Diversity Assignment

For this paper, you will choose to focus on a certain population that is different from your own, that you have limited knowledge about, and that is not part of the dominant culture. You may choose to focus on (1) racial/ethnic diversity issues, (2) gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender issues or (3) issues facing people with physical disabilities. This assignment is designed to allow you an opportunity to hear the "voice" of someone who is different than you in some way and to explore the issues related to social work practice with diverse groups. You will also engage in critical thinking about how you are impacted as a result of completing this paper.

Through completion of this assignment, you will demonstrate increased sensitivity to and awareness of human diversity. You must learn as much about the group you select as possible, concentrating on the information that would be helpful to social workers working with this group.

Information used in this paper must be from all of the following sources:
- Part A: Library/Academic research
- Part B: Personal, face-to-face interview with a member of the selected group
- Part C: Self-reflection/Critical thinking

Part A: Library/Academic research

The first part of the paper will be based on library/academic research. You are required to use at least two library/academic resources for this section. The resources must be current (published within the past 10 years). Appropriate resources for this section include books or research journal articles available in an academic library (online copies may be used).

The course textbook is not considered as one of the two library/academic resources; however, it may also be used and cited. Other resources, such as newspapers, websites and non-academic books may be used and cited; however, these will not be considered library/academic resources. If other resources are also used, they must be from a reputable source (Wikipedia and other non-research-based websites may not be used).

This section must address the following:

1. A brief background of the chosen group.
   Ideas for this section may include:
   - How is the group portrayed in the media?
   - What are generalizations or stereotypes that could be or are detrimental to the group?
   - How has the group evolved through history? (Such as how the civil rights era changed perceptions of the group)
   - Discuss how hate crimes have affected your chosen group.

2. What are some of the social issues that social workers should be aware of when working with this population?

3. How are these issues relevant to social work practice?
Part B: Personal Interview

The second part of the paper will be based on a personal, face-to-face interview. To ensure confidentiality, no real names will be disclosed in your paper. Refer to the interviewee as Jamie Smith throughout your paper. The following are three options/related questions to focus on for this paper; in addition, you may include any other questions/discussions that you and the interviewee have regarding the issues. Your goal of the interview is to gain an understating of the interviewee's insights/perspectives as a member of their minority group. You will summarize the results of the interview rather than including an account of the dialogue between you and the interviewee. Choose one of the following groups:

Option A.: Racial/Ethnic Diversity Issues

Interview someone who identifies as a member of a different racial or ethnic minority group than you are. Ask him/her the following questions:

- How do you identify yourself ethnically or racially?
- Do you recall when you first realized you were a member of your racial/ethnic group?
- What have been your positive and negative experiences to membership in your group?
- What are some cultural characteristics of your group, in your opinion?
- What experiences of discrimination have you had, if any?
- What are some of the social issues impacting people from your racial/ethnic minority group, in your opinion?

Option B.: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender Issues

Interview someone who identifies as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender person. Ask him/her the following questions:

- How would you characterize your sexual orientation/identity and gender identity & expression?
- When did you first become aware of your lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender identity?
- What was your reaction and the reaction of others? (family, friends, coworkers, etc.).
- How would you characterize the social response to your sexual orientation/identity and gender identity & expression?
- What experiences of discrimination have you had, if any?
- What are some of the social issues impacting gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender people, in your opinion?

Option C.: Issues Facing People with Physical Disabilities

Interview someone who identifies as a person with a physical disability. Ask him/her the following questions:
How would you characterize your disability?
When and how was it first evident to you that you had a disability?
What was your reaction and the reaction of others? (family, friends, coworkers, etc.).
How would you characterize the social response to your disability?
What experiences of discrimination have you had, if any?
What are some of the social issues impacting people with disabilities, in your opinion?

Part C: Self-Reflection/Critical Thinking

The third part of the paper will be based on your personal critical thinking and reflecting about the experience of conducting the interview. You may use first person tense in this section only (the use of "I"). This section should focus on the meaning of the interview experience and insight you gained as a result of completing this paper. Personal opinions about the group you chose are not to be part of this paper. Address the following questions:

- What was this interview like for you as a person?
- As a future social worker, how did the interview benefit you?
- Using the Strengths Perspective, identify the interviewee’s strengths/resiliencies.
- What is your reaction to the interviewee’s experiences?
- Looking back on the interview, would you do anything differently? Why or why not?

You will have a brief introduction and conclusion paragraph for the paper. This paper (5-6 pages, double spaced, Arial 12-point font, 1" margins) will be graded on level of critical thinking, thoroughness, organization, and presentation (i.e. grammar, spelling, clarity, etc.). This assignment relies largely on the personal experience of others and your assessment. Consequently, the assignment will be graded on your ability to effectively convey the results of your research and of the interview, and to critically analyze the implications of the results.

You will use APA citation style; appropriate citations MUST be used in the paper. All facts, statements, ideas, assertions, etc that are based on information from a source other than your own mind must be cited. Failure to cite appropriately is plagiarism and will NOT be tolerated. If you have questions about citations contact the free Writing Center on campus in Curtain 127, phone: 414-229-4339.

Late papers will not be accepted. Papers MUST be submitted in the D2L dropbox prior to the beginning of class on the due date. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct version of your paper is submitted on D2L. Technical difficulties will not be an acceptable excuse for a late assignment so be sure to give yourself adequate time in case you should have a technical problem. This assignment will comprise 25% of your final grade.
Diversity Assignment Resources

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center: walk-in, phone, or email
Location: Union WC-89
Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday — 9:00 am - 7:00 pm, Monday & Thursday — 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Friday — 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Website: www.lgbt.uwm.edu
Phone: 414-229-4116
Email: uwm-lgbt@uwm.edu peerout@uwm.edu

Roberto Hernandez Center: walk-in or schedule appointment via phone
Location: Bolton Hall 183
Website: http://www4.uwm.edu/rhc/
Phone: 414-229-6156
Email: rhc@uwm.edu

Southeast Asian-American Student Services: prefers scheduling an appointment
Location: Bolton Hall 160D
Hours: Monday - Friday — 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Website: http://www4.uwm.edu/letscl/studentservices/saass/index.cfm
Phone: (414) 229-5282
Email: dao@uwm.edu

American Indian Student Services: go in to schedule an appointment
Location: Bolton Hall 195
Website: http://www4.uwm.edu/aiss/
Phone: (414) 229-5880
Email: joylogan@uwm.edu

For additional help writing papers contact:

UWM Writing Center
Location: Curtin Hall 127
Hours: Monday-Wednesday — 9:00 am - 7:00 pm, Thursday — 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, Friday — 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Website: http://www4.uwm.edu/writingcenter/
Phone: (414) 229-4339
Email: writing@uwm.edu

Student Success Center
Location: Bolton 192
Hours: Monday: 9am-5pm, Tuesday: 9am-7pm, Wednesday: 9am-7pm, Thursday: 9am-5pm, Friday: 9am-3pm
Phone: (414) 229-5385
Email: pmc@uwm.edu
Website: http://www4.uwm.edu/ssc/