



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
National Catholic School of Social Service
Shahan Hall
Washington, DC 20064

SSS 326, Spring 2009
DIVERSITY IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY
(3 credits)
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I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course examines social work's historical and current commitment to diversity and social and economic justice within a global context. Grounded in theoretical perspectives on injustice and oppression, the course explores the relationship between the social construction of difference and persistent inequalities operating at personal, institutional, and societal levels. Utilizing a strengths perspective and principles of empowerment practice, the needs, experiences, and resilience of diverse and at-risk populations are addressed; including groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, immigration status, religion and spirituality, sex and gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, and socio-economic status. Course content, structure, and learning activities are designed to enhance personal and professional self-awareness in order to develop knowledge, values, and skills required for culturally sensitive social work practice.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the linkages between societal definitions of difference and the development of identity and worldviews among individuals and groups in a multicultural society.
2. Utilize theoretical perspectives to analyze the interlocking dynamics of discrimination and oppression as they operate at the personal, institutional, and societal levels.
3. Analyze the common characteristics and elements of oppression as they apply to diverse groups and at-risk populations.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the impacts of oppression in the lives of individuals from diverse groups and at-risk populations, as well as the adaptive strategies and sources of resilience used to cope with such oppression.

5. Demonstrate appreciation of human diversity within oneself and others and its importance to both personal and professional development and the profession of social work.
6. Demonstrate increased critical self-awareness of personal and professional beliefs, attitudes, and values as they influence one's practice with diverse groups and at-risk populations.
7. Demonstrate the knowledge, values, and skills required for culturally sensitive and ethical social work practice, including a working knowledge of the NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice and the NASW Code of Ethics.
8. Integrate theoretical and empirical knowledge of oppression and oppressed groups into social justice strategies relevant to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Text/Supplemental Readings:

Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W. J., Castaneda, R., Hackman, H. W., Peters, M. L., & Zuniga, X. (2000). *Readings for diversity and social justice: an anthology on racism, Anti-Semitism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and classism*. New York: Routledge.

Supplemental Readings also will be assigned for most class sessions.

Supplemental Readings can be printed from the Electronic Reserve on Blackboard by going to <http://bb.cua.edu> **username:** SSS326GREE **password:** diversity Go to My Courses-click on the name of the course-click on course map-click on electronic reserve (You must have a current ID to gain access to the articles. You can also access them via <http://aladin.wrlc.org>).

B. Course Assignments: The following lists the course assignments and the relative weights for each assignment. Detailed instructions for written assignments are attached to this syllabus.

1. Personal/Professional Learning Journal: (25%). This assignment requires students to make six(6) journal entries that focus on self-awareness of their reactions/responses to readings and class sessions. **DUE: See Course Outline.**
2. Midterm Exam (Take Home): (25%). This take home exam provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of core course concepts. **DUE: February 18**

3. Analysis of Oppressed Group Paper: (25%). This paper requires students to use library research and class materials to analyze the processes and consequences of oppression for a particular oppressed group. **DUE: April 1**
4. Cross-Cultural Experiences Paper: (15%) This assignment requires students to engage in two cross-cultural experiences that focus on various groups covered in class and write a critical analysis of these experiences. **DUE: April 29**
5. Attendance/Participation (10%). Students are expected to be engaged participants and co-learners in this course. Class participation will be assessed by attendance and active participation in class discussions and activities.

C. **Due Dates:**

Assignments are due on the dates designated and will be marked down one-third of a letter grade for each day late unless alternative arrangements have previously been made with the instructor.

D. **Grading Policy:** The grade for this course will be based on the University Grading System.

E. **Course and Instruction Evaluation:**

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at <http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations> using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. **Scholastic Expectations:**

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. **Academic Honesty:**

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and Appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. **Accommodations:**

Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a

disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

D. Attendance and Participation:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to arrive to class on time. If you know you must be absent for a particular session, please notify the instructor in advance. If absent due to illness, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. Students are responsible for obtaining any class notes or other materials missed due to absence. Unexcused or multiple absences will result in a reduction of the final grade.

Students are expected to read all required readings listed on the course outlines and be prepared to participate in classroom discussions and exercises. Students are also expected to take responsibility for being an active part of the learning experiences for themselves and others.

In order to assure safe and honest exploration of sensitive issues in a course focusing on the consequences of oppression and privilege for all people, the following ground rules or guiding principles will be followed:

1. We acknowledge that social inequalities and oppression exist.
2. We acknowledge that we have all been systematically exposed to misinformation about groups to which we and others belong.
3. We cannot be blamed for misinformation we have learned, but we must take responsibility for repeating it after we have learned otherwise.
4. We will not blame people who have been oppressed for their oppression.
5. We will assume that people are doing the best they can and we will not demean, devalue, or in any way “put down” people for their experiences, perceptions, questions, or comments.
6. We will actively pursue information about our own groups and those of others, share it with classmates, and translate this knowledge into professional behavior.
7. We will respect the confidentiality of classroom discussions about specific individuals, groups, communities, or organizations that could be identified in any way. This includes information that classroom colleagues share about themselves.

V. COURSE UNITS

Unit I: Theoretical Understandings of Diversity and Oppression (#1-#4)

A – Defining Difference: The Social Construction of Difference

B – Experiencing Difference: Privilege, Power, Inequality, and Stigma

C – The Meaning of Difference: The Dynamics and Consequences of Oppression

D – The Normalization of Oppression: The Cycle of Socialization

Unit II: The Many Faces of Diversity and Oppression (#5-#11)

A – Exemplar #1: Race, Ethnicity, Immigrant Status

- B – Exemplar #2: Religion and Spirituality
- C – Exemplar #3: Sex and Gender
- D – Exemplar #4: Sexual Orientation
- E – Exemplar #5: Disability
- F – Exemplar #6: Age
- G – Exemplar #7: Socio-Economic Status

Unit III: Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice (#12-#14)

- A - Social Work and Social Justice: Origins and Current Commitment
- B – Social Work Strategies for Social Justice
- C – Becoming a Social Justice Ally

Course Schedule

[Textbook readings are designated by “Text”; Supplemental readings are designated by “SR”]

Session/Date

Topic, Readings, and Assignment Due Dates

#1 – 1/14 **Course Overview and Introductions; Co-Creating a Learning Environment**

Unit I. Theoretical Understandings of Diversity and Oppression

A - Defining Difference in Self and Others: The Social Construction of Difference

Readings: SR: Rosenblum & Travis, *Constructing Categories of Difference* (1-33);

Readings: Text: Tatum, *The Complexity of Identity – Who am I?* (9-14)

#2 – 1/21 **B - Experiencing Difference: Privilege, Power, Inequality & Stigma**

Readings: SR: Rosenblum & Travis, *Experiencing Difference* (165-188); McIntosh, *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* (163-168); Wright, *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow: An Autobiographical Sketch* (23-32); French, *Can You See the Rainbow? The Roots of Denial* (194-201)

Readings: Text: Wilman & Davis, *Language and Silence: Making Systems of Privilege Visible* (50-60)

#3 – 1/28 **C - The Meaning of Difference: The Dynamics and Consequences of Oppression**

Readings: SR: Rosenblum & Travis, *The Meaning of Difference* (279-294); Pharr, *The Common Elements of Oppressions* (53-64);

Readings: Text: Blumenfeld & Raymond, *Prejudice and Discrimination* (21-30); Pincus, *Discrimination Comes in Many Forms: Individual, Institutional, and Structural* (31-35); *Five Faces of Oppression* (35-49); Lee, *An Asian Lesbian’s Struggle* (118-120)

*****DUE: Journal Entry #1**

#4 – 2/4 **D – The Normalization of Oppression: Cycle of Socialization**

Readings: Text: Harro, *The Cycle of Socialization* (15-21); Thompson, *White Men and the Denial of Racism* (104-109); Edginton, *Moving Beyond White Guilt* (127-129)

Unit II: The Many Faces of Diversity and Oppression

#5 – 2/11 **A - Exemplar #1 – Race, Ethnicity, & Immigrant Status**

Readings: Text: Takaki, *A Different Mirror* (67-73); Omi, *Racial Identity and the State* (73-78); Tatum, *Defining Racism: Can We Talk?* (79-82); Martinez, *Seeing More than Black and White* (93-98); Root, *A Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People* (120-126)

Readings: SR: Acuirre & Turner, *White Ethnic Americans* (217-242); Churchill, *Crimes Against Humanity* (413-420); Shaheen, *TV Arabs* (353-355)

*****DUE: Journal Entry #2**

#6 – 2/18 **B - Exemplar #2 – Religion & Spirituality**

Readings: Text: Adams, *Antisemitism* (133-137); Kaye/Kantrowitz, *Jews in the U.S. - The Rising Costs of Whiteness* (138-144); Dinnerstein, *The Christian Heritage* (144-149); Wyman, *The Setting: Europe and America* (163-169)

Readings: SR: Ellor, Netting, & Thibault, *Understanding the Diversity of Religious Groups in the United States* (44-71); Mindell, *Religious Bigotry and Religious Minorities* (227-246)

*****DUE: Mid-Term Take Home Exam**

Feb. 25 **No Class**

March 2 - March 6- **Spring Break-Enjoy!!**

#7 – 3/11 **C - Exemplar #3 - Sex & Gender**

Readings: SR: Fausto-Sterling, *The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are Not Enough* (87-92); Thompson, *A New Vision of Masculinity* (630-636)

Readings: Text: Hackman, *Sexism* (198-203); Lorber, “*Night to His Day*”: *The Social Construction of Gender* (203-213); Law, *Adopting the Principle of Pro-Feminism* (254-255); hooks, *Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression* (238-240); Truth, *Ain’t I a Woman* (241); Haubegger, *I’m Not Fat, I’m Latina* (242-243); Chernik, *The Body Politic* (243-246); Anonymous, ‘*The Rape*’ of Mr. Smith (246-247); Katz, *Pornography and Men’s Consciousness* (247-251); Walker, *Why I Fight Back*, (251-253); Lees, *The Transgender Spectrum* (305-306)

*****DUE: Journal Entry #3**

#8 – 3/18 **D - Exemplar #4 – Sexual Orientation**

Readings: Text: Blumenfeld, *Heterosexism* (261-266); Blumenfeld, *How Homophobia Hurts Everyone* (267-275); Deihl & Ochs, *Biphobia* (276-280); Herek, *Internalized Homophobia Among Gay Men, Lesbians, and Bisexuals* (281-283); Plant, *The Men with the Pink Triangles* (302-304); Miller, *Stonewall and the Birth of Gay and Lesbian Liberation* (288-289); *International Bill of Gender Rights* (309-312)

Readings: Text: hooks, *Homophobia in Black Communities* (283-287); Deacon, *What Does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?* (290-292); Lim-Hing, *Dragon Ladies, Snow Queens, and Asian-American Dykes: Reflections on Race and Sexuality* (296-299); Meiner, *Memoirs of a Gay Fraternity Brother* (299-301); Burns, *Why Don't Gay People Just Keep Quiet? Listening to the Voices of the Oppressed* (306-309); Washington & Evans, *Becoming an Ally* (312-318)

#9 – 3/25 **E - Exemplar #5 – Disability**

Readings: Text: Castaneda & Peters, *Ableism* (319-323); Bryan, *The Disability Rights Movement* (324-329); Fine & Asch, *Disability Beyond Stigma: Social Interaction, Discrimination, and Activism* (330-339); French, *Equal Opportunities – Yes, Please* (364-366); Nagler & Nagler, *Computers and Disability* (373-376); Brown, Connors, & Stern, *Invisible and on Center Stage: Who Do We Think We Are, Anyway?* (377-378)

Readings: Text: Padden, *The Deaf Community and the Culture of Deaf People*, (343-352); Smith, *The Hidden Dimension of Learning: Time and Space* (352-355); Bowman & Burford, *Wheel Power* (356-358); Deegan, *Recovering Our Sense of Value after Being Labeled Mentally Ill* (359-363); McCormick & Leonard, *Learning Accommodations for ADD Students* (369-373)

*****DUE: Journal Entry #4**

#10 – 4/1 **F - Exemplar #6 – Age**

Readings: SR: Kelcher, *Ageism's Impact and Affect on Society: Not Just a Concern for the Old* (85-100); Pampel, *Images of Old Age* (1-24) Caudill, *Personal Narrative* (33-37); Molidar & Maes, *A Rose By Any Other Name* (11-20); United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1-15)

*****DUE: Analysis of Oppressed Group Paper**

#11 – 4/8 **G - Exemplar #7 - Socio-Economic Class**

Readings: Text: Adams, *Classism* (379-382); Brouwer, *Sharing the Pie* (382-385); *The Sinking Majority* (385-391); Heintz & Folbre, *Who Owns How Much?* (391-396); Oliver & Shapiro, *A Sociology of Wealth and Racial Inequality* (402-406); Ransford, *Two Hierarchies* (412-418)

Readings: Text: Edelman, *Responsibility for Reducing Poverty* (436-446); Langston, *Tired of Playing Monopoly?* (397-402); Lewis, Holland & Kelly, *Working-Class Students Speak Out* (421-425); Bray, *So How Did I Get Here?* (425-429); Scheller, *On the Meaning of Plumbing and Poverty* (430-432)

*****DUE: Journal Entry #5**

Unit III: Implications for Generalist Social Work Practice

#12– 4/15 **A - Social Work’s Commitment to Social Justice: Origins and Current Commitment**

Readings: SR: Lundblad, *Jane Addams and Social Reform: A Role Model for the 1990’s* (661-669); Carlton-LaNey, *African American Social Work Pioneers’ Response to Need* (311-321); Polack, *Social Justice and the Global Economy: New Challenges for Social Work in the 21st Century* (281-290);

Readings: Internet: NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice and NASW Code of Ethics, www.naswdc.org

#13- 4/22 **B – Social Work Strategies for Social Justice: The Strengths Perspective and Empowerment Practice**

Readings: SR: Saleeby, *The Strengths Perspective* (1-22), Van Wormer, *The Empowerment Tradition in Social Work* (125-147); Parsons, Gutierrez, & Cox, *A Model for Empowerment Practice* (3-23); Praeger, *A World Worth Living In* (523-535); East, *Journey for Justice* (5-11)

Readings: Text: Pharr, *Reflections on Liberation* (450-457); Collins, *Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection* (457-462)

*****DUE: Journal Entry #6**

#14 – 4/29 **C – BECOMING A SOCIAL JUSTICE ALLY COURSE SUMMARY AND CLOSURE**

Readings: Text: Harro, *The Cycle of Liberation* (463-469); McClintock, *How to Interrupt Oppressive Behavior* (483-485); Sherover-Marcuse, *Working Assumptions and Guidelines for Alliance Building*, (485-487); Zuniga & Sevig, *Bridging the ‘Us/Them’ Divide* (488-493)

*****DUE: Cross-Cultural Experiences Paper**

Assignment #1: Personal/Professional Journal

During the semester, students will be exposed to various ideas and experiences of others that may be challenging to their worldview and personal beliefs or values. As developing critical self-awareness is a major objective of the course, this assignment is designed to help students consider reactions/responses they have to assigned readings and classroom experiences. Each student will complete six(6) “journal entries” to be turned in as indicated on the course outline and the schedule listed below:

Each entry must include reactions/responses to:

one reading (*specify* title and author); and

some aspect of the class session (lecture, class discussion, class exercise, speaker, etc.).

In addition, students should also address at least one major concept that has been presented for that class session (privilege, oppression, the norm, the other, lack of prior claim, etc.).

For each entry, include:

The number and topic of the class session being discussed *and* the date the journal is being turned in. (e.g., Session #2- Experiencing Difference; turned in 1/30).

Reflections and insights regarding the experience [for the specific reading *and* the specific class activity (lecture, class discussion, class exercises, guest presentation, etc.)].

What was your immediate reaction to the experience? What is your reaction as you think back on it now?

Explain what it is about you that predisposes you to this reaction. For example, can you connect your reaction to previous personal or professional experiences; family or cultural heritage; societal messages; prejudices, biases or lack of knowledge/exposure?

Identify specific strengths and/or limitations of your personal and professional development that are revealed by this self-reflection.

For each strength or limitation identified, list an implication for further growth and how you plan to support this growth.

Journal entries are expected to move beyond description to demonstrate self-analysis based on thoughtful reflection and critical self-assessment. Simply stated, the point of this assignment is to turn “the eye inward” and conduct an honest self-assessment. It is important to note that students’ entries will be kept confidential and will not be graded on the *content* of their entries, but rather on students’ *ability to thoughtfully reflect* about their reaction/responses and walk themselves through the four(4) steps of the process.

Entries should be approximately 4-5 pages long, typed, and double-spaced. They will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Comprehensive coverage of the four(4) required areas for both a reading and a class activity.
Evidence of thoughtful and critical self-reflection and analysis.
Ability to produce readable, well-organized journal entry.

Points assigned as follows:

3 points = complete coverage, in-depth self-reflection & analysis, well-organized & well-written.

2 points = limitations in one(1) area: coverage, reflection & analysis, or organization/writing.

1 point = limitations in more than one(1) area: coverage, reflection & analysis, or organization/writing.

Schedule for Assignment #1: Personal/Professional Journal

<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Journal Entry Topic and Class #</u>
1/28	Journal 1: Defining Difference in Self and Others or Experiencing Difference (Class #1 or #2)
2/11	Journal 2: The Meaning of Difference or The Normalization of Oppression (Class #3 or #4)
3/11	Journal 3: Race, Ethnicity, & Immigrant Status or Religion & Spirituality (Class #5 or #6)
3/25	Journal 4: Sex & Gender or Sexual Orientation (Class #7 or #8)
4/8	Journal 5: Disability or Age (Class #9 or #10)
4/22	Journal 6: Socio-Economic Status or Social Work Commitment to Social Justice (Class #11 or #12)

Assignment #2: Analysis of Oppressed Group Paper
DUE: April 1

Using at least **4 library sources** other than your textbook or class readings, write an **8-paged, typed, double-spaced paper** (not including cover page or reference list), that provides an analysis of oppression of a particular oppressed group that falls within a different membership category than your own. Use the two class handouts on: a) *5 Characteristics of Oppression* and b) *Common Elements of Oppressions* to analyze the experiences and consequences of oppression for the group you have selected. Be sure to give concrete examples from your research sources to illustrate the characteristics and elements that seem most applicable. (Go beyond description to analysis.)

Grading Criteria:

Comprehensive coverage of the assignment
Demonstrated understanding of key concepts
Discussion at the level of analysis, not just description
Organization and flow of paper
Correct grammar, spelling, and use of 2001 APA referencing style (5th ed.)

Assignment #3: Cross-Cultural Experiences Paper
DUE: April 29

For this assignment, students must complete a paper that analyzes **two cross-cultural experiences** (one from each of the categories listed below). This assignment is intended to enhance student appreciation of diversity in self and others and provide an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of other persons' lived experience.

1. Interview a member of a population group different from oneself.
2. Attend a cultural event that expands one's understanding/awareness of a population group different from oneself (museum exhibit, festival, theatrical production, religious/spiritual service, etc.).

You should select experiences that are **significantly different than your own**, as defined by race, ethnicity, immigrant status, religion or spirituality, sex and gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, and/or socio-economic class. For the interview, you should tell these persons about the assignment and why you are asking them to participate (no "undercover" interviews!). When you write up the interview, make sure to keep your interviewee's identity confidential (including both their real name and any other personal information that might make the person identifiable).

Note: Visits to ethnic restaurants or attendance at music concerts are not appropriate activities for this assignment. Check with instructor before selecting activity.

Your papers should not be a simple recounting of the experiences, but should include:

- 1.) a thoughtful analysis of each experience utilizing **course concepts**;
- 2.) a critique of **your own reactions/responses** to each experience; and
- 3.) a **reflection on the implications** of each experience on both your personal and professional sense of self.

As with your personal/professional journals, a major focus should be on what you learn about yourself as a result of this process (in parts 2 & 3). Things to notice about yourself during this assignment might include: being aware of your thoughts as you figure out who you would like to interview/ what event to attend; being aware of your feelings as you ask people to be interviewed/get ready to go to the event; your reactions/responses during the interview/event; and your reflections on yourself while writing up the interview/event.

Papers should be approximately five(**5**) **pages long, typed, and double-spaced**. Papers will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- a. Ability to thoughtfully identify social justice themes reflected in interview and cultural event and analyze your experiences in relation to course concepts.
- b. Ability to critique personal reactions/responses to these experiences.
- c. Ability to reflect on ways in which these experiences might inform one's professional practice and sense of self.
- d. Ability to produce well-organized log with correct grammar, spelling, and correct use of 2001 APA referencing style (5th ed.).