A. (2009). The contemporary reality of Canadian imperialism: Settler colonialism and the hybrid colonial state. *The American Indian Quarterly*, 33(3), pp.325-351. [library online]

Razack, S. (2002). Gendered racial violence and spatialized justice: The murder of Pamela George. In S. Razack (ed.). *Race, space and the law: Unmapping a White settler society*. Toronto: Between the Lines, pp.121- 156. [library online]

Leroux, D. (2018) *Self-made Metis*. *Maisonneuve: A Quarterly of Arts, Opinion and Ideas*. [article online]

Week 10: November 18, 2019 – Queer Theory

Butler, J. (2004) *Doing justice to someone: Sex reassignment and allegories of transexuality*. *GLQ*, 7-4, pp. 621-636 [library online]

Hicks, S., Jeyasingham, D. (2016) *Social Work, Queer Theory and After: A Genealogy of Sexuality Theory in Neo-Liberal Times*. *British Journal of Social Work*, 46, pp.2357-2373. [library online]

Pyne, J. (2014). Gender independent kids: A paradigm shift in approaches to gender non_conforming children. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 23(1), pp. 1-8. [library online]

Week 11: November 25, 2019 – The Complications of Multiculturalism, Diversity and Citizenship

Ahmed, S. (2007). The Language of Diversity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(2), pp. 235-256. [library online]

Arat-Koc, S. (2005) The disciplinary boundaries of Canadian identity after 9-11: Civilizational identity, multiculturalism, and the challenge of anti-imperialist feminism. *Social Justice*, 32(4), pp. 32-49 [library online]

Bannerji, H. (2000) The Paradox of Diversity: The Construction of a Multicultural Canada and “Women of Color”. *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 23(5): pp. 537-560. [library online]

Week 12: December 2, 2019 – Critical Disability Theories and social work

Hiranandani, V. (2005). Toward a critical theory of disability in social work. *Critical social work*, 6(1). [library online]

El-Lahib, Y & Webhi, S. (2011). Immigration and disability: Ableism in the policies of the Canadian state. *International Social Work*, 55(1), pp. 95-108. [library online]

WINTER TERM

Week 1: January 6, 2020- Power Dynamics in Social Work Practice

Baines, D. (2017). Anti-oppressive practice: Roots, Theory, Tensions. *Doing Anti_Oppressive Practice*, pp. 2-24.

Bar-On, A. (2002) Restoring power to social work practice. *British Journal of Social Work*, 32, pp. 997-1014 [library online]

Week 2: January 13, 2020 - Indigenous approaches, decolonial challenges

Baskin, C. (2006). Aboriginal World Views as Challenges and Possibilities in Social Work Education, *Critical Social Work*, 7(2). [available online]

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015). Introduction. Honouring truth: Reconciling for the future – Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Winnipeg, MB: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, pp. 1-26. [available online]

Week 3: January 20, 2020 – Claiming Spaces

Pon, G., et al. (2017). Who's protecting whom? Child welfare and policing black families. *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice*, pp. 70-83.

Razack, S. (2002). When place becomes race. *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping a White*

Settler Society. Toronto: Between the Lines. [available online]

Week 4: January 27, 2020 - Reconceptualizing Practice

Baines, Donna. (2017). Bridging the practice-activism divide in mainstream social work: Advocacy, organizing and social movements. *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice*, pp. 89-103.

Brown, Catrina. (2017). Creating counter stories: Critical clinical practice and Feminist narrative therapy. *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice*, pp.212-230.

Parker, L. (2003). A social justice model for social work practice. *Affilia*, 18(3), pp.272-288. [library online]

Week 5: February 3, 2020 – Indigenous and Decolonial approaches II

Freeman, Bonnie. (2017). Soup days and decolonization: Indigenous pathways to anti_oppressive practice. *Doing Anti-Oppressive Practice*, pp.105-119.

Barker, A. J. (2015). A Direct act of resurgence, a direct act of sovereignty: Reflections on Idle no More, Indigenous activism, and Canadian settler colonialism. *Globalizations*, 12(1), pp. 43-65. [library online]8

Week 6: February 10, 2020 – Labour rights and unions

Yates, C. (2004). Forum: Reorganizing Unions, Rebuilding the Union Movement by Organizing the Unorganized, Strategic Considerations. *Studies in Political Economy*, 74, pp.171-179. [library online]

Baines, D. (2011). Unions: A vehicle for Anti-oppressive resistance. *Doing Anti_Oppressive Practice*, pp. 337-347.

Reading Week - February 15-21, 2019

Week 7: February 24, 2020– Re-imagining bodies and borders

Hugman, R., Moosa-Mitha, M., & Moyo, O. (2010). Towards a borderless social work: Reconsidering notions of international social work. *International Social Work*, 53(5), pp. 629-643. [library online]

Rwigema, M, Udegbe, O., Lewis-Peart, D (2015) We are expected to work as if we are not who we are: reflections on working with queer black youth, in *LGBTQ People and Social Work: Intersectional Perspectives*, Eds. Brian J. O'Neill, Tracy A. Swan and Nick J. Mule, (pp.37-51), Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press. [posted]

Week 8: March 2, 2020– Re-imagining bodies and borders II

Deepak, A. (2012). Globalization, power and resistance: Postcolonial and transnational feminist perspectives for social work practice. *International Social Work*, 55(6), pp. 779-793.[library online]

Ross, M. (2017). Social work activism within neoliberalism: A big tent approach? *Doing Anti-oppressive Practice*, pp. 304-318.

Week 9: March 9, 2020

Presentations

Week 10: March 16, 2020

Presentations

Week 11: March 23, 2020

Presentations

Week 12: March 30, 2020

Presentations and Final Class

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment One – Reading Analysis: Due Mon, Oct 21

I want you to write about the two main themes for the first half of the course: oppression and privilege/conferred dominance.

Select a group of readings to analyze what we have explored in class. Please discuss the following – Given the variety of theories we have explored, explain your understanding of oppression and privilege/conferred dominance and their effects? Also - how have the readings changed or helped you understand your own identity in the world? Provide an overall thesis; construct your argument in coherent paragraphs that lay out your argument. You can provide examples from your personal and/or professional experience to add to your argument.

Your analysis should be in essay format of six to eight pages, double-spaced, APA, 12 pt.

Further information about reading and writing strategies will be discussed in class.

Assignment Two: Relating Across Differences: Due Mon, Dec 2 Identify a situation in which you were involved and included interaction(s) relating to power differences or working across differences. Describe the situation. Analyze and discuss anti-oppressive themes and issues occurring within the situation. How it was or was not resolved

successfully. What were or could have been possible strategies to address and mitigate harmful power imbalances? In your discussion you must use principles and concepts from class discussions, required readings and additional resources of your choosing. You will be expected to integrate your personal and professional experiences. The paper should look at a personal situation involving a difference(s) resulting in oppression. You will need to deconstruct (analyze and discuss) the situation with respect to how it was or was not addressed using the knowledge from the course readings, sessions and other sources.

Your paper should be in essay format of eight to ten pages, double-spaced, APA, 12 pt.

Assignment Three: Experiential Learning and Presentation

Students are required to attend an event (panel, rally, protest, march, etc) that offers education/ awareness regarding a topic discussed within the course. Students are there as observers, participants and community members engaging with issues, struggles and topics.

Assignment 3A: Presentation- presentation schedule will be discussed in class.

Students will present to their classmates a five-minute reflection, information sharing or debrief of the event they attended. Please do not read your reflective journal out loud.

Students must:

- Link the event to a topic in the course and social work10
- Provide a brief background or context for the event
- Share their thoughts regarding the event

Assignment 3B: Reflective Journal- Due Mon, Feb 24

The second part of the assignment includes a reflective journal. The student needs to reflect on what they learned from the event and link this learning to interlocking sites of oppression and resistance discussed in the course. Your reflective journal should be two to four pages, double-spaced, APA style, 12 pt.

Examples of potential events:

- Take Back the Night
- Sisters of the Spirit Vigil
- Trans Day of Remembrance
- December 6th Memorial
- Strawberry Ceremony
- Black Lives Matter-Toronto rallies
- International Women's Day

Assignment 4 – AOP Response: Due Mon, Apr 6

You will be provided with an editorial or opinion print article (or may write on an article that has been pre-approved by the instructor). The opinion that will be expressed in the article will be counter to the values, ideas and mission statement of the School of Social Work and this course. It is your job to provide a response to challenge their arguments. You will need to provide strong sources to back your own argument (research and/or peer reviewed articles) and not rely on 'public opinion' or 'common knowledge'. You may

situate yourself and your lived experiences in the paper but you will also need to provide academic arguments as the primary foundation. We will discuss this assignment more in class as it will be dependent on current topics and discussions in the news.

Your paper should be in essay format of eight to ten pages, double-spaced, APA, 12 pt