University of Rhode Island, School of Education
EDC 665: Social Justice in Higher Education
Quinn Hall, 209
Tuesdays 4pm-7:45pm
DRAFT

Instructor: Annemarie Vaccaro, Ph.D.     Office: Quinn 220
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Specific course dates are May 21, 28; June 4, 11, 25; July 2, 9, 23

Overview:
Institutions of higher education are becoming increasingly diverse. Yet, research shows that institutions do not necessarily become more inclusive or equitable as they diversify. This course provides a broad overview of contemporary issues of social justice in higher education. Through course readings, discussions, and assignments students will engage with the theoretical foundations, current research, and practical applications of social justice issues in higher education.

Whether one is interested in being a faculty, staff, or administrator in higher education, this course has something to offer. One of the overarching course goals is to explore how social justice issues in different realms of higher education intersect. For instance, the experiences of faculty, staff, and students are intricately related, and are informed by, research, pedagogy, curriculum, research, administrative policies, and campus climate. While most of the literature in higher education focuses on these topics independently, this course requires students to see the intersections between them. In short, the class offers a holistic perspective of social justice in contemporary higher education.

Learning Outcomes:
By the end of the course students will:
1. Be familiar with socio-political issues of social justice issues in higher education
2. Understand and apply social justice concepts to real world situations in higher education
3. Learn from seasoned higher education leaders about the realities of social justice work on college campuses
4. Analyze and evaluate higher education literature on curriculum, research, pedagogy, and policy with theoretical models of social justice
5. Understand the implications of social justice issues on various higher education stakeholders such as faculty, staff, administrators, and students
6. Reflect upon the ways social justice issues impact their personal and professional identities as both students and educational leaders

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- All other readings are posted on Sakai or linked in syllabus.

**Class 1 (5/21): Theoretical & Conceptual Foundations of Social Justice**

**Readings:**

2. Byrd et al., Chapter 1

**Class 2 (5/28) Student Experiences**

**Readings:**

1. Byrd et al., Chapters 2-6
Class 3 (6/4): Administration, Policy, Structure and Climate Issues

Readings:
1. Byrd et al., Chapters 15, 16, 17
8. Optional: Review of URI Community Equity and Diversity Strategic Plan

Class 4 (6/11): Staff in Higher Education
1. Byrd et al., Chapters 12-14
5. Bhattar, R. J. (2012). Honoring the intersections: The experiences of a Desi queer professional in student affairs. In D. Ching & A. Agabyani (Eds.), Asian Americans and


Class 5 (6/25): Faculty Issues

Readings:
1. Byrd et al., Chapter 7

Class 6 (7/2): Teaching and Learning

Readings:
1. Byrd et al., Chapters 9,10, 11


Class 7 (7/9): Research & Assessment

Readings:


Class 8 (7/23): Social Justice Advocacy and Allyship in Higher Education

Readings:


Grading and Assignments

**Class Participation and Attendance - 25%**
Thoughtful and informed participation is worth 25% of your final grade. You are expected to be physically and mentally present for all class sessions. This includes all activities and small/large group discussions. You may also be asked to bring an item or idea to class to share with your peers as part of your participation grade.

Informed, in-class participation includes comments which are grounded in the class concepts, particularly the weekly readings. Your comments should always be related to course content and be respectful to others. Be thoughtful in your participation, gauging the frequency to allow all students to participate fully.

**Social Justice Autobiography Assignment - 25% Due July 2, 2019**
As a leader within the field of education, it will be necessary and beneficial for you to continuously assess your personal development, confront your weaknesses, and acknowledge your strengths. The purpose of this assignment is to grant each of you the opportunity to personally, politically, and intellectually reflect on the content of this course and your experiences (or lack of experiences) as a diverse and socially just being. As such, you will be expected to maintain a continuous narrative (e.g., journal) reflecting upon your personal journey through our course. In your entries (3-4 times a week), I expect that you will utilize course readings, discussions, presentations, etc. to reflect. I recommend you journal as you read.

Within your reflections, please consider addressing areas of personal resistance, new knowledge/perspectives, change, and/or insights. To inspire your thoughts, please consider questions such as: How have my educational experiences related to course materials? How have my experiences contributed to my understanding of myself/others as people who live within oppressive systems? What significant experiences have I had that have contributed to my perceptions of racial, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, ability etc. identities in education? What surprised me about the experiences of students, faculty and staff who are similar to and different from me? Why? This essay is intended to be an approximately 10-12 page reflection in which you process through your journal entries relying upon APA format to reference our course readings.

**MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENT: Select Option A or B - 50% Due July 23, 2019**
Half of your grade will be gleaned from this major course assignment. Select from either Option A or Option B. Inform Annemarie of your decision by class session 3. All students will be expected to informally share highlights from their project during the last class session.

**DUE DATE:** This major course assignment is due on the last day of class. You will be expected to share an overview of your project during the last class session.
MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENT OPTION A = Part 1 (25%) & 2 (25%)

Option A: Part 1: Interview and Reflection Paper - 25%
Select a campus leader from any post-secondary institution. Schedule an informational interview with that person. In that interview, do your best to ascertain what diversity and social justice means to that person. What role does social justice play in their daily life? What diversity issues do they see as most pressing in higher education in general and at their institution in particular? What efforts have been made to address those issues? What is their definition of leadership and what role does social justice play in their leadership style and activities? You are not limited to these topics. Please feel free to craft your own interview questions, as long as they are within the realm of course topics. Analyze the interview with at least 4 course concepts. Craft a 7-9 page paper of your analysis.

Option A: Part 2: Journal Article Review - 25%
You will be required to read, review, analyze, and present a selected empirical journal article. Find an article related to any diversity or social justice issue in higher education. Read the document, contrast it with at least 2-3 required readings and analyze it with social justice theory (Class 1). Submit the written paper.

MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENT OPTION B
Self-Designed Project - 50%
You may propose a project about diversity and social justice which best meets your current or future campus role and/or dissertation focus. You will be expected to engage in a similar amount of work as Option A.

A prospectus for this project is due during class session 3. The prospectus should include a 1-2 page overview of the project with as much detail possible regarding the:

- Purpose, goals and learning outcomes for the project;
- Types/examples of resources to be used in the project;
- Format of the final product (e.g., paper, blog, video, other)

Option B projects must include a connection to a minimum of 2-3 course materials. While the format is flexible, all students are expected to integrate/synthesize class materials into their proposed work.
Academic Honesty & Integrity
Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity, which are consistent with expectations of the program, department, Graduate School, institution, and student affairs profession. A student's name on any written work shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own thought and study. Work should be stated in the student's own words and properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, or reference the work of others with integrity. The following are examples of academic dishonesty:

- Using material from published sources (print or electronic) without appropriate citation
- Claiming disproportionate credit for work not done independently
- Unauthorized use of another's work or preparing work for another student
- Taking an exam for another student
- Altering or attempting to alter grades
- Fabricating or falsifying facts, data or references
- Facilitating or aiding another's academic dishonesty
- Submitting the same paper for more than one course without prior approval from the instructors.

You are responsible for understanding how to cite appropriately.

Accommodations
Please meet with me early in the semester to let me know if you need specific accommodations to learn best. I also suggest you visit with the Office of Disability Services for Students.

APA Style
All out-of-class written assignments are expected to be completed in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the 6th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. For more information about APA style, visit the Web site http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx

Incomplete Grades
The university’s incomplete policy is that an instructor may consider submitting an "Incomplete" in place of a grade when the work of the semester has been passing, but has not quite been completed because of illness or for some other reason, which, in the opinion of the instructor, justifies such a report. Instructors must accompany such reports with a written explanation. Thus, students who request consideration of a report of Incomplete must submit relevant and timely documentation.

Attendance
Students are expected to attend class and classroom activities. Occasionally, students may miss class activities due to illness, severe weather, or sanctioned University events. If ill, students should not attend class and should seek medical attention especially if they have a communicable disease such as influenz (flu). Also, it is the policy of the University of Rhode Island to accord
students, on an individual basis, the opportunity to observe their traditional religious holidays. Students desiring to observe a holiday of special importance must inform each instructor and discuss options for missed classes or examinations. See Sections 8.51.11 – 8.51.14 of the University Manual for policy regarding make-up of missed class or examinations.

**Standards of Behavior**
Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow classmates with dignity and respect. Students are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to the published “Student Code of Conduct” which can be accessed in the University Student Handbook (http://web.uri.edu/studentconduct/student-handbook/). If you must come in late, please do not disrupt the class. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices. If you are on-call, please, let Annemarie know. Turn your phone to vibrate and step out if you get a call.

**The Graduate Writing Center**
The Writing Center is for “all writers, all disciplines, at all levels, and all stages of writing.” It is a great campus resource for improving writing. Visit them at: https://web.uri.edu/graduate-writing-center/