

Introduction to Social Justice

CSJ 200



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General Course Information

Required Texts:

- Adams et al, *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (ed. 2013)
- Other readings as assigned on Blackboard

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 access injustice in its multiple forms, and therefore to address contemporary and historical issues.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course students will be able to:

- Reflect and demonstrate knowledge on the meanings of social justice;
- Map and discuss the power, agency, and resistance frameworks that exist in social justice movements;

- Interrogate the socio-political nature of categories that are often to be assumed as natural (race, gender, sexuality); and
- Investigate ways to put theory into action.

Assignments and Activities

Weekly Activities (25 points each X 8 activities): Each week you will have a different activity to complete based on the material covered. Some weeks it will be a discussion board interaction and other weeks it will be researching organizations that do work in the area we are covering. I will also have some activities that will be based on television programs. I will try to keep it different each week in order to provide a new way to apply the material.

Exams (100 points each X 2): There will be two exams in this class. The first will happen after week 4 and the second during week 8. Exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay. They will be open note/open book. However, they will also be timed. I will provide a study guide.

Final Project (100 points): The final paper will be a short research paper that will analyze a current or historical collective action. A full rubric and guide will be on blackboard.

Assessment of Student Learning:

Activity	Points Possible	Approx. Percent of Total Grade
Activities	200	40%
Exams	200	40%
Final Paper	100	20%
Total	500	100%

Points Needed	Percent	Letter Grade
500-450	90-100	A
400-449	80-89	B
350-399	70-79	C
300-349	60-69	D
Below 299	59 and below	F

Instructor Policies

Course Organization and Approach:

CSJ 200 uses a ***participatory, learner-centered, adult education*** approach. This approach recognizes that ***YOU are responsible*** for your own learning. The instructor can only provide **opportunities** to learn, but cannot force you to learn. Course material is presented in **substantive readings** from the text; **structured activities; lecture; and class discussions**. You are expected to work hard in this course; for

every hour of class time, you should spend at least **two to three hours** outside of class preparing by doing readings, assignments, studying for exams, and thinking about the course material.

*You are expected to take **responsibility** for the success of the course*, that is, you should take an active interest not just in the course material, but in the course itself, making it a success for all participants. Factors such as **interest, motivation, creativity**, and **initiative** are important elements in evaluating your performance in the course and assigning a grade.

This class will be a place for sharing ideas and voicing opinions. Intelligent argument and polite disagreement is welcome. It is important each student is respectful of an individual's point of view. Civil discourse is the foundation of not only this class, but social justice.

Quality of Written Work: I expect you to write with the highest quality. I expect complete sentences in all written work. I expect well thought out responses. Further, I will deduct points if you use text message abbreviations or language in your formal papers. I still value proper grammar and expect you to do the same while in this course. This is not the place for “slang” terminology unless you are using it to make a theoretical point.

Further, write in a professional manner. I do not expect your papers to sound like you just sat down at your computer and typed a conversation to me. Avoid phrases such as, “Well, in my personal opinion”—even if I am asking for your thoughts and opinion, that is not a necessary phrase. Think “professional tone” while writing. Also, limit the use of “I.” Once again, even when asking you to respond from your own life you can minimize the first person. There is nothing worse than reading a paper that begins every sentence with “I think”, “I want to discuss”, “I believe”, “I feel”, etc. Please refrain from addressing the reader directly. For example, there is no need to thank me for reading your paper. Finally, proof read all your work. I really hate to read papers that are full of grammatical errors. It takes away from your thoughts and ideas and frustrates me. You do not want me to grade your paper frustrated!

Professional Communication

With the use of our personal mobile devices to write and respond to email I've noticed a disconcerting trend among students. I will receive emails like the following example (an actual email I've received):

To: Donielle.lovell@wku.edu

Subject: NONE

grades are not posted

And that will be it. No salutation, no proper sentences, no closing comments, and not even a name. This is highly unprofessional and sounds rude to the reader. In the work world you will be expected to compose proper messages and you are expected to do so in this course. Therefore, I expect all emails to include greeting, actual sentences that thoroughly explain the purpose of your email and a closing that includes your name. For example:

To: Donielle.lovell@wku.edu

Subject: Grades in CSJ 200

Greetings Dr. Lovell,

I was curious as to when grades for our first reflection paper will be posted.

I am taking a very strict perspective on this. I will no longer respond to emails that are unprofessional.

Academic Honesty: You are expected to **comply with all academic standards and ethics** as defined in the Western Kentucky University College Catalogue (page 42). You are expected to do your **own work** in this course. Plagiarism, fraud and other forms of cheating will **NOT** be tolerated. I have the authority to either fail you on the paper plagiarized and even for the course or depending on the seriousness of the offense, to take it to WKU administration which can have serious consequences. Do not test me on this. I have failed students in the past and will continue to do so for academic dishonesty. I take this VERY seriously. **DO NOT TEST ME—THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE. Act with integrity.**

IT IS **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** TO UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES. Make sure you know what constitutes plagiarism and cheating **BEFORE** turning in any assignments. Once you turn in an assignment, you are representing it as your own work. If you are suspected of committing plagiarism, pleas of “I didn’t know what plagiarism was” will not be accepted. If you are concerned about your knowledge of plagiarism, please see me and I will give you a handout with examples of plagiarism. **Please note, copying and pasting directly from a website is plagiarism. Copying and pasting directly from a website and changing a few words is STILL plagiarism. Copying and pasting from Wikipedia is also plagiarism and very easy to identify so just don’t do it.**

Office Hours: Please email me for an appointment.

Make-up and Late Work: Missing a test is unacceptable unless there are justifiable and excusable circumstances (i.e. car accident; family death; hospitalization, etc.) provided in writing following the missed test. If a situation does arise that you know in advance you will have to miss a test, please inform me as soon as possible. **Further, if you are late turning in a paper you will receive a 25% reduction in grade for everyday you are late until there are no points.** I will not follow up on missing

assignments. I will simply dock the points. This includes “glitches” in uploading papers to blackboard. So, you better be very sure your paper uploaded by the deadline.

Email: Since this is an online course, my main form of contact will be through email. I will use your university email account. **You must access and check this account regularly.**

No Technology Weekends: At the request of my spouse I have started instituting no technology weekends in the Lovell household. This means on weekends I will not check email, blackboard, etc. If you email on a weekend you can expect to hear from me on Monday. During the week you will typically hear back from me within 24 hours.

Grading: You can expect assignments to be graded within 2 weeks from the time of submission.

Accessibility: In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, Room 1074. The SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): Once a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, he or she becomes an "eligible student," and all rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student. Therefore, I am unable to disclose information about grades, attendance, class schedule, etc. to parents, spouses and other interested parties. If you would like to give these rights to your parents or spouse you need to file a waiver with Western Kentucky University. Until I have received such waiver, please discourage other parties from contacting me regarding your status as my student.

Title IX and Sexual Harassment: Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's [Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy](#) (#0.2070) and [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (#0.2040). Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121. Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's [Counseling and Testing Center](#) at 270-745-3159.

Social Media: I am happy to accept friend requests on social media sites after your graduation. However, it is my policy not to connect in that way while you are my student.

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