Critical Perspectives on Social Justice and Anti-Oppressive Social Work

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:
Anti-oppressive social work is based on a critical understanding of social justice frameworks and of the social, economic, psychological, and political impact of discrimination and oppression. Students will explore ways in which social workers can address, resist, and counter oppression, through conceptual and theoretical analyses of privilege, marginalization, intersectionality (e.g., between 'race', culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, and ability), and processes of inclusion/exclusion. The course will examine the role of institutions, media, and policy in producing/reproducing oppression and constructing the ‘other’. Students will be expected to articulate their understanding of anti-oppressive frameworks by drawing from critical analysis of various epistemological traditions, such as modernism, post modernism, and post colonialism. Social work policy, research, ethics, and practice issues will be analyzed using anti-oppressive frameworks.

PREREQUISITES: Admission to the MSW program.
COREQUISITES: None.

TOTAL HOURS PER TERM: 45
* STRUCTURE OF HOURS
Lectures: 15
Seminar: 30
Field Experience:
Student Directed Learning:
Other (Specify):

MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT: 24
EXPECTED FREQUENCY OF COURSE OFFERINGS: Every 2 years, based on MSW Cohort model

AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURES:
Course Designer(s): Lisa Moy, MSW, PhD, RSW
GPC Chair: John Hogg
Dean: Rosetta Khalideen, PhD
GSC Chair: Adrienne S. Chan, PhD, W

GSC Approval in Principle Date: GSC Final Approval Date: January 23, 2014

COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE: September 1, 2011
COURSE REVISED IMPLEMENTATION DATE: January 2015
COURSE TO BE REVIEWED (4 years after approval): January 2018
COURSE NAME/NUMBER  SOWK 720
Critical Perspectives on Social Justice and Anti-Oppressive Social Work

COURSE OBJECTIVE - The overall purpose / rationale for this course is:
To provide students with the skills to analyze and critique the multifaceted phenomena of marginalization and exclusion. The course will examine and critique theories of oppression and the interrelationships between oppression, social justice and social work.

LEARNING OUTCOMES – Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate an advanced level of understanding of colonialism, imperialism and other historical practices that have created and reinforced marginalization of social groups, with particular attention paid to the colonialism of Indigenous peoples in Canada;
- Evaluate the various contexts (social, political, economic, and so on) that shape the historical and present day realities of classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and other forms of oppression and power relations in Canada;
- Integrate and critique a range of social work practice, ethical and theoretical frameworks with theories of oppression and social justice;
- Critically examine the conceptual and historical foundations of anti-oppressive theories and practice including various epistemological traditions such as critical modernism, post-modernism, and post-colonialism;
- Critique models of anti-oppression and social justice in relationship to social work ethics;
- Critically demonstrate the role of self and reflexivity in anti-oppressive and social justice practice and research;
- Articulate a conceptual and operational framework for anti-oppressive social work as it applies to social work research, policy, and practice interests.

*METHODS:
This is an online course with a face to face component. The course will be based on lectures, small and large group discussions, case studies, multi-media resources, guest speakers, and student presentations.

*COURSE CONTENT:
- Introduction: Interrogating social justice and oppression
- Theoretical/epistemological foundations
- Politics of difference, power, and recognition
- Genealogy of anti-oppressive practice
- Theories of oppression revisited: Debates and tensions
- Imperatives of social work : Anti-oppressive social work in current context
- Anti-oppressive theory in practice: Clinical context (counseling/health)
- Anti-oppressive theory in practice: Community development
- Anti-oppressive theory in practice: Policy development/critique
- Anti-oppressive theory in practice: Child welfare
- Anti-oppressive theory in practice: Indigenous considerations and context
- Developing a model for one’s own anti-oppressive practice. Theoretical intersections and ethical considerations

*STUDENT EVALUATION:
Assignment #1 - Reflexivity and positioning paper  (Value: 20%)
Assignment #2 - Critical Reflection paper  (Value: 25%)
Assignment #3 - Online seminar facilitation (Value: 20%)
Assignment #4 - Major paper – Research Paper  (Value: 35%)
**TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCES, MATERIALS:**


A Coursepack will accompany the texts.

**SUPPORT MATERIALS:**


PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT RECOGNITION (PLAR):
Credit can be awarded for this course through PLAR (Please check:) ☐ YES ☒ NO

* If YES specify how:

* These sections are subject to change at the discretion of the department and the content will vary.