

CSJ200-970: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL JUSTICE (OnDemand)

Colonnade/Statewide General Education Code E-SB | SB

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor:	Marcus Brooks, PhD (He/Him)
E-Mail:	Marcus.Brooks@wku.edu
Office Hours:	During Fall/Spring Semesters: Wednesday: 10:00-1:00 During Summer/Winter: By appointment - e-mail me with your availability. By appointment: https://calendly.com/marcus-brooks-1/30min ¹
Office Location:	Grise Hall, Room 114

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

We are living through difficult times. There is social, political, cultural, economic, and environmental unrest and anxiety at a global scale. But we are not the first people to live through social, political, and economic conflicts, pandemics, climate disasters, and other sorts of social issues. The societies and people who have lived through, and even thrived, in response to these kinds of problems have imagined many ways to confront them. We have access to the knowledges and experiences of these people and can look to them to help us think about the different ways we can approach the problems we are confronted with today. These proposed solutions range from reactionary to neoliberal movement actions. In this course, we will focus on *social justice*, its history, standpoints, and practices, as one way of confronting social problems and working towards freedom for all people.

In this course you will learn:

- 1) how social justice perspectives and strategies compare to other proposed solutions to social problems.
- 2) about the kinds of problems that the social justice approach address.
- 3) about different strategies used in social justice-oriented problem solving methods.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Analyze how systems evolve.
- 2) Compare the study of individual components to the analysis of entire systems.
- 3) Evaluate how system-level thinking informs decision-making, public policy, and/or the sustainability of the system itself.

By the end of this course, you will be able to answer:

- 1) What are the philosophical origins of Social Justice and what does contemporary Social Justice theory and praxis look like?
- 2) What is the difference between personal troubles and social issues? And how do we go about solving social issues?
- 3) What are some examples of social justice informed strategies for addressing social issues?
- 4) What are the necessary conditions for social justice oriented allyship? What are the limitations of allyship that does not have a social justice orientation?

¹ Please wait for personal confirmation from me before locking the meeting into your calendar.

- 5) What are some of the criticisms of the social justice approach? And how do these criticisms compare to what you've learned about the social justice approach?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Technology

All course material (including readings, exams, assignments, and submissions) are housed on Blackboard. If you do not have access to a personal computer, WKU Information Technology Services has computer labs on campus. [For information on lab location and hours, visit their page here.](#)

TopperTech offers computer repair and rental services. [Information about these services is available here.](#)

Course Texts

You are not required to purchase any texts or other media for this course. All material is available to you via PDF on Blackboard or I provide links them.

While you are not required to purchase texts there are several that I use, and you are encouraged to add them to your library. If you prefer to purchase full texts, either physical or digitally, below is a list of texts used in the course:

- HoSang, Daniel Martinez. 2021. [*A Wider Type of Freedom: How Struggles for Racial Justice Liberate Everyone*](#). University of California Press.
- Rothman, Noah. [*Unjust: Social Justice and the Unmaking of America*](#). Regnery Gateway.
- Spade, Dean. 2020. [*Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis \(and the Next\)*](#). Verso Books.
- Vaid, Urvashi. 2012. [*Irresistible Revolution: Confronting Race, Class and the Assumptions of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Politics*](#). Magnus Books.

E-Mail/Contact

All e-mail communication should go through the WKU domain (.edu). Don't e-mail me from your personal, i.e. non-university e-mails; I will not respond. I will never e-mail you from an address other than my university address: marcus.brooks@wku.edu.

Since e-mail is my primary way of keeping in contact with you outside of class, please check your e-mail regularly. I check my e-mail often, so you should receive a timely response to any messages (I commit to responding to any messages within 24 hours, not counting weekends and holidays). I ask that you check yours often, so you do not miss any important class information or updates.

Assignments

1)	Reading Quizzes x18	225 points
2)	Module Tests x 4	100 points
3)	Analytical Essay	50 points
4)	Final Exam	25 points
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		400 possible points

- 1) Reading Quizzes (10-15 points each, 225 total):** For each of the Readings/Videos there is a quiz. These are a mix of multiple choice, short answer, T/F, and short essay.
- 2) Module Tests (25 points each, 100 points total):** There is a quiz at the end of each of the first four modules. These are a mix of multiple choice, short answer, T/F, and short essay.
- 3) Analytical Essay (50 points):** To complete Module #5 you will write an analytical essay. This is your one major writing assignment for the course.
- 4) Final Exam (25 points):** Format details available when you reach this point.

CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Academic Honesty

WKU takes a strong stance against academic misconduct. Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication. Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or facilitating any such act. For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply: (1) Plagiarism: The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works of another person as one's own without proper acknowledgement. (2) Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours. (3) Fabrication: Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

To be clear: going online and using information without proper citations, copying parts of other student's work, creating information for the purposes of making your paper seem more official, or anything involving taking someone else's work without proper attribution is academic misconduct. If you have a question about an assignment, please contact me to clarify. All cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs for violating the academic honesty requirements in the student handbook. They may also result in failure for the course.

Grade Disputes

All of your grades will be available on Blackboard. If you think there is a problem with one of your grades, please reach out and let me know. Depending on the nature of the dispute I may ask you for an in person meeting to discuss the situation.

Regular and Substantive Interaction

The U.S. Department of Education requires that distance education courses must include regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty. For more information about Regular and Substantive Interaction at WKU, please visit the [Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online and Distance Learning webpage](#).

In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- Welcome video and introduction assignment
- Office Hours - set hours and by appointment
- Each module contains an essay or short answer assignment with feedback from instructor
- Communication policy outlined in syllabus

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

ADA Accommodations

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.

Title IX/Discrimination & Harassment

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding [WKU's Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#) (#0.070) 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 Executive Director, Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir, 270-745-6867 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.

WKU Writing Center

The Writing Center on the Bowling Green campus will have writing tutors available to offer advice to current WKU students on any stage of their writing projects. In-person tutoring is available in Cherry Hall 123 from 10-4 Monday through Friday and in the Cravens Commons (at the horseshoe-shaped reference desk) from 5-9 on Sunday through Thursday evenings. WKU students may also request feedback on their writing via email or arrange a real-time Zoom conference to discuss a paper. See instructions and how-to videos on the website (<http://www.wku.edu/writingcenter>) for making appointments. Walk-in feedback is available unless we are booked up. Students may also get short writing questions answered via email; just put "Quick question" in the subject line to (writingcenter@wku.edu).

Student Resources

Support Resources:

[WKU Food Pantry](#)

[Emergency Student Assistance](#)

[Center for Literacy](#)

[Counseling Center](#)

Conflict Resolution Resources:

[Student Academic Complaint Procedure](#)

[Student Ombuds Officer](#)

[Student Legal Services](#)

[WKU Police Department](#)

Misc. Resources:

[WKU All Gender Bathroom Directory](#)

[Intercultural Student Engagement Center \(ISEC\)](#)

[Kentucky Museum](#)

[Full List of Student Resources](#)

COURSE OUTLINE

MODULE #1: WHAT IS JUSTICE? WHAT IS FREEDOM?	Points
Read: Michael Sandel – <i>Justice</i> (Chapter 1: Doing the Right Thing) Assignment: Quiz #1: What is Justice	10
Read: Martin Luther King, Jr. – <i>Letters From a Birmingham Jail</i> Assignment: Short Essay #1: King’s Approaches to Justice	15
Read: HoSang – <i>A Wider Type of Freedom</i> (Preface and Chapter 2) Assignment: Quiz #2: A Wider Type of Freedom	10
Watch: POLITICAL THEORY - JOHN RAWLS Assignment: Short Essay #2: Rawl’s “Veil of Ignorance”	15
Exam: Module #1 Exam	25
MODULE #2: DEFINING SOCIAL JUSTICE & UNDERSTANDING SYSTEMS OF INEQUALITY	
Read: Bell – <i>Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice Education</i> Assignment: Quiz #3: Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice	10
Read: Adams and Zuniga - <i>Core Concepts for Social Justice Education</i> Assignment: Quiz #4: Core Concepts for Social Justice	10
Read: Miller – <i>Principles of Social Justice</i> Assignment: Quiz #5: Principles of Social Justice	15
Read: Young - <i>Five Faces of Oppression</i> Assignment: Quiz #6: Five Faces of Oppression	10
Read: Collins - <i>Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection</i> Assignment: Quiz #7: Toward a New Vision	10
Exam: Module #2 Short Essay Exam	25
MODULE #3: APPLYING SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES TO SYSTEMS OF INEQUALITY	
Read: Mantsios – <i>Class in America</i> Assignment: Quiz #8: Class in America	10
Read: Tatum- <i>Defining Racism: “Can We Talk?”</i> Assignment: Quiz #9: Defining Racism	10
Read: Vaid – <i>Irresistible Revolution</i> (Chapter 1: Still Ain’t Satisfied) Assignment: Quiz #10: Irresistible Revolution	10
Read: Bloomer et al. – <i>Reimagining Global Abortion Politics</i> (Chapter 7) Assignment: Quiz #11: Reimagining Global Abortion Politics	10
Read: Gooding and Cox - <i>Stigmatized, Marginalized, and Ill: The Oppression of People With Serious Mental Illness</i> Assignment: Quiz #12: The Oppression of People With Serious Mental Illness	15
Exam: Module #3 Short Essay Exam	25
MODULE #4: WAYS OF DOING SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK	
Read: Collins - <i>Toward a New Vision</i> (Part 2) Assignment: Quiz #13: Collins - <i>Toward a New Vision</i> (Part 2)	10
Read: Bell – <i>Theoretical Foundations</i> (Part 2)	10

Assignment: Quiz #14: Theoretical Foundations (Part 2)	
Read: Smith – <i>The Personal is Political</i> Assignment: Quiz #15: The Personal is Political	10
Watch: What is Transformative Justice? Assignment: Quiz #16: What is Transformative Justice?	10
Read: Sumerau et al. - Constructing Allyship and the Persistence of Inequality Assignment: Quiz #17: Constructing Allyship	10
Read: Spade – <i>Mutual Aid</i> (Chapter 1 & 2) Assignment: Quiz #18: Mutual Aid	10
Exam: Module #4 Short Essay Exam	25
MODULE #5: DEBATES IN AND CRITICISMS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE	
Read: Rothman – Unjust (Intro and Chapter 4)	N/A
Watch: PragerU – What is Social Justice?	N/A
Exam: Module #5 Analytical Essay	50
MODULE #6: FINAL EXAM	
Final Exam	25
Total Course Points: Breakdown: Quiz x18=225. Module Test x 4=100. Analytical Essay=50. Final Exam=25.	400