Diversity Inclusion and Equity in Social Policy  
HS529a 
The Heller School for Social Policy – Brandeis University 
Fall 2017 

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Class Meeting Time: 2:00 – 4:50 

Course Description, Assumptions, and Objectives 

This course is required for second year students in the Master of Public Policy program. It focuses on diversity, inclusion, and equity in social policy. By diversity we mean difference across many fields including but not limited to race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, criminal status, and immigration status. This course starts with the assumption that diversity is a benefit to individuals, groups, and society as a whole, and therefore, we should strive towards inclusive and equitable policies. The course is taught from the perspective that race, gender, class, sexuality, and all other categories used to subordinate groups, are social constructions that can be used as diagnostic tools. By social construction we mean that categories that marginalized groups, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and disability, have been established through the adoption of biologically essential narratives and structural distribution of resources. By diagnostic tool we mean that by studying socially constructed categories we can not only see the boundaries of exclusion in a given policy, but also, and more fundamentally, the structural failings that may exist in a policy design or implementation. Finally, studying how systems of oppression operate in tandem, intersectionality, is vital in understanding the dynamics of power. 

The value of understanding and promoting diversity, in all senses, lies in the potential benefits not only to marginalized groups but also to all of society. We cannot solve society’s most intractable social problems and build a thriving democracy without significant thinking and problem-solving participation by a diverse set of stakeholders. An essential and necessary part of the project that we call democracy is the study of how “normal” or the norm is socially constructed and maintained. In this moment in time, that means studying white male wealthy heterosexual advantage or privilege. 

The course has several objectives. It will provide opportunities for learners to: 

1. Review theories and objectives of deliberative democracy;  
2. Learn contemporary theory and practice around inclusion of and equity for diverse and excluded stakeholders;  
3. Understand the experiences of marginalized groups;  
4. Study the theory and practice of intersectionality;
5. Analyze the dynamics of power;
6. Explore how to create mechanisms that include subordinated groups in policy design, policy implementation, and policy evaluation thus moving towards creating an equitable democratic civil society;
7. Identify methods and tools to promote diversity in organizations and diverse work environments.

**Learning Outcomes:** At the completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Explain theories of democracy, diversity, inclusion, power, and justice;
2. Apply theoretical frameworks for inclusion to specific policy arenas;
3. Identify methods and practices that promote inclusion including, but not limited to: 1) Question Formulation Technique; 2) Public Narrative; 3) Non-violent Symbolic Protest; 4) Community Organizing; 5) Photo Voice; and 6) Multiple Intelligence Theory;
4. Understand how participatory action research methodologies can promote the participation of excluded groups in the crafting and/or the evaluation of policies.

**Course Pedagogy**

In addition to the above-mentioned objectives, this course also aims at co-creating a democratic learning community. Therefore, the course outline is a work in progress and open to suggestions. We will co-construct a learning agenda that responds to your interests and enables you to critically reflect on your reading of texts and on your research project.

To this end, both facilitator and learners have responsibilities:

**Facilitator responsibilities:**

- The facilitator is a guide in the learning, not an expert in all areas of diversity and inclusion. As a guide, I find material and pose questions that help the entire class – learners as well as myself – develop a richer understanding of questions and issues. In so doing the facilitator is a learner as well as a teacher;

- The facilitator must give up a significant portion of authority, control, and power of the classroom traditionally held by instructors. I must do this in order for learners to share ownership and power of the class and ensure all questions important to everyone in the class are explored.

**Learner responsibilities:**

- Learners must claim the shared ownership and power the class offers. This means they must commit to sharing the work of managing the class, reading, writing, discussing, and eventually contribute their knowledge and the benefits of their study and research to the entire class. In so doing, learners are teachers as well learners.
• Learners’ contribution to the class is essential. Attendance is just the beginning; ownership requires that all have a stake in the teaching and the learning.

If both the facilitator and the learners accept these responsibilities, this course can be a teaching / learning community based on mutuality and reciprocity. The second half of the course will be co-constructed and managed by all members of the course. The following syllabus has been created assuming we will all accept the above stated responsibilities.

**Teaching/Learning Strategies:** This course uses a variety of methods including: lectures, interactive activities, group work, peer review, and student presentations.

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**Required Texts:**


**Recommended Texts:**


Additional required readings will be posted on LATTE.

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**Course Requirements and Evaluation**

1) **First Paper – Public Narrative Essay – 15 % of Final Grade**
   • The essay should follow the public narrative format of 1) story of self; 2) story of us; and 3) story of now.
   • Instructions and grading criteria will be posted on Latte.
   • The essay should be 3 to 4 pages long.
2) **Team Classroom Presentation – 15% of Final Grade**
   - Each team will lead a class discussion on a topic of their choosing.
   - Instructions and grading criteria will be posted on Latte.

3) **Class Participation – 35% of Final Grade**
   - This class requires every participant’s active engagement in classroom discussions and activities.
   - Active engagement means asking questions, sharing analysis, and respecting differing opinions and positions.

4) **Research Paper – 35% of Final Grade**
   - This paper will count as your final exam.
   - The research paper should explore a policy recommendation, design, or implementation that has been developed or is being developed with the participation of a subordinate group(s) the policy seeks to benefit.
   - Instructions and grading criteria will be posted on Latte.
   - The paper should be 6 to 8 pages long.

**PLEASE NOTE THESE DEADLINES:**

**First Paper – Public Narrative Essay** – Due: to be co-determined

**Research Paper** – Due: to be co-determined

**Attendance**

Attendance in class is required and factors into your class participation grade.

**Full Engagement**

When class is in session, your full attention and engagement is expected and needed. Please turn off cell phones during class. Laptops can distract and create separation. Please take notes by hand so you can participate fully in discussions.

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**ADA Policy**

If you as a student qualify as a person with a disability as defined in Chapter 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the
Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), you are strongly encouraged to register with the University. As a student, it is your responsibility to present your accommodation letter to your instructor at the beginning of each semester.

**Academic Integrity Statement**

Students are required to abide by the requirements for the *Maintenance of Academic Integrity Policy* found in Section 4 of *The Rights and Responsibilities Student Handbook*. See: http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/srcs/rr/pdfs/RR%202015-16.pdf

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**Course Outline**

**Tuesday September 5th - Democratic Pedagogy and Course Overview**

*How does power operate in a classroom?*

**Group Activity**
- Experiences of life giving learning
- Defining Democracy

**Discussion**
- Course Objectives
- Syllabus and Assignments

**Tuesday September 12th – Justice and the Principles of Deliberative & Participatory Democracy**

*Inclusion into what?*

**Group Activity**
- Question Formulation Technique – The Right Question Institute

**Discussion**
  **Read – Chapter 1**
  **Read Introduction and Chapter 1**
Tuesday September 19th – Possibilities for Deliberative Democracy

*How can oppressed people step into their own power?*

**Group Activity**
- Public Narrative

**Discussion**
  - Read Chapter 3

Tuesday September 26th – Theorizing Power and the Abduction of Democracy

*How does power operate? How is power used to exclude and oppress?*

**Group Activity**
- Basics of Community Organizing

**Discussion**
  - Read Chapters 1, 3, and 4
  - Read Introduction

Tuesday October 3rd – No Class - Thursday Schedule

Tuesday October 10th – Intersectionality and Creating Spaces for Empowerment

*Where does marginalized people’s power lay?*

**Group Activity**
- Feedback - Evaluation
- Multiple Intelligence Theory

**Discussion**
  - Read Chapters 5 – 8
Tuesday October 17th – Applying Intersectionality – Solidarity

How do groups overcome identity politics and competition?

Group Activity
- Solidarity Movements - Non-Violent Social Change

Discussion
  Read Chapters 1 & 2
  Read – Chapters 1 & 2

Tuesday October 24th – North Carolina – Case Study in Dismantling Democracy

Where is the battleground to save democracy?

Group Activity
- Small Groups

Discussion
  Read Introduction, Prologue, Chapter One, - pp. xii – 25
  Read Conclusion – Get Ready – pp 207 – 234
- Steinmetz, K. 7 Ways California Is Fighting Back Against President Trump’s Administration. Times Magazine, Apr 06, 2017

Tuesday October 31st - Oppressions

- To be co-constructed with learners

  Read Conclusion: Populist Shrinking and the Shrinking of Democracy

Tuesday November 7th - Oppressions

- To be co-constructed with learners

Tuesday November 14th – Oppressions

- To be co-constructed with learners
- Participatory Action Research
  PAR Readings

Tuesday November 21st – Oppressions

- To be co-constructed with learners
- Participatory Action Research
  PAR Readings

Tuesday November 28th – Oppressions

- To be co-constructed with learners
- Sui, A. *Deliberation & the Challenge of Inequality*. Daedalus: Volume 146, Issue 3, Summer 2017

Tuesday December 5th - Last Class

Question Formulation Technique

Conclusion and Evaluation