

Syllabus: Power, Privilege, and Difference

ID 102 | Spring 2022

Thursdays 6:00 – 9:00pm, CCE Osborne Common Room

Instructors: Dr. Matthew Bryant Cheney & Ashlyn Stanton-Henry, M.Div.

Office Hours:

Dr. Matt: **Office Hours:** T (2-4pm), W (9:30-Noon:30), F (1:30-4:30)

Ashlyn: By Appointment

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Course Description

This course seeks to explore core issues of domination, oppression, and transformation by utilizing storytelling, collaboration, and critical analysis. This course is designed to engage students to think critically about the world and their place in it. The roles of teacher and learner constantly rotate back and forth between all participants in this course as the goal is not to find all the answers, but, instead, to ask all the right questions. Questions of a profound kind, about human potentials, wishes, desires—questions which go beyond immediate issues of utility for social or economic needs. This course involves reading relevant material, watching several videos, and reflecting on what you are learning in light of your own ideas, values, goals, and experiences. The goal of this course is to build a learning community where empowered citizens argue together about the future of their society and demonstrate their ability to be active participants rather than passive spectators in the learning process.

Student Learning Goals

SLG1. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze and understand methods and theories of social change, oppression, activism, and root cause analysis.

SLG2. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the relationship between direct service, indirect service, and capacity building.

SLG3. Students will use multiple strategies to build community and promote dialogue across human differences.

SLG4. Students will understand, analyze, and negotiate the relationship between their faith and conceptions of charity and justice.

Liberal Arts Core Goals

LACG 3. Students will develop effective communication skills in both written and spoken English

LACG 4. Students will develop the ability to think critically and to apply appropriate research techniques to the study of human behavior, social systems, and cultures of the world.

LACG 6. Students will develop a broad knowledge of human actions, imagination, and expression

Grade Breakdown

Songs of Struggle=10%

Short Writing & Homework Assignments=15%

Reading Quizzes= 25%

Talk Back Presentation & Responses=25%

Collaborative Group Project & Presentations=25%

Major Assignments & Grade Distribution

A=90-100% | B=80-89.5% | C=70-79.5% | D=60-69.5% | F= \leq 59.95%

NOTE: Students who earn below a C in the course will have to re-take the course in order to remain in good standing with the Bonner Scholars Program.

Songs of Struggle (10% of Final Grade)

Each week, a different student will play a song for the class and explain why that song resonates with them and their understanding of power, privilege, and difference.

Short Writing & Homework Assignments (15% of Final Grade)

Many weeks, students will have short writing prompts or assignments to go with the following week's reading. Students will be encouraged to use what they have written during class discussion and may even be asked to read their work aloud.

Reading Quizzes (25% of Final Grade)

Students will take several unannounced reading quizzes at the beginning of class throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, we will drop the lowest quiz grade.

NOTE: We reserve the right to quiz more often if students do not participate in class discussion.

Talk Back Presentation & Responses (25% of Final Grade)

During the semester, each student will be required to conduct a 15 minute "Talking Back" presentation. The purpose of this presentation is to identify an issue (personal, communal, societal) that you struggle with. Your presentation will describe the issue, detail the effects this issue has had in your life, and explore ways you will confront and address the issue while charting a new path to recovering yourself on your journey to heal. After the presentation, there will be some time (approx. 5 minutes) to conduct a question and answer session with your audience regarding your presentation. The Talking Back presentation is a presentation you will give to the entire class and can include any components (audio, video, etc.,) you deem pertinent to your presentation. Students will sign up in class for dates to conduct their presentations.

Collaborative Paper Project and Presentation (25% of Final Grade)

Students will be placed in assigned groups to facilitate campus and community dialogues on pressing social issues. Details will be given during class on Thursday, March 18.

Course Policies

Class Accessibility and Student Capabilities

We want this class to be as accessible for students with a wide range of physical, emotional, and mental capabilities. Please let us know if there is anything we can do as instructors to maximize your participation in this class and help you have a successful semester. I will never refer in class to any disability or student difficulty brought to my attention. Period.

The university's official statement regarding students with disabilities to be included on all syllabi is as follows: "Any student with a special documented disability (learning, sight, hearing, mobility, etc.) which may affect class activities should contact David Humphrey, ext. 3268, Kathleen Manley Wellness Center. Students will have to provide appropriate documentation."

Attendance

Because our class depends so heavily on in-class discussion, we follow a fairly strict attendance policy (see below).

Unexcused Absences: Because our class only meets once a week, students are allowed one unexcused absence with no grade penalty. On the second unexcused absence, your grade will be lowered one letter per unexcused absence until you reach five unexcused absences at which point you can only receive an F for the course. NOTE: This rule assumes an A in all other coursework. If you are averaging lower than an A, your unexcused absences may yield an F sooner than five unexcused absences. If you miss class and cannot justify it with an excuse, you can erase an unexcused absence from your record by writing (within one week of the absence) an extra short writing assignment and read it at the beginning of class. Students may only erase one unexcused absence in this way.

Excused Absences: We will excuse absences for illness, death in your family, or certain college-sponsored activities. For illness documentation, we require a doctor's note for each individual absence. In the unfortunate event of a death in your immediate family, we DO require a copy of the obituary or the program from a memorial service or funeral. College-sponsored activities include required travel for the purposes of inter-collegiate athletics and other events required within your major. If you're unsure whether or not an event counts, e-mail us with at least four days' notice.

Missed Assignments & Class Notes

It is the student's responsibility to complete all assignments and learn from a classmate what they missed in class. In the case of extended documented illness (more than one week), see either Matt or Ashlyn to work out amended due dates.

Due Dates

All assigned work is due at the beginning of class in the medium (electronic or hard copy) we have requested. For every day that passes after the due date, we will subtract a letter grade. For example, if your paper earned a solid B (85%), but you turned in your paper two days late, you would receive a D (65%). After five days, the work will receive an automatic zero.

Technology

Cell Phones: **All texting and cell phone use (even to check the time) is banned in our class unless it is part of an approved class activity**, i.e., taking pictures or conducting an internet search during a group project. I will appoint a timekeeper at the beginning of each class, and they will be responsible for keeping us on time. If a cell phone rings in class, Matt and Ashlyn are the only people allowed to answer it, and we will answer it and talk to whoever is on the other end. If we notice you texting in class, we will ask you to stop and you will be issued a tardy (3 tardies=1 unexcused absence). Unless we speak before class begins and Matt or Ashlyn grant you permission to use your cell phone, phones must be turned off and in your bag throughout class.

Plagiarism

Students will be provided with a plagiarism handout that they are required to sign and return. If plagiarism is detected on **ANY** of your work, the lowest possible punishment is an F on the assignment. All plagiarism cases are reported to the Provost & VP for Academic Affairs. Students who are found plagiarizing may earn an automatic F in the course and/or face further disciplinary action from the University.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to revision or change at any time during the course.

See online daily course schedule below for due dates and weekly reading assignments!

ID 102 WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

January 14 – Introductions

Readings: None

Activities: Greetings, Assumptions, Hopes & Fears, Definitions

January 21 – Social Justice & Civil Disobedience

Readings: (1) read Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. - “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and Letter from Area “Liberal” Clergy

Activities: Reading Discussion, Talk Back Instructions, Oppression and Social “Issues”

January 28 – Oppression & Education

Readings: (1) watch Anna Mascara, “10 Active Reading Strategies // Study Less Study Smart”

(2) read Paulo Freire - from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (p. 35-69)

Activities: Reading Discussion

February 4 – Vulnerability & the Quest for Happiness

Readings: (1) watch Brené Brown, “The Power of Vulnerability”

(2) read Brené Brown - from *Dare to Lead* (p. xi-43)

February 11 – Beyond Victimhood & Helplessness

Readings: (1) read Kendra Cherry, “What Is Learned Helplessness and Why Does it Happen?”

(2) read Audre Lorde, “*The Master’s Tools Will Not Dismantle the Master’s House*”

(3) watch Audre Lorde, “The Theory of Difference”

February 18 – What is a Criminal? Part One

Readings: (1) read Michelle Alexander – from “Introduction” to *The New Jim Crow* (p. 1-19)

(2) watch Jose Antonia Vargas, “Actions are illegal, never people”

(3) watch the DOCUMENTED film trailer

February 25 – What is a Criminal? Part Two

Readings: (1) Read Reiman and Leighton, “The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison” (p.170-189)

(2) Knoxville Mercury Article, “Knox County Jail Policies Draw Fire Over Prisoner Profiteering”

March 4 – Story Time!

Readings: (1) read Flannery O’Connor, “Everything that Rises Must Converge”

March 11 – SPRING BREAK

Readings: None!

March 18 – What is “Safe Speech”

Readings: (1) read Lukianoff and Haidt’s, “The Coddling of the American Mind” (p. 1-32)

(2) watch “Political Correctness: Explained”

Assign: Collaborative Project Guidelines

March 25 – Us vs. Them

Readings: (1) read Lukianoff and Haidt’s, “The Coddling of the American Mind” (p. 53-77)

April 1 – Moral Revival

Readings: read Barber and Theoharis, “Revive Us Again” ()

April 8 – The Civil Rights & Anti-War Movements

Readings: (1) Martin Luther King, Jr.- “Beyond Vietnam: The Riverside Speech” [Audio and Written Versions Available on Canvas]

April 15 – WORK WEEK [No class requirements]

Activities: (1) Work on your collaborative projects and schedule a conference with Dr. Matt & Ashlyn.
(2) Attend Twin Pillars Award Ceremony instead of attending class

April 22 – Class Wrap-Up

Activities: Collaborative Project Presentations (15 minutes per group) and semester reflections.

**All significant changes will be announced in class and posted to the Google Docs Version

