

**EDL 558: Social Justice Topics in Education**

Semester/Year	Fall 2016
Day/Time	Wednesdays, 5-7:15 PM Synchronous: 8/24, 9/7, 9/21, 10/5, 11/2, 11/16
Location	EB 337
Instructor	James M. DeVita <a href="http://people.uncw.edu/devitaj/">http://people.uncw.edu/devitaj/</a>
Office Location	EB 376
Office Hours	Wednesdays, Noon-5 PM Thursdays, 10 AM-3 PM
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Expected Response Times	Text message to cell 2-3 hours (often quicker) Email message 2-3 days Voicemail message >3 days

I do check email messages regularly and will respond as soon as possible. If you do have an immediate concern, please contact me via phone.

Watson College of Education – ELearning  
& Online Support

<http://uncw.edu/ed/online/students.html>

Randall Library

<http://library.uncw.edu/>

Technology Assistance Center @ UNCW

<http://uncw.edu/itsd/help/>

Disability Services @ UNCW

<http://uncw.edu/disability/students/index.html>

TAC Help Desk

<http://uncw.edu/ITSD/help/TAC.html>

University Learning Center

<http://www.uncw.edu/ulc/about/index.html>

Blackboard Information

<http://uncw.edu/ITSD/learning/UNCWITSDBlackboardLearn.html>

Writing Center

<http://uncw.edu/ulc/writing/center.html>

## Course Overview

### Course Description

This course examines topics related to privilege, marginalization, and social justice work in higher education. Readings, discussions, and activities are focused on the theoretical foundations that frame social justice work and practical implications for multiple stakeholder groups.

### Relation of the Course to UNCW Learning Goals



This course meets UNCW Learning Goals of:

1. ***Inquiry*** – Students will engage in rigorous, open-minded and imaginative inquiry;
2. ***Information Literacy*** – Students will locate, evaluate, and effectively use information by applying a variety of academic and technological skills;
3. ***Thoughtful Expression*** – Students will effectively express meaningful ideas in speech and writing;
4. ***Diversity*** – Students will describe and examine the importance and implications of human diversity.

### Relation of the Course to the Watson College of Education Conceptual Framework

This course is designed to help students understand how the Master's Degree in Higher Education prepares effective higher education professionals through program coursework and practicum experiences. The key concepts are: (a) Reflective practice; (b) Developing high quality communication and reasoning abilities; (c) Commitment to ethical and professional standards; and (d) Ability to meet needs of diverse learners.

### Course Objectives and Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. To demonstrate understanding of the theoretical foundations of diversity, multiculturalism and social justice;

2. To discuss philosophical perspectives that have shaped the ways in which leaders in higher education engage in social justice work in higher education;
3. To identify the ways in which power, privilege, and marginalization impact various institutional stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff) in disparate ways;
4. To describe the effects of social justice work across institutional and administrative contexts.

### **Class Policies**

**Academic Honesty:** All work completed in this course must be original work developed this semester. Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses or purchases ghostwritten papers. It also occurs when a student utilizes ideas or information obtained from another person without giving credit to that person. If plagiarism or another act of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be dealt with in accordance with the academic misconduct policy as stated in the latest *Student Handbook*. More information about the Academic Honor Code at UNCW is available here: [http://uncw.edu/policies/documents/03\\_100FINALHONORCODE\\_Aug2009.pdf](http://uncw.edu/policies/documents/03_100FINALHONORCODE_Aug2009.pdf).

**Attendance:** If you must miss class for a legitimate reason (e.g., religious holidays, illness, family emergencies, work requirements that cannot be rearranged, court appearances, conferences), please contact Dr. DeVita to discuss the situation prior to class via email or cellphone (text is acceptable). Make sure you are also on time to class each week as I will try to start and end class on time each week. Attendance and active participation is considered a requirement of the course and therefore will not be graded.

**Disability:** All students are provided with equal access to classes and materials, regardless of special needs, temporary or permanent disability, special needs related to pregnancy, etc. If you have any special learning needs, particularly (but not limited to) needs defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and require specific accommodations, please do not hesitate to make those known, either yourself or through the Coordinator of Disability Services. Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. For more information, the website is linked on page 1 of the syllabus.

**Deadlines and Late Work:** If you must hand in work late for a legitimate reason (e.g., personal illness, family illness), please contact Dr. DeVita to discuss the situation prior to the due date. The grade for any work handed in late without prior discussion and a legitimate reason will be reduced by 5 points per day.

**Professional Conduct and Participation:** You will be expected to contribute actively and positively to the class discussion. Actively engaging in discussion about ideas and concepts is one means of learning new material and considering your position with regard to those ideas and concepts. Participation in the class is designed to help you develop your verbal and listening skills by encouraging active involvement in the learning process. Participation does not necessarily equal talking a lot (in fact, talking for the sake of talking often detracts from one's participation). The following are examples of factors considered when evaluating participation:

- Contributing interesting, insightful comments
- Presenting good examples of concepts being discussed
- Building on the comments of others
- Raising good questions
- Being sensitive to your level of participation and making attempts to increase or decrease it if necessary
- Being sensitive to the emotional impact of your statements
- Listening and responding appropriately to others' comments
- Being sensitive to the nonverbal messages you may be conveying
- Attending all class meetings
- Being on time

**Student Email Policy:** University of North Carolina Wilmington students are provided an “@uncw.edu” email account, which is the official means of communication between the University and student. It is the student’s responsibility to check this email account for important University related information. This will also be the primary form of communication I utilize to communicate with you throughout the semester.

### **Required Texts**

Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W., Castaneda, C. R., Hackman, H. W., Peters, M. L., & Zuniga, X. (Eds.). (2015). *Readings for diversity and social justice* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Alinsky, S. (1989). *Rules for radicals: A practical primer for realistic radicals*. New York: Vintage Books.

### **Recommended Text**

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2009). Washington, DC: Author.

### **Assignments & Evaluation**

1. Social Justice Project	30 points
Applied Learning Activities [10 total: 2 per module]	
Initial Reflection Video	15 points
Reflection Response Video	15 points
2. Learning Activity Reports	50 points
3. Small Group Forum	10 points
4. Pre-Post Survey & Reflection	10 points
Total	100 points

## Grading Scale

<b>A</b>	<b>95-100</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>80-82</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-94</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>75-79</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>86-89</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>70-74</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>83-85</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>69 and Below</b>

Incompletes will be given only in extreme circumstances.

## Assignment and Writing Guidelines

All assignments should be submitted by 11:59 PM on the day they are due as noted on the syllabus. Your written assignments must be submitted using the Assignment Submission function in Blackboard for our course. My feedback and grade will be added to your document using the “track changes” function in Word, so your document should be uploaded in either “.doc” or “.docx” format and saved with your last name as part of the file name. (e.g., DeVita\_MAP1)

If you need assistance conceptualizing assignments or reviewing projects, please contact me at least one week prior to the assignment due date. I will not assist with editing or rewrites but may be able to indicate to you that editing or rewriting is needed to correct grammar, punctuation, APA format, etc. Students are strongly encouraged to use each other as editors as well.

All written assignments are expected to conform to the guidelines and reference formats specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). All work must be typed, double-spaced, using 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman, although it is important to note that Arial is the most “readable” font for individuals with any type of visual or learning impairment).

Written assignments will be graded on their technical quality as well as content. All written assignments should be carefully proofread for spelling, grammar, and syntax. If your writing skills are not strong, I urge you to seek outside help to improve them.

## Course Activities

### Social Justice Project

My philosophy of social justice has evolved from my research on allies in higher education, and LGBTQ communities and individuals, as well as from my work in social justice programming. Over time it has evolved to include several components: (a) learning about the experiences and development of marginalized/targeted populations, (b) understanding privilege within the individual and greater society, (c) engaging in work that attempts to ameliorate the climate for those populations on campus and in society, and (d) honoring the voices and perspectives of marginalized and targeted individuals with creative representations of knowledge.

Throughout the semester, students will be engaged in a social justice project (SJP) where they participate in applied learning activities that provide them with first-hand experiences with one or more of the marginalized/targeted populations which we learn about during the semester. The goal of this project is to ensure that you have personal experiences that connect and ground theory-to-practice applications of social justice topics.

Students will be assigned in pairs to explore specific marginalized populations in higher education. Each student will be required to participate in their own set of activities and completed individual reflections and other associated assignments. The purpose of the pairs is to facilitate the development of a forum or workshop by the end of the semester that addresses key issues related to the population that you have explored throughout the semester. The format and structure of each forum is up to the pair of students focused on that identity group; however each forum or workshop must follow the guidelines posted below and should represent the effort required for an approximately a one-hour workshop:

1. **Collaborative:** each forum or workshop should represent a collaboration between the respective pair who studied that population and at least one other campus or community organization;
2. **Educational:** the forum or workshop should be educationally-focused. In other words, one of the primary goals should be to educate others about the group you have examined throughout the semester;
3. **Professional:** the forum or workshop should be professionally planned and organized, include appropriate supporting documents, and demonstrate a professionally conducted activity in higher education;
4. **Creativity:** each forum or workshop should utilize a creative approach, possibly through the use of technology or multi-media. In other words, I want you to think beyond just a typical workshop—go deeper, go into the community, take an applied approach, create a movie, create a performance...this is a chance to be creative!

### Social Justice Project Groups

Students will select the group with which they work from the list below. 2 students will be assigned to each group.

SJP Focus/Group	Student	Student
Non-White Lesbian Identities		
MTF or FTM Transgender Identities		
International Students from South/Central America		
White Privilege on Campus		
Non-Traditionally Aged Military Veterans & Partners		
Students from Rural and/or Low SES Schools/Areas		

### Applied Learning Activities

Over the course of the semester students are expected to identify and participate in 10 applied learning activities where they engage with members of the marginalized population that is the

focus of their Social Justice Project (during first class meeting). Each student will work on the same population as another student in the course, but must engage in their own applied learning activities and associated assignments (reflections, LARs).

Students are required to complete 2 applied learning activities prior to completing their initial reflection videos in 5 of the course learning modules for a total of 10 applied learning activities. **One applied learning activity must come from activities included in each of the options listed below; that is, students must complete 1 from option A and 1 from option B within each module.** You will be evaluated on your completion of reflection videos associated with your applied learning activities and the Learning Activity Reports (described below).

Option A	Option B
Review at least 3 research or scholarly publications about SJP group	Informal interviews with members of the SJP group
Tedtalk or other online workshop or presentation about SJP group	Informal interviews with staff and/or faculty who work with/study the SJP group
Attend a workshop or presentation about SJP group	Attend a performance, play, musical, or other performing arts event associated with SJP group
Read an autobiography, biography, or book about SJP group member(s), leader(s)	Visit a museum, art installation or other venue associated with SJP group
Watch a documentary or educational video or program about SJP group	Attend a cultural event associated with SJP group
Review blog posts, Facebook pages, other relevant media about SJP group	Volunteer at an event or fundraiser associated with SJP group
Completing a walking tour of campus during which you attempt to view campus from the perspective of someone who identifies as a member of the group you are studying. This can be an option A or B activity and is recommended during your final modules in the course as your prior reflections will inform your perspective.	

### Reflection Videos & Discussion Boards – 30 points total

Online discussions will be a key component of engagement among members of the course during our online weeks. Therefore, 30% of your overall grade is tied directly to your on-time and thoughtful engagement in module activities and discussions. Each module will require you to upload an initial reflection video where you will summarize your engagement in the applied learning activities and discuss your learning and development. You will then be required to review the posts of other course members and post a reflection response video. In your reflection response post, you will be asked to provide feedback to your peers AND to make connections to the assigned readings, as appropriate. In order to make this process meaningful for everyone involved, it is critical that posts are completed by the assigned deadlines. Specific prompts for each module will be available within Blackboard. Your initial posts will also be shared with your collaborative undergraduate group.

All reflections should be submitted by 11:59 PM on the day they are due as noted on the table below and within the assignment in Blackboard. A voice-over video response is required for

both posts and should be professional, thoughtful, and related directly to the module activities and associated prompt. The module activities and discussions are intended to approximate engagement in face-to-face activities and discussion. Instructions on how to upload voice-over videos are included within the Blackboard course. NOTE: you will need to prepare a presentation for all response videos that will accompany your voice-over video.

### Discussion Evaluation

0	1	2	3
Did not post by deadline	Unacceptable depth, content; Unacceptable formatting	Relies heavily on personal opinion and little reference to external examples, ideas; Presentation has errors, poorly formatted	Uses examples, references readings, demonstrates depth and thoughtfulness; Presentation is professionally prepared and formatted

### Discussion Board Schedule

Module	Initial Reflection Due by 11:59 PM	Reflection Response Due by 11:59 PM
1	Tuesday, 8/30	Tuesday, 9/6
2	Tuesday, 9/13	Tuesday, 9/20
3	Tuesday, 9/27	Tuesday, 10/4
4	Tuesday, 10/26	Tuesday, 11/1
5	Tuesday, 11/8	Tuesday, 11/15

### Learning Activity Reports – 5 @ 10 points/each

**50 points**

Students are required to submit a report that details their learning activities and reflections about their attitudes and experiences while participating in the Social Justice Project. The report should be approximately 4 pages in length (max., excluding cover page, references) and address the following:

1. **Description of the learning activities completed** – this should include all of the following: (a) description of the activities you completed in this module, (b) description of the activity site: where was the activity completed, and (c) rich description of the general participants as well as the key stakeholders that stood out to you during your activity (1 page maximum)
2. **Critical reflection** – each report must include an in-depth reflection that focused on what you have learned about your own identities and those with whom you have engaged in work during the semester. This section should address one or more of the



questions below and be **approximately 2 pages** in length. Where appropriate, you should provide citations to course readings or other scholarly publications reviewed during your activities.

In your reflection you should consider the following questions:

- a. What have you learned about yourself, your assumptions about power, privilege, and marginalization?
  - b. What have you learned about yourself in relation to the individuals with whom you have worked?
  - c. How have your experiences impacted your understanding of marginalized populations?
  - d. How do your identities shape what you think you've learned by engaging in your social justice project?
3. **Collaborative group reflection** – in this section you should reflect on the collaborative group process. Discuss the role you have taken and the group dynamics that you have observed. What is going well? What needs to be improved? What could be adapted moving forward? Also discuss the creative process and your thoughts about the progress made towards the final representation. 1 page max.

### Learning Activities and Report Deadlines

Learning Activity	Due Date
Activity & Report #1	Tuesday, 9/13
Activity & Report #2	Tuesday, 9/27
Activity & Report #3	Tuesday, 10/11
Activity & Report #4	Tuesday, 11/8
Activity & Report #5	Tuesday, 11/22

### Report Evaluation

0	Required Description 4 points			Critical Reflection 4 points			Group Reflection 2 points		Total
No points awarded for late submissi ons	1	2	3-4	1	2	3-4	1	2	10
	Poor quality overall; lacked depth	Lacked depth, details; relevant info not included	Good depth and detail	Poor quality overall; lacked depth	Reflection lacked depth and reference to learning activities	Good depth, reference to learning activities	Lacked depth and detail	Good depth and detail	

### Collaborative Meetings and Social Justice Forum – 10 points

Student pairs are required to meet with Dr. DeVita at 2 points in the semester (highlighted in blue below). The purpose of these meetings is to monitor progress and assist with the team's work on developing the Social Justice Forum they are required to conduct (see above). While the meetings will be informal in nature, each pair should prepare a presentation or summary of the progress made on their SJP and work towards their final forum or workshop. Each pair can develop a single presentation or summary for the meeting and both members should attend the meeting.

The table below represents when meetings should be planned and completed:

Activity	Timeline	Goal/Focus
SJP Group Members	Between 8/17 – 9/6	Initial meeting; work styles; project focus; activities and learning to date
2-on-1 w/DeVita	Between 9/7 – 9/20	Project plans; activities and learning to date; group dynamics; collaborative plans
SJP Group Members	Between 9/21 – 10/4	Activities and learning to date; project ideas; forum/workshop structure and planning
2-on-1 w/DeVita	Between 10/5-11/1	Project progress; activities and learning to date; forum/workshop format and scheduling and details
Hold Forum/Workshop	Between 11/1-12/1	Implement forum/workshop with collaborative partners

Meetings can be scheduled via outlook calendar invitations or email. WebEx or Skype meetings available for students who cannot meet in person. All meetings will last approximately 30 minutes.

### Pre-Post Survey – 10 points [Pre-Survey: Module 0; Post-Survey: Module 6]

All students are required to complete a pre-post survey that provides information about their learning and development in the course, as well as their perspective on their engagement and the role of course activities.

### Course Schedule

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Activities</b>	<b>Due by 11:59 PM</b>
Module 0: Course Introduction and Overview	Review Syllabus and Blackboard  F2F: Wednesday, 8/24 5-7:15 PM – EB 337	8/30: Pre-Survey
Module 1: Theoretical Foundations of Social Justice in Education	<i>Readings</i> Section 1 (pp. 1-56)  F2F: Wednesday, 9/7 5-7:15 PM – EB 337	8/30: Reflection #1 9/6: Reflection #2 9/13: LAR #1
Module 2: Race and Ethnicity	<i>Readings</i> Sections 2 & 3 (pp. 57-228)  F2F: Wednesday, 9/21 5-7:15 PM – EB 337	9/13: Reflection #3 9/20: Reflection #4 9/27: LAR #2  2-on-1 meeting by 9/20
Module 3: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Religion	<i>Readings</i> Sections 4, 5 & 6 (pp. 229-424)  F2F: Wednesday, 10/5 5-7:15 PM – EB 337	9/27: Reflection #5 10/4: Reflection #6 10/11: LAR #3
Module 4: Ability and SES	<i>Readings</i> Sections 7, 8 & 9 (pp. 425-588) <i>Radicals</i> , pp. 3-97  F2F: Wednesday, 11/2 5-7:15 PM in EB 337	10/26: Reflection #7 11/1: Reflection #8 11/8: LAR #4  2-on-1 meeting by 11/1
Module 5: Culminating Discussion	<i>Readings</i> Section 10 (pp. 589-646) <i>Radicals</i> , pp. 98-end  F2F: Wednesday, 11/16 5-7:15 PM in EB 337	11/8: Reflection #9 11/15: Reflection #10 11/22: LAR #5  11/22: Post-Survey