

CRST/SOCI/WOST 2150
Challenging Oppressions, Civic Engagement and Change
Fall 2018
Monday 6:00-9:30pm
Fontbonne 108

Instructor: Aisha A. Upton
Office: Fontbonne 111
Office Hours: Tuesday 11:35am-1:35pm and by appointment
Email: aaupton037@stkate.edu

COURSE OUTLINE

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of inequality, intersecting oppressions and social change. This course represents an innovative collaboration that bridges the curriculum/co-curriculum, the classroom and the community, theory and practice. Student participants explore classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism and speciesism through interaction with community presenters, service work, academic reading and student initiated projects. In addition to breaking down stereotypes, and gaining practical multicultural knowledge, students will be engaged in a community building process, and learn how to become effective allies and activists by acquiring new skills in this area.

This course will examine issues of inequality from an interdisciplinary perspective that is based on the work of Adams, Bell and Griffin (2000). Their model of social justice education addresses inequality from multiple vantage- points (i.e. humanities, social sciences, public policy and professional areas of study). Adams, et al. approach the “isms” with a theory of oppression that emphasizes intersection, privilege, prejudice, and power, identity and internalization, the systemic foundations of domination and subordination, and options for social change. Students will examine classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism and speciesism in detail through readings, discussions, guest speakers from the community, visits to community partner agencies, a civic engagement/community work and learning component, and a research project.

This course is also an elective for students in the CRST, SOCI, and WOST major/minor program and available as an elective to all other students at SCU. This course fulfills the CRST/WOST CORE Liberal Arts Requirement.

Course Goals: Student Learning Outcomes

Students will explore and demonstrate an understanding of:

- Interdisciplinary perspectives on inequality and oppression- theoretical questions, central concepts, and analytical tools.
- The systemic foundations of oppression – domination, subordination, privilege, prejudice and power.
- The structural underpinnings of classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism

and speciesism.

- The intersection of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, age and ability in systems of inequality
- The impact of inequality on identity – personal voices, internalization and resistance.
- Knowledge of self, identity, privileges, prejudices, and oppressions
- Strategies for civic engagement and systemic change – opposition, allies, coalitions and community response.

Course Goals: CORE Liberal Arts, CRST and Sociology

1) Completion of this course fulfills the liberal arts core requirement in CRST/WOST. The requirement supports the following liberal arts goal:

Diversity and Global Perspectives: The ability to understand and analyze the impact of diversity and systems of power and privilege on the individual and society; the ability to decipher and honor multiple and global perspectives in creating mutual understanding; the ability to imagine and take action toward justice.

2) The course is also a requirement for a major and minor in CRST. As a cross-listed course in this field,: at least half of its material is focused on racial/ethnic issues/perspectives on racial/ethnic issues/perspectives; the syllabus or reading list includes recognized and recent scholarship and/or writings by persons of color in the U.S., including African American, Asian American, Latino/Latina, and Native American perspectives); and it includes at least two of the following criteria:

- Course critically/analytically evaluates diverse situations of persons of color through course readings and analytical paper
- Racism and ethnocentrism are analyzed as oppressive systems on racial ethnic groups; sexism, ageism, and body image are analyzed as oppressive systems within society through readings and class discussion.
- Discussion of individual's role and strategies for personal and/or social change for improvements of the situations or status of people of color is embedded in at least half of the course discussions.
- Student participation and collaborative learning is emphasized heavily through class discussions, team discussions, and collaborative research. Students are encouraged to share their experiences and stories to enrich the discussion.

3) This course is also an elective in/a requirement for a major and minor in WOST. As a cross-listed course in this field, at least half of the course material is women centered and the course includes the following characteristics: [list at least two of the following five characteristics]:

- The syllabus or reading list uses recognized and recent writing/scholarship by women, including feminist perspectives;
- The course critically/analytically evaluates the diverse situations of women, nationally or globally;
- The course includes a critical examination of social forces changing or having shaped the

situation of women;

- There is analysis of the effects on women from oppressive systems, e.g., imperialism, racism, sexism;
- The course includes a discussion of strategies for personal and/or social change for the improvement of women's situations and status.

This course also meets the Department of Sociology's Goals for student learning:

1) Understanding Sociological Content

- Demonstrate familiarity with the three major paradigms in sociological thought
- Use any of the competing methods of making knowledge claims in sociology
- Identify and describe the major contributions of the leading theorists in the discipline
- Converse at some level about the most central concepts in the discipline:
 - community and alienation
 - deviance, conformity, and social control
 - social stratification by class, race, gender, and other social categories
 - identity and the self
 - social institutions and social change
- Converse in considerable depth about two or more of the above ideas

2) Development of Intellectual And Academic Skills

- effectively read, interpret, and apply concepts from complex theoretical texts
- effectively derive sociological knowledge from non-sociological texts
- use appropriate empirical methods to collect, analyze, and interpret data
- appropriately use and cite research and other published knowledge sources
- acquire habits and methods of study appropriate to the first year of graduate school

3) Development of Transferable Professional Skills

- use information technology effectively
- use appropriate statistical methods and software
- write clearly in both technical and persuasive modes
- use empirical or analytical methods to illuminate a real-world question

4) Self-Awareness And Community Participation

- view social and political activism as an appropriate means of social change
- develop strategies for impacting social change through personal action, social movements, community organizations, the law and public policy
- adopt a skeptical posture toward the status quo
- use sociological concepts and knowledge in understanding her own circumstances (the "sociological imagination")
- articulate a coherent concept of social justice

REQUIRED TEXTS

Maurianne Adams, Warren J. Blumenfeld, Rosie Castañeda, Heather W. Hackman, Madeline L. Peters and Ximena Zúñiga, editors. *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice: An Anthology on Racism, Antisemitism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism, and Classism*, 3rd Edition, New York: Routledge. 2013.

Additional articles/handouts on D2L.

Course Requirements:

This course requires a variety of informal and formal writing. Students will learn more about the writing process in general. Further, students will be exposed to the types of writing that sociologists utilize in academic and applied careers. Writing will facilitate understanding of the subject matter. Feedback from peers and the instructor will assist students to develop effective written communication skills in general and, specifically with reference to the subject matter and style of sociology.

All written work should comply with the standards of Academic Integrity outlined in *Le Guide*. Please be aware that plagiarism (i.e., when one does not cite or credit one's sources) and failure to do one's own work, etc., if detected, will not be tolerated. "Ghostwriting" and plagiarism are academic offences that may result in an F for an assignment or under extreme circumstances, the entire course.

All Sociology and CRST majors should save the graded copy for their sociology portfolio.

CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, REFLECTIONS, RESEARCH PAPER & PRESENTATION (230 points)

Students will be required to engage in civic engagement/community work and learning throughout the semester. Written reflections on the experiences will be shared with instructors and the class. Emphasis is placed on students working with existing community partners. In all cases, the community component of the course would allow students to explore a particular "ism" (preferably one you are least knowledgeable about or most challenged by) in a context of action towards systemic change. Students should contact an organization, visit the site and obtain related literature as to purpose, goals and work of the agency, and conduct an interview with a representative of the agency. Minimal estimated time of involvement should be 5 hours. All students would write a pre and post reflection paper, incorporate the community experience into their final research project, and report to the class. The Office of Community Work and Learning can assist with the selection of community organizations and site options

Preliminary Reflection Paper/ Community Engagement Proposal (30 points)

Students should submit a 3-4 reflection paper prior to their community experience. This reflection paper should also include a proposal identifying the community organization that you wish to contact and the particular "ism(s)" that will be addressed. You will receive guided questions to address in this reflection. **The first reflection paper/community engagement proposal is due 10/8.** Guiding Questions for Reflection Assignment on Community Project areas follows:

- What "ism" have you chose to focus on and why? In what ways is working with this

“ism” challenging for you?

- Which organization are you planning to work with and why?
- How did you learn about this organization? What do you know about them at this point? How/where does their work seem to fit on the Social Change Wheel?
- What do you hope to find out – what questions do you have about them?
- What are your hopes and fears in undertaking this assignment?

Research Project (120 points)

Students are also required to write a major research paper focusing on issues related to a particular “ism”. This paper should be 10-15 pages in length. The paper should be based primarily on library research, but should also include information from your community work and learning experience, and from the knowledge you gained from active involvement. **The research project should include at least one interview and fifteen outside sources, at least ten of which are academic.** The research project should include a complete discussion of the particular issue of inequality, an analysis of the existing remedies, a discussion of the actions taken by the community organization you worked with, and your own plan of action for addressing the inequality. ASA reference style should be used.

Paper proposals are due on **11/5 and are worth 20 points**. Proposals should include **at least 3 preliminary references**. The final paper is due **12/10 and is worth 100 points**.

Papers will be assessed by consideration of the following:

- Originality
- Clear Thesis statement
- Organization
- Substantive critical analysis
- Clarity of discussion/arguments
- Use of supporting literature
- Inclusion of existing remedies and action plan
- Grammar, punctuation, sentence and paragraph construction
- Use of citations and notes
- Complete and accurate listings of references
- Appendices (Please include information from your community organization and interview questions with summary)

Suggested Organization of Paper

- Introduction
- Definition of “ism” – scholarly sources
- Ism in National Context – background stats, scope, who is affected, intersections
- Ism in State and Local Context – background stats, scope, who is affected, intersections
- Local Organization – work, nonprofit?? – Funding sources, secular v faith-based, focus re social change wheel, evaluation of impact
- Other actions that you would suggest - Nationally and locally

Presentation (50 points)

Students will be asked to inform the class on their specific issue and community experience. Presentations should provide specific information on the issue of inequality, discuss attempts to remedy the problem, evaluate the success of current efforts, and propose further action to

alleviate the inequality.

The presentations should be no more than thirty minutes, and student should incorporate art, music, literature, or film into their presentation. The presentation should also document the group's contacts with community organizations. **In-class presentations are worth 50 points. Students should also prepare a PowerPoint presentation; this should outline the key points of the research.** These should be posted on the D2L course site the date of your presentation.

Final Reflection Paper

Students should write a 3-4 page reflection paper to summarize/synthesize their course and community experiences. **The final reflection is due on 12/10. A maximum of 30 points** will be given for completeness of answers to the reflection Guiding Questions for Final Reflection Assignment are as follows:

- **Describe how this course - both in the regular class time and in activities planned outside of regular class time - has assisted you in understanding inequality- the "isms" and their interconnections. Explain and illustrate.**
- **Describe your community experience. What additional learning did this provide? Explain.**
- **Describe your thoughts on the Social Change Wheel?? Where do you fit now? What approaches do you feel are most effective?**
- **Do you think you are more likely to engage in action for social change as a result of taking this course? Explain.**

PARTICIPATION (70 points)

In-Class/D2L Discussion (70 points)

Students will be required participate in an on- line discussion on D2L. The class discussion board can be accessed directly from the course web site. (Instructions for accessing the site will be available on the first day of class). **Students should make at least 10 substantive contributions to the discussion during the semester, five before and five after the midterm.** Each contribution is worth 5 points and should address a key reading for the week. Comments should be posted before class each week. Contributions to the discussion may also include comments or questions about the texts and lectures, relevant news items or any other materials that may inform the class on related topics. **Students should also make 2 substantial comments- one on a class presentation and one on your community organization. (10 points each).**

GRADING POLICY

Grades will be determined by total points **(300)**. In general, students may expect that **A** work requires scores of more than 90 % on papers, regular class attendance, and some contributions to class discussions.

Preliminary reflection paper 30 points
Research project proposal 20 points
Final research paper 100 points
Presentation 50 points
D2L discussion 70 points

Final Reflection 30 points

- **All work must be completed by the due date, and must be submitted before a final grade can be turned in.**
- **Students must submit a hard copy of all required papers – no email submissions will be accepted.**
- **A student may miss up to a week's classes (one class) without penalty. The first absence after a week's worth of absences will result in a half grade reduction in the final grade. Each subsequent absence will result in another deduction.**
- **Class discussion is highly encouraged, and will be taken into consideration in determining final grades.**

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A: Clearly superior work; obviously beyond a “good job” in some combination of the following respects: creativity, originality, depth, clarity, and critical, independent thinking

B: A good job, meeting all the expectations of the assignment. “B” work goes beyond minimum competence by showing insight, creativity, clarity

C: Adequate work, generally meeting expectations but lacking in some areas

D: Inadequate work, but not failing

F: Incomplete, dishonest, or simply not a serious effort

93%+ A

90%+ A-

87%+ B+

83%+ B

80%+ B-

77%+ C+

73%+ C

70%+ C-

67%+ D+

60% D

<60% F

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Writing Assistance at the O’Neill Center

If necessary, we will refer students to the O’Neill Center for writing assistance.

Please do not get offended if you are referred. Instead, please view it as an opportunity to improve your writing skills. The center offers a service designed to meet the needs of students, and the staff members are competent, friendly, and non-threatening. We, at St. Kate’s, attempt to do our best to accommodate students to help them achieve a successful outcome. When the instructor and the student work together, a successful outcome is usually met.

Academic Dishonesty

Absolutely no incidents of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct will be tolerated. The best way to avoid being academically dishonest is to properly cite any ideas/words that are not originally your own.

Special Accommodations

Saint Catherine University is committed to equal access for all and recognizes that disability is an aspect of diversity. The University's goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to the learning environment, accurate assessment or your achievement, please contact the Resources for Disabilities office as soon as possible. Access Consultants can be reached in the O'Neill Center at **651-690-6563** to discuss academic adjustments or accommodations. If you need accommodations for a disability, please inform us immediately at the beginning of the semester to work out appropriate arrangements. We cannot grant any accommodations without notice from Disability Services. This information will be kept confidential. Please note that notifying us at the end of the semester or thereafter will not be useful to your situation.

Incompletes

There will be no incompletes given for this course unless you have performed satisfactorily (at least 70%) in most of the requirements, and you have an emergency [i.e., sudden illness/hospitalization of self or immediate family member (medical documentation required), death of immediate family, etc.]. You will be required to write a formal contract for completion of the project. An "I" grade automatically converts to an "F" grade one year after the final exam of the term in which the "I" was given.

S/N Grades:

Students who are taking this course S/N must get a grade of C or better to pass the course.

Course Schedule

Monday September 10: Introduction and syllabus review;
Reading: Readings for Diversity & Guiding principles and expectations Social Justice (RDSJ) section 1

Monday September 17: Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender Conceptual Frameworks
Reading: RDSJ Section 1 continued.
Assignment due on D2L

Monday September 24: Racism.
Reading: RDSJ Section 2
Assignment due on D2L.

Monday October 1: Racism/Ethnocentrism
Reading: RDSJ Section 4.
Assignment due on D2L.

Monday October 8: Classism
Reading: RDSJ Section 4.
Preliminary reflection/community org. proposal.

Monday October 15: Sexism/Gender
Reading: RDSJ Section 5.
Assignment on D2L.

Monday October 22: Heterosexism/Gender
Reading: RDSJ Section 6
Assignment on D2L

Monday October 29: Heterosexism/Gender
Reading: RDSJ Section 7.
Assignment on D2L

Monday November 5: Ableism/Ageism
Reading: RDSJ Sections 8 and 9
Research paper proposal and outline

Monday November 12: Speciesism/Anthropocentrism
Reading: Articles on D2L
Assignment on D2L

Monday November 19: Social Justice Action/Strategies Discussion
Reading: RDSJ Section 10
Assignment on D2L

Monday November 26: Presentations on Community Organizations
Presentation comments on D2L

Monday December 3: Presentations on Community Organizations
Presentation comments on D2L

Monday December 10: Presentations on Community Organizations
Organization comments. Research paper and final reflection paper due.