LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our students, faculty and staff are located across Indigenous lands. On our Calgary campus, we acknowledge and pay tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples who made Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations). The city of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6). Our Calgary campus is situated on land northwest of where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a site known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, Wîchîspa Oyade to the Îyâxe Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda), and Guts'ists'i to the Tsuut'ina and Otos-kwunee to the Metis.

At our Edmonton campus, we acknowledge the Treaty 6 region, the traditional homelands of Cree, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/ Anishinaabe, Inuit and Métis people (Districts 9 and 10). We recognize the rich cultural history of the place, now called the City of Edmonton, which has, for centuries, been a traditional gathering place of Indigenous peoples from across Alberta, BC, and Saskatchewan.

At our Lethbridge campus, we acknowledge the traditional territories of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pay respect to the Blackfoot people past, present and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land. We offer respect to the Metis and all who have lived on this land and made Lethbridge their home.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, RACIAL JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DECOLONIZATION

The Faculty of Social Work (FSW), University of Calgary (UCalgary), is committed to promoting and actualizing equity, racial justice, diversity, inclusion and decolonization**.** We affirm that diversity and uniqueness are enriching and valuable, and that they can strengthen our teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and community connections. We aim to foster an inclusive, thriving and equitable environment for our students, non-academic and academic staff, and community members. We take the stand that equity does not mean sameness in treatment of people, but rather requires measures and accommodations for diverse life experiences and circumstances to ensure that no one of a particular social group is disadvantaged, underrepresented or overlooked in all aspects of our work. We intend to address systemic inequities and compounded disadvantages due to intersectionality of social locations, particularly for those who are members of racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, Black peoples, persons with disabilities, migrant groups (including refugees and immigrants), 2SLGBTQ+ communities, linguistic minorities as well as those who have experienced socioeconomic, caregiving, religious, political, and/or cultural barriers to their education and employment. We also recognize, honour, and integrate into our work diverse perspectives, ways of knowing and doing, experiences, and strengths. An anti-oppressive lens, particularly intersectional, anti-colonial, anti-racist and decolonizing frameworks, will inform our work.

Please refer to our full statement of our [Commitment to Equity, Racial Justice, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization](#), our [Statement on Anti-Black Racism](#) and the work of the faculty's [Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#), our [Statement on Anti-Asian Racism](#), and the university's [Indigenous Strategy.](#)

Course & Session Number	SOWK 604 S05	Classroom	Online
Course Name	Advanced Practice Theories in Context		
Dates and Time	Start of Classes: September 2, 2025 End of Classes: October 17, 2025 Dates and Time: **Zoom Sessions:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:30-8:30PM MST (Sept 2nd to Oct 16th) **Asynchronous Session:** Thursday, Sept 11th Add/Drop/Withdrawal Dates: Please refer to the course-specific deadline in your Student Centre[1].		
Instructor	Sheliza Ladhani, PhD	**Office Hours**	As Requested
UCalgary E-mail	sheliza.ladhani@ucalgary.ca	**UCalgary Phone**	By email

SYLLABUS STATEMENT

Examines theoretical models, philosophical frameworks and ethical foundations of social work practice as a means to facilitate change while locating social work's development and current practice in historical, economic, political, socio-cultural and environmental contexts.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores critical theories and transformative frameworks that inform advanced social work practice in community and international contexts. You will engage with diverse theoretical traditions to examine how theory lives in practice — as a method of analysis, a relational orientation, and a tool for collective change. Moving beyond the binary of theory versus practice, the course invites you to think-feel-act with theory as a situated, evolving, and animate process. Together, we will critically consider the historical, social, and environmental contexts from which theories emerge, and how these frameworks shape community-based practice. Emphasis is placed on integrating theory into your evolving professional identity through reflexive, collaborative, and creative assignments. You are encouraged to engage with course materials relationally — thinking and feeling alongside the ideas and practices we explore. This online course includes 12 synchronous sessions and 1 asynchronous integration activity (as outlined in the course schedule). Classes will involve critical dialogue, small-group collaboration, guest speakers, experiential exercises, and embodied practices that support multiple ways of knowing, doing, and relating. If you are unable to attend a live session due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact

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[1] In the Enrolled Courses table, under Deadlines, click on the Calendar icon by each course and the deadlines will appear.

the instructor in advance and propose an alternative participation plan (e.g., submitting a brief reflection and contributing to the online discussion board).

Prerequisite(s): SOWK 600 and SOWK 602

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Identify, understand, critically assess, and analyze the influence of historical, social, political, economic, environmental, and other developments on social work theory and practice.
2. Explore the relationship between social work and other theories, generating an awareness of your positioning in relation to theoretical approaches to change and application to your social work practice.
3. Critically engage with a range of theoretical frameworks to analyze their relevance, limitations, and transformative potential in community-based practice.
4. Evaluate how different theories and frameworks shape approaches to community engagement, assessment, advocacy, and organizing across diverse practice settings.
5. Understand the relationship between comparative approaches to change and social justice in social work practice at multiple levels.

LEARNING RESOURCES

REQUIRED READINGS, TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

No textbook is required for this course. As this is a graduate level seminar, you are expected to read through the material in preparation of participating in class discussions. **Required readings are listed below, organized by class/topic, and are accessible through D2L via Leganto Reading list.** A list of additional recommended readings will be shared on D2L, and you are welcome to read and integrate the recommended readings into your assignments and class discussions.

Sept 2 - Theory as Grounded Practice: Thinking-Feeling, Practicing, and Theorizing Otherwise

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Publishing.
- Ch 2: On the Research Journey (p. 22-42)
hooks, b. (1991). Theory as liberatory practice. *Yale JL & Feminism*, *4*, 1.
Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a feminist life*. Duke University Press
- Introduction: Bringing Feminist Theory Home (p. 1-18)

Sept 4 - Beyond Damage, Toward Desire: Onto/Epistemic Shifts and the Politics of Complexity

Ives, N., Sussman, T., & Denov, M. S. (2015). *Introduction to social work in Canada: Histories, contexts, and practices*. Oxford University Press.
- Ch 2: Social Work Theories (p. 31-61)
Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review 79*(3): 409–428.

Leitão, R. M. (2022). From needs to desire: Pluriversal design as a desire-based design. *Design and Culture, 14*(3), 255-276.

Sept 9 - Examining Justice and Community Practice in Destabilizing Times

brown, a. m. (2020). *We will not cancel us: And other dreams of transformative justice*. AK Press.
- Unthinkable thoughts: Call-out culture in the age of Covid-19 (p. 33 – 63)

bergman, c., & Montgomery, N. (2017). *Joyful militancy: Building thriving resistance in toxic times*. AK Press.
- Introduction: https://joyfulmilitancy.com/2017/09/04/intro/

Mingus, M. (2022, January 16). *You are not entitled to our deaths: COVID, abled supremacy & interdependence. Leaving Evidence*. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2022/01/16/you-are-not-entitled-to-our-deaths-covid-abled-supremacy-interdependence/

Sept 11 - Relational Groundwork in Asset-Based Community Practice (Asynchronous)

City of Calgary. (n.d.). *Module 1: What is asset-based community development?* In *Asset-Based Community Development Toolkit*. City of Calgary. https://www.calgary.ca/social-services/asset-based-community-development-toolkit/what-is-abcd.html

City of Calgary. (n.d.). *Module 2: Building trust and relationships*. In *Asset-Based Community Development Toolkit*. City of Calgary. https://www.calgary.ca/social-services/asset-based-community-development-toolkit/building-trust-and-relationships.html

Sept 16 - Engaging with Care: Decolonial, Trauma-Informed, and Intersectional Practice

Smith, L. T. (2021). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (Third edition.). Zed Books.
- Ch 9: Twenty Further Indigenous Projects

Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. (2020). *Beyond inclusion: Equity in public engagement.* https://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/what-we-do/knowledge-practice/beyond-inclusion.html
- p. 1-54

The Opportunity Agenda. (2021). *Ten tips for putting intersectionality into practice*. https://opportunityagenda.org/messaging_reports/ten-tips-for-intersectionality/

Sept 18 - Assessment and Investment as Relationship: Understanding, Reciprocity, and Sustainability

Klaus, T. (n.d.). *Community needs assessment or community understanding?* Tamarack Institute. https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/community-needs-assessment-or-community-understanding

The Circle on Philanthropy. (n.d.). *Pathway toward a shared future*. https://the-circle.ca/pathway-toward-a-shared-future/

Imagine Canada. (2023, June 28). *Let's Imagine Podcast, Episode 7: How lack of core funding is impacting 2SLGBTQI+ organizations* [Audio podcast episode]. Imagine 360. https://imaginecanada.ca/en/360/lets-imagine-podcast-episode-7-how-lack-core-funding-impacting-2slgbtqi-orgs

Sept 23 - Community Building and Collaboration: Constellations of Relation and Scales of Kinship

Simpson, L. B. (2017). *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Ch 12: Constellations of Coresistance

Whyte, K. (2021). An ethic of kinship. In G. Van Horn, R. W. Kimmerer & J. Hausdoerffer (Eds.), *Kinship: Belonging in a world of relations* (Vol. 05 Practice, pp. 30-38). Center for Humans and Nature.

Gumbs, A. P. (2022). *Undrowned: Black feminist lessons from marine mammals*. AK Press.
- Ch 5: Collaborate (p. 51-60)

Sept 25 - Geographies of Organizing: Activism, Place, and Revolutionary Care

Spagnuolo, N., & El-Lahib, Y. (2020). Unsettling realities and rethinking displacement: Transforming settlement services for refugees, migrants and people with intellectual disabilities. In M. Berghs, T. Chataika, Y. El-Lahib & K. Dube (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of disability activism* (pp. 639-656). Taylor & Francis Group.

Hayes, K., & Kaba, M. (2023). *Let this radicalize you: Organizing and the revolution of reciprocal care*. Haymarket Books.
- Ch 4: Think like a geographer

Daigle, M., & Ramírez, M. M. (2018). Decolonial geographies. In *Keywords in Radical Geography: Antipode at 50* (pp. 78–84). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Oct 2 - Advocacy in Digital and Embodied Worlds: Disability Justice, Storytelling and Participatory Ethics

Sitter, K. C., & Curnew, A. H. (2016). The application of social media in social work community practice. *Social Work Education*, *35*(3), 271-283.

Sitter, K. C., Allemang, B., Pabia, M. R., Gaunt, E., Herrera, A., & Howell, B. (2023). Cripping digital storytelling: Disability, accessibility, and celebrating difference. *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, *12*(1), 29-58.

Oct 14 - Navigating Accountability: Ethical Rupture, Repair, and the Practice of Return

Mingus, M. (2019, May 5). *Dreaming accountability: Dreaming a returning to ourselves and each other*. Leaving Evidence. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2019/05/05/dreaming-accountability-dreaming-a-returning-to-ourselves-and-each-other/

Mingus, M. (2019, December 18). *How to give a good apology: Part 1 – The four parts of accountability*. Leaving Evidence. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2019/12/18/how-to-give-a-good-apology-part-1-the-four-parts-of-accountability/

Hemphill, P. (2024). *What it takes to heal: How transforming ourselves can change the world* (1st ed.). Random House.
- Things Fall Apart

Oct 16 – Critical Hope and Collective Healing as Praxis: Speculative Futurities

Solnit, R. (2016). *Hope in the dark: Untold histories, wild possibilities* (3rd Ed). Haymarket Books.
- Foreword to the Third Edition: Grounds for Hope p. xi - xxvi

Devich-Cyril, M. (2021). https://inthesetimes.com/article/freedom-grief-healing-death-liberation-movements

Johnson, A. E. (2024). *What if we get it right? Visions of climate futures*. Penguin Random House: One World.
- A Note on Hope (p. 397-399)
- Away from the Brink (p. 428-433)

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A D2L site is set up for this course, which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials. A laptop, desktop or mobile device with Internet access, microphone and speaker is required for D2L and Zoom access.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

The Advanced Practice Core curriculum consists of 4 theme courses, SOWK 600, 602, 604, and 606, which will explore core elements of social work knowledge and practice within the specializations. This curriculum will examine social justice, research strategies, social work practice models, and public policy with the intent of further developing students' unique social work perspective and strengthening their social work identity and personal practice framework. These courses also provide the foundation for the specialization as well as for the field education component leading to the final capstone project.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Important Dates for Fall 2025
- Start of Term: Monday, August 25
- First Day of Class: Tuesday, September 2
- End of Term: Wednesday, December 24
- Last Day of Class: Friday, December 5
- Fee Deadline: Friday, September 19
- Labour Day, no classes: Monday, September 1
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, no classes: Tuesday, September 30
- Thanksgiving Day, no classes: Monday, October 13
- Remembrance Day, no classes: Tuesday, November 11
- Term Break, no classes: Sunday-Saturday, November 9-15

Date	Topic	Assignments
Theory as Grounded Practice: Thinking-Feeling, Practicing, and Theorizing Otherwise		
Sept 2	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Introductions and course orientation • Course outline overview • Exploring paradigms that influence social work theories • Theory as lived, embodied, and relational practice **Theories/Concepts:** Paradigms, Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, Feminist theory, critical pedagogy, embodied praxis Readings: • Wilson (2008)	

	• hooks (1991) • Ahmed (2017)	
Beyond Damage, Toward Desire: Onto/Epistemic Shifts and the Politics of Complexity		
Sept 4	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Attend to historical and contemporary social work theories and approaches • Examine how dominant narratives shape how communities are perceived and engaged. • Explore desire-based frameworks as anti-deficit, relational alternatives. **Theories/Concepts:** Ecological systems theory, Onion-peeling/Faulty-engine/Storytelling/Mountain-moving theories, Anti-colonial and relational epistemologies, desire-based frameworks Readings: • Ives et al. (2015) • Tuck (2009) • Leitão (2022)	
Examining Justice and Community Practice in Destabilizing Times		
Sept 9	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Examine how justice and accountability are reimagined through care, interdependence, and refusal in times of crisis. • Explore transformative and disability justice frameworks that center complexity, contradiction, and relational response. • Reflect on how urgency, harm, and survival shape — and sometimes constrain — how we show up in community. **Theories/Concepts:** Transformative justice, prefigurative politics, disability justice, abolition feminist ethics Readings: • brown (2020) • bergman & Montgomery (2017) • Mingus (2022)	
Relational Groundwork in Asset-Based Community Practice		
Sept 11 (Async)	**Asynchronous Integration** (Detailed description of asynchronous integration activity will be posted on D2L) • Engage with asset-based community development (ABCD) as a relational and strengths-based alternative to deficit models of practice. • Reflect on how trust, relationship-building, and reciprocity are foundational to ethical community engagement. • Consider how ABCD aligns with participatory, anti-deficit, and community-led approaches to change. **Theories/Concepts:** Asset-based community development, strengths-based approaches, participatory development, relational practice Readings: • City of Calgary (n.d.). Module 1 • City of Calgary (n.d.). Module 2	**Assignment 1 - due Sept 15th**

	Engaging with Care: Decolonial, Trauma-Informed, and Intersectional Practice	
Sept 16	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Examine how community engagement continues to be shaped by imperial/colonial legacies to then explore community engagement as relational and ethical praxis • Examine theories/frameworks that reorient practice toward accountability, agency, and Indigenous sovereignty • Reflect on how positionality, identity, and structural inequities influence engagement, participation, and shared decision-making. **Theories/Concepts:** Decolonial ethics, CRT & intersectionality, principles-based approach **Guest: Kris Watkins** Readings: • Smith (2021) • SFU (2020) • Opportunity Agenda (2021)	
	Assessment and Investment as Relationship: Understanding, Reciprocity, and Sustainability	
Sept 18	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Consider traditional and alternative models of assessment, exploring how knowledge is gathered, by whom, and for what purposes. • Examine how dominant funding structures reproduce inequity, and explore alternative practices rooted in reciprocity and self-determination. • Reflect on what ethical, community-led investment demands of practitioners in terms of presence, time, and relational accountability. **Theories/Concepts:** Relational frameworks, Indigenous and place-based philanthropy, ethics of sustainability **Guest: Kelli Stevens** Readings: • Klaus (n.d.) • The Circle (n.d.) • Imagine Canada (2023)	
	Community Building and Collaboration: Constellations of Relation and Scales of Kinship	
Sept 23	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Explore kinship, collaboration, and co-resistance as relational practices that resist colonial fragmentation and nurture collective thriving. • Engage with Indigenous and Black feminist visions of liberation, sovereignty, and futurity rooted in land and multispecies healing/flourishing. • Consider how community building can emerge through co-resistance, kinship, and reciprocal relations that honors distinct yet linked struggles. **Theories/Concepts:** Indigenous resurgence and kinship ethics, Black feminist thought, ecological justice, multispecies relationality Readings: • Simpson (2017)	

	• Whyte (2021) • Gumbs (2022)	
Geographies of Organizing: Activism, Place, and Revolutionary Care		
Sept 25	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Analyze how theoretical approaches help us understand the geographies of oppression and resistance. • Explore how abolitionist, anticolonial, and decolonial theories inform organizing strategies rooted in land, relationship, and care. • Consider how solidarity can be mapped across struggles through shared practices of organizing and political imagination. **Theories/Concepts:** Anti-colonialism, postcolonial theory, critical disability, anti-racism, abolition, decoloniality **Guest: Dr. Yahya El-Lahib** Readings: • Spagnuolo & El-Lahib (2020) • Hayes & Kaba (2023) • Daigle & Ramírez (2018)	**Assignment 2 – due Sept 29th**
Sept 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (No Class)		
Advocacy in Digital and Embodied Worlds: Disability Justice, Storytelling and Participatory Ethics		
Oct 2	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Explore digital storytelling as a form of advocacy grounded in disability justice, difference, and collective voice. • Analyze how social media can both challenge and reproduce dominant power relations in community practice. • Reflect on participatory ethics and access in the creation and circulation of community narratives. **Theories/Concepts:** Critical disability, participatory approaches and ethics, digital storytelling as advocacy **Guest: Dr. Kathleen Sitter** Readings: • Sitter & Curnew (2016) • Sitter et al. (2023)	
Building Otherwise Group Presentations		
Oct 7	**Zoom Session** 5:30PM – 8:30PM MST • Group Presentations: Building Otherwise: Theory-Informed Tools for Ethical Community Practice	**Assignment 3 – Today**
Building Otherwise Group Presentations Cont'd		
Oct 9	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Group Presentations: Building Otherwise: Theory-Informed Tools for Ethical Community Practice	**Assignment 3 – Today**
Navigating Accountability: Ethical Rupture, Repair, and the Practice of Return		
Oct 14	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST	

	Examine the foundations of transformative accountability beyond punitive models. • Explore apology, return, and repair as ethical practices rooted in care, not performance. • Reflect on how rupture and imperfection can become portals for deeper relational healing. **Theories/Concepts:** Transformative justice, relational ethics, accountability, **Guest: Kalista Sherbaniuk** Readings: • Mingus (2019, May 5) • Mingus (2019, Dec 18) • Hemphill (2024)	
	Critical Hope and Collective Healing as Praxis: Speculative Futurities	
Oct 16	**Zoom Session** 5:30 – 8:30 PM MST • Reframe hope as a radical, relational, and speculative commitment to justice. • Explore grief and healing as integral to sustaining movements and imagination. • Consider how collective storytelling can shape more just and livable futures. **Theories/Concepts:** Critical hope, healing justice, radical loss and liberation, decolonial futurisms Readings: • Solnit (2016) • Devich-Cyril (2021) • Johnson (2024)	**Assignment 4 – Due October 20th**

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND RELATED INFORMATION

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY

All course communication must occur through your @ucalgary email. I will respond to emails sent via your @ucalgary emails within 48 hours excluding weekends and statutory holidays.

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

You are expected to practice professional communication in all interactions with the instructor and your peers. Please use your UCalgary email for all school-related communications. Your email should start with a proper greeting (e.g. Dear/ Good Day), address the instructor by name, and include a sign-off (e.g. Sincerely/ Best regards) and your name.

GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS IN ONLINE CLASSES

You are expected to participate actively in all Zoom sessions. Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that allows you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. **Unless advised (or agreed) otherwise by your instructor, your video camera should be turned on during class and you are expected to manage your microphone as required**. Please reach out to your instructor if you experience challenges that prevent you from having your camera turned on. You are expected to behave in a professional manner during all Zoom sessions. Please do not share the Zoom links with anyone who is not registered in this course.

MEDIA RECORDING FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING (By Instructor)

The instructor may use Zoom media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session.

RECORDINGS OF ONLINE CLASSES (By Students)

Recording of lectures is generally not permitted. You must seek authorization from your instructor to record any lecture. Any student with a disability who is registered with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), and who requires an accommodation to make audio recordings of course material shall be provided with such an accommodation if determined necessary by an Access Advisor in SAS. Please refer to the Recording of Lectures Policy and Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy for the additional information.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

Summary of Assignments	Due Dates	Weight
1. Asset-Based Community Development Exercise & Reflection	Sept 15th	15%
2. The Art of Community Practice: Enacting Theory through Intersectional Analysis	Sept 29th	30%
3. Building Otherwise: Theory-Informed Tools for Ethical Community Practice (Part A: 15%; Part B: 25%)	Oct 7th or 9th	40%
4. Relational Engagement Reflection & Self-Assessment	Oct 20th	15%

Assignment 1: Asset-Based Community Development Exercise & Reflection (15%) - Sept 15th
Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 4, 5

Assignment Description:
Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) offers a relational and strengths-oriented approach to community engagement that centers the capacities, knowledge systems, and relationships already present in communities. Rather than beginning with deficit-based framings or professionalized problem-solving, this approach asks us to begin with listening, with reciprocity, and with trust in community self-determination. Developed by John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann, ABCD is rooted in anti-deficit thinking, participatory ethics, and community-led transformation. Its foundations resonate with many of

the theoretical frameworks we are exploring in this course which urge us to reimagine how we build relationships and engage in change work. This assignment invites you to deepen your understanding of ABCD as both a conceptual and practical approach. Through two asynchronous learning modules, you will engage in self-reflection, consider your existing and emerging relationships with communities, and begin applying theory to lived and local practice. Through this assignment, you will: 1) engage with ABCD as a relational, anti-deficit approach to community practice, 2) reflect on your positionality and relationship-building within community contexts, 3) identify insights related to trust, connection, and accountability, and 4) apply and connect course theory to practice through a situated, self-guided learning experience.

After completing Modules 1 and 2 from the City of Calgary's Asset-Based Community Development Toolkit (Please see required readings/materials for Sept 11th)*, download and complete the worksheet titled *"Taking Stock of Your Relationship with a Community"* found in Module 2. In addition to completing the worksheet, please complete a written reflection based on your learnings from the modules and activity. Your reflection should address the integration of course content and theoretical approaches into your practice-based insights. You are invited to reflect on what challenged, affirmed, or expanded your understanding of community work — particularly in relation to trust-building, presence, and relational ethics. It is expected that you will engage and integrate course learnings, content, and materials into this assignment of up to 500 words and include a reference list, citing sources used in APA 7th edition format.

Assessment Criteria
As you prepare for this assignment please consider how your submission:
- Reflects sincere engagement with the module activity and demonstrates thoughtful attention to relational contexts and your location within them.
- Offers critical and nuanced engagement with the learning experience, awareness of complexity, and consideration of practice implications.
- Thoughtfully draws from course concepts/materials to situate insights in relation to broader course themes.
- Demonstrates clarity, well-organized structure and formatting and adheres to APA 7 citational practice and word count.

Please submit your completed worksheet *and* written reflection with a reference list via D2L dropbox **by 11:59pm September 15th.**

Assignment 2: The Art of Community Practice: Enacting Theory through Intersectional Analysis (30%) – Sept 29th

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assignment Description:
Community events—whether teach-ins, town halls, organizing sessions, or collective gatherings—offer important entry points for observing how power, identity, and relational practice are navigated in lived contexts. This assignment invites you to attend and analyze a community event through an intersectional lens, considering how it reflects, resists, or reproduces structures of inclusion, exclusion, and belonging. In line with this course's emphasis on theory as lived praxis, this is not a technical critique or dispassionate evaluation, but a relational, situated practice of witnessing, reflecting, and naming how theory meets reality in the architectures of community life. You are asked to bring your full critical

curiosity and ethical presence to this work—attending not only to what happens (or not) in a space, but how, for whom, and why it matters. Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how multiple systems of power and identity (e.g., race, gender, class, disability, sexuality, age, immigration status) co-produce and contour lived experiences. In this assignment, intersectionality is taken up not only as an analytic tool, but as a practice of discernment—one that urges us to attend to complexity, accountability, and the conditions that shape community participation.

In this assignment you are asked to attend a community event (in-person or online) and analyze it using an intersectional and relational lens. Events can take various forms (e.g., town halls, community consultations, protests, organizing sessions, justice gatherings, community dialogues, public forums on particular issues, panels or roundtables, community celebrations, education/awareness sessions etc.) If you are uncertain whether an event is suitable for this assignment, please check in with me to discuss/explore further.

Drawing on your experience at the event and relevant course theories, write a 1200–1500 word analysis that integrates both observational insight and theoretical engagement. Your reflection should be grounded in the intersectional and theoretical frameworks encountered in this course (though of course not limited to them). To support your analysis, you are invited to draw on Section 3: "Scoping Projects for Inclusion and Accessibility" (pp. 55–72) from the *Building Trust and Relationships Beyond Inclusion* report. This section offers a set of interrelated considerations that can guide your reflections on accessibility, belonging, and participation. Your analysis should attend to the following five dimensions:

1) Representation and Meaningful Inclusion
2) Accessibility & Participation
3) Power, Facilitation, and Decision Making
4) Relational Climate and Conditions for Trust
5) Reflexivity and Positionality

A resource with questions/prompts will be provided on D2L to support your critical analysis. It is expected that this analytic reflection will integrate relevant course content, concepts, and materials. You are invited to draw on additional theoretical frameworks from the course to enrich your understanding and application of intersectionality as a framework for analysis. Use these theories not just to describe, but to deepen your insights into how power, identity, and community are shaped and experienced.

Assessment Criteria:
As you prepare for this assignment, please consider how your analytic reflection:
- Demonstrates thoughtful analysis of the five dimensions, with attentiveness to both visible and subtle forms of power, accessibility, inclusion, and belonging.
- Engages intersectionality as method and lens, articulating how multiple structures of identity and power interact, and exploring their implications in the community context.
- Draws meaningfully on relevant course theories, using them not only to describe but to interpret and deepen understanding of the event and its broader context.
- Attends to positionality and ethics, demonstrating self-awareness and accountability in how you show up as a participant and learner.
- Presents a clear, organized, and coherent analysis, demonstrating depth and nuanced thought, critical engagement, and scholarly care.

- Adheres to APA 7 formatting, including in-text citations and reference list, as well as the word limits for the assignment (1200–1500 words excluding references).

Please submit your assignment to the D2L dropbox **by 11:59 PM MST on Sept 29th**. I invite you to approach this assignment with curiosity, care, and commitment — not just as an intellectual exercise, but as an opportunity to inhabit theory as praxis for more equitable, accessible, and inclusive community practices.

Assignment 3: Building Otherwise: Theory-Informed Tools for Ethical Community Practice (Part A: 15%; Part B: 25%) – Oct 7th and 9th

Aligned Course Learning Outcomes : 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Assignment Description:
Theory is not a distant abstraction — it is a living orientation to the world. In community practice, theory helps us interpret, intervene, imagine otherwise, and stay accountable to the people and places we are in relationship with. This final assignment invites your group to engage in praxis by applying a selected theory or framework to a real-world community issue of your choosing. As a group, you will work collaboratively to select a **community issue** (e.g. food insecurity, health care access, houselessness, etc.) and engage a **critical theory or framework** (e.g., critical disability, abolition, queer theory, CRT, etc.) to shape both your analysis and your theoretical response. By the end of the first week of the course, groups of 3-4 (depending on final enrolment numbers) will be established. Your group must decide upon a community issue and theory by September 12th.

As a collective you are asked to critically analyze a community issue through a theoretical lens, explore how theory shapes community engagement, organizing, advocacy, and generate a concrete, theory-informed resource to support practice. This assignment invites both conceptual depth and grounded creativity. You are encouraged to think relationally and expansively: How does theory help you analyze the conditions and possibilities of the issue? How might it inform your orientation, decisions, and approaches to community work? What ethical and political commitments guide your practice?

This assignment unfolds in two interrelated parts: Part A: Theory-Informed Practice Guide (15%) and Part B: Group Presentation (25%):

Part A: Theory-Informed Practice Guide (15%)
Each group will create a 2-page resource or facilitation guide rooted in the theory you've chosen and the community issue you are addressing. This guide should be accessible and usable — imagine it as a living document that practitioners, organizers, or community members could draw on. Choose one of the following areas of practice to focus your guide: community engagement, community assessment, community mapping, community building, community organizing, activism, or advocacy.
Your guide should include:

- A brief framing of the issue and its significance
- Key principles, concepts, and/or tenets from your selected theory
- Practical applications or facilitation ideas that reflect the theory in action in relation to the selected area of practice
- Consideration of accessibility, safety, and ethical/relational care

Submission Guidelines:

Please post this guide in advance of your group's presentation on the respective D2L discussion board as a practice of collective knowledge building.

Part B: Group Presentation (25%)
Each group will have approximately 40 minutes to present (30 minutes presentation, 10 minutes discussion). As you prepare for this group presentation, please be attentive to the following components:

- Frame the Community Issue: Provide a clear overview of your selected issue, including its historical, structural, and justice-based dimensions. Who is most impacted, and how?
- Describe and Critically Appraise the Theory*:* What is the theory or framework? What are its core commitments, and what tensions or limitations should be named?
- Apply Theory to Practice: How does the theory shape your understanding of the issue? How might it inform community engagement, organizing, building, or accountability processes? What tensions or generative insights emerge when applying it to real-world contexts?
- Explanation of Resource*:* Present and guide the class through the 2-page theory-informed practice guide your group created. Explain how it connects to your issue and theoretical approach and demonstrate how/when it could be used in practice.
- Reflect on Relational and Ethical Dimensions: Discuss how your group's process, positionalities, or experiences shaped the work. What relational or ethical questions arose in your collaboration and enactment of theory?
- Facilitate Class Discussion: Pose 1–2 generative questions to the class to invite reflection on the relationship between theory and practice.

Assessment Criteria:
- Clearly articulates the community issue, with attention to structural, historical, and social justice dimensions.
- Demonstrates a clear and critical engagement with the selected theory or framework, connected to course concepts.
- Offers a strong, thoughtful analysis of how theory can guide concrete practices
- Guide is well-designed, clearly grounded in theory, and responsive to the selected issue. Demonstrates creativity, applicability, and theoretical integrity.
- Reflects critically on group process, power dynamics, and ethical tensions in enacting theory. Attends to relational responsibility.
- Demonstrates thoughtful, grounded facilitation, prompting deeper reflection and collective learning.
- Integrates literature effectively and cites all sources accurately in APA 7 format.

For Parts A and B of this assignment, it is expected that you will draw on a minimum of 8 sources, including at least 4 scholarly or peer-reviewed texts. The other 4 may include videos, blog posts, community resources, or organizational reports. Use APA 7 style for all in-text citations and references.

Submission Guidelines:
Your group will have approximately 40 minutes to present (30 minutes presentation, 10 minutes discussion). Please ensure that one member of your group submits Parts A and B to the D2L dropbox folder **by 11:59pm on the day of your group presentation on either October 7th or October 9th.**

Assignment 4: Relational Engagement Self-Assessment (15%) – Oct 20th
Aligned Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 5

Enacting theory towards social justice is a relational praxis that calls on us to make individual and collective commitments as we (re)envision the possibilities for a more liveable present and future. This course is grounded in relationality and reciprocity that asks us to respond and be response-able (Patel, 2016) to knowledge and one another. As part of this relational orientation, students will be expected to come prepared to engage in deep listening, and contribute to dialogues/activities by sharing insights, content, critiques, and connections to their field of practice. Engagement is gauged not *only* by the quantity of contributions, but also how students facilitate a collective space of learning by being mindful of how space/voice are used. This includes being thoughtful of how ideas are shared and held in ways that create the conditions for ethical spaces of engagement and collective care.

Recognizing that engagement and participation are animated in multiple ways, some more overt than others, you will be invited to reflect on and assess your own participation and engagement in the course. Please complete a 200-250 word reflection containing your self-assessed grade out of 15 marks. Additional criteria will be shared in class and on D2L to guide your self-assessment. Sources are to be cited using APA 7th edition format. *Please note that the final participation grade is determined by the instructor after review of student recommendation.* Assignments are to be submitted via D2L dropbox **by 11:59pm MST on October 20th.**

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE AND COURSE ENGAGEMENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be fully present and engaged in each class activities and discussions as part of their participation grade. Details are outlined in the assessment components section above. If you are unable to attend, please contact your instructor *prior* to class (if possible) to discuss alternative means of engagement.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Please submit all assignments electronically through their respective dropbox folder in D2L, unless otherwise indicated in the assignment descriptions. Written assignments should be submitted as a **Word document whenever possible** and labeled as follows: "Last Name_First Name_ Assignment Name" (e.g., Ladhani_Sheliza_Assignment Name). **Assignments are to be submitted by 11:59pm on their due date.** Please note it is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the correct version is submitted.

MISSED OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Late assignments will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor. A request for an extension should be sent to the instructor at least **24 hours prior** to the assignment due date. Assignments that are submitted after the deadline or negotiated extension date, without prior arrangements with the instructor, may be penalized with **a grade reduction (of 5% per day- including weekends and holidays)**. There is a 7-day maximum limit by which students who have

not requested for an extension can submit their assignments. **No assignments will be accepted after the 7-day limit.**

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

All assignments will be assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented and referenced in APA 7th edition format. If you need writing support, please connect with the Student Success Centre.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is expected that all work submitted in assignments is the student's own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. Students are reminded that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, has serious consequences, as set out in the University Calendar.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

Whenever new tools and technologies are introduced in society, particularly at the scale of Artificial Intelligence in contemporary times, they shake things up and bring forward important ethical considerations. Given that this course explores theories of/toward social justice at multiple scales, including ecological justice and planetary health, it is important to consider the impact of AI and search engine use on our environment and natural world. Before proceeding with the permitted use of AI (as outlined below), please be considerate of the ways you choose to engage with AI.

Some Use Permitted
In this course, you are expected to complete and draw upon the required readings, learning activities and additional research to complete the assignments. Students may use generative AI tools in this course in accordance with the instructions and guidelines outlined for each course assignment or assessment. Your approved use of AI tools must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include: 1) what tool(s) were used; 2) how they were used; 3) how the results from AI were incorporated into the submitted work; 4) what you did to verify the AI generated results; 5) what you did to extend your work beyond the AI generated contents; and 6) your critical reflection on ethical use of AI tools. **Failure to cite the use of AI generated content in an assignment and use of generative AI outside assessment or assignment guidelines will be considered a breach of academic integrity and subject to Academic Misconduct procedures.** You are ultimately accountable for the work you submit.

GRADING

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately to pass the course. The University of Calgary Graduate Grading System and Faculty of Social Work Percentage Conversion will be used. This grading system overrides the grading system in D2L. Final grades that are within 0.5% of the next letter grade will be rounded up.

Grade	Grade Point	Description	Percentage Range
A+	4.0	Outstanding performance	95-100
A	4.0	Excellent performance	95-100
A-	3.7	Very good performance	90-94
B+	3.3	Good performance	85-89
B	3.0	Satisfactory performance. **Note**: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable **average** that a graduate student must maintain throughout the programme as computed at the end of each year of their program.	80-84
B-	2.7	Minimum pass. **Note**: Students who accumulate two grades of **"B-"** or lower can be required by the faculty to withdraw from the programme regardless of the grade point average.	75-79
C+	2.3	All grades of "C+" or lower are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.	70-74
C	2.00		65-69
C-	1.70		60-64
D+	1.30		55-59
D	1.00		50-54
F	0.00		Below 50
CR		Completed Requirements. Carries no weight in calculating the grade point average. This will be noted in the calendar description as "Not Included in GPA" where applicable.	

COURSE EXPERIENCE FEEDBACK

At the close of each term, students can provide feedback on their academic learning experience in their courses, including their instructors, through university-wide online surveys. They will receive an email from UCalgary Course Experience Surveys with direct links to their current course surveys, or they can access within the D2L course shell. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor. They are expected to provide comments that are consistent with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct, the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2023) and the Canadian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (2024).

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

Please see D2L for additional readings.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

Professional Conduct

As members of the University community, students and staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary's Code of Conduct. They are also expected to demonstrate professional behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. Consistent with the aims of the Social Work Program and the University of Calgary, all students and staff are expected to respect, appreciate, and encourage expression of diverse world views and perspectives; to offer their fellow community members unconditional respect and constructive feedback; and to contribute to building learning communities that promote individual and collective professional and personal growth. While critical thought and debate is valued in response to concepts and opinions shared in class, feedback must always be focused on the ideas or opinions shared and not on the person who has stated them.

Students and staff are expected to model behaviours in class, including evaluations of teaching and learning, that are consistent with our professional values and ethics, as outlined in the Canadian Association for Social Workers, Code of Ethics (2024) and the Alberta College of Social Work Standards of Practice (2023).

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS). SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. Please refer to the full policy on Student Accommodations.

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human participants – _including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – _must have the approval of the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board or the Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required. Some courses will include assignments that involve conducting research with human participants; in these cases, the instructor will have applied for and received ethics approval for the course assignment.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please refer to the [Integrity and Conduct](#) section in the University of Calgary Calendar.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Copyright Legislation

All students who use materials protected by copyright are expected to comply with the University of Calgary policy on [Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright](#) and requirements of the [Copyright Act](#) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. [Private information](#) related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's [Sexual and Gender-based Violence Policy](#) guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances.

Other Important Information

Please visit the [Registrar's website](#) for additional important information on the following:
- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/ Assembly Points
- Safewalk