ED437:
Diversity & Equity in Higher Education

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Course Description:
This course is intended for students who are pursuing an advanced degree in higher education or a related area. Students in this course will explore diversity, equity and justice in the context of higher education institutions in the United States. The first segment of the course will be a foundational consideration of diversity, equity and the idea of justice. The second segment of the course will examine power, privilege and difference. The first two segments of the course are intended to allow us collectively to engage conceptually with the tensions surrounding how we make sense of diversity and equity in contemporary post-secondary education settings. The second half of the course is more focused on particular groups and issues within higher education. The third segment addresses identity development theory as a lens to understand different individual (from specific backgrounds) experiences within higher education. The fourth and final segment involves learning about teaching and administrative responses to diversity and equity concerns. The final segment of the will be in part driven by class participant identified issues.

Desired Learning Outcomes:
• Develop an understanding of definitions of diversity, equity and justice in the context of higher education.
• Be able to apply principles of justice to the practice of higher education in the United States.
• Be able to articulate how the concept of power, privilege and economic systems play out in the experiences of individuals in different backgrounds in higher education.
• Describe the interplay between identity development and racial/ethnic background in the context of students in higher education.
• Be able to identify the strength and limitations of different administrative approaches addressing diversity, equity and justice in higher education institutions.
• Be able to translate theories of justice, equity and identity into practices to advance institutional goals as practitioners in higher education.
**Instructional Pedagogy and Expectations:**

This course is designed to be a learning centered course with each student being responsible for maximizing their own experience. The instructional responsibility is to create a welcome environment for all students where sharing differing views and intellectual intrigue are valued and respected. Our commitment is to bring our very best in terms of resources, course organization and facilitation to create a high-quality learning experiencing. We have high expectations of for students as to their (1) preparation for class; (2) engagement with course content; (3) performance on application assignments. We recognize that individuals learn and perform in a variety of ways and as such instructional approaches will be varied as will our appreciation for different learning and performance styles. In addition to this statement of instructional pedagogy and expectation we have found it useful to articulate the following expectations related to the class.

**Attendance and Missed Class Policy:**
You are expected to be present at all sessions, should you not be able to be present please contact me in advance of class (e-mail is fine). Should you miss class it is our expectation that you submit a one-page reaction/ critique of the assigned readings for the week that you miss. This should be submitted as a blog entry and is available on the blog for viewing by other students. The blog should be submitted within one week of your class absence.

**Assigned readings:**
All class sessions will involve discussion of assigned readings; it is my expectation that you will have prepared these reading in advance of class.

**Group Activities:**
Part of working in higher education is working with diverse individuals; as such this course will provide a practical forum for developing group functioning skills. Each class member is expected to participate in group discussions, activities and projects that will be a part of each class.

**Assignment:**
All assignments should be submitted on or before the due date. Assignments should be submitted through Blackboard, rather than through e-mail.

**Academic Integrity:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, in this course will be treated seriously – all work must be your own and the work of others must be properly cited as appropriate. The University of Rochester’s “Academic Honesty Policy” and related judicial processes is found on pp. 49-52 in the Graduate Bulletin’s
Regulations and University Policies Concerning Graduate Study or online at the following location: [http://www.rochester.edu/GradBulletin/PDFbulletin/GradBul06-08forWeb.pdf](http://www.rochester.edu/GradBulletin/PDFbulletin/GradBul06-08forWeb.pdf).

More information regarding proper citing and plagiarism can be found in the APA Manual. The website below also provides helpful hints, tools, and exercises in proper citation.

**Required Books:**

(available electronically)


**Assignments**

1. **Reflection Journals** – Each individual must complete 6 different entries into the course journal that react to class readings and discussion throughout the semester. Each entry should be between 250 and 350 words in length and written in an academic form. Entries must be posted every two weeks per the schedule here: February 7, February 28, March 13, March 27, April 10 and April 24. It is anticipated that the content of this course might challenge individual underlying beliefs; as such journals are intended to be a space for critically examining issues raised in the classroom. (Each entry is worth 5 points for 30 Points)

2. **Diversity Experience Report** - You will be asked to engage in a diversity experience related to higher education and then develop a report of your experience. You should engage in a report and reflection of your experience that does not exceed 3 pages. Your report should make connections between your experience and course readings, and reflect upon your experience. (20 Points - Due April 3rd)
3. **Class Group Presentation** – There will be four weeks of the semester when intentionally diverse groups of students will present an issue of diversity, equity or justice within higher education. It is encouraged that presentations be creative in format and engage the class actively. Class members will provide feedback that will be the basis for each group grade for this project. Each presentation must include a review of no less than 8 peer-reviewed articles that should be reviewed critically and summarized as a part of the course. The article deemed by the group to be the best should be provided by the group to the class one week prior to your presentation. Your groups deliverable graded products for this project includes three products: (1) An article for the class (3 points); (2) A written summary of what you have learned from your 8 topical articles (10 points); and (3) Your class presentation/ activity (12 points). (Total of 25 points)

4. **Integrative Research Review**: Prepare an 8-10 page paper on one of the topics, concepts, or theories discussed in class that is relevant to your professional or research interest. If possible, choose a topic that will help with the preparation of your thesis or dissertation. The paper should be an integrative literature review and prepared according to APA style guidelines. (Due May 1st – 25 Points)

**Grading**

1. Journal Entries 30 points
2. Diversity Experience Report (Due April 3rd) 20 points
3. Class Group Presentation 25 points
4. Integrative Research Review (Due May 1st) 25 points

**Total** 100 points

A = 90 to 100 points
B = 80 to 89 points
C = 70 to 79 points
D = 60 to 69 points
F = 59 points or less
Course Schedule

Class 1.1  
January 24, 2012

**Topic:** Introductions, course overview, and group assignment.

**Mini-Lecture:** Course Ground Rules

**Discussion:** How do we have “difficult dialogues” about diversity?

**Read**


Class 1.2  
January 31, 2012

**Topic:** Examining the Idea of Social Justice

**Mini-Lecture:** The Role of Considering Justice in Education

**Discussion:** Just What is Justice in Higher Education?

**Read**


Class 1.3  
February 7, 2012

**Topic:** Examining Social Justice Part II
Mini-Lecture: Major Ideas of Justice

Discussion: What do different conceptions of justice mean in the case of higher education?

Read

Class 1.4
February 14, 2012

Topic: A Human Capabilities Approach

Mini-Lecture: Considering Human Capabilities as a Way to Consider Justice

Discussion: How might we apply a human capabilities approach in higher education?

Read


Class 1.5
February 21, 2012

Topic: Diversity and Democracy

Mini-Lecture: How do diversity, democracy and justice relate?

Discussion: What kind of democracy is concerned with diversity?
Read


Class 1.6
February 28, 2012

Topic: Power and Privilege

Mini-Lecture: Seeing white privilege in higher education

Discussion: Examining power and privilege in higher education.

Read


Class 1.7
March 6, 2012

Topic: Exploring Power and Privilege Part II

Mini-Lecture: Introduction to Critical Race Theory

Discussion: Examining white privilege in higher education

Read


Class 1.8  
March 13, 2012

**Topic:** Identity Theory Among College Students

**Mini-Lecture:** Introduction to Identity Theories

**Discussion:** Does identity development matter?

**Read**

Forward, Chapters 1 and 2


Class 1.9  
March 20, 2012

**Topic:** Identity Theory Among College Students: Examining Specific Groups

**Discussion:** Affinity Groups and Identity Development

**Read**

Chapters 3 and 4

expression and development among african american male student leaders. 
Journal of College Student Development, 48(2). 127-144.

Class 1.10
March 27, 2012 – ACPA Conference

Topic: Identity and Higher Education Recap

Discussion: Identity and Higher Education

Group 1 Peer Led Learning: Topic TBD

Read

Peer Led Learning Article


Chapters 5 and case study

Class 1.11
April 3, 2012

Topic: Campus Climate toward Intergroup Dialogue

Group 2 Peer Led Learning: Topic TBD

Read

Peer Led Learning Article


Chapter 1 and 2
Class 1.12  
April 10, 2012

**Topic:** Critical Perspectives and Reflection

**Group 3 Peer Led Learning:** Topic TBD

*Read*
Peer Led Learning Article


Chapter 3 and 4

Class 1.13  
April 17, 2012

**Topic:** Whiteness and the Equity Scorecard

**Group 4 Peer Led Learning:** Topic TBD

*Read*
Peer Led Learning Article


Chapter 5 and 6

Class 1.14  
April 24, 2012

**Topic:** Considering Race and Social Justice

**Group 5 Peer Led Learning:** Topic TBD

*Read*
Peer Led Learning Article


Chapter 7

Class 1.15
May 1, 2012

Topic: Course Reflections

Discussion: What did we collectively learn about engaging in ‘difficult dialogues’?