COURSE TITLE/SECTION
SOCW 7397 / Section 18826
Overrepresentation of Minority Males in Criminal Justice System

TIME: 9:00 am to 12:00 noon, Wednesday, June 1 - August 3

FACULTY: Rev. William Lawson
Jamie Parker, LMSW

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

E-mail: jparker@central.uh.edu

Phone: 713.743.9658

I. Course

A. Catalog Description

Selected topics in social work; topics will vary.

B. Purpose

This course is designed to provide the student with an understanding of the oppression of minority males in the United States and specifically in Texas with emphasis on their over-representation in the criminal justice system. This course is built on the assumption that social workers need to understand the economic, political, social and cultural forces that impact our clients and society. This course examines these forces as they generate and maintain oppression based on race and ethnicity in the U. S. Strategies for change are developed and are critically examined.

II. Course Competencies

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

1. demonstrate an understanding of demographic trends and forces that influence and shape a diverse U. S. society.

2. identify and describe selected theories of oppression and apply them to the experience of minority males.

3. describe the U. S. criminal justice system and articulate the extent
to which minority males are over-represented in prison systems, particularly in Texas.

4. reflect on the growth and maturation of their personal attitudes related to understanding oppression, as well as to their commitment to social justice.

5. demonstrate the ability to assess strengths and limitations of selected action strategies to combat aggression.

### III. Course Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Deutsch (2006)</td>
<td>Dr. Peggy Engram</td>
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<td>June 8</td>
<td>Apprehension and Prosecution</td>
<td>Barak et al. (2007), Ch. 8. Warren et al. (2006).</td>
<td>Chief of Police, District Attorney</td>
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<td>June 18</td>
<td>Texas Courts and Trial System: Role of the Public Defender</td>
<td>Barak et al., (2007), Ch. 9.</td>
<td>Criminal Courts Judge, Public Defender</td>
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<td>June 22</td>
<td>FIELD TRIP: Juvenile Detention Center</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>July 6</td>
<td>Prison Life in Harris County</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>July 13</td>
<td>Role of Media (Radio, TV, Movies, Internet, etc.)</td>
<td>Mauer (2006), Ch. 10. Muraskin &amp; Roberts (2005). Ch. 5.</td>
<td>Television Station Manager, Veteran TV Anchor</td>
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<td>July 20</td>
<td>Dialog on Racial/Ethnic Patterns</td>
<td>Barak et al. (2007), Ch. 1 – Class.</td>
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Barak et al. (2007), Ch. 2 – Race.
Barak et al. (2007), Ch. 3 – Gender.

Speaker: NAACP Leader
LULAC Leader

July 27  Role of Public Education on Predisposition Toward Criminal Behavior
Reading:  Lockner & Morretti (2001).
          Lord & Mahoney (2007).
Speaker:  Wheeler Avenue Children’s Academy
          Former US Sec. of Education

August 3 Final Examination, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

IV.  Course Structure

The course consists primarily in presentations by community leaders with front-line experience in working with the social systems and social agencies that impact minority males prior to, during, and following involvement with the criminal justice system.

V.  Textbooks

There are no required textbooks for this course. All required and recommended readings will be made available on Blackboard.

Required Reading Assignments

Selected chapters noted in Course Content above.


Readings.


VI Course Requirements

A. Attendance and Participation
Attendance and participation are heavily weighted because much of the learning in the course will occur by means of participation in class activities, groups and assignments.

B. Field Trips

June 22 Juvenile Detention Center

C. Written Assignments –

1. **Reflection & Reaction Papers** (minimum of 4 pages each) – Due dates are listed below. *In each paper you will be required to incorporate the required readings, guest speakers, classroom discussion, current events (if applicable) and your individual processing of all materials.* The purpose of these papers is for you to exhibit your understanding of all of the materials.

   June 20th R & R Paper Due
   July 11th R & R Paper Due
   August 1st R & R Paper Due
2. **Final Examination** – An essay exam will be administered over all assigned readings, class discussions, and field trips.

VII. **Evaluation and Grading**

**Class attendance and participation (15%)**
Attendance and participation is expected, as much of the learning will occur as a result of interacting with guest speakers and class discussion. 2 grade points will be deducted from your final grade for each class absence. An absence is defined as missing more than 30 minutes of any class period or field trip.

**Reflection & Reaction Papers (45%)**
Each paper is worth 15%

**Final Exam (40%)**

As is standard practice in the GCSW, an A will be 95% and higher, A- will be 90% to 95%, B+ will be 87% to 90%, B will be 83% to 86%, B- will be 80% to 83%, etc.

**Policy on grades of I (Incomplete):**
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. Incompletes will be given only under exceptional situations after consultation with the instructor.

VIII. **Consultation**

Consultation with the instructor will be on an appointment-only basis. In order to schedule contact with the instructor, students should contact the instructor via email at jparker@central.uh.edu or via phone at 713.743.9658. Emails through Blackboard will not be checked.

**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.

*This syllabus may be amended over the duration of the semester.*