

Middle Tennessee State University
Department of Social Work
SW 2000: Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Fall 2023

Instructor:

E-Mail:

Office:

Phone:

Office Hours:

Catalog Description

This course advances knowledge and skills embedded in the values of social and economic justice for all people across systems of all sizes.

The course meets the guidelines for credit in the History and Civic Learning Exploration category of True Blue Core. Students demonstrate civic learning by using knowledge, information, and understanding to comprehend civic identity and civic obligations in local and global contexts.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to advocacy for social and economic justice. Students will critically analyze various social movements related to civil and human rights. Content focus on the historical and contemporary context of social and economic justice frameworks from a human service perspective which declares that all people have universal needs, capacities, strengths, and rights. The conceptual frameworks of social justice and its varied meanings assist students in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to alleviate the harm of social oppression and discrimination. Students explore the distribution of power, status, class, and resources in the U.S. and internationally. Students utilize the person-in-environment construct to execute advocacy and organizational planned change in addressing social and economic injustice.

Course Objectives

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

1. Articulate how the pursuit of social and economic justice is grounded in the core values and the historical mission of social work.
2. Cultivate an awareness of the of the mechanisms of oppression, discrimination, exploitation, privilege, and power as they apply to access to resources.
3. Differentiate theories and perspectives as they relate to aspects of justice including the context and impact of power, oppression, and privilege.
4. Describe the historical and ongoing struggle for human rights and the historical role of social work in providing advocacy and leadership for social and economic justice.

5. Describe the basic mechanisms of free market capitalism, including the tendency toward exploitation, oppression and unjust resource distribution, as barriers to economic justice.
6. Identify practice strategies including policy interventions and advocacy that attend to changing contexts, social well-being, and promotion of social and economic justice.
7. Demonstrate effective written communication while drawing from multiple sources of knowledge.

Required Textbook

Benner, K., Loeffler, D.N., & Pope, N.D. (2022). *Social economic, and environmental justice: Building social work practice skills*. Springer.

Recommended

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed). *American Psychological Association*.

Student Evaluation

Student evaluation may include but is not limited to participation, exams, exercises, written assignments, and oral presentations.

Course Evaluation

The course is evaluated formally using the Middle Tennessee State University student evaluation of courses format. In addition, individual suggestions and comments by students will be accepted. Faculty peer evaluation may be employed at the discretion of the instructor.

Make Up Policy

Assignments need to be completed and turned in when they are due. Extensions for assignments are generally not given, except at the instructor's discretion for extenuating circumstances.

Participation Policy

Students are expected to participate in the activities of this course. Students should sign in D2L to regularly to ensure that there is consistent participation. Content and activities in each module should be completed before moving on to the next module.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work you complete for this course is your own. You are expected to include appropriate citations in all of your work for this course. The University policy for academic misconduct will be followed. Academic misconduct includes the following behaviors: Plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or facilitating any such act. The following definitions apply:

(1) Plagiarism. The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper acknowledgment.

(2) Cheating. Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.

(3) Fabrication. Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

(4) Facilitation. Helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic misconduct.

Any student suspected of committing academic misconduct may be asked to meet with the instructor to discuss the situation. Any form of academic misconduct will result in a grade of "Zero" for the exam or assignment. Your name will also be forwarded to Academic Affairs for possible disciplinary action.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodations, or if you have any questions related to any accommodation for testing, note taking, reading, etc., please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. You may also contact the Disability Access Center (898-2783) with any questions about such services. Accommodations are not provided unless they are approved in advance by the Disability Access Center and you provide this documentation to the instructor.

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP:

To retain Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must earn a cumulative TELS GPA of 2.75 after 24 and 48 attempted hours and a **cumulative** TELS GPA of 3.0 thereafter. You may qualify with a 2.75 **cumulative** GPA after 72 attempted hours (and subsequent semesters), if you are enrolled full-time and maintain a **semester** GPA of at least 3.0. A grade of C, D, F, or I in this class may negatively impact TELS eligibility. Dropping a class after 14 days may also impact eligibility; if you withdraw from this class and it results in an enrollment status of less than full-time, you may lose eligibility for your lottery scholarship. Lottery recipients are eligible to receive the scholarship for a maximum of five years from the date of initial enrollment, or until a bachelor's degree is earned. For additional Lottery rules, please refer to your Lottery Statement of Understanding form, review lottery requirements on the web at <http://scholarships.web.mtsu.edu/telsconteligibility.htm>, or contact the Financial Aid Office at 898-2830.

REPORTING OF UNOFFICIAL WITHDRAWALS:

Federal regulations require that students who cease class attendance but do not officially withdraw from the University must be reported so that future financial aid will cease and/or the student will be required to return funds. Therefore, during the term, the instructor is

required to complete a roster indicating those students who have stopped attending class without officially withdrawing.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

MTSU is a community of people with respect for diversity that emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all individual faculty, staff, and students. For information on non-discrimination contact the Institutional Equity and Compliance Office, Cope Administration Building, 615-898-2185.

HARASSMENT INFORMATION:

MTSU is committed to establishing an atmosphere where your work, education, and participation in the university's activities and programs will be free from intimidation or offensive behaviors. Sexual, racial or other forms of harassment have no place in a university community. For more information contact: Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Equity and Compliance Office, Cope Administration Building 220, 615-898-2185.

Incivility

Civility and respect in the classroom and online (virtual classroom) are critical in the learning process. You may not agree with everything which is said or discussed, yet courteous behavior and responses are expected. To optimize teaching and learning, all of us share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive atmosphere. You are expected to conduct yourselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Position Paper – This assignment is designed to use empirical evidence to understand aspects of controversial issues relative to social justice. The assignment requires the ability to succinctly communicate, to articulate thoughts and ideas, as well as integrate knowledge from multiple sources, which is critical in any social work and other social science disciplines. Students will use scholarly literature to argue one of the following positions:

- Rates of homelessness are higher among veterans or families because people who are homeless are more likely to have mental illness v. people who are homeless that cannot find affordable housing.
- People are poor because they do work (e.g., people who work full time on minimum wage are still poor vs, people who do not want to work).
- Why is obesity a concern for people in poverty (e.g., nutritious food is not affordable on SNAP v. poor food choices that are more gratifying and/or filling).
- The U.S. owes reparations to descendants of enslaved African Americans to repair the harms caused by the institution of slavery (e.g., historical precedents exist for reparations v. no one currently living is responsible for righting the wrongs committed by the institution of slavery).

The position paper should follow APA Guidelines, including a title page, in-text citations, and a reference list. Only books and peer-reviewed articles are acceptable as scholarly sources (No websites, newspaper articles, magazines, blogs, or other popular media). A minimum of 3 scholarly sources for minimal credit. The paper should be typed, double-spaced in 12-point fonts. The length of the paper should not exceed 1.5 to 2 pages (excluding the title page and reference list). The paper should contain a very brief but encompassing history of the issue to provide context, in 100 words or less. Briefly, how does the issue contribute to the aspects of differences/social justice/injustice that affect this population?

2. **Southern Poverty Law Center (SPL) Hate Map Reaction Paper** – Go to the Southern Poverty Law Center website. Click on the Hate Map with data on tracking and monitoring hate groups. Discuss the data for the state of Tennessee e.g., types of groups, funding sources, membership, targets, growth, and expansion. Discuss whether or not you believe tracking this type of information is important, as well as the overall mission and purpose of the Southern Poverty Law Center. The position paper should follow APA Guidelines, including a title page, in-text citations, and a reference list. The paper should be typed, double-spaced in 12-point fonts. The length of the paper should not exceed 1.5 to 2 pages (excluding title page and reference list).
3. **Online Discussions** - Students will complete **four (4) online discussions**. All discussions close on Sunday at 11:59 PM. Students are expected to make their initial post on Wednesday. The post should include supporting documentation for the argument/premise. In other words, the discussion post requires critical thinking and may require some examination of the scholarly literature. Students may want to write their initial post in Word, spellcheck, and then post in D2L. The initial post should be between 150-250 words. Students should check back regularly in order to respond to two (2) classmates' posts. Responses should be 75-150 words. See the assignment rubric in D2L for full evaluation criteria.
4. **Reading and Module Comprehension Checks**- Based on the assigned readings and material covered in the modules, a total of nine comprehensions checks are disbursed throughout the course (Modules: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14). These are quizzes that students earn from 10 to 30 points based on correct responses to 5 to 15 questions worth 2 points each. In keeping with academic integrity, students should not share quiz questions or answers.
 - a. **The comprehensive checks will open on Monday at 8:00 AM and close on Sundays at 11:59 PM.**
 - b. When taking online exams students should access [D2L](#) or through the D2Quicklink on the MTSU homepage instead of through PipelineMT. Pipeline eventually times out causing students to lose valuable time while dealing with a popup window. If PipelineMT is used to access an exam, the Pipeline window may be closed (not the D2L window) preventing the timeout situation.

- c. Students should save each answer to online quiz questions as they answer each question in case a computer crashes or loses Internet connectivity. Students may reboot their computers or wait for internet connectivity to access the test again, and D2L will allow students to continue taking the test using the time left and the question answers they have saved.
- 5. Social Movement Research Paper** - Each student will select a contemporary social movement (1960 – forward) to research. The content of the paper should include information on the time period of the movement, major leaders, social problems the movement addresses, major accomplishments, strategies, and advocacy efforts. The written report is a major research paper that should conform to APA Guidelines. The final report should include a title page, running head, subheadings, in-text citations, and a reference list. The final paper should be 5-7 pages (excluding title page and reference list) double spaced using a 12-point font (e.g., Times New Roman). The reference list should reflect a good sampling of the literature which includes books and articles. See the assignment rubric in D2L for full evaluation criteria.
- 6. Social Movement PowerPoint** – Students will create a PowerPoint presentation that includes a minimum of 10 – 15 slides (excluding the title slide and reference list). The PowerPoint presentation should be informative and visually appealing. See the assignment rubric in D2L for full evaluation criteria.
- 7. Social Movement Timeline** - Students will create a diagram of the major events in the social movement they selected. The timeline should include 5 -15 significant events in chronological order. See the assignment rubric in D2L for full evaluation criteria.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Position Papers	20
SPL Hate Map Reaction Paper	20
Reading Comprehension Checks	120
Discussion posts (4 @ 25 points each)	100
Social Movement Paper	
• Part I	25
• Part II	40
• Part III	75
Social Movement PowerPoint	50
Social Movement Timeline	<u>50</u>
TOTAL	500

Final grades will be based on the following point totals:

- A = 100-90%
- B = 89-80%
- C = 79-70%

D = 69-60%
 F = 59% and below

Tentative Course Outline

Modules	Topics	Assignments
#1 Aug. 28 – Sept. 03	Introduction to Advocacy for Social Justice	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Discussion #1 - Introductory video – introduce yourself to your classmates, including full name, major, class status (i.e., sophomore, junior, senior), reason for taking this class, social justice issue of particular concern and why? 2. Read Chapter 1
#2 Sept. 04 – Sept. 10	Theoretical and Conceptual Aspects of Social Justice	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 2 2. Read Chapter 2 3. Discussion #1 – Introductory video (See above)
#3 Sept 11 – Sept. 17	Human Rights	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 2 2. Read Chapter 3 3. Chapter Quiz #1 (Ch. 1-2)
#4 Sept. 18 – Sept. 24	Poverty and Economic Justice	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 4 2. Read Chapter 4 3. Discussion #2
#5 Sept. 25 – Oct. 01	Advocacy for Women and Girls	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 5 2. Read Chapter 5 3. Chapter Quiz #2 (Ch. 4-5)
#6 Oct. 02 – Oct. 08	Health and Mental Health Disparities	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 6 2. Read Chapter 6
#7 Oct. 09 – Oct. 15	Advocacy for Children	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 7 2. Read Chapter 7 3. Reaction Paper #1
# 8 Oct. 16 – Oct. 22	Advocacy for LBGTQ Populations	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 8 2. Read Chapter 3
#9 Oct. 23 - Oct. 29	White Supremacy and Racial Justice	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 8 2. Read Chapter 3 3. Reaction Paper #2
#10 Oct. 30 – Nov. 05	Policing and Criminal Justice	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 9 2. Chapter Quiz # 3 (Chapters 5 & 6)

#11 Nov. 06 – Nov. 12	Disparities in the Educational System	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 10 2. Discussion #3
#12 Nov. 13 – Nov. 19	Policing and Criminal Justice Reform	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 11 2. Chapter Quiz #4 (Chapters 7 & 8) 3. Discussion #3
#13 Nov. 20 – Nov. 26	Climate and Environmental Justice	1. Review D2L Content in Module 12 2. Social Movement Paper
#14 Nov. 27 – Dec. 03	Unavailable Housing	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 13 2. Social Movement PowerPoint Presentation 3. Discussion #4
#15 Dec. 04 – Dec. 10	The Reparations Movement	Assignment (s) due by Sunday at 11:59 PM: 1. Review D2L Content in Module 14 2. Social Movement Timeline

The following bibliography is a list of some of the resources used in this course, though not exhaustive. You may wish to utilize this list to support other readings and works needed for course activities.

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