Course Description

What is social justice? How are identities, experiences, and structures of race, ethnicity, and class intertwined with social justice in the American context? Why does social justice matter? What can individuals and communities do to develop socially just outcomes?

We will closely read a number of texts to explore responses to these broad questions. Assigned readings are drawn from a wide variety of disciplines and contemporary popular writings. In addition to traditional classroom practices of lecture, discussion, and writing, this course moves decidedly beyond the classroom by requiring students to engage in a number of social justice activities on campus and in the Winston-Salem community. Students are expected to bring enthusiastic participation to these experiences and to reflect critically on their experiences in written work. Students will work collaboratively to build a toolkit for social justice activity as the final project for the class.

Course Objectives

Students will critically engage a wide range of scholarly and popular texts focused on inequality, justice, community capacity building, and social action.

Students will become familiar with broad themes and approaches to social justice research, activism, and policymaking.

Students will develop skills of critical analysis and practical problem solving.

Students will be introduced to multiple, contested ideas for remedying injustice.

Students will produce a toolkit for action.

Students will participate and contribute to social justice activities on their own campus and in the community.
Assessment

Reading Responses (30%)

All students are expected to post FIVE (5) 300-500 word reading responses on the course Sakai site by Wednesday at 2:00PM. Students may choose to write in any five weeks over the course of the semester. The reading responses should be organized as follows:

- Part 1: 100-150 word summary of the reading
- Part 2: 100-150 word assessment of the most valuable contribution of the reading to our understanding of social justice as a concept. This can be critical or laudatory.
- Part 3: 100-150 word explanation of an important tool practice/policy for addressing and enhancing social justice as suggested by the reading. This will often be non-obvious and will require the student to be both critical and creative.

The reading responses are very brief and must get to the point swiftly and clearly. Responses will be graded on insight, accuracy, creativity, and clarity of writing.

Social Action and Social Action Reflections (30%)

All students must take part in at least FIVE (5) direct social action initiatives as designated on the syllabus or that are offered as opportunities arise throughout the semester. For each social action, students must write a THREE (3) page reflection essay. Students may participate in more than five social actions, but reflection essays are only required of FIVE (5).

These reflections should be written in the first person and provide both an assessment of the action and of the student’s own self-evaluation of learning as well as the student’s theoretical and ethical understanding of what is meant by social justice.

A rubric for the Social Action Reflections is forthcoming.

Social Action Reflections are due within One Week (7 days) of the completion of the action.

Tool Kit (30%)

Students will collectively write a Tool Kit for Action as the course final project. Full description of the Tool Kit project and rubric for assessment is forthcoming.

Peer Assessment (10%)

Students will provide feedback for peers as part of the final Tool Kit group project.

Extra Credit

Throughout the semester this course will offer opportunities to attend campus events for extra credit. Each Extra Credit event attended counts toward ½ point on the final grade.
REQUIRED TEXTS

Readings marked with a * are available as links from the course website. Books are all available through the university bookstore.


Extra Credit Opportunities

Delores Huerta Lecture, TBA
Joy Ann Reid Lecture, TBA
Ta-Nehisi Coates Lecture, TBA
More opportunities will be made available throughout the semester.
Week 1, August 26  
Introduction

Students post a link to a recent news article in Sakai (anytime in 2015) about a social injustice as you see it. Every student will be prepared to explain why this issue is indicative of injustice in some way.

Week 2, September 2  
Different Perspectives on Social Justice


Week 3, September 9  
Deliberation


Action 1: WFU Action Team Community Forum, 7pm

Week 4, September 16  
Deliberation


Week 5, September 23  
Research and Teaching


Action 2: Attend North Carolina Women’s Summit 2 panels

Week 6, September 30  
Philanthropy

Week 7, October 7  
**Philanthropy**


Week 8, October 14  
**Media**


*Watch: Inconvenient Truth or Hotel Rwanda*

Week 9, October 21  
**Media**


Week 10, October 28  
**Civic Action and Volunteerism**


Week 11, November 4  
**Protest**

**Action 9:** Attend Moral Monday protest, rally or teach-in

**Week 12, November 11  Policing/ Criminal Justice Reform**


**Action 10:** Attend Campus Policing Community Forum

**Week 13, November 18  Policing/ Criminal Justice Reform**


*The Century Foundation, Two Views on the Failure of Policing
*The Ferguson Report

**Action 11:** Complete assessment of current criminal justice reform plan as provided

**Week 14, November 25  THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS**

**Week 15, December 2  Voting and Elections**


**Action 12:** Take part in voter registration effort in Winston-Salem

December 10 by 5pm

**Final Tool Kit Due**