

Philosophy 298: Diversity and Social Justice: Education for Liberation
Fall 2015

Professor Carol Moeller (Course originally designed and team taught with Sharon Brown,
Moravian College Director of Institutional Diversity)

Class Meets: Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., Comenius 304

Office: Comenius 110

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 9 a.m. – 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., and by
appointment

Course Description:

This course will investigate the historical, philosophical, and psychological dimensions of both oppression and resistance to that oppression. We will cover such topics as identity development, identity threat/ identity safety, whiteness, and education as oppressive and as liberating. Covered will be some history of social justice activism, diversity, philosophies of liberation, and current issues such as immigration, violence, affirmative action, and equity in education.

In every discussion, we will explore multiple sides of issues. There are seldom easy right or wrong answers to the questions we will consider. This course will require us to think critically, be willing to take risks, and be willing to think and /or move “outside of the box”.

Text:

Readings for Diversity and Social Justice: An Anthology on Racism, Anti-Semitism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism, and Classism, Third Edition, Adams, Blumenfeld, Castañeda, Hackman, Peters, Zúñiga, ed., NY, NY: Routledge, 2013.

Additional readings will be assigned and will be placed on reserve in the library and/or distributed in class.

Teaching and learning strategies

- We will do extensive reading, lectures, discussions, group and individual active learning projects.
- We will lead critical interrogations of the texts and related issues.
- The course will engage related questions in current contexts, whether through news, media, current events, and our individual life contexts.
- Throughout, we stress philosophical and interdisciplinary methods to clarify, understand, give reasons for, and criticize our own and others’ positions, beliefs, and actions.
- The course will incorporate a variety of teaching and learning strategies and modes.

Core Values

- We are all learning partners. Therefore we all share in the responsibility of making this class a positive experience.
- Each individual’s voice is important and may be different from your own. We will all

need to respect the perspective of one another and learn to tolerate ambiguity and viewpoints different from our own.

- We will not give grades. You will earn them! An “A” is achievable for everyone in this course but is not an automatic entitlement.

Operating Principles

- Attend each class unless you have received an excused absence from one of the professors.
- Be prepared (e.g. do the readings and other assignments on time and be ready to discuss the assignments in class).
- Contribute to discussions and class activities in a courteous, substantive and thoughtful manner.
- Be respectful and turn off your cell phone and other electronic devices during class.
- It is imperative that students keep up with their work in this course and get help any time

they have trouble. Each chunk of material builds upon the previous chunk, and so holes in understanding will continue to cause problems. Similarly, missing even a single class can disrupt the learning process and leave a student feeling hopelessly lost very quickly. Please be on top of your work, come to class, ask questions, and achieve an excellent level of understanding of all the material covered, together with the developed ability to apply that understanding independently.

Class Participation Guidelines

- Set your own boundaries for sharing.
- Speak from experience and avoid generalizing about groups of people.
- Respect confidentiality (do not share personal information shared in class outside of the class).
- No blaming or scapegoating.
- Keep the focus on your own learning.
- Share air-time.
- Listen to and respect different experiences and perspectives.

Course Requirements

- Each student will be required to write a one-page journal that focuses on your experiences in the class. Your journal should reflect insights you gained, issues that were raised for you during the class, and any thoughts you wish to share that are relevant to the course. Journals should be submitted the following Tuesday of class. You can email them as an attachment.
- Participation in class discussions and exercises is expected. Learning is an active process and requires you to be engaged. You will be expected to contribute to discussions by sharing your ideas and thoughts, responding to questions based on the reading assignments, participating in group activities, and offering your insights. Please note that “simply” showing up to class is not sufficient.

- *Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will impact your final grade (2 points will be deducted from your final grade for every unexcused absence, e.g. if you earn 88 points but have two unexcused absences you will lose 4 points and go to an 84 for your final course grade).*

- You will be required to have an “otherness” experience. This means you will identify another culture outside of your own identity and attend a program, service or event. The purpose of this experience is to help you learn about other cultures/groups. You will need to submit a paragraph that describes your proposed “otherness experience” and what makes it beyond what you are familiar with. A two-page reaction paper to your experience is required.

- Each student will be required to write a 5-6 page essay, on a self-designed topic or one chosen from a list I will give out of suggested topics

- Students will be assigned a section of reading to present in class.

- Attend three relevant events on and off campus and write a one page response paper that reflects what you learned about promoting social justice.

- You will have a mid-term and a final exam. Quizzes will be randomly given throughout the semester.

GRADING POLICY

The course grading system will be based on points earned for each of the following components:

Journals 10%

Critical Analysis Essay 15%

Participation 10%

“Otherness” Experience 15%

Event Reflections 10%

Quizzes 10%

Mid-term 15%

Final Exam 15 %

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The rules of academic integrity for Moravian College must be followed. Please take them seriously. Any suspicion of violations will be actively pursued. Moravian College standards on academic integrity and plagiarism are available in *Academic Honesty at Moravian College*, available from the Office of the Dean of the College (in Colonial Hall, first floor).

Plagiarism is very serious, resulting in automatic failure on the relevant assignment, even if the action is unintentional, such as the failure to cite the source of paraphrased ideas. We

will discuss these issues on particular assignments, such as essays. For more information on these policies, please see the student handbook, the professor, or the academic dean's office.

For this course, the following pointers may be helpful. Follow instructions on graded assignments, doing your own work unless the assignment is explicitly given as a group project or as allowing for open-book work. In doing essays, be sure to give references and credit for any ideas which are not entirely your own. That is, when quoting or paraphrasing or even referring to the idea(s) of another, cite the source. If you are not sure whether a reference is required, give a reference anyway. If in doubt, err on the side of overly generous reference giving, and consult with the professor for guidance.

Disabilities /Learning Disabilities

Students with disabilities/learning disabilities should contact the Academic Support Services Office as soon as possible to arrange for any necessary accommodations, Lower Level, Monocacy Hall, 610-861-1401. Official authorization is necessary for accommodation eligibility.

Potential Syllabus Changes

This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's notice.

Further Note on Grading

As in other courses, grading is at the professional judgment of the professor. For example, there may be an element of discretion in how much partial credit is given to a response. You may appeal grades to the department chair, Dr. Cantens, and to the Dean's Office.

Grading and academic integrity policies for this course are in accordance with Moravian College standards, as expressed in the Catalog (p. 43). Please note the following about grading.

Grading scheme: 97-100=A+ 93-96.9=A 90-92.9=A- 87-89.9=B+ 83-86.9=B 80-82.9=B-

77-79.9=C+ 73-76.9=C 70-72.9=C- 67-69.9= D+ 63-66.9=D 60-62.9=D- 0-59.9 =F

A (4.00 points) and A- (3.67): "These grades indicate achievement of the highest caliber. They involve expectations of independent work, original thinking, and the ability to

acquire and

effectively use knowledge."
B+ (3.33), B (3.00), and B- (2.67): "These grades indicate higher than average achievement. Evidence of independent work and original thinking is expected."

C+ (2.33), C (2.00), and C- (1.67): "These grades are given when the student has devoted a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention to the work of the course, and has satisfied the following criteria: familiarity with the content of the course, familiarity with the methods of study of the course, and active participation in the work of the class."

D+ (1.33), D (1.00), and D- (0.67): "These grades indicate unsatisfactory work, below the standard expected by the College. They indicate work which in one or more important aspects falls below the average expected of students for graduation. The work is,

however, sufficient to be credited for graduation, if balanced by superior work in other courses.”

F (0.00): “This indicates failure.”

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Course Schedule

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Pages, Chapters and Topics</i>	<i>Presenter:</i>
T 9/1	First day of class	
T 9/8	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression- Social Identities/Oppression/Marginality Reading: Readings for Diversity, section 1, Conceptual Frameworks	
T 9/15	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression- Racism Reading- Readings for Diversity, section 2, Racism	
T 9/22	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression-Classism Reading: Readings for Diversity, section 3, Classism	
T 9/29	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression- Religious Oppression and Privilege Readings- Readings for Diversity, section 4, Religious Oppression	
T 10/6	Midterm Exam	
T 10/13	No Class: Fall Break	
T 10/20	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression-Sexism Readings for Diversity, section 5, Sexism	
T 10/27	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression-Heterosexism Reading: Readings for Diversity, section 6, Heterosexism	
T 11/3	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression-Transgender Oppression Readings for Diversity, section 7, Transgender Oppression	
T 11/10	Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological Dimensions of Oppression-Ableism Readings for Diversity, section 8, Ableism	

T 11/17 Topic: Historical, Social, Philosophical and Psychological
Dimensions of Oppression-Identity Threat/Stereotype Threat
Reading: Claude M. Steele, A Threat in the Air (article)

T 11/24 Topic: Bringing It All Together **Readings: Readings for Diversity, section 10, Working for Social Justice**

T 12/1 Topic: Bringing It All Together **Readings: Readings for Diversity, section 10, Working for Social Justice (continued)**

T 12/8 Review, Discussion Before Final Exam

12/15 (Tuesday) 6:30 PM Final Exam