THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Course Number: SW195K	**Instructor:** Yessenia Castro, PhD (she/her)
Unique Number: 61300	**Office Number:** WWH 250.22
Semester: Fall 2024	**Office Phone:** 512-232-0778
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SW195K: COLLOQUIUM ON ISSUES IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

I.   STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces social work doctoral students to topics that facilitate the transition to doctoral education including identity development, professional development, and doctoral program requirements and expectations. Certain topics are covered every year, but some class sessions are reserved for topics of particular interest to each new doctoral cohort. The course relies on readings, structured reflection exercises, and discussion to help students learn course concepts and apply them to their educational and research training experiences.

II.   COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Have a foundational and mutually agreed upon understanding of their and their mentor's expectations for and responsibilities to their research training and the mentor-mentee relationship.
2. Identify their strengths and weakness regarding research-related knowledge and skills, and articulate a nascent set of short and long-term training and career goals, and use this information to create an individual development plan.
3. Understand the educational purpose, policies, and procedures of the major program requirements (individual development plans, annual review of student progress, program of work, first-authored manuscript submission, comprehensive exam, dissertation) and how to leverage these (along with research experiences)

to develop a specialized content area of expertise and coherent program of research.

4. Gain knowledge and skills needed to participate in a scientific community such as CV development, collaboration, networking, presenting at conferences, and writing and evaluating research articles.
5. Engage in reflective practices to understand oneself as a developing social work scientist and to consider how one's personal identities, group membership, and previous experiences may influence their scientific identity.
6. Broaden their exposure to current trends and issues in social work, including past and present controversies and critiques.
7. Broaden their exposure to a variety of scholars, research trajectories, and ways of being a scholar.

III.   TEACHING METHODS

The primary teaching methods will be small group discussion, lectures, readings, and individual or group assignments. Students are expected to ask questions, share experiences, and actively participate in class discussions.

IV.   REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Available on the Canvas site for this class.

V.   COURSE REQUIREMENTS

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: A variety of in-class or homework assignments, as well as required readings, will be used to facilitate learning and class discussion. Eight assignments are listed in the course calendar that must be completed for credit. In addition, ***submission of the Individual Development Plan is required to earn credit for the course.*** Students should be prepared to meet with their mentor *at least once* for the specific purpose of developing the IDP. Final versions of the IDP that have been approved and signed by both the mentor and the mentee are due September 27. Students should be aware that Assignment 3 (Research Mentor Expectations) will require the student to meet one-on-one with their mentor and should plan accordingly.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH SEMINARS: Students will be required to attend three Responsible Conduct of Research Seminars sponsored by UT Austin's Office of Research Integrity and Compliance. Students will attend these seminars in lieu of class on the days noted in the syllabus calendar. ***Please be aware that these seminars take place from 1 to 2 pm and be prepared to adjust your schedule accordingly on those days.*** In addition, seminars may take place either in-person or via Zoom; so please be mindful of each seminar's mode of

attendance. Students must register for these seminars, and may do so using this link: https://research.utexas.edu/resources/research-integrity-and-compliance/research-integrity/rcr-training

STUDENT LED GROUP DISCUSSION: This class will consist predominantly of student-led discussion of the week's topic. The student-led group discussion has two goals. The first goal is to review the week's readings and/or assignments and get any outstanding questions or points of clarification answered by fellow classmates and the instructor. The second goal is to decide, as a class, what are the key conceptual, theoretical, or practical "take home points" from the week's course topic. To this end, the following discussion prompts are offered. Students are encouraged to consider any other additional exercises, strategies, or discussion points in pursuit of the above-stated goals as they see fit.

a. Articulate the "big picture"/overall topic of the week/article(s).
b. Review (e.g., define, explain) individual concepts, terms, etc., as they come up in discussion, *in your own words.* This helps check one's own understanding.
c. Ask clarifying questions and make any "stuck points" known. This helps everyone learn and can lead to new insights.
d. Consider the connections of concepts from the current week's topic/articles with concepts from previous weeks' topics/articles.
e. Critically evaluate the relevance of the overall discussion topic or, particular concepts or points of discussion, to any of the course objectives. What insights or lessons are offered with regard to any of the course objectives?
f. Discuss how you might apply insights/lessons learned from the readings or subsequent discussion to enhance your experience as a doctoral student or facilitate your development as a scientist and scholar (in both the short and long term).

All students are expected to meaningfully contribute to the group discussion every week. Refraining from participating in the group discussion will result in loss of participation points.

MENTOR-MENTEE MEETINGS: Students are required to meet a minimum of twice per month with their *primary* research mentor, either one-on-one or with a group in the context of a research team meeting. The primary purpose of these meetings should be to implement, receive guidance, and report on the progress of the student's research training goals as articulated in their individual development plan. Additional purposes of these meetings may be to allow the student the opportunity to be exposed to and participate in ongoing research projects, observe and learn about the practical aspects of project implementation, and participate in a community of scholars.

VI.   GRADES

This course is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis only. Students will earn 2 points each week (13 classes; 26 points total) provided all attendance and participation criteria (outlined below) are fulfilled at each class. Assignments 2 and 4 are worth 10 points each (20 points total). All other assignments are worth nine points each (54 points total). Thus, total points possible for this course is 100 (26 + 20 + 54). **To receive credit for the course, a student must earn at least 74 out of 100 possible points, including a minimum of 20 participation points and 54 assignment points. In addition, the student must submit Individual Development Plan to receive credit for the course.**

VII.   CLASS POLICIES

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. If a student cannot attend a class, they should notify Dr. Castro ahead of time via email. Students should also notify Dr. Castro as soon as possible after an unforeseen emergency that has caused them to miss class with no prior notice. If a student has an unforeseen emergency that affects their attendance in this course, they should be prepared to approach Dr. Castro about it with official documentation of the unforeseen emergency. **Participation points cannot be "made up" in the event of an absence.**

PARTICIPATION: Participation is evaluated based on the extent to which a student completes all preparatory work/readings and participates meaningfully in class discussions. All students are expected to make at least one meaningful contribution to every class conversation. In this course, a **meaningful contribution is defined as a substantive commentary that helps move the group discussion forward beyond a basic review/reiteration of concepts.** Additionally, helping another student or the class advance their understanding of a concept with which they are struggling (or otherwise helping them get past a stuck point) constitutes a meaningful contribution. Students should be aware that completion of assigned readings may be necessary prior to completing a homework assignment and should plan accordingly.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: Students will receive specific instructions for each homework assignment before the end of class one week before the assignment is due. Homework assignments should be completed independently unless otherwise specified. Homework assignments will be published on Canvas at 12:30 pm one week before they are due. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas **prior to the start of class** on the day that it is due. Submission portals on Canvas will close at 11:30 am. **Do not submit homework assignments to Dr. Castro via email.**

Late homework assignments will be accepted in the event of a **documentable, unforeseen emergency** that has caused the student to be unable to complete or submit the assignment. If a student has an unforeseen emergency that has affected their ability to complete a course assignment, they should be prepared to approach Dr. Castro about it with official documentation of the unforeseen emergency. If the student is aware, in advance, that they will be unable to submit an assignment by the due date, they should make arrangements with Dr. Castro to submit it early.

VIII. <u>UNIVERSITY POLICIES</u>

Attendance and Academic Behavior. At the University of Texas at Austin, regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. See more information at https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/. Furthermore, students are expected to abide by the Standards for Social Work Education (available at https://socialwork.utexas.edu/student-resources/bsw/policies-and-procedures/). The student shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements.

Religious Holy Days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Center for Access and Restorative Engagement at https://community.utexas.edu/care/. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

The University of Texas Honor Code. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Policy on Academic Integrity. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and / or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct.

Use of Course Materials. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

University Electronic Mail Student Notification. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the

right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy.

Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

Professional Conduct and Civility in the Classroom. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

Classroom Confidentiality. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

Unanticipated Distress. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling and Mental Health Center at 512-471-3515 or online at https://cmhc.utexas.edu/.

Policy on Social Media and Professional Communication. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

Resources, Prevention of Discrimination, and Safety

Disability Accommodation Statement. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: https://community.utexas.edu/disability/. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

Behavior Concerns and Covid-19 Advice Line (BCCAL). If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line. The Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

Covid-19 Related Information. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: https://protect.utexas.edu/

Title IX Reporting. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free

from discriminatory conduct on the basis of sex https://titleix.utexas.edu/. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at https://titleix.utexas.edu/.

Title IX Accommodations for Those Pregnant, Nursing and Parenting. Pregnant, nursing and parenting students, faculty, and staff are eligible for accommodations through the Title IX Office that support equal access to education and work and prevent discrimination. Students may reach out to the Title IX Office for help with accommodations to make up missed classes, complete missed coursework, keep them safe in the classroom, apply for leaves of absence, receive priority registration and other related support. Faculty and staff, including undergraduate students who work on campus and graduate student employees, may reach out for assistance with job or schedule restructuring and obtaining modified or additional work equipment. Visit the Title IX pregnancy and parenting resource page for more information or contact the Title IX Support and Resources team connect with a Case Manager.

Campus Carry Policy. The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: https://campuscarry.utexas.edu.

Safety. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

Emergency Evacuation Policy. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
1 8/28	Course introduction, Syllabus Review Research Expectations Aligning Mentor-Mentee Expectations	**Assignment 1:** Research Trainee Expectations	1. Lee, S. P., McGee, R., Pfund, C., & Branchaw, J. (2015). Mentoring up: Learning to manage your mentoring relationships. In, *The Mentoring Continuum: From Graduate School Through Tenure*, 133-153.
2 9/4	Skills Development in Graduate Education Individual Development Plans	**Assignment 2** **Part 1:** Complete the Research Competencies Self-Assessment Survey (look for an email containing your survey results) **Part 2:** Complete Parts 1-3 of Individual Development Plan form	1. Parker R. (2012) Skill development in graduate education. *Mollecular Cell, 25, 46(4), 377-81.* 2. Core Competencies and Expectations form 3. Individual Development Plan form
3 9/11	<mark>Attend RI0101: Intro to Research Integrity, 9/11/24, 1-2 PM in lieu of class</mark>	**Assignment 3:** Research Mentor Expectations	No readings due
4 9/18	Individual Development Plans	**Assignment 4:** Complete Part 4 of Individual Development Plan	1. How to write SMART Goals 2. Individual Development Plan form

5 9/25	<mark>Attend RI0103: Authorship and Communication, 9/25/24, 1-2 PM in lieu of class</mark>	**Signed Individual Development Plans due Friday, 9/27**	No readings due
6 10/2	Scientific Mindedness	**Assignment 5:** Your weekly log of cognitive biases	1. Lilienfeld, S. O., & Lynn, S. J. (2014). Errors/biases in clinical decision making. *The Encyclopedia of Clinical Psychology*, 1-9. 2. Handout: Common Biases that Affect Decision Making
7 10/9	Practical Strategies for Reading Research Articles	**Assignment 6**: Answers to the 6 questions in Rule 3 of "10 Simple Rules for Reading a Scientific Paper" using the any empirical article of your choice.	1. Handout: Guide to Reading Research Articles 2. 10 Simple Rules for Reading a Scientific Paper 3. Any empirical article of your choice with which to complete Assignment 6. Optional: 4. How to Read a Scientific Paper 5. How to (Seriously) Read a Scientific Paper
8 10/16	Research Writing 1: Introduction and Research Question	No assignment due	1. Castro Y (2022). *Anatomy of a Research Paper: An Absurdly Long Outline Based on Many of Dr. Castro's Musings that You Have Probably Already Heard from Her at One Point or Another.*
9 10/23	<mark>Attend RI0105: Peer Review, 10/23/24, 1-2 PM in lieu of class</mark>	**Assignment 7:** Using your Quantitative Research Methods paper idea, answer the highlighted questions under the introduction section of the week's readings. No	No readings due

		more than 1-3 sentences is necessary.	
10 10/30	<mark>Attend RI0106: Research Misconduct, 10/30/24, 1-2 PM in lieu of class</mark>	No assignment due	No readings due
11 11/6	Research Writing 2: Methods, Results, and Discussion	No assignment due	1. Castro Y (2022). *Anatomy of a Research Paper: An Absurdly Long Outline Based on Many of Dr. Castro's Musings that You Have Probably Already Heard from Her at One Point or Another.*
12 11/13	Social Work Science and Identity Formation	No assignment due	1. Fong, R. (2014). Framing doctoral education for a science of social work: Positioning students for the scientific career, promoting scholars for the academy, propagating scientists of the profession, and preparing stewards of the discipline. *Research on Social Work Practice, 24(5),* 607-615. 2. Barak, M. E. M., & Brekke, J. S. (2014). Social work science and identity formation for doctoral scholars within intellectual communities. *Research on Social Work Practice, 24(5),* 616-624.
13 11/20	Imposter Syndrome	**Assignment 8:** Complete the Clance IP Test	1. Abrams (2018). Yes, Impostor Syndrome is Real. Here's How to Deal with it. Time Magazine.
14 11/27	No Class (Fall Break)		
15 12/4	No Class		

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