



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

June 1	Course Introduction Reading: Deutsch (2006) Speaker: Dr. Peggy Engram
June 8	Apprehension and Prosecution Reading: Barak et al. (2007), Ch. 8. Warren et al. (2006). Speakers: Chief of Police District Attorney
June 18	Texas Courts and Trial System: Role of the Public Defender Reading: Barak et al., (2007), Ch. 9. Speakers: Criminal Courts Judge Public Defender
June 22	FIELD TRIP: Juvenile Detention Center Reading: None
June 29	Minority Families and Child-Rearing Reading: Dwivedi (2002), Ch. 1, pp. 17-34. Speakers: African American History Minority Family Speaker
July 6	Prison Life in Harris County Reading: TBA Speaker: TBA
July 13	Role of Media (Radio, TV, Movies, Internet, etc.) Reading: Mauer (2006), Ch. 10. Muraskin & Roberts (2005). Ch. 5. Speaker: Television Station Manager Veteran TV Anchor
July 20	Dialog on Racial/Ethnic Patterns Reading: Barak et al. (2007), Ch. 1 – Class.

	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.

Barak, G., Leighton, P., & Flavin, J. (2007). *Class, race, gender, and crime*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield. HV9950.B34 2007. On library reserve for class.

Clear, T. R. (2007). *Imprisoning communities: How mass incarceration makes disadvantaged neighborhoods worse*. New York: Oxford University Press. HV9950/C55 2007. On library reserve for class.

Deutsch, M. (2006). A framework for thinking about oppression and its change. *Social Justice Research*, 19(1), 7-41. Posted on WebCT Vista under Readings.

Dwivedi, KI.N. (Ed.). (2002). *Meeting the needs of ethnic minority children – including refugee, black, and mixed parentage children: A handbook for professionals*. London: J. Kingsley Publishers. HV751.A6 M44 2002. Available as ebook through Anderson library.

Lockner, L., & Moretti, E. (2001, November). *The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self reports*. National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 8605. Post on WebCT Vista under

Readings.

- Lord, H., & Mahoney, J. L. (2007). Neighborhood crime and self-care: Risks for aggression and lower academic performance. *Developmental Psychology*, 43(6), 1321-1333. Posted on WebCT Vista under Readings.
- Mauer, M. (2006). *Race to incarcerate*. New York: The New Press. HV9950.M32 2006. On library reserve for class.
- Muraskin, R., & Roberts, A. R. (2005). *Visions for change: Crime and justice in the twenty-first century*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall. HV9950.M87 2005. On library reserve for class.
- Prager, D. (2007). *Marked: Race, crime, and finding work in an era of mass incarceration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. HV9304.P23 2007. On library reserve for class.
- Warren, P., Tomaskovic-Devey, D., Smith, W., Zingraff, M., & Mason, M. (2006). Driving while black: Bias processes and racial disparity in police stops. *Criminology*, 44(3), 709-738.

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 20 th	R & R Paper Due
July 11 nd	R & R Paper Due
August 1 th	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.