

# UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

## SPRING 2022 – HONS 300: SOCIAL JUSTICE (PROSEMINAR)

*Examination of the nature of liberal education and its relation to work and living. Student-led discussion of issues.*

### RACIAL AND GENDER EQUITY IN STEM

**Thomas Foster** (*Physics*)

Section 001

Traditional/FTF

CRN: 15660

Thursdays

8:00-9:50 AM

3/14-5/06 (SEW)

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are not objective arbiters of Nature. All STEM disciplines were created by humans living in their era of social norms. What is stupefying is how all these people managed to create a subculture in STEM that seems to propagate the worst of each era. The objective of this course is not to demonize STEM or to disavow important descriptors of Nature. Science, as a process, is still better than public opinion. Yet, what is the potential for STEM if it was inclusive? How can we change injustice to equality against the mighty bulwark of STEM?

*Keywords: questioned standards; created systems; inclusive practices; socially-aware STEM*

### STIGMA & SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE MEDIA'S ROLE IN MARGINALIZING SEXUAL MINORITIES

**Gary Hicks** (*Mass Communications*)

Section 002

Traditional/FTF

CRN: 15955

Wednesdays

10:00-11:50 AM

1/10-3/04 (FEW)

In the 21st century no cultural institution has more power in determining how we view ourselves, others, and our respective places in the world than do mass media. This seminar will examine the power of the mass media primarily using one non-fiction text: *The Scarlet Professor, Newton Arvin: A Literary Life Shattered by Scandal* by Barry Werth. Published in 2001, it deals with the rampant American homophobia of the 1950s and 1960s. As many of these injustices were perpetrated by the media, this book allows us to explore how the media can be used to elevate and disregard ideas, perspectives, and groups of people. Its use will be supplemented by more contemporary research on LGBTQ+ people, HIV/AIDS, and mass media.

*Keywords: non-fiction; media studies; LGBTQ+ issues;*

## ST. LOUIS, MO: GATEWAY TO RACIAL INEQUALITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM

Jessica Hutchins (*Honors*)

Section 003	Traditional/FTF	CRN: 15668
Mondays	6:00-7:50 PM	1/10-3/04 (FEW)

WE will examine social justice through the history of SIUE's metropolitan neighbor, the "Gateway City" of St. Louis, MO. St. Louis ranks among the most segregated cities in the United States and has one of the highest rates of police shootings per capita. The city has also been a leader in the Black Lives Matter movement, with the 2014 killing of Michael Brown igniting a wave of protests and activism. Consequently, "Ferguson" has become both synonym and symbol of entrenched racial injustice, as well as political and equity activism, in contemporary America. To better understand the structures of power and ideology that have led to these events, we will read *The Broken Heart of America: St. Louis and the Violent History of the United States* by historian Walter Johnson. Through our reading of history and engagement with contemporary issues in the city, we will discuss the roots of American racial and economic injustice, questions of personal identity in relation to power structures, and options for dismantling structures of injustice and building a more equitable world.

*Keywords: non-fiction; St. Louis; racial/economic justice; contemporary protests*

## RACE, DRUG POLICY, & JUSTICE

Tricia Oberweis (*Criminal Justice*)

Section 004	Traditional/FTF	CRN: 15669
Mondays	9:00-10:50 AM	1/10-3/04 (FEW)

The earliest drug policies in the US were created to criminalize drug use along deliberate racial lines. We'll look at the racial politics used to justify our earliest drug control efforts and follow the growth (and occasional shrink) of those drug policies and the racial politics that have accompanied them. We'll connect drug policies to police practices and examine how this history bloomed into some of the racialized dynamics we hear about currently, both in policing and incarceration. Given time, we will finish with discussion of the new marijuana legalization in Illinois and consider the restitutive intent behind record expungement and community reinvestment programs.

*Keywords: politics & policies; unequal treatments & outcomes; drugs*

## HISTORY, MEMORY, NOSTALGIA: THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN INJUSTICE

Mitchell Haas (*Lovejoy Library*)

Section 005	Traditional/FTF	CRN: 15662
Mondays	6:00-7:50 PM	3/14-5/06 (SEW)

This proseminar will explore the concepts of history, memory, and nostalgia as it relates to white supremacy and injustice in American society by reading and discussing *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America* by Clint Smith. In this book, the author discusses the differences between these concepts as history being a view of the past utilizing all available facts, nostalgia being a view of history with no facts, and memory existing somewhere in between. This class will attempt to determine whether these separations are accurate and also determine how the remembrance of the past effects the present, especially as it relates to current social justice struggles and the existence of systemic bigotry in American society.

*Keywords: nostalgia; entrenchment; intersectionality; current events*

## FRAMEWORKS FOR EXPLORING SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITIES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Gertrude Pannirselvam (*Business*)

Section 006	Traditional/FTF	CRN: 15663
Wednesdays	6:00-7:50 PM	3/14-5/06 (SEW)

This course introduces students to theoretical frameworks to map the multidimensionality of identity and oppression. Students will use these frameworks to understand the sources of social injustices and as a class, develop scenario-based cause-effect maps and possible actions. The course will be driven by active learning – students exploring resources and using the theoretical frameworks to explain their observations and possible actions for social justice. While the students will be introduced to all social identities, the class will focus on social identities that are most relevant or interesting to the cohort. Mostly open-source readings, videos, and archives will be provided to enable this discussion

*Keywords: identity & oppression; mapping; theory*

## HOW STORIES ARE TOLD: RACE, CULTURE, & GENDER IN MEDIA

Timothy Staples (*Director, East St. Louis Campus*)

Section 007	Traditional/FTF	CRN: 15664
Mondays	6:00-7:50 PM	1/10-3/04 (FEW)

This interdisciplinary exploratory course will examine the socially constructed nature of race, gender, and cultural bias in the United States, and its representation through sitcoms, movies, news coverage, and social media. Students will examine and discuss how media shapes one's interpretation of the world and the lived experiences of others. Additionally, how cultural norms are formed and sustained through media.

*Keywords: social construction; representation in media, "conscious consumer"*

## AMERICAN SLAVERY & ITS MODERN IMPACTS

Simone Williams (*Lovejoy Library*)

Section 008	Traditional/FTF	CRN: 17949
Thursdays	10:00-11:50 AM	3/14-5/06 (SEW)

While the 2020 murders of George Floyd and other unarmed Black Americans and the subsequent Black Lives Matter protests caused a racial reckoning in America, there has already been considerable and predictable backlash and political polarity when the realities of Black Americans are being addressed. For example, a number of states have already implemented or have drafted legislation that bans critical race theory and anti-racist education and limits the discussion of slavery and the Civil Rights Movement. This class will focus on the history of US slavery and its impact on global systems of inequality, racial inequity, and anti-blackness.

*Keywords: American Slavery; historical & contemporary impacts; impacts on inequality, inequity, anti-blackness*

## THE RISE, FALL, THEFT, AND ERASURE OF OLIVER CROMWELL COX

Christienne Hinz (*History*)

Section 009

Traditional/FTF

CRN: 18010

Wednesdays

6:00-7:50 PM

1/10-3/04 (FEW)

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The history of systemic anti-black racism is rooted in the history of capitalism, the seedlings of which emerged between the 15th and 16th centuries. In this course, we will examine a selection of the works of brilliant Trinidadian-American sociologist Oliver Cromwell Cox, who developed the first functional definition of race, and linked it to the history of capitalism. Significantly, this body of scholarship suppressed, and his career was side-lined by white supremacy in the Academy, then later, plagiarized and capitalized by the white supremacy that operates within the Academy to this day. We will explore his scholarship, his biography, and dig deeply into the ways in which anti-black racism operates in the culture and structures of Higher Education

*Keywords: historical figure; higher education; study & theories of capitalism; suppression, plagiarism, appropriation*