SC311: Diversity, Community and Service
Spring 2011, McGuinn 400
Tuesdays 12:00-2:20 p.m.

Prof. Dave Harker  Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-5:00 p.m.
McGuinn 410A
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Course Description:

Poverty, racism, homelessness, inadequate education, lack of quality and affordable healthcare, unemployment, violence, and environmental pollutions, etc. have become daily realities for many people living in a stratified society. What are the roles and responsibilities of individual citizens in addressing the pervasiveness of injustice and inequality in our society? How do our personal experiences influence the way in which we understand inequality and how does this understanding shape our motivations and forms of civic engagement? What forms of civic engagement can lead to social change? How can privilege distort our views and impact our actions?

This course will engage with several bodies of literature - social movement, community organizing, service learning, feminist and critical race studies - in understanding the dilemmas facing those working for social change. Students will explore contemporary forms of civic engagement, volunteerism, service, community organizing, and ‘activism’ and evaluate how each addresses social change. Drawing on case studies, personal accounts, and sociological research, students will have the opportunity to reflect upon their own personal motivations and/or experiences with these social change forms as well as gain a deeper understanding of how various forms of privilege can influence social change efforts.

Course Objectives:

• Gain a deeper understanding of your own moral responsibility as a member of society.
• Identify and articulate how your personal experiences have been shaped by larger societal patterns and in turn have shaped your understanding of inequality and what it takes to make social change.
• Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various social change models and be able to apply these models to a particular social issue.
• Develop an understanding of how privilege can impact our actions toward social change and explore ways in which we can effectively work across differences.
Required Texts (available in bookstore and on reserve):

Course Requirements:

Class participation (25% of your grade):
Class participation is required, as much of the learning will take place in the classroom through participation in class discussions. It is expected that when you are in class you will participate. Students are expected to come to each class session having completed the assigned readings and prepared to discuss the material. I will take note of the frequency of your participation as well as excessive absences and lateness, as this has an effect on group discussion.

Assignments and due dates (75% of your grade):
You will be asked to complete three assignments and a short presentation over the course of the semester. A detailed description for each assignment can be found on Blackboard.

*Personal Reflection Paper (10%)*
Due date: Tues., Feb. 15

*Inequality Analysis (25%)*
Due date: Tues., Mar. 29

*Field Experience Report (25%)*
Due date: Tues., Apr. 26

*Final Presentation (15%)*
Due date: TBD, end of semester

Late work: If you have extenuating circumstances, you must see me BEFORE the due date to discuss a possible extension; otherwise you will lose 5 points each day the assignment is late.

A note on academic integrity:
Sharing of information and ideas are encouraged as you will be working with your classmates on your assignments. In cases where you are required to use published work, you must cite the work. If you plagiarize or cheat in some other form, you will fail the assignment; repeated episodes will result in failure of the course. If there are any questions on proper method of citing, please see me. For more information on Boston College’s academic integrity policy, please visit: www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity.
Course Schedule:

Tuesday, January 18th:
Introduction to the course

I. SELF AND SOCIETY

Tuesday, January 25th:
Moral and Social Responsibilities

Readings:

Tuesday, February 1st:
Guest Speaker: Burt Howell, Associate Director for The Center for Student Formation at Boston College

Readings:
- Illich, Ivan. (1968). “To Hell With Good Intentions” Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects, Cuernavaca, Mexico. BLACKBOARD

Tuesday, February 8th:
Service Learning and Public Sociology

Readings:
Tuesday, February 15th:
Lived Experiences and Worldviews
Paper Discussion

Readings:

II. CRITICALLY EXPLORING INEQUALITY

Tuesday, February 22nd:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege

Film clips in class: “Dangerous Minds” (1995)

Readings:

Tuesday, March 1st:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege (Continued)

Readings:

Tuesday, March 8th:
Spring Vacation - No Class
Tuesday, March 15th:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege (Continued)

Readings:

III. EVALUATING MODELS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Tuesday, March 22nd:
The Politics of Difference
Distributive, Ideological and Feminist Models of Change

Readings:

Tuesday, March 29th:  2nd PAPER DUE
Paper Discussion and Possible Field Experience Placements

Tuesday, April 5th:
The “Service” Model

Readings:
Tuesday, April 12th:
The “Community-Organizing” Model

*Film in class: 9500 Liberty (2010)*

*Readings:*
  - Stall, Susan and Randy Stoecker. (1998). “Community Organizing or Organizing Community? Gender and the Crafts of Empowerment.” *Gender and Society*, 12, 6, 729-756. LIBRARY RESERVE

Tuesday, April 19th:
The “Organizing Community” Model,
Discuss Field Experience, and Presentation Review

*Readings:*

Tuesday, April 26th: 3rd PAPER DUE
Presentations

Tuesday, May 3rd:
Presentations