

**Multicultural Foundation**  
**SWRK 275 Study in Guatemala**  
**Briar Cliff University**  
**January 2014**  
**Course Instructor:**  
**Liz Rembold, Assistant Professor of Social Work**

**Liz's contact information:**  
**Office Heelan 319, Phone 279.5458**  
[elizabeth.rembold@briarcliff.edu](mailto:elizabeth.rembold@briarcliff.edu)  
**Cell: 605.661.0165**

## **SYLLABUS FOR SWRK 275**

**MULTICULTURAL FOUNDATION LEARNING OBJECTIVES** – As a result of successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe how people share space, and interact on a day-to-day basis, with people who are different from themselves.

This learning objective will be demonstrated through a written reflection of the observed values, traditions, and customs of Guatemalan citizens (indigenous people, Ladinos, etc.) and described values, traditions, and customs of Guatemalan Americans in Siouland.

2. Understand differences in privilege, power and power perception between diverse groups in a shared space.

This learning objective will be demonstrated through two written and verbal analyses of an academic paper on privilege, power and power perception – one at the beginning of the course and one at the end of the course.

3. Recognize historical basis for development of differential power and privilege between diverse groups.

This learning objective will be demonstrated through a written analysis and reflection of the student's experiences in Guatemala, an interview with a Guatemalan American, the reading of the McIntosh article on privilege, and the reading of the Menchú biography.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** - This multicultural service-learning course begins with two weeks in Guatemala, including the following:

**Week One (January 4– 9) – FOCUSING ON CULTURE AND LANGUAGE:** The first week of the course is reserved for intensive one-on-one Guatemalan culture and Spanish study. Each student will work individually with a Guatemalan language instructor who will develop a learning plan based upon the student's level of Spanish expertise (beginner to advanced). Instruction is provided in a comfortable setting at a language school for six hours a day. Breaks include food and beverages and an hour at noon to return to the host family for lunch. The curriculum includes field trips to study aspects of the culture and language in Antigua and the surrounding area.

**Weekend Multicultural Studies (January 10 – 11) – FOCUSING ON INDIGENOUS CULTURES:** The weekend between week one and week two is reserved for group travel and study of indigenous cultures around Lake Atitlán and Chichicastenango. The excursion includes exploring and shopping at Guatemala's largest "mercado" (market).

**Week two (January 12 – 17) - FOCUSING ON SERVICE, PRIVILEGE, POWER AND POWER PERCEPTION:** A volunteer service learning experience with the Asociación Nuestros Ahijados (ANA), also known as The God's Child Project, gives students an opportunity to work directly with children and families and to explore issues of privilege, power and power perception in Guatemala. One of the service projects will be the construction of a house with a poor family. The house will be fully constructed in three days. Students will also explore cultural, educational, health, economic, and social justice issues through hands-on service work, volunteering in social service agencies (food distributions, caring for malnourished children, etc.), interviewing a social worker from the God's Child Project and daily debriefing of learning experiences relative to privilege, power and power perception.

**Week Three (January 19)** –Students will spend one day completing the course by interviewing a Guatemalan American living in Siouxland and writing a reflective paper focusing on the student’s multicultural experiences and learnings about privilege, power and power perception between diverse groups in Guatemala and in Siouxland (the tri-state area around Sioux City, Iowa)

**TEXTS:** The following three texts are required reading before traveling to Guatemala. The Menchú text is easy to read and provides an excellent description of experiences common to many Indian communities in Latin America today. Menchú won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 for this autobiography.

- Menchú, Rigoberta. (1984) *I Rigoberta Menchú – An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. New York, NY: Verso
- McIntosh, P. (1990) White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom* (July/August 1989), 9-10; repr. in *Independent School*, 49. [https://www.isr.umich.edu/home/divers24\\_y/resources/white-privilege.pdf](https://www.isr.umich.edu/home/divers24_y/resources/white-privilege.pdf)
- Atkinson, P. (2012) *The God’s Child Project Service Team Handbook*. Bismarck, ND: God’s Child Project.

**OTHER RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

- Arias, Arturo (2001) *The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. (The Arias text provides chapters that very clearly present the varied perspectives on the controversy which was created by the publication of David Stoll’s book, *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*. The Arias text includes contributions and responses from David Stoll, on the Menchú book. The short chapter format makes this book very readable.)
- Coatsworth, J.H., Nuccio, R.A. & Kinzer, S. (1982) *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Hannan, Monica. (2007) *The Dream Maker* (ISBN: 1-893757-59-8) – available used through amazon.com and also on God’s Child Project web site
- Stoll, David (1999) *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Before going to Guatemala read the God’s Child Project Service Team Handbook and the Peggy McIntosh article on power and privilege and write a two page reflection on personal power and privilege.
- While in Guatemala develop a daily journal of reactions to experiences in Guatemala, including a focus on personal growth and development of multicultural knowledge. The journal may be online or hand written.
- Interview a Guatemalan American after return to United States and incorporate information from the interview in the assigned final paper.
- Develop a 5-7 page final reflection paper uploaded to Angel by 6:00 pm, January 21. The paper will include key points demonstrating the three learning objectives of the course and including references to the Menchú biography, the McIntosh paper, the interview of a Guatemalan American, the student’s personal journals, the Atkinson service team handbook, and other resources.
- Complete a self-assessment of professional demeanor, based on the grading rubric.

**ASSESSMENT OF REQUIREMENTS OF THIS COURSE:** Assessment will be based upon grading rubrics for each of the assignments and the following points:

Reflection paper (pre service learning trip)	20
Reflection paper (post service learning trip)	100
Daily completion of journal that includes thoughts about multiculturalism, privilege, power and power perceptions between groups	40
Culturally responsive demeanor (self and instructor assessment)	40
	<b><u>200 Total</u></b>

**GRADING SCALE ON WRITTEN WORK AS OUTLINED ABOVE:**

A = 94 – 100 percent

A- = 90 – 93 percent

B+ = 87 – 89 percent

B = 84 – 86 percent

B- = 80 – 83 percent

C+ = 77 – 79 percent

C = 74 – 76 percent

C- = 70 – 73 percent

D+ = 67 – 69 percent

D = 60 – 66 percent

F = 59 or less