Post-Graduate Certificate Course Program in Psychoanalytic Social Work Practice

Fall 2024 – Spring 2025

Handbook

Course Developed by Beth Kita, PhD
in collaboration with Tina Adkins, PhD
January 2022
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Certificate Program in Psychoanalytic Social Work Practice

In this yearlong, postgraduate program, clinicians, social workers and community practitioners will learn to deepen their work by using core psychoanalytic ideas to think about themselves, their clients, and the settings in which they practice. This unique program centers on the practice of social work – its values related to social justice and racial equity, commitment to working in agency/community-based settings, and person-in-environment perspective - and emphasizes the ways in which psychoanalytic theory and concepts can help social workers to reflect more critically and meaningfully on their work. Upon completing the first year of didactic coursework and case conferences, students will receive a certificate in psychoanalytic social work practice.

The curriculum is divided into five modules, each with five class meetings, and are taught by one or two instructors. Each module emphasizes salient aspects of psychoanalytic theories that are helpful to social work practice. The five modules are:

- Critical social work and psychoanalysis – Reckoning with our roots
- The inner worlds of individuals and groups
- Agency and organizational life
- The sociopolitical realm
- Surviving and thriving in social work

Contact Us

See the Sue Fairbanks Psychoanalytic Academy website and sign up for our newsletter for program updates.

For general and application inquiries, please contact SFPA Director, Tina Adkins at tina.adkins@austin.utexas.edu or SFPA@utexas.edu.
Curriculum Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Module I: Critical social work and psychoanalysis – Reckoning with our roots</th>
<th>Module II: The inner worlds of individuals and groups</th>
<th>Module III: Agency and organizational life</th>
<th>Module IV: The sociopolitical realm</th>
<th>Module V: Surviving and thriving in social work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Emphasis In this module, students will learn about the historical roots of both social work and psychoanalysis, and how both have been used to advance radical ideas related to humanity and justice as well as to provide the tools of resistance to such ideas.</td>
<td>This module will focus on exploring psychoanalytic ideas related to the internal lives of individuals and groups. Holding in mind the historical frameworks of psychoanalysis and social work, students will be introduced to various perspectives from attachment, developmental, and relational theoretical perspectives.</td>
<td>This module will enable students to apply psychoanalytic ideas to organizational life, agency practice, and community settings. Students will learn about the ways in which systems can often reenact the very problems that they purport to resolve, and how social workers can better navigate them.</td>
<td>In this module, the focus will be thinking together about the sociopolitical conditions in the US, and exploring the unique perspective that psychoanalytic theories offer related to the perniciousness of racism, whiteness, economic inequality, and politics.</td>
<td>This module will enable students to explore the core psychoanalytic concepts of transference and countertransference, and grapple with how to “make use” of such dynamics to advance clinical practice, as well as the risks for burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and vicarious trauma that can result from such inherently relational work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Key Ideas • “Radical roots” of psychoanalysis and social work • Compromises/losses of aligning with medical model/assimilationism • Reckoning with complicity with oppressive systems, and efforts to overturn them</td>
<td>• The role of the unconscious • Anxiety and defense • Core concepts from object relations, attachment theory, trauma theory, relational theory</td>
<td>• Agency and organizational life • Clinical work within systems – holding environments, impingements, etc. • Traumatic reenactment • Social system anxieties and defenses</td>
<td>• Cultural and normative unconscious • Neoliberalism and racial capitalism • Whiteness from psychoanalytic perspective • Psychoanalysis and social work and reparations, apologies, reckoning • Power and privilege</td>
<td>• Transference • Countertransference • Burnout, compassion fatigue • Secondary traumatic stress • Vicarious trauma • Moral injury • Posttraumatic growth • Praxis/radical change</td>
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<td>11-15</td>
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Course Structure

The Fall 2024 program will consist of 25 class meetings (50 hours of learning) over the course of one academic year, beginning in September 2024 and ending in April 2025. The cohort is limited to 12 students to ensure ample time for class discussion, case examples, and group reflection. CEUs will be provided upon completion of each module.

Faculty

The Sue Fairbanks Psychoanalytic Academy works with a range of talented, skilled, and innovative faculty from around the country whose experience has been related to applied psychoanalysis, clinical social work, and using theory to think about broader sociopolitical issues such as those involving race, gender, power, etc. The Certificate Program relies heavily on faculty who are aligned with and enthusiastic about the practice of clinical social work from a psychodynamic perspective, and who are committed to helping clinicians to make use of theoretical concepts to advance their practices on behalf of their clients and patients. See our website for current and past faculty profiles.
Student Profile

We welcome all applicants and encourages anyone who 1) is practicing as a clinician or social worker/case manager in a social work or related field and 2) has an MSW or related graduate degree to join us. This program is designed for clinicians, clinical case managers, and those working in a range of settings – private practice, community mental health, etc. We believe that as social workers are increasingly called upon to do more with less, it is crucial that we offer opportunities for social workers to think both meaningfully and critically about our work, and that psychoanalytic ideas can help us in all aspects of our work.

Continuing Education Credits

Each course module qualifies for 10 Continuing Education Credits (CEU) hours in Social Work, a total of 50 CEU hours for the entire course. A certificate will be available for each module, a total of 5 CEU certificates. Students must be current on course tuition payments, successfully complete each module and submit the respective post-module evaluation survey to receive each CEU certificate.

The Office of Professional Development at The University of Texas at Austin Steve Hicks School of Social Work provides continuing education in accordance with the criteria and standards of the Texas Board of Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists and Licensed Psychologists under Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 34. § 781.509. Complaints about this program may be made to TSBSWE, 1801 Congress Ave., Ste. 7. 300 Austin, TX 78701, 512-305-7700, 800-821-3205, bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-socialworker-examiners/.
**Tuition**

Tuition for the 2024-2025 certificate course will be $2,250. Upon acceptance into the program, a non-refundable deposit of $100 is required to secure a spot. The deposit is applied to the total cost of tuition.

**Discount for Non-Profit/Public Service Employees**

Up to 4 students per course who work full-time for a community/non-profit or public service agency may qualify for a 30% discounted tuition rate of $1,575. Examples of qualifying employment include but are not limited to Child Protective Services, community mental health centers, homeless or veterans’ agencies, etc. Applicants must verify employment and will be reviewed for approval by order of application date.

**Payments**

Tuition may be paid in one or two installments. First or full tuition payments are due two weeks prior to the first class, on August 28, 2024. Second installment payments are due on January 6, 2025. Installment payments must be current in order for students to proceed through the course modules as scheduled.

**Refunds**

The $100 deposit is non-refundable. Tuition is fully refundable (less the deposit) until the first day of class, September 11, 2024. Tuition is 100% non-refundable after the course begins.
Admissions

Timeline

For the Fall 2024 cohort, applications will be invited, reviewed and accepted according to the following timeline:

- April – May 2024: Program is Advertised
- May – July 2024: Applications are Accepted
- July – August 2024: Applications are Reviewed, Applicants are Notified
- August 2024: Program Details are Finalized
- September 2024: Certificate Program Begins

Application Criteria

1. Current practice in social work or social work-related field (may include clinical work and/or casework)
2. Graduation from a Masters or Doctoral program in a related field
3. Ability to be in a diverse working group

Application Selection

We are looking for diverse cohort and will selecting applicants from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and environments. We hope this variety will enrich the learning experience and create an environment in which classmates can learn from one another.

Proposed Class Dates

Classes will take place online on Wednesdays from 6-8pm CST.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>Module 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>9/18/24</td>
<td>10/30/24</td>
<td>1/15/25</td>
<td>2/19/25</td>
<td>4/9/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>9/25/24</td>
<td>11/6/24</td>
<td>1/22/25</td>
<td>2/26/25</td>
<td>4/16/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class 5</td>
<td>10/16/24</td>
<td>11/20/24</td>
<td>2/5/25</td>
<td>3/12/25</td>
<td>4/30/25</td>
</tr>
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Expectations for Student and Faculty Engagement

Students and faculty will take turns actively listening and speaking in discussion and be considerate and respectful of others’ ideas, especially in relation to difficult topic areas. Offensive language or behavior will not be tolerated and are subject to dismissal from the program without refund or payment, including but not limited to racism, sexism, bigotry, and aggression.
Attendance

Students will attend class regularly, having completed assigned readings before class. When an absence is necessary, students should email a notification to the module faculty member and program coordinator. The program coordinator will make the class recording available and the student will make best efforts to view the recording and complete all assigned readings prior to the next class session.

If a student is absent from a module two or more times, or accrues three or more absences from the entire course, SFPA staff and faculty may call a conference with the student to discuss any related needs, expectations and course standing.

In the event that a faculty member must cancel a class session, SFPA Staff will either secure a substitute faculty member for the session, schedule a separate makeup session, or shift and extend course dates to accommodate a makeup session.

Class Recordings

Class sessions will be automatically recorded using the SFPA Zoom account. Recordings will be stored and accessible to SFPA staff and faculty only for internal reference and quality purposes. If class recordings are considered for any other purpose, SFPA Staff will obtain written permission from students prior to external use.

Application

Applications will be received via the SFPA website and include the following fields and questions. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are optional. The purpose of gathering this information is to ensure that class cohorts are, where possible, representative of the range of diverse identities among practitioners, clients, and settings. Applicants needing accommodations to complete the online application may contact Program Coordinator Lauren Bledsoe at lauren.bledsoe@austin.utexas.edu.

*If your current primary practice is through full-time non-profit or public sector employment, and you would like to apply for the discounted tuition, you will be asked to provide your employer’s name and contact information, your position title, and your work email address.

Demographic and Education Information

1. Name
2. *If you prefer to share your pronouns, please do so here*
3. Phone number
4. Email
5. Mailing address
6. Age*
7. Race/Ethnicity*
8. Gender*
9. Degree(s)
10. Granting Institution(s)
11. Year(s) of graduation(s)
12. Area of study/focus (if applicable)
13. Current Licensure (if applicable)
14. Resume / Curriculum Vitae (upload)
Social Work Practice Experience

1. Please describe your current practice (client population, setting, role, etc.).

2. Please describe your social work/social work-related experience, and share what has been most satisfying, what has been most challenging. Also talk briefly about your reasons for being in this field, and anything else that seems important to share.

3. In a few paragraphs, please describe your interest in this program, e.g., your learning goals, how you think the program might help you to achieve them, etc.

4. The SFPA prioritizes inclusivity and belonging, and works to ensure that all participants in this program arrive with a commitment to mutual respect, an openness to learning, and a willingness to be in dialogues about topics that can be emotionally demanding. Please describe your experience of being in groups, how you plan to address difficult topics as they emerge, and your commitment to participating in this program in a way that honors the range of experiences among students.

Commitment and Accommodations

1. This program depends in large part on students meeting consistently and developing their capacity as a thinking/reflecting group. Is there anything that you anticipate interfering with your ability to commit to attending meetings every week, and arriving prepared having read the assigned papers?

2. If you have any accommodation needs in terms of Zoom meetings, accessing assigned papers (which you will receive electronically), or participating in this format, please describe them here.

Curriculum Details

Module I: Critical social work and psychoanalysis – Reckoning with our roots (Class meetings 1-5)

Course Description

In this module, students will explore the historical roots of both social work and psychoanalysis, and consider the ways in which both have been used to advance radical ideas related to humanity and justice as well as to provide the tools of resistance to such ideas. These class meetings will provide students with an opportunity to get to know each other, develop a foundation for thinking about fundamental ideas in social work and psychoanalysis from a critical perspective, and begin to grapple with them together as a cohort.

Learning Objectives

- Identify key social, historical, political, and cultural factors that contextualized the development of US social work and psychoanalysis
- Examine the ways in which power can operate in social work and psychoanalysis to pathologize and marginalize particular groups of people in the US
- Explore the ways in which social work and psychoanalysis have been used to advance radical ideals related to social justice, equality, and equity
Teaching Notes

• Review the social, cultural, and historical roots of US social work and psychoanalysis
• Explore the “radical roots” of psychoanalysis – talking cure, role of the unconscious, idea of anxiety and defense – as well as role in pathologizing individuals, groups, etc., and alignment with medical model and the “radical roots” of social work in context of whiteness, white women, paternalism, etc.
• Consider including Foucault/disciplinary power, Bourdieu/symbolic capital, etc. to help students better reflect on their power as social workers as well as how to understand evidence based/RCT models and psychodynamic interventions
• Explore current efforts in both fields to “decolonize”, acknowledge/repair harm, etc.
• Focus on setting the stage for thinking critically about psychoanalysis and social work throughout the course so that useful ideas can be made use of and harmful ones can be reworked, especially relative to students’ differing identities in terms of race, gender, gender identity, etc.

Suggested Key Readings


Module II: The inner worlds of individuals and groups (Class meetings 6-10)

Course Description

In this module, students will dive into psychoanalytic ideas about the internal lives of individuals and groups. Holding in mind the historical frameworks of psychoanalysis and social work, students will be introduced to various perspectives from attachment, developmental, and relational theoretical perspectives. The classes in this module will give students a chance to learn about a range of theorists and their frameworks as they apply to the practice of clinical social work with individuals across the lifespan in their sociocultural contexts.

Learning Objectives

• Define core psychoanalytic ideas such as the unconscious, anxiety, defense, internal objects, and attachment strategies
• Apply developmental theories to individuals and groups
• Conceptualize ideas of health, suffering, trauma, and wellness within a sociocultural context
Teaching Notes

• Emphasize core concepts from object relations (ie, mourning and melancholia, Klein, Winnicott, Bion, etc.), relational theory and attachment theory
• Apply them to social work relationships with a variety of clients in a variety of settings via case examples
• Explore core concepts from trauma theory – anxiety, defense, attachment trauma, reenactment
• Focus on mapping “internal world” of individuals from a psychoanalytic perspective as it relates to social work practice so that students can start to hold in mind the intrapsychic lives of their clients and how they interact with their own in their social work practice
• Emphasize concepts that are useful to social workers in their everyday practices (v a “comparative theory” type of course)

Suggested Key Readings


Module III: Agency and organizational life (Class meetings 11-15)

Course Description

In this module, students will focus on the application of psychoanalytic ideas to organizational life, agency practice, and settings such as those in community mental health where social workers often practice. These classes will enable students to better explore and understand the ways in which systems can often reenact very problems that they purport to resolve, and how social workers can better navigate them. This module will also expose students to a rich history of psychoanalytic thought about systems and organizational change.

Learning Objectives

• Identify characteristics of a variety of social work practice settings, including those in the private, public, and community spheres
• Analyze aspects of agency and organizational life from a psychoanalytic perspective
• Explore the role of traumatic reenactment in systems of care/social work
Teaching notes

- Build upon previous module’s ideas related to attachment, trauma, object relations and use them to think about agency life – holding in mind that for social workers, the agency/system dynamics are often harder than the clinical work itself
- Emphasize concepts, papers, examples that really demonstrate how psychoanalytic ideas can be applied to organizational levels of analysis
- Explore “evidence-based treatments” in more depth, and their relationship to the medical model and capitalism/racial capitalism
- This is a chance for students to consolidate the learning from the previous module and extend it to the environments in which they practice

Suggested Key Readings


Module IV: The sociopolitical realm (Class meetings 16-20)

Course Description

In this module, students will think together about the sociopolitical conditions in the United States, and explore the unique perspective that psychoanalytic theories offer related to the perniciousness of racism, whiteness, economic inequality, and politics. These classes will enable to students to deepen their understanding of how psychoanalytic ideas can be applied to culture and society, how developmental theories are always situated in this broader context, and what psychoanalytic theory offers in terms of working towards social change.
Learning Objectives

• Describe the ways in which psychoanalysis can be used to explain racism, sexism, transphobia and other forms of othering
• Apply concepts such as projection, projective identification, dissociation, and melancholy to the problems of race and racism
• Utilize psychoanalytic ideas to understand sociopolitical polarization and its implications for social work practice

Teaching Notes

• Continue to build on those core psychoanalytic concepts, and in this module, apply them to thinking about race, class, gender, whiteness, etc.
• Help students to grapple with both the conscious and unconscious drivers of inequality
• Explore the idea of othering and its intrapsychic benefits
• Use psychoanalysis to connect “internal worlds” with external ones, and explore how the unconscious is also a cultural one
• Use this module to help the cohort reflect on their positionalities, differing experiences of these broader dynamics

Suggested Key Readings


Module V: Surviving and thriving in social work (Class meetings 21-25)

Course Description

In this module, students will explore the core psychoanalytic concepts of transference and countertransference, and how to “make use” of such dynamics to advance their clinical practice, as well as the risks for burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and vicarious trauma that can result from such inherently relational work. These classes will also provide students a chance to reflect on their experience together over the course of the year, and to imagine their next professional steps.
Learning Objectives

• Apply concepts of transference and countertransference to clinical cases/practice
• Define the psychological and emotional risks of relational work to clinicians/providers
• Name strategies for mitigating burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and vicarious traumatization

Teaching Notes

• All roads lead here! This module emphasizes, again, how crucial relationships are in social work, how they can be supported or undermined by the systems in which social workers practice, and how they are both a source of satisfaction and stress to social workers
• Explore countertransference as something that can be made use of – not something to be avoided
• Help students to reflect on transference and the power they have (whether they want to or not) as well as the ways that this is influenced by race, gender, etc.
• Provide psychoeducation with regard to secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, etc as well as practices/strategies social workers can use to mitigate them
• Help students to think about their experience of the course, their learning edges, etc.

Suggested Key Readings