Psychology 492:
Psychology and Social Issues
Fall 2014: T/Th 11:00-12:15 pm
Fraser 458
3 Credits (Course #: 25617)

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Course Description:
This course examines social issues from a psychological perspective. The course will cover a variety of topics including, but not limited to: academic achievement gaps, same-sex marriage, racism, sexism, disability, socio-economic inequality, immigration, genocide, and social protest. A thread running through many of the topics will be an emphasis on the psychological experience of dominant and subordinate group members.

A good portion of the material will consist of social and political psychological research. Materials and readings, however, will also include perspectives from history, sociology, political science, economics, philosophy, film, literature, and journalism.

The goal of this course is to expose the student to a set of readings and perspectives, which help her/him understand some key social issues in the United States. The goal is NOT to convince the student with a survey of important social issues and a set of tools (primarily from social psychological science) that help her/him make sense of complex and politically charged issues.

Course Format:
This course is designed for undergraduate psychology majors. Although enrollment is not restricted to students in psychology, some background in psychology (especially social psychology) is assumed.

This will be a seminar course meeting twice a week. Class time will be dedicated to discussing assigned articles & videos, class demonstrations, and class presentations by students to supplement the discussions.
**Course Requirements and Grading:**
Final grades in this course will be assigned on the basis of performance in class participation, class presentation, three exams, and a couple of analysis reports. The breakdown is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Class presentation</td>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
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<td>Final Exam (Optional)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Analysis Report</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Museum Analysis Report</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>205</strong></td>
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As with all university courses, regular attendance is assumed, as is having completed the assigned readings in a timely manner. Expect a good grade only if you do all of the work carefully, thoughtfully, and thoroughly. Top grades are reserved for demonstrated academic excellence.

**Class Attendance & Participation:**
Students are strongly encouraged to attend all class meetings and to complete the assigned readings prior to class. To encourage class attendance part of the course grade is based on attendance. Students are responsible for information presented in class. Students can miss up to 2 class meetings without any penalty.

The course will be comprised of two sessions per week. At each meeting we will discuss the assigned readings, videos, &/or films. To encourage participation part of the course grade is based on level of participation.

**Class Presentations:**
For each class meeting after the first several weeks, one student will be responsible for presenting a summary of the reading and leading discussion. So if there are two assigned readings for a session, two students will provide summaries and lead discussions. These presentations should summarize key ideas of the readings and, more importantly, provide critical evaluation & raise discussion points. The primary purpose of these presentations will be to stimulate discussion so please develop questions that provide a springboard for class discussion.

**Written Assignments:**
I want you to practice applying the themes of the course to the world around you. The point here is to “live with the material” and see how it applies to your life and the world around you. Social psychology, which will be emphasized in this course, is a particular perspective through which you can view life and the following assignments are practice toward this end.

The length of these short assignments should be 1 single-spaced page with about 500 words on that page. Standard APA format. You will submit these directly to us. A brief description of these assignments follows. Additional information will become available later in the course.
Film Analysis Report
Watch one of the suggested movies on the list and write about it in the light of what you have learned about in this class. This assignment is due on October 9 (Thursday).

Museum Analysis Report
Go to one of the suggested museums on the list and write about it in the light of what you have learned about in this class. This assignment is due on November 25 (Tuesday).

For those who wish to improve their writing skills, the KU Writing Center (http://www.writing.ku.edu/) is highly recommended.

Exams:
Exams will cover all readings, videos, and discussions up until the day of the exam. Each exam will be comprised of about 30 multiple-choice questions and 2-5 open-ended response questions.
- Exam 1 will occur on 9/25/14
- Exam 2 will take place on 10/30/14
- Exam 3 will be on 12/11/14

Final Exam:
The final exam is optional. If you want to take the final exam to make up for a missed exam or substitute this score for a lower exam score you may do so. Otherwise, you may skip it if you are happy with your three previous exam scores. The final exam is scheduled for December 15, 2014 (Monday) from 10:30-1:00 pm. The final exam is cumulative and is comprised of 40 multiple-choice questions.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:
The Modern Language Association (MLA) defines plagiarism as the use of another’s ideas or expressions without giving proper credit to the source. This can include paraphrasing, copying segments of writing word for word, or simply using someone else’s ideas in your paper without proper citations. The instructor will strictly abide by the KU Student Code of Conduct in circumstances in which a student is suspected of plagiarism or any other form of scholastic dishonesty. For more information about plagiarism please refer to your KU student handbook.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:
It is university policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester to discuss their individualized needs for accommodations.

Course Materials:
Course readings will be placed on the course webpage.

The course webpage is located on the KU Blackboard website for Fall, 2014. Look for “Psychology 492: Psychology and Social Issues”.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRO TO COURSE; SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY & ITS APPLICATION
8/26/14 (Tuesday): Introduction to Course
Introductions & review syllabus.

8/28/14 (Thursday): Social Psychology and its Application
Video clip: Candid Camera Elevator.

Aronson, E. (2000). Nobody left to hate: Teaching compassion after Columbine
Ch. 1: What happened at Columbine?

WEEK 2: “APPLYING” SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY; PRIVILEGE & DISADVANTAGE
9/2/14 (Tuesday): Social Psychology and its Application
Video Clip: From “TED” on Strange Beliefs by Michael Shermer.

Ch 1: Applying social psychology: Typical features, roles, and problems
Ch 2: Science, Research Methodology, and Teenage Pregnancy

9/4/14 (Thursday): Group Privilege & Disadvantage
Class Demo: Privilege & Disadvantage.

Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work In
Women's Studies. Print.

WEEK 3: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAPS IN AMERICA
9/9/14 (Tuesday): Academic Achievement Gaps (Social Class)
symbolic violence and vice versa.

9/11/14 (Thursday): Academic Achievement Gaps (Social Class)
disadvantage: How American universities’ focus on independence undermines the academic

WEEK 4: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAPS cont. AND GROUP RELATIONS
9/16/14 (Tuesday): Academic Achievement Gaps cont.
disadvantage: How American universities’ focus on independence undermines the academic

9/18/14 (Thursday): Group Relations
Video Clip: Interview of James Baldwin by Kenneth Clark (show segment(s) in class)

Tropp, L., & Molina, L. E. (2012). *Intergroup processes: From prejudice to positive relations*

WEEK 5: IMMIGRATION; EXAM #1
9/23/14 (Tuesday): Attitudes toward Immigration
Video: “Frontline” segment entitled, “Lost in Detention” (watch prior to class)


9/25/14 (Thursday): Exam # 1
*****EXAM #1*****

WEEK 6: IMMIGRATION; NATIONAL IDENTITY
9/30/14 (Tuesday): Immigration

10/2/14 (Thursday): National Identity
Video Clip: “I am an American” (2001). Ad Council; and “Coca-Cola Superbowl Ad” (show in class)


WEEK 7: NATIONAL IDENTITY; SOCIAL CLASS AND INEQUALITY IN AMERICA
10/7/14 (Tuesday): National Identity; Social Class and Inequality in the U.S. (Part 1)

Demo: Attributions of Inequality.


10/9/14 (Thursday): Social Class and Inequality in the U.S. (Part 2)


WEEK 8: ANTI-WHITE RACISM
10/14/14 (Tuesday): NO CLASS

10/16/14 (Thursday): Anti-White Racism
Demo: Data visualization; is there a story in a line graph? (demo in class)


**FILM ANALYSIS REPORTS DUE**

**WEEK 9: IMPLICIT RACISM; RACE AND PRISONS**

10/21/14 (Tuesday): Implicit Racism  
Demo: Implicit Association Test (demo in class)


10/23/14 (Thursday): Race and Imprisonment  
Video: Bryan Stevenson TED talk (watch video in class)


**WEEK 10: TBD; EXAM 2**

10/28/14 (Tuesday): To be determined  
10/30/14 (Thursday): Exam #2  
*******EXAM #2**********

**WEEK 11: HOSTILE AND BENEVOLENT SEXISM; GENDER STEREOTYPES & DISCRIMINATION**

11/4/14 (Tuesday): Hostile and Benevolent Sexism  


11/6/14 (Thursday): Gender Stereotypes and Discrimination  

WEEK 12: SEXUAL ORIENTATION; SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS & MARRIAGE
11/11/14 (Tuesday): Sexual Orientation, Prejudice, & Politics
Video: “A Hidden Life” from Frontline (watch video prior to class)


11/13/14 (Thursday): Same Sex Relationships & Marriage
Video: *Bill Moyers Journal* on “Same Sex Marriage – An Interview with Theodore Olson & David Boies” (watch prior to class)


WEEK 13: GENOCIDE & RECONCILIATION
11/18/14 (Tuesday): Genocide
Video: “Ghosts of Rwanda” from Frontline (watch video prior to class)

Ch. 2: The origins of genocide and mass killing: Core concepts.

11/20/14 (Thursday): Reconciliation: Reducing Intergroup Conflict
Class Activity: *Looking at Photographs. What do you see?*


WEEK 14: THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS
11/25/14 (Tuesday): The Case for Reparations

***Museum Analysis Report Due***

11/27/14 (Thursday): Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 15: DISABILITY STIGMA AND RAPE MYTHS/VICTIM BLAMING
12/2/14 (Tuesday): Disability Stigma
Video: “Rolling” from THIRTEEN (watch video prior to class)


12/4/14 (Thursday): Rape Myths/Victim Blaming
Ch 1: Learning to Fear.


**WEEK 16: TO BE DETERMINED; AND EXAM #3**

12/9/14 (Tuesday): To Be Determined

12/11/14 (Thursday): Exam #3

EXAM #3

**FINAL EXAM ON DECEMBER 15 (MONDAY) FROM 10:30-1:00 pm**

Please note: The instructor has the right to change the course schedule.