Semester/Year: Spring 2016
Course Title: Human Behavior, Diversity and Social Justice
Course Prefix/Number/Section: SOCW 5317-005/009
Instructor Name: Ericka Robinson-Freeman, MSSW/LMSW
Faculty Position: Assistant Professor in Practice
Faculty Profile: http://www.uta.edu/profiles/ericka-freeman
Office Number: SOCW Bldg A, 101F
Phone Number: Emailing is preferred.
Email Address: erickarobinson@uta.edu
Office Hours: Tues 5-7 p.m., Wed 2-4 p.m., Thur 8-9:30 a.m.
Day and Time of Class (if applicable): Online
Location: Online
Equipment: A laptop computer with wireless capability or equivalent is required for all SSW classes.
Blackboard: https://elearn.uta.edu/webapps/login/

A. Catalog Course Description/Special Requirements (Prerequisites/Out of Class Meetings):

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.

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.

B. Measurable Student Learning Outcomes:

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.

SOCW 5317 addresses the following foundation educational objectives:

Objective 2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.

Objective 3. 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.

Objective 4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.

Objective 7. 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.

Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

SOCW 5317 addresses the following Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) requirements for Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors:

Educational Policy 2.1.2—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice. [Social workers have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage in ethical decision-making. Social workers are knowledgeable about the value base of the profession, its ethical standards, and relevant law. Social workers:]

(a) Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice.

(b) Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and, as applicable, of the International Federation of Social Workers/International Association of Social Workers
(c) Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts; and

(d) Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions.

**Educational Policy 2.1.3—Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.** [Social workers are knowledgeable about the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and reasoned discernment. They use critical thinking augmented by creativity and curiosity. Critical thinking also requires the synthesis and communication of relevant information. Social workers:]

(a) Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge, and practice wisdom.

**Educational Policy 2.1.4—Engage diversity and difference in practice.** [Social workers understand how diversity characterizes and shapes the human experience and is critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Social workers appreciate that, as a consequence of difference, a person’s life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers:]

(a) Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.

(b) Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.

(c) Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences; and

(d) View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants.

**Educational Policy 2.1.5—Advance human rights and social and economic justice.** [Each person, regardless of position in society, has basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers recognize the global interconnections of oppression and are knowledgeable about theories of justice and strategies to promote human and civil rights. Social work incorporates social justice practices in organizations, institutions, and society to ensure that these basic human rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice. Social workers:]

(a) Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination.

(b) Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and

(c) Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice.

**Educational Policy 2.1.6—Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.** [Social workers use practice experience to inform research, employ evidence-based interventions, evaluate their own practice, and use research findings to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery. Social workers comprehend quantitative and qualitative research and understand scientific and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers:]

(a) Use research evidence to inform practice.
Educational Policy 2.1.7—Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.  
[Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in promoting and maintaining health and well being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers:]

1. utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation; and
2. critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment.

By the end of the semester, students should be able to demonstrate the following knowledge areas through their course assignments, papers, examinations, and group projects:

This course aims at enabling students to:

1. Identify theoretical, policy, and practice issues related to ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability status. (EP 2.1.4 (a-d), 2.1.5 (a-c), 2.1.7 (a & b); Achieved through: DB, Quizzes, Midterm and Final Exam, Out of Comfort Zone Paper)
2. Identify historical, political, socioeconomic forces that maintain racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, etc. (EP 2.1.4 (a-d), 2.1.5 (a-c), 2.1.6, & 2.1.7 (a & b); Achieved through: DB, Quizzes, Midterm and Final Exam, Out of Comfort Zone Paper)
3. Identify how sociopolitical, interpersonal, and socio-cultural processes promote/block optimal health and well being for persons of oppressed groups. (EP 2.1.3(a), 2.1.4 (a-d), 2.1.5 (a-c), & 2.1.7 (a & b); DB)
4. Examine self-identity and values as regards to social work values, ethics, and professional practice. (EP 2.1.2 (a-d), 2.1.4 (a-d) & 2.1.5 (a-c); Out of Comfort Zone Paper, DB)
5. Develop strategies to counter racist/sexist/heterosexist/ablest policies and practices in social institutions. (EP 2.1.4 (a-d) & 2.1.5 (a-c); Out of Comfort Zone Paper, DB)
6. Develop specific strategies that promote economic and social justice for populations at risk. (EP 2.1.3 (a), EP 2.1.4 (a-d) & 2.1.5 (a-c); DB)

C. Required Text(s) and Other Course Materials:


In addition, videos and supplemental readings may be posted in weekly sessions.

D. Additional Recommended Text(s) and Other Course Materials:

N/A

E. Major Course Assignments & Examinations:

Discussion Boards. 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. Not all 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 a discussion board question and comment on two postings from your classmates.
• Demonstrate thoughtfulness and effort in your response.
• Complete discussion posts in a timely manner. Discussion Boards begin on Sundays at 12:00
a.m. and end on Saturdays at end of day, 11:59 p.m.

*Students are encouraged to participate in more than the minimum number of discussions required, as participation will generally enhance your understanding of the material as well as your overall experience in the course. **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 individually write a short paper (4-6 pages) based on their 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, write a paper describing the experience. Some example choices include: a mosque; a temple (Jewish, Buddhist, etc.); white, black, or Hispanic meeting; a gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (glbt) gathering; spending all day without speaking (to experience a disability firsthand); or going through the intake process at a homeless shelter, among others. Additional information regarding this assignment will be posted on Blackboard under Session 11. **This assignment is due by the end of session 11.**

**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. **Exam 1 is due by the end of session 10 and Exam 2 is due by the end of session 16.**

**F. Grading Policy**

All papers must be grammatically correct using APA style. Papers with many grammatical errors and misspellings will not receive a satisfactory grade.

The grading for this course is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Discussion Boards</td>
<td>20% of Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of Comfort Zone Paper</td>
<td>20% of Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td>30% of Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam II</td>
<td>30% of Final Grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90 and Above = A
80 - 89.9 = B
70 - 79.9 = C
60 - 69.9 = D
Below 60 = F

A grade of incomplete will not be given for this class.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see “Student Support Services,” below.

**G. Make-Up Exam or Assignment Policy:**
You will not be permitted to “make-up” an exam. 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.

**H. Attendance Policy:**

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, 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.

**I. Course Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session #</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates Covered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1/24 – 1/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Understanding Ourselves and Others</td>
<td>1/31 – 2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>2/7 – 2/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cross Cultural Communication</td>
<td>2/14 – 2/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Immigration and Oppression</td>
<td>2/21 – 2/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Race and Oppression</td>
<td>2/28 – 3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Religion and Oppression</td>
<td>3/6 – 3/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Spring Break – No Class</td>
<td>3/13 – 3/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rejecting Oppressive Relationships</td>
<td>3/20 – 3/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Exam Review and Exam #1</td>
<td>3/27 – 4/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>4/3 – 4/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>4/10 – 4/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Heterosexism</td>
<td>4/17 – 4/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Classism</td>
<td>4/24 – 4/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ableism</td>
<td>5/1 – 5/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Exam Review and Exam #2</td>
<td>5/8 – 5/14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

**J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study:**

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

**K. Grade Grievance Policy:**
L. Student Support Services:

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals and writing support, students may visit the Office of Advising and Student Success located on the third floor of Building A of the School of Social Work Complex or contact the Administrative Assistant at 817-272-3647. Also, the Maverick Resource Hotline may be contacted at 817-272-6107, or send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming self or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call 1-800-273-TALK or visit http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/ for a live chat. For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

M. Librarian to Contact:

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is John Dillard. His office is in the campus Central Library. He may also be contacted via E-mail: dillard@uta.edu or by Cell phone: (817) 675-8962. Below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php

The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:

Library Home Page............... http://www.uta.edu/library
Subject Guides....................... http://libguides.uta.edu
Subject Librarians................... http://www-test.uta.edu/library/help/subject-librarians.php
Database List........................ http://www-test.uta.edu/library/databases/index.php
Course Reserves.................... http://pulse.uta.edu/vweby/enterCourseReserve.do
Library Catalog..................... http://discover.uta.edu/
E-Journals........................... http://utalink.uta.edu:9003/UTALink/az
Connecting from Off-Campus........ http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus
Ask a Librarian...................... http://ask.uta.edu

N. Emergency Exit Procedures:

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exits, which are the stairwells located at either end of the adjacent hallway. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.
O. Drop Policy:

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships ([http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/](http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/)).

P. Disability Accommodations:

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.**

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.**

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](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Q. Title IX:

The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos). For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

R. Academic Integrity

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses 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.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including
(but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents’ Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

S. Electronic Communication:

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

T. Student Feedback Survey:

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

U. Final Review Week:

This ONLY applies to courses administering a major or final examination scheduled in the week and locations designated for final examinations following last classes. A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated 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.