

SOCW 3317 Human Behavior and Diverse Populations

ONLINE SYLLABUS

Fall
2014

Instructor: Ericka Robinson-Freeman, LMSW

Classroom: This is an online course taught via Blackboard via <https://elearn.uta.edu>

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Office: Social Work Complex, Building A, 101F

Office Hours: Tuesdays 8-9:30 a.m., 5-7 p.m.; Thursdays 8-9:30 a.m., 12:30-3 p.m.
(Other hours available by appointment only.)

Course Description:

Course Catalog Description

Introduction to theoretical, practical and policy issues related to race, ethnicity, and women. Historical, political, and socioeconomic forces are examined that maintain racist and sexist values, attitudes, and behaviors in society and all levels of organizational behavior.

Expanded Description of Course Content

This course is part of the Human Behavior and the Social Environment curriculum sequence in the School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington. Students are introduced to the theoretical issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status. Course includes a study of historical, political, and socioeconomic forces that maintain racist, sexist, heterosexist, and ablest values, attitudes and behaviors in our society and profession. Concepts related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status include but are not limited to sociopolitical processes (racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, oppression, prejudice, discrimination, class, etc.), interpersonal processes (identity, self-concept/esteem, authenticity, mental health, and basic behaviors), and socio-cultural processes (cultural fusion, culture conflict, acculturation, and assimilation). The implications of these sociopolitical, intrapersonal, and socio-cultural processes for social work practice are examined in terms of social work values, knowledge and skills at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of organizational behavior.

The emphasis in this course will be on developing an understanding of (a) those client groups who, because of factors of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status are particularly oppressed in our society, and (b) those client groups who perpetuate such oppression against individuals due to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability status. Please note, this is not a practice course. While practice interventions will be discussed at times, the focus of the course remains on developing a theoretical understanding of human behavior in relationship to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status.

CSWE EPAS Policy Statement

4.3 Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Social work education programs provide content on the reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments. Content includes empirically based theories and knowledge that focus on the interactions between and among individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems. It includes theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development across the life span; the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organizational, and community); and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being.

Educational Objectives Addressed:

- Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
- Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
- Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.

This course relates to and advances the program objectives by developing knowledge and competence in working with diverse populations. Students completing this course will have developed a critical understanding of social justice, discrimination, and oppression, and will be prepared to apply this understanding in their practice.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate the following knowledge areas through their course assignments, discussions, and exams.

1. Identify theoretical, policy, and practice issues related to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability status.
2. Identify historical, political, socioeconomic forces that maintain racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, etc.
3. Identify how sociopolitical, interpersonal, and socio-cultural processes promote/block optimal health and well-being for persons of oppressed groups.
4. Examine self-identity and values as regards to social work values, ethics, and professional practice.
5. Develop strategies to counter racist/sexist/heterosexist/ablest policies and practices in social institutions.
6. Develop specific strategies that promote economic and social justice for populations at risk.

Online Class Responsibilities and Expectations

Accessing the Course and Assignments

Classes are online for your convenience. There is no set "class time" or "class day"; however, you should log on to the class **at least twice a week** by going to Blackboard (<https://elearn.uta.edu>) and logging on using your UTA NET ID and password.

Each week you should:

- Check Blackboard at least twice. Make sure to check "Announcements" for any updates.
- View each week's content under "Course Material."
- Complete the readings from the textbook.
- Complete any assignments (if applicable).

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- Complete the discussion (if applicable) under “Discussions.”
- Contact Professor Robinson-Freeman with any questions!

Expectations for Class Study

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

Learning and Participating

Much of what students learn is affected by two sources: the level of effort contributed by the individual, and the learning community that is created through the shared ownership and contributions of the collective whole. Each student is asked to participate to her/his fullest extent in the virtual learning environment, and to facilitate others' ability to participate at the same time. This means that students come prepared to join in the classroom learning experience by having readings and other work completed, by respecting themselves and others who are posting on the discussion boards, and by taking responsibility for completing assignments in a competent and timely manner

Communication with Professor

I will be available by email to answer questions about assignments. I receive email on my phone and check it multiple times per day. Students should submit questions or requests for clarification *at least 24 hours before an assignment is due*. If an assignment is due in less than 24 hours, I cannot guarantee a timely response.

If you are concerned about your class performance, I am more than willing to work with you to help you improve your understanding of course content.

Assignments

- 1) *Attendance and Participation*. Although there is no “attendance” grade, regular access to the course on Blackboard is expected. In borderline grade situations, Blackboard access will count at the professor's discretion. Actions that undermine your participation and compromise the online learning community, such as disrespectful communication in discussion boards, will negatively affect your grade.
- 2) *Discussion Board*. You must answer at least one of the discussion board questions posted for 10 sessions. In addition, you must post responses to at least two postings of your classmates in each of the 10 sessions. Not all weeks/sessions will have discussion board questions. In order to earn the full points in any given session, you must meet the following criteria:
 - Respond to new discussion board question at least one and comment on two postings from your classmates. (Feel free to respond to more than the minimum as this will enhance your learning experience!)
 - Demonstrate thoughtfulness and effort in your response.
 - Discussions will begin each Sunday and end each Saturday at midnight.
- 3) *Out of Comfort Zone Paper*. One of the goals of this course is to push students out of their own comfort zones. Therefore, students will write a short paper (4-6 pages) based on their

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visit to a place that is out of their comfort zone. Students will choose a place to visit where they will not feel entirely comfortable, and after they visit, will write a paper describing the experience. Additional information regarding this assignment will be posted on Blackboard.

This assignment is due by end of Session 10 on Saturday, November 1.

- 4) *Exams.* Two examinations will be given during the semester. Exam I will cover the first half of the material learned and Exam II will cover the second half of the material learned. (Exam II will NOT be comprehensive.) Helpful reviews for both exams will be posted. Both exams will be administered online and may include various types of questions such as multiple choice, true/false, and short answer.

Grading

The grading for this course is as follows:

10 Discussion Boards	20% of Final Grade
Out of Comfort Zone Paper	20% of Final Grade
Exam I	30% of Final Grade
Exam II	30% of Final Grade

90 and Above =A

80 - 89.9 = B

70 -79.9 = C

60 - 69.9 = D

Below 60 =F

Grading Policy

Late assignments are strongly discouraged. You will not be permitted to “make-up” a discussion board or exam unless the instructor offers it to the entire class as a bonus/exception. There will be **10 points deducted for late papers.** No paper will be accepted after 5 days following the due date. It is your responsibility to ensure that your work is completed on time and submitted correctly. Please do not wait until Saturday evening to submit your assignments for the week, as I will not be able to assist you if there is a problem with Blackboard.

Required Textbook

Koppelman, K. & Goodhart, L. Understanding Human Differences: Multicultural Education for a Diverse America, 3rd or 4th edition.

Recommended Text

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.), Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

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Final Review Week

A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations is designated by the University as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Course Outline/Topics and Readings

Session #	Topic	Dates Covered
1	Understanding Ourselves and Others	8/24 – 8/30
2	Prejudice	8/31 – 9/6
3	Cross Cultural Communication	9/07 – 9/13
4	Immigration and Oppression	9/14 – 9/20
5	Race and Oppression	9/21 – 9/27
6	Religion and Oppression	9/28 – 10/4
7	Rejecting Oppressive Relationships	10/5 – 10/11
8	Exam Review and Exam #1	10/12 – 10/18
9	Racism	10/19 – 10/25
10	Sexism Out of Comfort Zone Paper Due!	10/26 – 11/1
11	Heterosexism	11/2 – 11/8
12	Classism	11/9 – 11/15
13	Ableism	11/16 – 11/22
14	No Class THANKSGIVING BREAK	11/23 – 11/29
15	Exam Review and Exam #2	11/30 – 12/6

OTHER INFORMATION AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

1. Dropping the Class: If you choose to drop this course at any point during the semester, please be attentive to specific University calendar dates established for completing this process. It is the student's responsibility to complete the necessary paperwork according to the University's schedule. Not doing so will result in a failing grade. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.

2. Student Support Services/Student Retention: The University supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

3. Academic Integrity: It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2). All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

For this class, be attentive to the manner in which you use and cite reference material. When in doubt, it is best to insert a citation. Avoid the excessive use of quotations – cited or not – and if you use any kind of a writing tutor, be careful about the degree of assistance they provide to you. Assignments are intended to represent YOUR work – for better or worse – so over-reliance on outside help is discouraged.

4. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): If you are a student who requires accommodations in compliance with the ADA, please see me at the beginning of the semester. Faculty members are required by law to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364, located in the lower level of the University Center.

5. Bomb threats: If anyone is tempted to call in a bomb threat, be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellation of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternate sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.

6. Librarian to Contact: The Social Sciences / Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is now in the central (main) library. He may also be contacted via E-mail: dillard@uta.edu. His web page is linked to the School of Social Work Main Page and through the Central Library web page.

7. E-Culture Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University email address as an official means of communication with students. All communication for this class will be conducted through the UTA email system. Through the use of email, UT-Arlington is able to provide students with relevant and timely information, designed to facilitate student success. In particular, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation may be sent to students through email. All students are assigned an email account and information about activating and using it is available at www.uta.edu/email. New students (first semester at UTA) are able to activate their email account 24 hours

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after registering for courses. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active as long as a student is enrolled at UT-Arlington. Students are responsible for checking their UTA issued email regularly.

8. Incompletes: Incompletes are given only in exceptional and very rare situations that involve Acts of Nature and/or other things beyond the ability of the student to anticipate or overcome. A student **MUST** speak directly with Professor Robinson-Freeman at least 2 weeks prior to the end of the semester to determine if he/she qualifies for an incomplete.

9. Grade Grievance Policy: It is the obligation of the student, in attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor with whom the grievance originated. Individual instructors retain primary responsibility for assigning grades. The instructor's judgment is final unless compelling evidence shows preferential treatment or procedural irregularities. If students wish to appeal, their requests must be submitted in writing on an Academic Grievance Form available in departmental or program offices to the department chair or program director. Before considering a grievance, the department chair or program director will refer the issue to a departmental or program committee of graduate faculty. If the committee cannot reach a decision acceptable to the parties involved, the department chair or program director will issue a decision on the grievance. If students are dissatisfied with the chair or director's decision, they may appeal the case to the academic dean. If they are dissatisfied with the academic dean's decision, they may appeal it to the dean of Graduate Studies. Students have one year from the day grades are posted to initiate a grievance concerning a grade.

10. Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

11. Emergency Exit Procedures: Please be aware of your surroundings when attending to your online class sessions. Know the emergency exits.

12. Web Outages: In an online class, access to course material *may* be compromised due to weather and other affecting circumstances. Please allow alternate time to complete course work in the event of an outage.

13. Title IX: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.