

HARDING UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
HUMAN DIVERSITY
SOCIAL WORK/SOCIOLOGY 4100

Instructor: Kim Baker-Abrams, LMSW
Office: Ezell #113
Phone: 279-4356
Email: kbaker@harding.edu

Office hours: MWF 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.
2:00 - 2:45 p.m.
T/TH 10:00 - 12:45 p.m.
web site: kbaker.abrams.org

Course Description: Human Diversity is a part of the Human Behavior and the Social Environment sequence of the Social Work program. This course is designed to describe the conditions of diversity in American society. Select theories regarding diversity will be considered. The course approach will examine the impact of the environment and economic and social injustice upon groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation religion, physical or mental ability, age, and other diverse groups and how this impact affects the community, individual, family, and small group. Specific attention will be given to intersectionality and vulnerabilities. Course content will include perspectives on the history of American diversity, social-psychological perspectives on diversity and “professional” assessment and intervention with select diverse groups. The similarities and differences in experience, needs, and beliefs of individuals will be explored. Course content and assignments will be based upon its applicability to “professional” practice and will be theoretically and empirically based.

Course Objectives:

1. Students should develop an understanding of the impact of environmental conditions, social and economic opportunities/limitations on diverse groups including the special intersections, stresses and oppression to which they can be subject. (**Competency 1,2, 3**) Assessment: Autobiography, Orientation paper, Project, Considerations, Discussion, Journal, Exams
2. Students should develop an understanding of the nature and scope of environmental, social and psychological factors that affect diverse populations. (**Competency 1, 2, 3, 4, 10**) Assessment: Orientation paper, Project, Considerations, Discussion, Journal
3. Students should develop an understanding and respect for diverse populations and the dynamics of interaction that contribute to the responsiveness of the helping professional as a change agent. (**Competency 1, 4, 5, 6**) Assessment: Project, Discussion, Considerations, Journal
4. Students should be able to recognize the impact that areas of diversity have upon persons throughout the lifespan. (**Competency 3, 6, 9**) Assessment: Autobiography, Orientation paper, Project
5. Students should understand the issues and advocate for change that advances human rights and social and economic justice. (**Competency 1, 3, 6, 10**) Assessment: Orientation paper, Project, Considerations, Discussion, Journal, Exams

Numbers in parentheses above indicate program goals and EPAS Competencies (to which the course objectives (CO) are related; numbers in boldface type highlight the competency(ies) that receive the most emphasis. Practice behaviors that operationalize the EPAS competencies in this course are measured by faculty assessment of assignments.

Required Text: Healey, J., Stepnick, A. & O'Brien, E. (2019). *Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change, 8th edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Students with Disabilities: It is the policy for Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Therefore, any student with a *documented disability* condition (e.g. physical, learning, psychological) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations, must contact the instructor and the Disabilities Office at the *beginning* of each semester. (If the diagnosis of the disability occurs during the academic year, the student must self-identify with the

Disabilities Director *as soon as possible* in order to get academic accommodations in place for the remainder of the semester.) The Disabilities Office is located in Room 219 of the Student Center, telephone, (501) 279-4019.

Time Management Expectations: For every class hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least two clock hours on course-related work, including but not limited to out-of-class time spent reading, problem solving, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams and other activities that enhance learning.

Assessment and Grading: Harding University, since its charter in 1924, has been strongly committed to providing the best resources and environment for the teaching-learning process. The board, administration, faculty, and staff are wholeheartedly committed to full compliance with all criteria of the Higher Learning Commission. The University values continuous, rigorous assessment at every level for its potential to improve student learning and achievement and for its centrality in fulfilling the stated mission of Harding. Thus, a comprehensive assessment program has been developed that includes both the Academic units and the Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units. Specifically, all academic units will be assessed in reference to the following Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose: The University provides programs that enable students to acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their academic disciplines for successful careers, advanced studies, and servant leadership.

In academics, assessment is used as a tool to improve individual courses and entire programs as well as to evaluate each student's knowledge, skills, and dispositions. There is a probability that what you learn in this course will be assessed in broader measures of student achievement such as the Social Work Exit Exam as well as your final competency evaluation in Field Placement.

Assessment of the knowledge, skills, and disposition of each student for the purpose of assigning a letter grade at the completion of this course will be assessed by means of the following:

1. Attendance: Class attendance is expected and required. You should have regular attendance and to be punctual for class. Any student who accumulates more than two **total** unexcused absences for in-person class attendance or three tardies during the course of the semester will have points deducted from their final grade. Two percentage points will be deducted from your final grade per excessive absence and five points per excessive tardy. *Please note: Leaving class early without prior permission will be counted as an absence* If you have extenuating circumstances be sure to clarify this with me, and you will not be penalized – the key issue being communication with me regarding your attendance in class.

2. Exams: Exams will cover the assigned text, lectures, and class discussions. You are responsible for material in the text, as lectures will not always cover the text material. Exams may be multiple-choice, true/false, or short answer discussion questions. Exams will be open book/open note and for online access students will be available for a 5-day period on canvas. For online access, there will have a set amount of time to complete the exam once it has been opened. (CO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Absences from exams can only be made up in the case of serious illness or family emergency. If an exam will be missed you must **call or email me before** the scheduled exam. If I am not in my office and you call, leave a voice mail message. You may schedule to take an exam early if a known problem exists. In all other cases, a grade of zero (0) shall be given for a missed exam. No exceptions will be made. (CO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

3. Class Participation Policy: Reading assignments should be completed before each designated class period. This includes being prepared to participate in classroom discussions. * You are expected to participate in all classroom activities. * (CO 3)

4. Cell Phones, communication devices, personal computers, tablets, etc.: Cell phones (or any other device) should be set to silent prior to the beginning of class if attending in person. If you are attending remotely, please set your speaker to silent unless you are making a comment/asking a question.

Personal computers, tablets, etc. are welcome with you if you are attending class in person, the device should be used for taking lecture notes only. Use of electronics during the class for any other purpose is not allowed. Any student found to be using a device for any purpose other than notes shall forfeit the privilege of having that device in class for the remainder of the semester and may be subject to expulsion from the class.

5. Class Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will be given individual and group assignments. Neatness, proper grammar and spelling will be required on all assignments. You are expected to turn in assignments on the designated due date BY CLASS TIME. If this is not possible, for an excusable reason, you must email me before class time to inform me of the issue and to work out a time to turn in the assignment without any late penalty. Work turned in the due date before 11:55 p.m. will receive a 5% late penalty. Work will be assessed a penalty of 10% per day beginning the day after the assignment was due. Assignments completed more than six calendar days after the due date will not receive credit unless explicit arrangements have been made with the instructor. * **Graduate Students:** There are additional expectations for you. Please see me for specific requirements.

The following are brief overviews of the required assignments for this course. More details will be given in class discussions.

Diversity Autobiography: You will type a minimum 3-page paper (typed full text for page length, double-spaced) discussing an event (or events) when you realized that there are individuals who are different from yourself (different ethnicity, religion, etc.). Specifically address the following questions:

What were your attitudes then?

How does this compare to what your attitudes are today?

How did this event (or events) affect your interactions with individuals who are different from yourself?

Do you believe that your personal differences impact how others relate to you?

Paper due **February 1** (50 points) (CO 1, 4)

Read/Watch Journal: Students will keep a journal of articles read, and videos watched for the class. For each unit, the student will be responsible for reflecting on the reading a min. of 2 articles and watching 3 videos. (Read: either from suggested “read” files on canvas, from individual research, or the class bibliography. Watch: either from suggested “watch” files on canvas, or from individual research on a topic covered in the unit). The student will then thoughtfully address the following for each unit:

* How this information can be used (or needs to be further researched) for culturally competent work with diverse and at-risk populations.

*Personal reflections on the article/video and how a person can practice ethically from a Christian perspective.

*Complete bibliographic information for the article/videos (link) reviewed

5 entries for each unit (5 points each) 25 points total. Note – extra credit will be given for new articles/videos you include (not on current class list) that are relevant to course content. (CO 1, 2, 3, 5)

Due:

Feb. 15 **Unit I**

March 29 **Unit II**

May 3 **Unit III**

Diversity Project: You will be responsible for a minimum 5-page paper (typed full text for page length, double-spaced), based on knowledge gained from conducting at least two diversity interviews, scholarly research, and reflective critical thinking. Scholarly research should be documented by a bibliography of at least five sources (no more than 10 years old), including at least one professional journal. No more than 1 web only source will be accepted (see instructor for details if this is not clear). The citations should be written using APA format, PROPER GRAMMAR AND SPELLING ARE REQUIRED.

Interviews: should be in-depth conversations with two individuals who differ significantly from your self. (Suggestions for areas of diversity include but are not limited to: another religion (not another Christian denomination, if you are a member of a Christian denomination), a different sexual orientation, or different physical/mental ability, a significantly different social class, age (of at least 20 years difference - with the interviewee being at least an adolescent), race/ethnicity, culture, or country of origin. The interviews are to help you find out the other person's perceptions, worldview, and their perspective on relationships with other individuals. You are expected to stretch your horizons and interview people who are not in your usual group of friends. A typed outline of questions used for the interview should be attached at the end of the project to be turned in.

Papers should:

- *discuss similarities and differences between your religion, physical ability, culture, ethnicity, etc. and that of the interviewees.
 - *explore the interviewees' world view -- how does this view differ from your own
 - *discuss what was learned from each interview and how your personal perceptions were challenged or reinforced
 - *discuss policy issues relevant to the areas of diversity covered in your paper
 - *include a final section discussing what you learned from your interviews about cultural competency and how that information relates to competent practice in your chosen field
 - *attach a copy of questions used and the responses received for the interviews
- Papers are due on **March 22** (250 points) **Feel free to stop by during office hours to view examples of previous "A" papers. (CO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Sexual Orientation Paper: You will prepare a minimum 3-page (typed full 12-point font text for page length, double-spaced) response to the question "How would my life be different if I were a different sexual orientation?" The paper should address potential changes in the following areas: socially, educationally, politically, economically/professionally, and religiously. Scholarly professional research (within Behavioral Sciences) should be documented by a bibliography of at least three sources (no more than 10 years old), including at least one professional journal. Sources should be documented throughout the paper. Due: **April 12** (75 points) *Feel free to stop by during office hours to view examples of previous "A" papers (CO 1, 2, 4, 5)

Group Article Discussion: Individuals who draw the same subpopulation in class will work together to find a recent article (or perhaps a two articles), published within the last year, highlighting aspects of intersectionality and diverse relations. The group will be responsible for informing the class about the issues and leading a class discussion over the areas of interest. Presentations will be on **April 26** (25 points). (CO 1, 2, 3, 5)

Group Consideration List: Individuals who draw the same subpopulation in class will work together as a group to create a list of considerations (aimed at rebutting some of the stereotypes for the population and/or tips for working professionally with the specific group). The focus of the considerations should be from the strengths perspective and should specifically address any aspect of oppression and discrimination addressed by the stereotypes within research sources. A minimum of 2 considerations from 2 scholarly sources per person in the group should be included on the list. Each source should be cited with full bibliographic information in APA style (sources should be no more than 10 years old - older

sources may be used if they are in addition to the required two). The considerations list will be posted to the course canvas. Be sure your post is in PDF format (that way everyone can access it, and you don't have to set permissions, etc.) Lists will be due on the same day as the article discussion **April 26** *Feel free to stop by during office hours to view examples of previous "A" consideration lists. (100 points) (CO 1, 2, 3, 5)

Group Evaluation: Each group member will fill out an evaluation form for the group projects. Forms will be turned in after the group presents. **April 26** (25 points)

Unacceptable Behavior: The following behaviors are rude, distracting, and disheartening to other students. Exhibiting these behaviors may result in you being asked to leave the class and receiving an unexcused absence.

- * Packing behavior: putting personal belongings up before class has been dismissed.
- * Personal conversations during class lectures or discussions.
- * Use of technology for a purpose other than class notes
- * Doing assignments for other classes.
- * Sleeping in class.

All students are expected to abide by the Student Handbook. A student may be asked to leave class or other activities if they are not in keeping with these expectations.

THE FINAL GRADE WILL BE COMPUTED AS FOLLOWS:

A = 90% or above

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% or below

***Disclaimer:** The Harding University Social Work faculty recognizes that a legitimate survey of current thought will necessarily include ideas that may conflict with the Christian view of humanity and the universe and that details in some of the courses may be regarded as offensive to a sensitive student. It should be clear, however, that the purpose of the course is not to endorse the offending views, to weaken students' religious faith, or to denigrate any student's moral standards. Rather, the goal of the course is to evaluate these ideas and assignments through the mature Christian perspective of both the teacher and the student. If students are to be equipped intellectually and spiritually to solve the problems that they will meet, both on campus and in later life, they must form habits of examining every aspect of each question. The university, therefore, urges professors to give the students in their classes all significant points of view regarding any problem or principle that may arise. Less than this would defeat the purpose of a Christian education.

COVID-19 Statement: Our goal at Harding University is to provide a safe and positive learning environment for all of our students. As a faith-based university, we have a responsibility to care for one another. The current COVID-19 pandemic gives us a good opportunity to do so, by following the guidelines to minimize transmission of the novel coronavirus. Every precaution will be taken to be sure that class is conducted in a way that is safe and in compliance with state and university guidelines. If you feel a situation needs to be addressed in the classroom environment, please speak with me as soon as possible so that the situation can be improved.

Due to the uncertain and unusual climate during which this course is being offered, certain adjustments may have to be made including changes to meeting times, modalities and work assignments. Every effort will be made to notify students of any change as soon as possible. Because this course

may/will be meeting using video conferencing, students are expected to find a safe, secure and reliable internet connection in order to participate in virtual meetings at the required level.

Code of Academic Conduct: All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of Christian scholars. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitutes academic misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to, Cheating, Plagiarism, Fabrication, Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty, etc. Academic misconduct is subject to automatic course failure (Grade of “F”).

Please note: Anyone taking an exam from the classroom, either on the day of the exam is administered or on the day the exam is returned, shall be considered to have engaged in the offense of “theft” and shall receive a grade of “F” for the course. In addition, individuals who share assignments with students taking the course in a subsequent semester may be subject to having an academic integrity sanction added to their college record.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOURSELF! BY ACCEPTING THIS SYLLABUS, YOU ARE ACCEPTING A CONTRACT BETWEEN YOU AND I, AND WE ARE AGREEING TO FULFILL OUR INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENTS. I reserve the right to change course requirements, grading procedures, etc. at any time during the semester. You will receive sufficient notice if changes are made.

Tentative Course Schedule

- 1/11 Introduction to the course and Unit I notes
- 1/18 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no class)
- 1/25 Unit I notes
- 2/1 Unit I notes
***Diversity Autobiography**
- 2/8 Unit I/II notes
- 2/15 **Exam Unit I *Read/Watch journal Unit I**
Unit II notes
***Online access students complete the Unit I exam during this week**
- 2/22 Unit II notes
- 3/1 Unit II notes
- 3/8 Spring break (no class)
- 3/15 Unit II notes
- 3/22 Unit II/III notes
***Diversity Project**
- 3/29 **Exam Unit II *Read/Watch journal Unit II**
Unit III notes
*** Online access students complete the Unit II exam during this week**

4/5 Unit III notes

4/12 Unit III notes
***Sexual Orientation Paper**

4/19 Unit III notes and group time

4/26 * **Group article discussion/consideration list, and group evaluations**

Final Exam (exam Unit III): Monday, May 3, 6:00 p.m. *Also, submit the Read/Watch journal Unit III