SC311: Diversity, Community and Service
Fall 2013
McGuinn Hall 415
Mondays, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Prof. Dave Harker
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Office Hours: Mondays, 11:30 am-2:30pm or by appointment

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 ways in which we understand inequality and how does this understanding shape our motivations and forms of engagement with these issues? What forms of 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 responsibilities 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. *If I sense that students are not doing the assigned readings, I will assign additional quizzes and/or short writing assignments to ensure the readings are completed.

Every student will also be required to sign up, as part of a pair or group, to lead discussion for one class during the semester. **This will be considered as part of your class participation grade. You must meet with me after class/during office hours the week before you are to lead discussion to go over your plans. If you have another class at this time, we can make other arrangements.**

* A note on personal electronics and class participation: Since this is a heavily participation and discussion-based class, I request that students refrain from using laptops and other personal electronic devices (iPad, iPhone, etc.) during the class period. I find that such devices tend to be more of a distraction than a learning aid. Powerpoints of any lecture slides will be posted on Blackboard after the class for your convenience. If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please let me know.

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: Mon., Oct. 7th
- **Inequality Analysis (25%)**
  - Due date: Mon., Nov. 11th
- **Field Experience Report (25%)**
  - Due date: Mon., Dec. 9th
- **Final Presentation (15%)**
  - Mon., Dec. 9th
Late work: If you have extenuating circumstances, you must let me know **BEFORE** the due date to discuss a possible extension; otherwise you will lose 5 percentage points for that assignment each day past the due date (beginning with class that day).

A note on academic integrity:
Sharing of information and ideas are encouraged, as you may be working with your classmates on your assignments. However, every student is responsible for her or his own work. 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; and 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](http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity).
Course Schedule:

Monday, September 9th:
Introduction to the course, overview of syllabus and assignments

I. SELF AND SOCIETY

Monday, September 16th:
Higher Education and Community Engagement

Guest Speaker: Burt Howell, Director of Intersections at Boston College

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

Monday, September 23rd:
Moral and Social Responsibilities

Sign up for discussion-leader groups

Readings:

Monday, September 30th:
Service Learning and Public Sociology

Readings:
Monday, October 7th:
Lived Experiences and Worldviews
Paper Discussion

Readings:

Monday, October 14th:
Columbus Day – No Class

II. CRITICALLY EXPLORING INEQUALITY

Monday, October 21st:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege

Readings:

Monday, October 28th:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege (Continued)

Readings:
Monday, November 4th:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege (Continued)

Readings:

III. EVALUATING MODELS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Monday, November 11th:
2nd PAPER DUE
The Politics of Difference - Distributive, Ideological and Feminist Models of Change
Paper Discussion and Possible Field Experience Placements

Readings:

Monday, November 18th:
The “Service” Model

Readings:
Monday, November 25th:  
The “Service” Model (continued)

Readings:


Monday, December 2nd:  
The “Community-Organizing” and “Organizing Community” Models  

Paper Discussion

Film to watch before 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

Monday, December 9th:  
3rd PAPER DUE
Presentations
9/9
9/16 – Burt visit
9/23 –
9/30
10/7
10/14 – No Class - Columbus Day
10/21
10/28
11/4
11/11
11/18
11/25
12/2  - Presentations?
12/9  - Presentations? (Final Class)