COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 7321 (12827): Multicultural Practice

TIME: 1:00pm-4:00pm Monday, SPRING 2007

FACULTY: Sandra A. Lopez, LCSW, ACSW OFFICE HOURS: 11am-1pm Monday 
3pm-5pm Thursday, & by appt

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I. COURSE
A. Catalog Description
Prerequisite: 34 hours in social work or consent of instructor.
Methods and skills for effective practice in oppressed urban communities or with 
multicultural groups, such as African-American, Hispanic, Asian-Americans, Native- 
Americans, gay men, lesbians, women and the poor.

B. Purpose
This course focuses on methods and skills of practice with diverse cultural groups in 
oppressed urban communities. Students learn methods and skills for playing a 
collaborative role for the empowerment of people in oppressed urban communities.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. detail advanced methods for acknowledging and confronting personal and 
societal biases based on gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, sexual or 
affectional preferences, physical/mental abilities, religious/spiritual beliefs, 
and cultures;
2. demonstrate effective skills for working with multicultural groups, in building 
multicultural organizations, networks and coalitions;
3. demonstrate advanced skills in leading people to move toward social justice 
in a multicultural society;
4. identify the major points at which cultures may come into conflict, and 
identify the methods that are necessary to generate multicultural cooperation;
5. demonstrate skills which empower both minority and majority practitioners 
in working inside and outside their cultures;
6. effectively apply research skills for assessing the efficacy of social work 
practice in multicultural environments.
III. COURSE CONTENT
This course prepares students to examine different theoretical and conceptual frameworks for practice with multicultural populations. Students develop a capacity for cultural self-assessment and a level of awareness of their own cultural limitations before examining diverse populations. Students examine the principles of a culturally competent system from the individual, organizational, community and practice level. The course focuses on theories of culture and inequality, and the help-seeking behaviors of multicultural groups. Special attention is given to self-awareness, values clarification, and ethnographic research as a tool for describing a group or culture and means for gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

IV. COURSE STRUCTURE
This course will be conducted as an advanced and highly interactive seminar. This course is organized to examine different theoretical and practice frameworks for enhancing culturally sensitive multi-cultural practice with special populations. Classes may include lectures, small group discussion, in-class exercises, case reviews, guest lectures, and media presentations. Class discussion is a significant component of the course. The atmosphere of the class will be open, collaborative and respectful of different perspectives, with each member influencing the outcome.

V. TEXTS

Required Text:

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignments
The attached course outline details the anticipated progress of the course and weekly assigned readings have been selected to prepare students to take full advantage of the class time. Additional reading assignments will be required.

B. Written Assignments/Class Presentations/Projects
1. Cultural Paper & Presentation
Each student will identify and explore their cultural/ethnic background through a structured list of questions provided by the Professor. Students will then have an opportunity to share their findings in a brief presentation in class. Specific guidelines for the preparation of this paper will be distributed separately.

2. Open Dialogue Facilitation & Paper
Students will have an opportunity to develop skills for leading sensitive dialogues related to multicultural practice. During several class times, students will be assigned
a topic area for discussion with the entire class. The discussion, facilitated by students, will allow for exploration of different perspectives on the selected issue. Students will then write a brief reflective paper of their experience. Specific questions to guide the reflection will be provided by the Professor.

3. Multicultural Immersion Project
Students will be assigned to small groups to prepare a three part multicultural immersion project. The project will allow students within a group to select an issue and target population for exploration and immersion. Specific guidelines for the preparation of this project will be distributed separately.

4. Final Exam
A final exam will be given to students at the end of exploration of all content issues from class. The final will cover information from all course lectures, readings, immersion project presentations as well as guest lectures.

C. Class Attendance and Participation
One measure of a student’s learning is the level of participation in the classroom. Consistent class preparation, class attendance and contribution to discussions will be expected of every student. Any necessary absences will be discussed with the Professor in advance. Should a student’s grade be marginal, attendance and class participation records may influence the final grade.

VII. EVALUATION AND GRADING

A. Grades will be assigned on the following basis:
   - Cultural Paper & Presentation 15%
   - Open Dialogue Facilitation & Paper 15%
   - Multicultural Immersion Project 40%
   - Final Exam 30%

B. Final course letter grades are based on the following scale:
   - 95-100 A
   - 90-94 A-
   - 87-89 B+
   - 83-86 B
   - 80-82 B-
   - 77-79 C+
   - 73-76 C
   - 70-72 C-
   - 67-69 D+ (no credit)
   - below 67 Failing (no credit)

C. Incomplete Grades
The grade of I (incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are passing a course but, for reasons beyond their control, have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for requesting an incomplete grade.

D. Late Assignments
Late assignments will result in the lowering of the otherwise earned grade. Late assignments will be accepted only if prior arrangements have been made.
with the Professor.

VIII. CONSULTATION
Students are encouraged to consult with the Professor especially as it pertains to student’s performance in the course. Instructor’s office is located in Room 312 of the Social Work Building, email address is slopez@uh.edu and office telephone number is 713-743-8104.

Addendum: Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call 713-743-5400 for more assistance.

Course Outline and Weekly Reading Assignments

January 22  Introduction/Course Overview  
Creating a Comfortable & Safe Environment for Dialogue

January 29  Defining Multicultural Practice

Sue – Ch. 1 Principles & Assumptions of Multicultural Social Work Practice

Social Work Cultural Competencies Self-Assessment (Pre Test)

Multicultural Immersion Project Planning

February 5  Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice

Sue – Ch. 2 Becoming Culturally Competent in Social Work Practice

NASW Code of Ethics (secure from NASW website)

NASW Standards for Cultural Competence (secure from NASW website)

February 12  Understanding Oppression in Social Work Practice

Sue – Ch. 3 Understanding the Sociopolitical Implications of Oppression in Social Work Practice
Ch. 4 Sociopolitical Dimensions of Worldview
February 19  Acknowledging and Confronting Personal & Societal Biases  
**Cultural Papers Due**  
**Class Presentation & Processing**  
Developing Skills for Dialogues  

February 26  Race, Culture, & Ethnicity  
Sue – Ch. 5 Racial/Cultural Minority Identity Development  
Ch. 6 White Racial Identity Development  

March 5  Multicultural Clinical Practice  
Sue – Ch. 7 Barriers to Effective Multicultural Clinical Practice  
Ch. 8 Cultural Styles in Multicultural Intervention Strategies  
Ch. 9 Multicultural Family Counseling and Therapy  

March 12  Spring Break  

March 19  Exploring Multiple Belief Systems  
Sue – Ch. 10 Non-Western and Indigenous Methods of Healing  

March 26  Multicultural Organizational Practice  
Sue – Ch. 11 Multicultural Organizational Change and Social Justice  

April 2  Guest Lecture  

April 9  Guest Lecture  

April 16  Guest Lecture  

April 23  Multicultural Immersion Project  

April 30  Exam  

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**  


SOCW 7321: MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE
CULTURAL PAPER & PRESENTATION

OBJECTIVE
One of the underlying principles of this course is that it is important for social workers working with diverse cultural groups to be aware of their feelings, thoughts, and attitudes about their own culture and their cultural biases.

The objective of this cultural paper is to provide a stimulus for those students who have not yet formulated or organized these ideas and feelings into a cohesive and meaningful manner. For those students who have already dealt with the meaning of culture, this paper will provide further opportunity to refine, integrate, and consolidate those feelings and thoughts.

Below are some questions that will serve as a guide and basis for writing this cultural paper. Students are asked to use the questions below as a frame of reference for developing a clear and helpful understanding of experiences and reactions. Some of the responses to these questions will be briefly presented to the entire class on a designated date. It is hoped that students will take the opportunity to visit these thoughts and feelings so as to further enhance their future social work practice with diverse cultural groups.

AREAS OF FOCUS
1. What is your cultural/racial/ethnic identity? How do you identify yourself? If your cultural/racial/ethnic background is diverse, with which do you most closely identify?
2. How important is your cultural/racial/ethnic identity to you?
3. How did your family of origin influence your sense of cultural/racial/ethnic identification?
4. What are the highest held beliefs or values of your cultural/racial/ethnic group? Discuss which of these values you like most and which you like least?
5. How has your culture/race/ethnicity influenced your perceptions about --
   a. problem identification
   b. problem solving
   c. help-seeking behaviors
6. Do persons of your cultural/racial/ethnic group experience racism and discrimination? Have you ever been discriminated against based on your cultural/racial/ethnic identity? Have you ever discriminated against someone based on their cultural/racial/ethnic identity?
7. Discuss your personal biases about diverse cultural groups (e.g., gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, sexual or affectional preferences, physical/mental abilities, religious/spiritual beliefs, and culture/race/ethnicity).
8. Discuss your goals for addressing and/or managing your biases.
9. Discuss which groups, other than your own, that you think you understand best. Why? Which do you understand least? Why?

FORMAT
This cultural paper should be typewritten and double spaced. References or footnotes are not required since this is not considered a theoretical paper. Students are encouraged to explore and develop an in-depth exploration, using the above questions as a guide. Papers must be at least a minimum of 7 pages and not exceed 12 pages in length.
EVALUATION
This cultural exploration paper & presentation is worth 15% of your total grade. Your grade will be based on the clarity of the expression of your thoughts and feelings and the meaningfulness of the content as it relates to the subject, as well as the ability to fully explore all areas as requested.

DUE DATE
See course schedule.

SOCW 7321: MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE
MULTICULTURAL IMMERSION PROJECT

OBJECTIVE
The objective of this three-part multicultural immersion project is to provide an experience for students to learn methods and skills of social work practice with diverse cultural groups in oppressed communities, and to ultimately develop a more diverse and integrated worldview.

PROCESS
After identifying interest areas, students will work within a small group which will be responsible for exploring a specific cultural group and issue. The understanding is that the students will become immersed in their learning about that particular group for the remainder of the semester. The immersion project will be divided into three specific components, as follows:

Part I: Data Gathering (15%)
Each group will be responsible for gathering data and information about their selected cultural group. This data may be gathered from several sources including a literature review, community agencies contacts and interviews, statistical sources, and/or personal interviews.

Part II: Development of Materials/Handouts (15%)
After summarizing data gathered, each group will be responsible for preparing handouts. Prepared materials should provide information relevant to the selected cultural group including description/strengths, summary of the concerns/issues/problems, guidelines for providing culturally sensitive/culturally competent social work services, and community resources.

Part III: Poster Session/Presentation (10%)
Each group will prepare poster materials that will creatively capture the outcome of their immersion experience. This may include photos, maps, drawings, etc. The prepared handouts will be distributed to class members and Instructor during the scheduled poster session time. Group members will have a limited amount of time to report on their experience.

EVALUATION
This immersion project is worth 40% of student’s total grade. The grade will be based on the group’s satisfactory completion of the three parts of the project as detailed above. Individual group members will be expected to contribute to all phases of work and to actively participate in this immersion experience. A peer evaluation will be used in this process.

DUE DATE
SOCW 7321, Section 12827, Spring 2007
See course schedule for date of poster session/presentation. On that scheduled date, each group will be responsible for setting up their poster session by the beginning of class.