An Introduction to Our Course

Social justice is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to their needs. [In a just society...] all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. [...] The process for attaining the goal of social justice, we believe, should also be democratic and participatory, inclusive and affirming of human agency and human capacities for working collaboratively to create change.

--Lee Anne Bell

In this course, we will engage in the process of community-based social justice by examining ways to analyze, understand, and resist forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, heterosexism, and trans* oppression. Through in-class activities, writing assignments, and service-learning with our community partners, we will develop the critical tools necessary (1) to understand oppression and our own socialization within oppressive systems and (2) to develop techniques to interrupt and change oppressive patterns and behaviors in ourselves and in the institutions and communities of which we are a part.

Required Materials

There is no textbook for this class. The interactions among members of the class and between our class and our community partners will serve as the primary “texts” from which we will learn in the course. In addition, you will be required to read/view several films, handouts, and online resources during the semester.

Course Work

Active Engagement: Includes completing all homework before class, meeting with community partners, and taking an active role during in-class work. Active engagement is absolutely required. If you do not contribute consistently and thoughtfully to our discussions and service work, you can earn no better than a C in the course. To earn an A in the course, you must actively contribute to the learning of your classmates.
Service-Learning: Includes 4 or more hours of direct service through Habitat for Humanity (working on a Build, during Rock the Block, and/or at the ReStore); the research, drafting, revision, and presentation of a service-writing project for Habitat; visits to Central Iowa Shelter Services and Oak Ridge Housing; and written reflections on your experiences and on critical readings about service-learning: 40% of final grade.

Shorter Writing Assignments: Includes all in-class and homework writing throughout the course of the semester. These frequent, shorter writing assignments are geared toward stimulating class discussion, facilitating critical thinking, and helping you think through possibilities for your individual commitment to social justice: 40% of final grade.

Midterm Critical Reflection: Includes your written critical reflection on the work you have done by the midpoint of the semester. The reflection should demonstrate how your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors have changed by analyzing important moments of learning and their relationship to the work in which you have been engaged: 5% of final grade.

Final Critical Reflection and Plan of Action: Includes your written critical reflection on actions you have taken during the semester to support or initiate social justice, as well as a plan for what actions you will have taken by 30, 60, and 90 days after the end of the course: 15% of final grade.

Grades

To earn an A in the class, you must fulfill all requirements, complete assignments in a timely fashion, consult with your classmates and me over drafts, and work diligently at revising your major assignments. You must participate intelligently and consistently in class and demonstrate in your writing assignments, in-class comments, presentations, and service that your critical sensibilities have grown considerably over the course of the semester. An A indicates outstanding work.

B reflects consistent, significant progress over the course of the semester. B work shows evidence that you have put to work the principles discussed in the class throughout all assignments and in-class work. A major improvement in your work in the last week or two of class is not enough to earn a B in this course.

C indicates work that has been uneven or does not evidence a consistent application of principles discussed over the course of the semester.

D usually indicates that you have minimally completed assignments but have shown little progress over the course of the semester.
F typically reflects poor engagement, failure to complete assignments, and/or lack of progress.

Note: I will provide you with evaluations of your work in the course. I encourage you to meet with me at any point during the semester, as frequently as you like, to discuss your progress in the course and, if necessary, ways to improve your work in any area of the class. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to begin a dialogue about your grade or your work in the course.

Attendance

I expect you to come to class on time and stay until the end of the session. Because the course depends upon active engagement and because we will do so much in each class session, it is imperative that you attend class regularly. That said, however, there is no grade penalty for absences. If you are not inclined to attend class, that is your choice, but you are forewarned that missing classes will inevitably affect your ability to engage meaningfully in the course.

Please note: Except in the event of extreme circumstances, late work will not be accepted. If you must miss class, you may turn in work early to receive credit, and you should contact a classmate to discuss what you missed in class.

Extending the Conversation

We will be using Piazza for out-of-class discussion and distribution of information, as well as accessing some of the required readings for the course. Piazza is designed to help you communicate quickly and efficiently with classmates and with me. Rather than emailing questions to me, I encourage you to post your questions on Piazza; I also encourage you to respond to other students’ questions. Our class page is http://piazza.com/drake/fall2014/fys4

Technological Distractions

Social justice and service-learning require you to be mindful and attentive to the work at hand. For this reason, while you’re in class, cell phones must be turned off, and I will not tolerate texting in class. If I see you send or check text messages during class, I will ask you to leave the classroom. You are welcome to bring your laptop or tablet to class and use it to take notes or access work we’re discussing. You are not welcome to catch up on your friends’ status updates, check email, or otherwise perform non-class-related activities during class. In other words, if you aren’t using it to perform a task specifically related to what we are doing in class at that very moment, then please put it away.
Academic Integrity

This course involves a great deal of collaboration and recognizes that you will frequently be appropriating techniques, approaches, and ideas from others for use in your own work. However, although we will be learning from, creating with, and sharing knowledge among one another, academic dishonesty has no place in this course. While in collaboration and appropriation, one acknowledges the role that other people or sources play in one’s own work, academic dishonesty includes any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating (any attempt to give or obtain aid or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations), fabrication (intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of information or citations in connection with an academic requirement), plagiarism (representing another’s ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one’s own) and intentionally attempting to help someone else to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Any instance of academic dishonesty will result in failure of this course.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and require academic accommodations in this course, I would be happy to discuss your needs, provided that you first contact Student Disability Services (107 Old Main; 271-1835) and provide a statement from them documenting your needs.

Writing Workshop

The Writing Workshop, located in Cowles Library 47, serves students who need assistance with individual writing assignments. The emphasis of the one-on-one tutoring sessions is not to “fix” your writing but to devise actions that you can take to improve your writing and to provide help with writing problems or questions. This is a free service to all Drake University students. You may visit a tutor by appointment or establish a time to meet a tutor on a regular basis. To set up an appointment, sign up online at http://artscl.drake.edu/writersworkshop/wwshop.html.

And Finally, A Standing Invitation

As a teacher, I try to be self-reflective about my role in our course, and I’m open to ideas about how we might better facilitate the learning that we’re doing here. I hope you’ll come see me during my office hours: I will always welcome your questions, suggestions, and comments.
Schedule

This schedule is subject to change as I learn your interests and strengths. Please be flexible, as some aspects of the schedule and assignments may need to be altered to meet the needs of our community partners.

Conceptual Foundations for Social Justice and Service-Learning

Monday, August 25
Goals: Develop a common vocabulary and a common conceptual understanding of oppression dynamics.

Wednesday, August 27
Goals: Explore social group memberships and experiences.


Friday, August 29
Introduction to service-learning with Mandi McReynolds, Director of Community Engagement & Service-Learning at Drake

Homework due today: Read PDF: “Defining Service-Learning.” Write and bring to class your response to the Focus Exercises on p. 9, 10, and 11. (Locate as many answers as possible to the questions on p. 10 before you come to class. We’ll have time in class for you to talk with our community partner about any remaining questions you may have during our site visit on September 12.)

Monday, September 1
No class—Labor Day

Wednesday, September 3
Goals: Explore personal experiences of privilege and disadvantage and practice group participation guidelines.

Homework due today: Complete the Privilege and Disadvantage Inventory.

***Activities Fair, 4-7pm, Olmsted***

Thursday, September 4, 5:30-8:00pm
Habitat for Humanity Key Awards, Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center
**Friday, September 5**  
Debrief and discuss Key Awards; continue discussion of “Defining Service-Learning”; discuss field notes assignments

Homework due today: Read “Becoming an Ally” and “What Kind of Ally Are You?” Write a bring to class your responses to the following prompts: 1) In the last two weeks, how have you embodied some of the characteristics of an ally? These instances may have occurred in the context of this class or in other areas of your life. 2) In the last two weeks, what characteristics of an ally have been difficult for you to embody? Why have they been difficult? What advice would you give to a classmate who is finding that same characteristic challenging? 3) Respond to Crenshaw’s questions in the last paragraph of “What Kind of Ally are You?”

**Understanding & Resisting Racism & White Privilege**

**Monday, September 8**  
Goals: Explore the personal experience of learning about race and racism; develop an understanding of the way that racism is communicated and enforced; develop a shared understanding of key terms and ideas, including *racial formation, race, racism, socialization,* and *social construction.*

Homework due today: Watch Episode 1 (“The Difference Between Us”) on the DVD *Race: The Power of an Illusion,* on reserve at Cowles Library. As you watch the film, take notes, jotting down questions, reactions, and feelings. Bring this written response to class.

**Wednesday, September 10**  
Goals: Begin exploration of institutional and cultural forms of racism.

Homework: Read PDF: “Finding My Eye-dentity,” “Identification Pleas,” “The Arab Woman and I,” “My Tongue Is Divided into Two,” “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” and “Waking Up White.” Write a response to the following question: How did these authors learn, consciously and unconsciously, messages about race, their own racial group, and other racial groups?

**Friday, September 12**  
Introduction to community partner: Habitat For Humanity; Meet in Olmsted parking lot for van to Habitat

Homework due today: Bring notebook to begin field notes and your response to the Focus Exercise on p. 10 of “Defining Service-Learning”

**Monday, September 15**
Goals: Identify and analyze the material consequences of racial construction for people defined as people of color.

Homework due today:
Watch Episode 2 (“The Story We Tell”) on the DVD Race: The Power of an Illusion, on reserve at Cowles Library. After viewing the episode, write and bring to class your responses to the following questions: 1) What in the film surprised you? 2) How did the film challenge or change any of your previous ideas and assumptions? 3) What feelings did the film stimulate in you? 4) About what were you confused or do you need to know more? 5) Having seen the film, how would you define race and racism?

**Wednesday, September 17**
Goals: Compare and contrast how immigrants from different groups have been treated in U.S. history and law; explore the role that race has played and continues to play in this differential treatment.

Homework due today: Read the “History of Immigration and Racism Timeline.” As you read, note events that interest you and do some additional research about those events. After reading and researching, write and bring to class your responses to the following questions: 1) What is one thing that you learned from this timeline and your research? 2) What surprised you about this timeline and your research findings? 3) About what do you want to find out more as a result of reading and researching this history? 4) What events described in the timeline did you learn about in school?

**Friday, September 19**
On-campus meeting with Kelsey Reynolds, Marketing Specialist for Habitat for Humanity, to develop goals for service-writing projects.

Homework due today: Bring to class complete field notes from visit to Habitat.

**Monday, September 22**
Goals: Identify ways to take action against racism in personal, work, and community settings; explore ways of empowering ourselves to eliminate racism in various areas of everyday life.

Homework due today: Reread “Becoming an Ally” and “What Kind of Ally Are You?” and your initial written response to these readings. Write a response to whichever of these questions you find most relevant: 1) If you identify as a person who is white, how might you become a better ally both to people of color and to other white people who are interrupting racism? 2) If you identify as a person of color, how might you become a better ally to members of your own
racial group, members of other targeted racial groups, and white people who are interrupting racism?

**Wednesday, September 24**
Goals: Provide a framework for developing a personal agenda for action; explore challenges faced in implementing action strategies.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “Women, Race, and Racism,” “FLEXing Cross-cultural Communication,” and “The Personal is Political.” Using the readings as a starting point, brainstorm and bring to class a description of at least three actions that you can and want to take to interrupt racism in the future, using any of the strategies in any of your spheres of influence.

**Friday, September 26**
Peer review/revision of interview questions.

Homework due today: Two copies of your interview questions.

**Understanding & Resisting Sexism**

**Monday, September 29**
Goals: Explore the personal experience of learning gender; increase understanding of the ways gender messages are communicated and reinforced; develop a shared understanding of key terms and ideas, including sexism, feminism, binary, patriarchy, and gender roles; begin exploring the relationship of intimacy, power, and violence to gender.

Homework due today: To help us think about what gender is, how we learn about ourselves as gendered people, and how we learn what it means to be a man or a woman, please draw on your own experiences to write and bring to class your responses to the following questions: 1) What were the gendered messages in your home? E.g., “Girls could...,” “Boys could...,” “Girls couldn’t...,” “Boys couldn’t...” 2) What roles and behaviors were expected of you in your home because of your gender? 3) Were there consequences for not following gendered expectations? 4) What did you see at home as models of women’s roles/ work/ place? What did you see at home as models of men’s roles/ work/ place? 5) What were the lessons of your early years in school? What models of maleness and femaleness did you see? 6) What were the lessons of your teenage years? How did you see yourself in relation to maleness and femaleness? What did you notice around you?

**Wednesday, October 1**
Goals: Explore the effects of gender socialization on relationships and our experiences of intimacy; expand our ability to listen, empathize, and communicate across gender differences.
Homework due today: To identify childhood lessons about gender relationships and how these lessons were taught, please write and bring to class your responses to the following questions: 1) When you were a child, what is one message you were taught about relationships between girls and boys or between women and men? How were you taught this lesson? 2) When you were a child, what is one lesson you were taught about how males were supposed to relate to each other? How were you taught this lesson? 3) When you were a child, what is one lesson you were taught about how females were supposed to relate to each other? How were you taught this lesson?

Friday, October 3
Critical reflections on service-learning.

Homework due today: Read PDF: "Preparing for Your Future."

Monday, October 6
Goals: Explore the prevalence and normalization of violence in our lives within the context of sexism and patriarchy; develop an understanding of the different forms of power.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “Patriarchy, the System,” “Feminism,” “Violence Against Women is a Men’s Issue,” and “Out-of-Body Image.” Write and bring to class a critical reflection on the readings.

Wednesday, October 8
Goals: Recognize, analyze, and discuss how overt and covert messages presented in formal policies affect gender expectations and behavior in workplaces.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “Women’s Pay” and “He Works, She Works...” Locate, read, and bring to class an employee handbook or manual for a place where you have worked, are working, or want to work. (If you don’t have a print copy of a handbook, look up the handbook or manual online.) Bring your written responses to the questions about organizational policies to class.

Friday, October 10
We are not meeting as a class today.

Direct service: Habitat for Humanity Build, ReStore, or Rock the Block. Bring notebook for field notes. (You may sign up for a shift on another day, but you should plan to complete your direct service no later than October 10.)
Homework due today: If you have not done so already, schedule your interview. (All interviews should be completed by October 24.) Post to Piazza when and where the interview will take place.

Monday, October 13
No class—Fall Break

Wednesday, October 15
Goals: Explore our own experiences with power; explore key events in history that helped women in the United States gain power, equality, access, and choice.

Homework due today: Midterm Critical Reflection: Write a list of ten perceptions and/or assumptions you had when you started the course and how each of these perceptions or assumptions has changed through what you’ve learned. These might be perceptions about social justice, about service-learning, about your own skills or abilities, or about any other aspect relevant to our course. Choose one or two items from the list, and write and bring to class an opinion piece for a newspaper, a letter to the editor, a letter to a policy maker, or another form of public writing about something you learned through your work in this class. The piece should not be a mere summary of your experience, but should elaborate on why what you’ve learned matters to you (e.g., how it relates to your broader academic, personal, or professional goals) and to the audience for whom you’re writing.

***Double credit if you publish your reflection in its intended venue.***

Friday, October 17
Visit Central Iowa Shelter Services; meet at DART Bus Stop (on University, in front of Library). Bring notebook for field notes. If you’re able, bring a recommended donation item.

Homework due today: Bring to class complete field notes for direct service experience.

Monday, October 20
Goals: Understand issues of sexism and power in a global context; develop new empowering strategies for addressing sexism.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “Promises Made,” “To Stop the Violence Against Woman,” “NLIRH Statement on Healthcare for All,” “Heartbroken,” “Stop the False Race/Gender Divide,” “Grassroots,” and “Unbowed.” Write and bring to class your responses to the following questions: 1) How do these readings demonstrate the use of power over, power with, and power within? 2) How do these readings help you think about sexism and power in a global context?
**Understanding & Resisting Heterosexism**

**Wednesday, October 22:**
Goals: Reflect on sexuality socialization

Homework due today: Write and bring to class your response to the following prompts: 1) Describe how your parents or other family members influenced your beliefs about sexual orientation; 2) Describe how your school classmates influenced your perceptions about your sexual orientation or sexual orientation in general; 3) Describe how you learned that heterosexuality was the “normal” sexual orientation; 4) What stereotypes about lesbian, gay, and bisexual people did you learn while you were growing up? From where did this information come?; 5) Describe an early memory when you realized that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are stigmatized or discriminated against.

**Friday, October 24**
Visit to Oak Ridge Housing. Meet at SE corner of Drake (25th & University) to walk to site. Bring notebook for field notes.

Homework due today: Bring to class complete field notes from visit to Central Iowa Shelter Services.

**Monday, October 27**
Goals: Understand gender and sexuality vocabulary; explore the complexities of gender and sexuality.

Homework due today: Registration is right around the corner! Meet with your academic advisor to discuss your plans for Spring 2015. Post a note to Piazza about what you discussed with your advisor and any lingering questions you may have about registration.

**Wednesday, October 29**
Goals: Understand some of the historical roots of contemporary heterosexism.

Homework due today: Read the Sexuality History Timeline. Write and bring to class your responses to the following prompts: 1) Which events on the timeline were unfamiliar to you? 2) What events from your lifetime would you add to the timeline? 3) List two or three questions you would like to discuss about the events on the timeline.

**Friday, October 31**
Peer review/revision of interview service-writing project for Habitat.
Homework due today: Two copies of narratives based on interviews. Complete field notes for visit to Oak Ridge Housing.

Monday, November 3
Goals: Identify and discuss institutional heterosexism; define and discuss heterosexual privilege.

Homework due today: Identify an incident related to gay, lesbian, or bisexual issues you have read about, seen in the media, or witnessed through a personal experience. Write a description of the incident or experience; then explain how the incident is related to heterosexism—the system of institutional and cultural beliefs, norms, and practices that advantages heterosexuals. Be prepared to share your description and explanation in class.

Wednesday, November 5
Goals: Explore the effects of multiple identities on experiences of heterosexism.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “The interSEXion,” “Sport,” “The Loving Decision,” and “Mestizo/Gender.” Write and bring to class your response to the following questions: 1) How do these readings demonstrate the intersections of multiple identities? 2) How do the readings help you understand the complexities of heterosexism for people with multiple targeted identities and for people with multiple advantaged identities?

Friday, November 7
On-campus presentations of interview service-writing projects to Habitat for Humanity.

Homework due today: Bring two copies of your revised interview service-writing project. Be prepared to present your project and to discuss what went well and what challenged you during the project. Please time your presentation to last 5 minutes. Be thorough, but do not go over the 5-minute limit.

Monday, November 10
Goals: Identify actions that challenge heterosexism.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “How Homophobia Hurts Everyone,” “Privilege,” and “Becoming an Ally.” Based on ideas generated by the readings, write and bring to class your response to the following questions: 1) How do homophobia and heterosexual privilege affect your life? Remember that people of all sexual orientations are affected by homophobia and heterosexual privilege, though in different ways. 2) If you identify as heterosexual, how might you become a better ally both to LGBTQ people and to other heterosexual allies? If you identify as LGBTQ, how might you become a better ally to other people who
share your sexual identity, to members of other targeted sexual identity groups, and to heterosexual allies?

**Wednesday, November 12**
We are not meeting as a class today. (I will be away due to work-related travel.)

Goals: Take action to interrupt racism, sexism, and/ or heterosexism.

Homework due today: Spend at least two hours acting to interrupt racism, sexism, and/ or heterosexism. You may work on your own, in a pair or group, or as a whole class. Use the action planning, discussion, and role-playing in which you’ve engaged in class as guides. Write and post to Piazza a critical reflection on your experience of taking action.

**Friday, November 14**
We are not meeting as a class today. (I will be away due to work-related travel.)

Homework due today: Revise your interview service-writing project based on the feedback from last week. Submit your final version of the project to me via Piazza and to Kelsey Reynoldson via email.

**Understanding & Resisting Trans* Oppression**

**Monday, November 17**
Goals: Establish some common vocabulary with which to discuss trans* identities, experiences, and oppression; provide some historical U.S. context for discussing contemporary trans* issues.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “History of Trans* Oppression and Resistance in the U.S.” Write and bring to class your response to the following questions: 1) What are some common themes among the events listed in the timeline? 2) What events seem particularly significant or momentous? 3) In what ways do you think individual trans* people might have been affected by these events? 4) How did this information corroborate or contradict your previous knowledge of trans* history? 5) What events from your lifetime would you add to the timeline? 6) What questions remain for you after reading and writing about the timeline?

**Wednesday, November 19**
Goals: Analyze the power of gender norms and the challenges encountered when one transgresses a gender norm; identify how individuals, institutions, and cultures perpetrate forms of oppression against trans* people.

Homework due today: Perform a gender-norm violation and bring to class a written reflection that includes 1) a description of what happened during your gender-norm violation; 2) an analysis of your experience and the public reaction
to your gender-norm violation; and 3) the relationship between your gender-norm violation and what you’ve learned about trans* oppression.

**Friday, November 21**  
Discussion with 2013 FYS students.

Homework due today: Write questions for the 2013 FYS students with your final critical reflection and plan of action in mind. What questions can you ask to help you critically reflect on your experiences? What can you ask that will help support your planned actions?

**Monday, November 24**  
Goals: Describe how trans* oppression may interact with other forms of oppression.

Homework due today: Read PDF: “Mutilating Gender,” “Trans Woman Manifesto,” and “The Impact of Juvenile Court...” Write and bring to class your response to the following questions: 1) How did these readings demonstrate ways in which multiple identities impact trans* oppression? 2) What are the ways in which trans* oppression impacts other social identities? 3) What are some connections and some distinctions among different forms of oppression?

**Wednesday, November 26 & Friday, November 28**  
No class—Thanksgiving Break

**Monday, December 1**  
Goals: Explore how gender-conforming individuals can identify and acknowledge their privilege; move toward taking action against trans* oppression.

Homework due today: Meet with me and/ or with the Writing Workshop this week to discuss a draft of your final critical reflection and plan of action.

**Wednesday, December 3**  
Goals: Develop specific and realistic action plans for working against trans* oppression.

Homework due today: Meet with me and/ or with the Writing Workshop this week to discuss a draft of your final critical reflection and plan of action.

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**Final Critical Reflection & Plan of Action**

**Wednesday, December 10, 12:00-1:50pm**
Goals: Reflect on our experiences over the course of the semester; celebrate the actions we have taken to work toward social justice; commit to additional actions we will take to continue learning about, supporting, and initiating social justice.

Homework due today: Final Critical Reflection and Plan of Action; Be prepared to speak briefly (3 minutes) about some of the actions you have taken this semester to work toward social justice. How have you educated yourself? How have you educated other people? How have you supported and encouraged others who are working toward social justice? How have you initiated individual or institutional changes that work toward social justice or prevent injustice? What are you going to do to continue your commitment to social justice?