

Arts and Social Justice
ES/WGSS/QS 375
(4 credits, meeting 4 hours a week)

Credits Rationale: This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, activities, and assignments for 4 credits. These credit units will allow for greater opportunity to practice critical thinking and writing and to facilitate the length and complexity of a final analytical writing assignment, an 8-10 page critical essay requiring students to consult multiple outside sources and online resources. In addition, 3-4 page papers are due three times during the term, as well as creative reflections using an art medium of their choice on alternate weeks. As an interdisciplinary course which focuses on the arts and creative expression, these course hours will also allow for the practice of making art.

This class meets twice a week for one hour and fifty minutes each meeting.

No prerequisites or co-requisites

Campus Location: Corvallis, Main

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores concepts of structural inequality, difference, power, and discrimination through a critical survey of arts activism. Students will think critically about artwork and artists which address a number of social issues in the United States, including race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, immigration, and indigeneity.

Additionally: Although this course is a survey of the many genres of art activism, we will emphasize readings of various practicing artists and academics with a focus on counter narratives, intersectionality, fluid, and multiple identities and communities.

Students will engage in a number of learning methods, skills, and strategies. These include: analyzing art genres, comparing artwork from various social movements and issues, generating critical-reflective artwork, creating dynamic presentations and peer-and self-evaluation and editing.

Difference, Power, and Discrimination Courses

Baccalaureate Core Requirement

ES/WGSS/QS 375: Arts and Social Justice fulfills the Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) requirement in the Baccalaureate Core. The DPD requirement engages students in the intellectual examination of the complexity of the structures, systems, and ideologies that sustain discrimination and the unequal distribution of power and resources in society. The unequal distribution of social, economic, and political power in the United States and in other countries is sustained through a variety of individual beliefs and institutional practices. These beliefs and practices have tended to obscure the origins and operations of social discrimination such that this unequal power distribution is often viewed as the natural order. Examination of DPD course material will enhance meaningful democratic participation in our diverse university community and our increasingly multicultural U.S. society.

Baccalaureate Core & Learning Outcomes

- A. Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) category. At the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Explain how difference is socially constructed.
 2. Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination.
 3. Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States.
- B. Course Learning Outcomes. At the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Articulate and analyze themes of power, privilege, and oppression within art activist work.
 2. Demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of arts activism methods and approaches.
 3. Generate reflective art pieces which interrogate contemporary social problems.

Required Learning Resources:

- Activist Art in Social Justice Pedagogy Edited by Barbara Beyerbach & Deborah Davis (Peter Lang Publishing, 2011).
- The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie (Hachette Book Group, 2007).

Selected Readings from:

- Readings for Diversity and Social Justice Edited by Maurianne Adams and Warren Blumenfield, Carmelita Castaneda, Heather W. Hackman, Madeline L. Peters, Ximena Zuniga (Routledge, 2013).
- Culturally Relevant Arts Education for Social Justice Edited by Mary Stone Hanley, George W. Noblit, Gilda Sheppard, and Tom Barone (Routledge, 2013).

COURSE CONTENT

Week 1: Introduction and Goals

Tues: Introduction: Difference, Power, and Discrimination through Art

Thurs: Read Readings for Diversity, Section 1, 1-25

*Due: Reflective Artwork – art method of choice

Week 2: Identity and Voice

Tues: Read Readings for Diversity, Section 1, 26-52

Thurs: Read Activist Art, Chapter 1

Activity in class, Power Shuffle

*Due: Reflective Artwork – poem

Week 3: Farmworkers and the Arts

Tues: Read Readings for Diversity, Section 2, 65-95

Thurs: Read Activist Art, Chapter 2

*Due: Brief #1

Week 4: Storytelling and Social Justice

Tues: Read Readings for Diversity, Section 2, pgs. 109-133

Thurs: Read Culturally Relevant, Section 2, pgs. 15-23

Activity in class, Theater of the Oppressed

*Due: Reflective Artwork– photography

Week 5: Photography and Transportraits

Tues: Read Activist Art, Chapter 6

Thurs: Read Readings for Diversity, Section 7, 427-446

*Due: Brief #2

Week 6: Art and Indigeneity

Tues: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

Thurs: Read Activist Art, Chapter 9

*Due: Creative reflective project proposal including a bibliography.

Week 7: Student Activism and Documentaries

Tues : Read Activist Art, Chapter 7

Thurs: Oregon State University Pride Center Video

*Due: Reflective Artwork – multimedia

Week 8: Activist Art as Liberation

Tues: Read Activist Art, Chapter 15

Thurs: Read Readings for Diversity, Section 7, 589-625

*Due: Reflective Artwork – art method of choice

Week 9: Creative Reflective Project Preparation

Tues: *Due: Draft of creative reflective project, present to small group and get feedback to improve.

Thurs: In class, group work for presentations

Week 10: Art Demo and Presentation

Tues: Finalize preparations for presentation

Thurs: In class, art demonstration and presentation

Exam week:

Exam time: The final creative reflective project is due on either Wed of exam week or the day after the exam day (with final presentations) by 5 in professor's box.

A Note about Pedagogy:

I believe in the power of personal transformation, creative expression, and social justice education. In this class, you will get out what you put in. The classroom environment is an opportunity to dig deep, learn new concepts, challenge your paradigms and engage in courageous conversations necessary for social change and envisioning of a better world. It requires a commitment to being open-minded, challenging dominant paradigms, and co-creating learning communities where students can explore concepts, their identities, and make meaning of knowledge to become informed change agents.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Participation: Discussion, in-class writings, and art concept presentation: Students will participate in in-class discussions (whole class and small group) as well as in-class writings that are handed in during class. These will show understanding and critical analysis of the readings. Students will also be asked to present to the class about an artist/issue area of their choice once during the term. The images and information will present a social justice issue that the class will discuss.

Briefs:

Papers must be typed, double spaced, 12 font, 1.5” margins, and edited.

Brief 1: (3 pages) Using course materials, discuss the ways in which art critically engages and educates others to understand issues of difference, power, and discrimination. Given the dynamics of power and privilege, what does an artist need to consider before working with communities? What is the relevance of and between the art method which the artist uses and the social justice issue conveyed?

Brief 2: (3 pages) Select an artist or art piece in which you would like to research and that will inspire and inform the art method and/or topic for your creative reflective project. The selection(s) must address social justice concepts of systemic power, privilege or oppression. Explore and provide context about the social justice issue which the artist interrogates in their work. Consider these issues: What is the artist/activist trying to communicate in their work? How is this work a vehicle for social change? What master narrative does this artist interrupt? How does the medium inform or relate to the message? Is this work empowering? Why or why not? What are the limitations of their work?

Brief 3: Creative Reflective Project Proposal (4 pages) Includes the purpose, background, outcomes, art method, “self-of-the artist” (social group memberships and biases), and social justice issue area to be discussed. A bibliography will be included for the paper portion.

Reflective Artwork: Students will complete five creative art reflections ranging from poetry to multimedia projects in preparation for their culminating project. A 50 word description is required for each piece.

Creative Reflective Project: Students will complete a creative-reflective project (accompanied by an 8-10 page paper) to be submitted and presented during finals week. Options for the creative project include, but are not limited to: a poster, performance, or

poem. The essay component should clarify how the creative medium provides an effective and critical synthesis of a specific social justice issue, covers concepts of difference, power, and discrimination, liberation, and includes relevant course readings, films, guest speakers, field trips, personal experience, intellectual growth/development and consults multiple outside sources and online resources. Your synthesis project will be presented in class, and will include time for an “Art Crit” with your instructor(s) and peers. Each student will do a constructive evaluation (peer review) of the rough draft of the creative reflective project for another student.

Criteria for evaluation of written work: mechanics of writing; organization and cohesion of ideas; clarity of expression; evidence of critical thinking; connections drawn to class lectures and discussions; originality of thought.

Presentations: Each group should work together on their presentation for the Art Demo, although each individual will also contribute their particular creative reflective project as part of the presentation. The group will be organized according to topics that are relevant to each other. They will also be the peer review groups to support each other, give feedback, and provide critique around their creative reflective projects. The final presentation will consist of (1) material that reflects the synthesis and discussion of the group’s social justice issue or art genre and (2) a creative reflective project that reflects the work of each student on his/her particular topic. These should be combined into one long presentation, activity, or creative experience.

Required from each group: Some form of representation of group and individual work that can be posted in the halls (as posters), or in digital form on the hall monitor (ppt), or on the web. Use the material that you use for the presentation so there is not extra work. Consult professor if you have other ideas for presentation.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken into consideration in calculating your grade.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

- Brief #1: 100 points
- Brief #2: 100 points
- Brief #3: 100 points
- Reflective Artwork: 5 pieces (20 points each)
- Creative Reflective Project (Final)
 - Art Demo-peer review of draft: 60 points
 - Final Group Presentation: 100 points
 - Final Project: 240 points
- Participation Points: 150 points
- Class presentation: 50 points
- Total possible points=1000

A	93.1-100	C+	77 – 79.9
A-	90 – 93	C	73.1 – 76.9
B+	87 – 89.9	C-	70 – 73
B	83.1 – 86.9	D	60 – 69.9
B-	80 – 83	F	0 – 59.9

DISABILITY ACCESS

Oregon State University is committed to student success; however, we do not require students to use accommodations nor will we provide them unless they are requested by the

student. The student, as a legal adult, is responsible to request appropriate accommodations. The student must take the lead in applying to Disability Access Services (DAS) and submit requests for accommodations each term through DAS Online. OSU students apply to DAS and request accommodations at our Getting Started with DAS page.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards in their Student Conduct Code. To review this document visit: <http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0>

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

“We believe social justice is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically secure... The process for attaining the goal of social justice, we believe, should also be democratic and participatory, inclusive and affirming of human agency and capacities for working collaboratively to create change.” — Lee Anne Bell

The ground rules of this class will be co-created during the first week of class. As a general guideline, we strive to co-create an affirming environment for all students and embrace multiple identities with respect to age, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socioeconomic background, veteran status, etc...

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY STATEMENT

Oregon State University strives to respect all religious practices. If you have religious holidays that are in conflict with any of the requirements of this class, please see me immediately so that we can make alternative arrangements.