SC311: Diversity, Community and Service  
Spring 2014  
McGuinn Hall 413  
Thursdays, 12:00-2:30 p.m.

Prof. Dave Harker  
McGuinn 410A  
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Office Hours: Thursdays, 2:30 – 5:00pm or by appointment

Course Description:

Issues such as poverty, racism, homelessness, inadequate education, lack of quality and affordable healthcare, unemployment, violence, and environmental pollutions 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 and social 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.
- Cultivate an understanding of the interaction between the structural and cultural factors involved in various issues of inequality.
- 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. Any and all 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 writing assignments and a short presentation over the course of the semester. A detailed description for each assignment can be found on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Reflection Paper (10%)</td>
<td>Thu., February 13th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inequality Analysis (25%)</td>
<td>Thu., March 20th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Experience Report (25%)</td>
<td>Thu., April 24th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Presentation (15%)</td>
<td>Thu., April 24th and May 1st</td>
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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 classmates on some of these 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.

If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities, including temporary disabilities. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.
Course Schedule:

Thursday, January 16th:
Introduction to the course, overview of syllabus and assignments

I. SELF AND SOCIETY

Thursday, January 23rd:
Moral and Social Responsibilities

Readings:

Thursday, January 30th:
Higher Education and Community Engagement
Sign up for discussion-leader groups

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

Thursday, February 6th:
Service Learning and Public Sociology

Readings:
Syllabus – Harker, SC311

Thursday, February 13th:
Lived Experiences and Worldviews
Paper Discussion

Readings:

II. CRITICALLY EXPLORING INEQUALITY

Thursday, February 20th:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege

Readings:

Thursday, February 27th:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege (Continued)

Readings:
Thursday, March 6th:
NO CLASS – Spring Vacation

Thursday, March 13th:
Stereotypes, Power and Privilege (Continued)

Readings:
- Decker, Paul T., Daniel P. Mayer, and Steven Glazerman. (2004). “The Effects of Teach For America on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation”. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. BLACKBOARD (Scan for main points – You do not have to read the entire article)

III. EVALUATING MODELS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Thursday, March 20th:
The Politics of Difference - Distributive, Ideological and Feminist Models of Change
2nd PAPER DUE
Paper Discussion and Possible Field Experience Placements

Readings:

Thursday, March 27th:
The “Service” Model

Readings:
Thursday, April 3rd:
The “Service” Model (continued)

Readings:

Thursday, April 10th:
“Community-Organizing” , “Organizing Community” and “Activism”

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

Thursday, April 17th:
NO CLASS – Easter Weekend

Thursday, April 24th: 3rd PAPER DUE
Presentations

Thursday, May 1st:
Presentations