

Colonnade Program Course Proposal: Explorations Category
Department of Diversity & Community Studies

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1. What course does the department plan to offer in *Explorations*?

ICSR 200: Introduction to Social Justice

- a. **Which subcategory are you proposing for this course?** Social and Behavioral Sciences

2. How will this course meet the specific learning objectives of the appropriate subcategory? Please address all of the learning outcomes listed for the appropriate subcategory.

ICSR 200 will address the following learning outcomes:

1. *Demonstrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.*

In ICSR 200 Introduction to Social Justice, students will use theories and tools from the social and behavioral sciences to study social justice and the material conditions of oppression. The course requires students to analyze and contextualize the concepts, vocabulary and strategies of social justice, including individual action, policy, advocacy, and collective action. Since the scholarship on social justice crosses disciplinary boundaries, the course utilizes materials from differing disciplines and interdisciplines. It introduces students to many social and behavioral concepts, including social construction, institutionalized oppression, empathy, normativity and internalized oppression. Students will gain a background in “intersectional theory” as a tool for understanding the complex, dispersed, overlapping workings of power that scaffold oppression. Additionally, students will analyze one of the central tenets of “critical legal theory,” that the law has been one of the most hostile venues for the articulation of multiple, intersecting subjectivities.

2. *Apply knowledge, theories, and research methods, including ethical conduct, to analyze problems pertinent to at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.*

ICSR 200 introduces students to social justice theories and practices as they relate to specific cultural and historical contexts. The course’s broad exploration of social justice enables the development of the analytical tools and information necessary to assess injustice in its multiple forms. The underlying social and behavioral theories related to access, agency, oppression, power, and privilege form the foundational bedrock of the course. ICSR 200 engages students in discussion and critical analysis and helps them develop skills to compare the overlapping yet distinct structures of power that require both independent and joint assessment. Students evaluate the ethical dilemmas inherent in systems of oppression and use social justice theories to inform their critical assessment of specific practices of inequality. The course also ascertains the contributions of interdisciplinary social justice research, scholarship, and praxis.

3. *Understand and demonstrate how at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences conceptualizes diversity and the ways it shapes human experience.*

ICSR 200 focuses on evaluating enduring and contemporary systems of oppression and how they emerge, evolve, and intersect. Rather than looking at diversity through a single lens (such as race, class, gender, and so forth), the course takes an intersectional approach. It covers a broad range of these systems and issues of human experience such as: ableism, ageism, classism, heterosexism, racism, and sexism. ICSR 200 develops nuanced understandings of diverse individual experiences in local contexts and global systems. With those understandings comes an appreciation of diversity and how it shapes all human experience. This course helps students critically analyze and challenge existing systems and facilitates productive interdependence between theory, reflection, and action. It also empowers students to be decision-makers in their own lives and become active participants in society through civic engagement, stewardship, and collective action.

4. *Integrate knowledge of at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences into issues of personal or public importance.*

ICSR 200 directs students to apply knowledge and skills of social justice to the significant issues of our world, and to the systems that impact our social environment. Students evaluate our individual and shared responsibility in these systems, and gain an understanding of various methods of resistance, and transformative visions of possibility. These understandings enhance evaluations and analysis of human experience and its impact in shaping larger cultural, historical, and societal contexts. Students also learn how to contextualize and evaluate social justice strategies including individual resistance, policy, law, advocacy, and collective action. This focus integrates social justice knowledge into issues of personal and public importance. Exploring these structures provides an opportunity to map out the dynamics of societal oppressions that resonate with the everyday experiences of our students, colleagues, neighbors, families, and communities.

5. *Communicate effectively using the language and terminology germane to at least one area of the social and behavioral sciences.*

ICSR 200 draws from literature across the social and behavioral sciences relying heavily on sociology, political science, and anthropology as well as the interdisciplinary fields of critical ethnic studies, disability studies, gender/feminist studies, and critical legal theory. Key concepts and terms include “intersectionality,” “difference,” “oppression,” “power,” “privilege,” and “social construction.”

3. Syllabus statement of learning outcomes for the course.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain key concepts in social justice including equity, dignity, solidarity, rights, responsibility, recognition, agency, possibility, futurity, and freedom;
- Demonstrate an understanding of social justice strategies (including individual resistance, policy, advocacy, and collective action) and be able to contextualize them;
- Explain the complex, multiple, and intersecting issues, theories and positions that comprise the field of social justice;

- Evaluate some of the methods used by social justice movements to create positive social change for short and long-term effectiveness;
 - Develop their own positions and arguments in written and oral communication.
- 4. Give a brief description of how the department will assess the course beyond student grades for these learning objectives.**

ICSR 200 students will complete five specific assignments designed to measurably assess objectives outlined in the course syllabus and the Explorations category for the Social Behavioral Sciences. In some cases, the assignments overlap the stated learning objectives for this course. These assignments include:

- *Reading Posts*: Students will synthesize social justice ideas and provide critical analysis of course readings in weekly posts. ***Explorations Learning Objective #1, 2, & 5***
- *Making “Beautiful Trouble” (presentation)*: Students engage in a short presentation using the web resource “Beautiful Trouble” to analyze a current or historical collective act of protest/resistance/social change. They argue how the action utilizes at least one of the course theories. ***Explorations Learning Objective #2, 3, 4, & 5***
- *Quizzes*: Students will be assigned seven short quizzes consisting of questions based on course readings, lectures, films or speakers covered during the semester. Quizzes ask students to identify key concepts, an author’s main argument, events, or statistics. ***Explorations Learning Objective #1 & 2***
- *Paired Presentations of Readings (presentation)*: Students will work with a partner to create biographies of the individuals they are reading in class. They will lead a formal presentation to discuss the most significant social justice concepts from the readings. ***Explorations Learning Objective #1 & 5***
- *Final Project (essay)*: Building on their “Making Beautiful Trouble” assignment, students will complete a final research paper and classroom presentation about a collective act of protest/resistance/social change. The final papers will answer prompts such as: “How can we understand systems of oppression as interrelated, yet also distinct?” What techniques can we engage to best understand and utilize multiple understandings of, and strategies for building, social justice? The project allows students to bridge theory and practice with the goal of proposing solutions for complex social issues of injustice. ***Explorations Learning Objective #1, 2, 3, 4, & 5***

The Department of Diversity & Community Studies has an assessment committee that will measure the effectiveness of ICSR 200 by incorporating the Colonnade Plan Learning Outcomes into our existing assessment structure. At the end of the semester, the department's assessment committee will randomly select and evaluate samples from these assignments for the five Exploration outcomes discussed above (#2 of this proposal).

A holistic rubric will be developed using a 4-point scale:

- 4 = outstanding (far exceeds expectations)
- 3 = good (exceeds expectations)
- 2 = average (meets basic expectations)

1 = poor (does not meet basic expectations)

The committee's targets are:

70% of the work will score 2 or higher.

30% of the work will score 3 or higher.

5. How many sections of this course will your department offer each semester?

Initially the Department of Diversity and Community Studies plans to offer one section of this course every fall semester.

6. Please attach sample syllabus for the course. PLEASE BE SURE THE PROPOSAL FORM AND THE SYLLABUS ARE IN THE SAME DOCUMENT.

ICSR 200
Introduction to Social Justice

Western Kentucky University, Fall 2014
Tues/Thurs 9:35-10:55
Tate Page Hall 214

Dr. Judy Rohrer
Office TPH 111
(270) 745-2093 / judy.rohrer@wku.edu (the best way to contact me is via email)
Office Hours: by appointment

*Our ultimate objective in learning about anything
is to try to create and develop a more just society.*
- Yuri Kochiyama

Course Description

This course provides an introductory study of theories, concepts and strategies of social justice, including individual action, policy, advocacy, and collective action. Rather than assume a singular definition of social justice, the course provides materials from differing perspectives and engages participants in discussion and critical analysis as we grapple with these perspectives and our own experiences. The course focuses on studying intersecting systems of oppression, methods of resistance, and transformative visions of possibility. This exploration of social justice enables the development of the analytical tools and information necessary to assess injustice in its multiple forms, and therefore to address contemporary and historical issues.

Central Course Questions

- What techniques can we engage to best understand and utilize multiple understandings of, and strategies for building, social justice?
- How do the frameworks provided by various scholar-activists enable us to ask important questions about power, agency and resistance?
- How can we best educate ourselves and others to think about socio-political categories, often assumed to be “natural” (gender, race, sexuality), as historical human creations? Why might that be important?
- How can we understand systems of oppression as interrelated, yet also distinct?
- How can we facilitate productive interdependence between theory, reflection and action?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain key concepts in social justice including equity, dignity, solidarity, rights, responsibility, recognition, agency, possibility, futurity, and freedom;
- Demonstrate an understanding of social justice strategies (including individual resistance, policy, advocacy, and collective action) and be able to contextualize them;

- Explain the complex, multiple, and intersecting issues, theories and positions that comprise the field of social justice;
- Evaluate some of the methods used by social justice movements to create positive social change for short and long-term effectiveness;
- Develop their own positions and arguments, through research projects and discussion and reflection.

This class is the core course for the new ICSR Citizenship and Social Justice minor (more info here: <http://www.wku.edu/icsr/minor/index.php>). It is also a required course in the new Diversity & Community Studies major (more info here: <http://www.wku.edu/dcs/major.php>). Please talk to me if you are interested in hearing more about these exciting new degree options.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact Student Disability Services on the ground floor of the Student Success Center, DUC A200. The phone number is 270-745-5004. After contacting SDS, please email me so that we can work out access and accommodations.

Required Texts

- Adams et al, *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*, 3rd Ed. (2013)
- Additional course materials to be posted on the course website

Course Website

Everyone will utilize the course website on Blackboard (Bb). Course materials, assignment sheets, lecture handouts, and announcements will be posted there. Some assignments will be completed on Bb. All students should have good internet access, the latest version of Bb compatible browsers, and familiarity with Bb tools (there are good on-line resources for those who need to brush up). Internet or Bb problems or troubleshooting should be taken up with IT support (<http://www.wku.edu/it/>).

Course Requirements

I have developed these requirements with the hope that all of you will succeed. If you have questions about anything in this class or are having difficulty, please come see me right away. I am always happy to talk with you. Grades will be calculated on a 600 point scale.

- Participation (10%, 60pts):
Your participation is a very important component of this class. A significant portion of your learning will occur during our class meetings when we discuss and analyze the assigned materials and the issues they raise. While I expect you to integrate your lived experience with the topics covered in this class, our class discussions will be focused on the course material.
- Reading Posts (20%, 120pts):
To help me gauge where you are with the reading, and to help you develop some focused ideas and questions before we meet, you will be posting a reading comment/question

every week from Week 3 through Week 12 for a total of 10 posts worth 12 points each. I will let you decide if you want to post regularly on Tuesday or Thursday's readings. You will post about the next day's readings by **5pm the night before class**. You may post up to a week ahead of time, but my late policy applies for postings after 5pm on your assigned day. More information will be provided in class.

- **Making "Beautiful Trouble" (15% total, 90pts)**
Twice during the semester you will engage in a short presentation at the beginning of class using the web resource [Beautiful Trouble](#) to analyze a current or historical collective act of protest/resistance/social change. You will need to explain how the action utilizes at least one of the listed theories, along with at least two of the tactics or principles. You will be able to sign up for dates that work best for you. Your first presentation will be worth 35pts and your second worth 55pts. More information will be provided in class.
- **Quizzes (10%, 60pts)**
There will be 7 short quizzes throughout the semester administered at the beginning of class. They will be worth 10 points each. When calculating your final grade, I will drop your lowest quiz score. The quizzes will be based the readings, lectures, films or speakers we have discussed or seen prior to the quiz. After the first one, each quiz will cover material subsequent to the one before. You may be asked to identify key concepts, an author's main argument, events, or statistics. *You are encouraged to review your lecture and discussion notes.* If you are absent or arrive late and miss a quiz, you will receive no credit for it (presumably that will be the quiz that gets dropped). If you arrive late to class and a quiz is underway, you will be required to finish in the same timeframe as your classmates.
- **Pair Presentation of Readings (20%, 120pts)**
At the beginning of the semester the class will be broken into pairs. Once during the semester you and your partner will lead discussion on the readings. You will prepare a 20-25 minute presentation with the following components: 1) brief biographies of the authors (their title/job, where they work, their key contributions); 2) a discussion of what you felt were the most significant points, themes or concepts in the readings (including connections between them); and 3) 2-3 provocative, open-ended questions or points for discussion which demonstrate critical reading and thinking. More information about this assignment will be provided in class.
- **Final Project: Making *More* Beautiful Trouble (25%, 150pts)**
The "Making Beautiful Trouble" assignment will be good preparation for this final project. This will be an expanded version of the earlier assignment but you will need to choose a different collective act of protest/resistance/social change to analyze. This final project will also have a paper component in addition to the classroom presentation and you will be asked to utilize (and cite) course materials. The presentation should be 8-10 minutes and the paper should be 3-4 pages (900-1200 words), plus a works cited page. The paper is due at the beginning of class on the last day of the semester. The

presentation is worth 90 points and the paper is worth 60 points. More information about this assignment will be provided in class.

Late or Missing Work

Assignments are due as indicated above or announced in class. You must complete all assignments to pass this class (so you cannot skip the pair presentation, and still pass). Late assignments will be docked by 25% for each day they are late. It is not fair to your classmates for you to have extra time on an assignment. For your protection, keep a file of all your graded work in case any questions arise about an assignment or grade.

Academic Integrity

This class assumes that all participants are doing the assignments with integrity. WKU has a policy prohibiting academic dishonesty that states: “The maintenance of academic integrity is of fundamental importance to the University. Thus it should be clearly understood that acts of plagiarism or any other form of cheating will not be tolerated and that anyone committing such acts risks punishment of a serious nature.”

(see <http://www.wku.edu/judicialaffairs/process-for-academic-dishonesty.php>).

You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the [WKU Student Code](#), especially those policies regarding academic dishonesty. “I didn’t know” is not an excuse. One of the most common problems is plagiarism, which occurs when a student copies, without proper citation intentionally or unintentionally, the ideas or words of another. Using ideas or words that are not your own without proper attribution in papers, Bb, or anywhere else in this course is a violation of academic integrity. The WKU library has good resources to help you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it:

<http://libguides.wku.edu/content.php?pid=214158&sid=3022377>

When in doubt, ask a librarian, a writing expert, a graduate student, someone at the Writing Center, or a professor.

Plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty defeat the purpose of the educational process and shortchange everyone involved. In this class, if you plagiarize, commit or attempt to commit another act of academic dishonesty, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment, risk having your actions reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs, and possibly fail the course.

Referrals: If you find any of the material covered in class to be emotionally distressing or need support for any reason during the semester, you have access to sources of professional support, counseling, and therapy services:

- Counseling Center: 270-745-3159 (<http://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/>)
- Student Health Center: 270-745-5641 (<http://www.wku.edu/healthservices/index.php>)
- Academic Advising and Retention Center: 270-745-5065 (<http://www.wku.edu/advising/>)

- Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion: 270-745-5066
(<http://www.wku.edu/oidi/>)
- Student Disability Services: 270 745-5004
(<http://www.wku.edu/sds/>)
- Writing Center: 270-745-6145 (<http://www.wku.edu/writingcenter/>)

Course Schedule

“RDSJ” below stands for our core text, Readings for Diversity and Social Justice. Materials not in RDSJ will be posted to Bb.

Week 1: Course Introduction: Introducing Social Justice

Week 2: Social Justice Core

- Crass, “Towards Collective Liberation”
- “Courage,” West, *RDSJ*
- “A Toolkit for Understand a Social Justice Paradigm,” Davis & Harrison

Week 3: Structural Oppression & Injustice

- “Theoretical Foundations/Conceptual Foundations,” Bell, *RDSJ*
- “Five Faces of Oppression,” Young, *RDSJ*
- “Structure as the Subject of Justice,” Young, *RDSJ*

Week 4: Agency & Resistance

- “Justice and Grassroots Struggles,” Capeheart & Milovanovic
- “Youth: Crisis, Rebellion and Identity,” Clay
- “Sista II Sista,” INCITE
- Video: *Judith Butler at Occupy Wall Street*

Week 5: Theorizing Multiple Oppression

- “Toward a New Vision,” Hill Collins
- “Intersectionality,” May
- “Paying for the Party,” Armstrong & Hamilton

Week 6: Risks in Ranking Oppressions

- “No Hierarchy of Oppression,” Lorde
- “Heteropatriarchy,” Smith, *RDSJ*
- Video: *The Oppression Olympics* (Dr. Ange-Marie Hancock)

Week 7: Analyzing Systems of Oppression: Classism

- “Class in America–2006,” Mantsios, *RDSJ*
- “The Dangerous Consequences of Growing Inequality,” Collins et al, *RDSJ*
- Film: *Inequality for All* (parts)
- “White Poverty–The Politics of Invisibility,” hooks, *RDSJ*
- “Classism from Our Mouths,” Leondar-Wright, *RDSJ*
- “Deep thoughts about Class Privilege,” Pittelman & Resource Generation, *RDSJ*

Week 8: Analyzing Systems of Oppression: Racism

- “Defining Racism,” Tatum, *RDSJ*
- “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness,” Lipsitz, *RDSJ*

- “Something about the subject,” Yamato
- Film: *Cracking the Codes/ Race: The Power of an illusion*
- Video: *The First Time (poem)*
- “La Conciencia de la mestiza,” Anzaldúa, *RDSJ*
- “Injustice for all,” NNIRR, *RDSJ*
- Videos: United We Dream & Jose Antonio Vargas

Week 9: Analyzing Systems of Oppression: Anti-Native Racism & Colonialism

- “Haole Girl,” Rohrer
- Film: *Act of War; Noho Hewa* (parts)
- “Identification Pleas,” Gansworth *RDSJ*
- Video: *More than that...*
- Guest lecture: Dr. Victoria LaPoe

Week 10: Analyzing Systems of Oppression: Heterosexism, Homophobia, Transphobia

- “How Homophobia hurts Everyone,” Blumenfeld, *RDSJ*
- “Privileges,” Carbado, *RDSJ*
- “Transgender Liberation,” Stryker, *RDSJ*
- “Mutilating Gender,” Space, *RDSJ*
- Videos: *Laverne Cox & CeCe McDonald on Dem Now! & I am not a Boy*

Week 11: Analyzing Systems of Oppression: Ableism & Ageism

- “The Social Construction of Disability,” Wendell, *RDSJ*
- “Carnal Acts,” Mairs
- “I’m not one of the...,” Wade
- Videos: *Social Model Animation & Sins Invalid Film Trailer*
- “Look out, Kid, It’s Something You Did,” Dohrn, *RDSJ*
- “Ageism: Another Form of Bigotry,” Butler, *RDSJ*
- Video: *Cut Back: Facing Ageism* (part)

Week 12: Working for Social Justice: Vision, Strategies, Impacts

- “Social Struggle,” Smith, *RDSJ*
- “Getting Started,” Shaw
- Video: *Idle No More Courtenay BC*
- WKU Green Tour with Christian Ryan
- “Ordinary People’s Extraordinary Courage, Impact and Hope: Terrible Conclusions,” Thalhammer et al.
- “How Occupy Wall Street Changes Everything,” Gelder, *RDSJ*

Week 13: Working for Social Justice: Solidarity, Alliance, Coalition

- “Reflections on Liberation,” Pharr, *RDSJ*
- “Becoming an Ally: A New Examination,” Evans & Washington
- “Accessible Futures, Future Coalitions,” Kafer
- Video: *Dean Spade: Impossibility Now*

Week 14: Catch up & Holiday

- Work in pairs on final presentations; catch up on assignments & readings

Week 15: Presentations & Course Wrap Up