STPEC 494A: Praxis

Class time/Location: Wednesday 11:15 – 1:45pm/ Dickinson 206
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STPEC 494PI: Praxis/IE is a 3 credit course intended for students who wish to receive credit for the Integrative Experience gen ed requirement through an extended analysis of an internship experience. STPEC requires an internship for graduation and students will have completed or will be enrolled in their internship at the time they take this course.

The learning objectives of the Integrative Experience:
• to reflect on and to integrate student learning and experience from general education courses and core major courses,
• to provide opportunities for gen ed learning objectives such as oral communication, collaboration, critical thinking and interdisciplinary perspective-taking at a more advanced level, and
• to offer a shared learning experience for applying prior learning to new situations, challenging questions, and real-world problems.

With this in mind, the goals of this course are:
• First, to identify what is often considered unrelated knowledge from broader general education classes, draw it into present learning in the core courses of the major, and then to apply this knowledge toward a critical analysis of the institutions in which the students intern.
• This is a seminar providing structured, regular, collaborative feedback in small groups, opportunities for applied critical analysis and reflective practice, and includes student presentations at the end.

In this small seminar setting, dialogue and engaged pedagogy are the dominant strategies for learning. Skills presented and practiced toward a collaborative classroom are: active listening, effective communication for clarity, comprehension and engagement, self-reflection, critical thinking, and an interdisciplinary contextual analysis. Both in their written assignments and in small group dialogue, students will practice articulating multiple perspectives (their own social identity standpoints and those of others), and develop an agile understanding (in the real-world example of their internships) of the ways people make meaning of experiences, frame and justify positions and issues, formulate institutional goals and evaluate outcomes.

This class focuses on the relationship between theory and practice. It is an opportunity to evaluate organizational structures and outcomes and the beliefs that underlie them, in order to understand how power, organizational culture and policy are created, interrelated and maintained. It is an inquiry into the role of institutions in social change, and an analysis of theory and practice in those institutions. Students will be expected to rigorously analyze, both concretely and abstractly, the organizations in which they intern.

Each student must include a race, class and gender analysis in her work, both of herself and of the organization in which she worked. Thus, this class is also an important opportunity for self-reflection. Using knowledge from the prior gen eds and core stpec courses, students will address the political and social contexts in which they find and define themselves, and also observe their own major influences and learning. This reflection will take the form of both dedicated class discussion and a short personal essay.

The IE project is an overarching question or topic that the student pursues as a part of their work analyzing their internship. Students should be prepared to set out goals for an inquiry that integrates content from previous gen ed and core STPEC classes into a critical analysis of their internship. Examples might be: 1) a contextual analysis of your organization within a social movement, 2) an analysis of the
political limits of an organization engaging theories of wealth accumulation, private property and/or development theory, or 3) an extended analysis of intersectionality as a feminist theory and implications for understanding the political goals of your organization. Given the inherently interdisciplinary nature of the STPEC curriculum, the possibilities for IE projects are great.

**Grading:**
Students will complete 4 written section drafts, developing the core analysis of their project, and then combine and revise these sections into the final form of the project. They will complete a short written reflective essay, which may or may not be included in the final project itself. Because the course is based in dialogue, grades will also reflect participation and skill development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 written section drafts/final</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>reflection</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>dialogue participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Papers will be graded based on:
- Completion of Assignment
- Observational skills
- Depth of Thought / Critical thinking and analysis
- Writing Quality – should be clear, concise, organized and proofread

**Please do not come to class late or skip class because you have not finished your paper.** The penalty for missing class is higher than the penalty for turning in a late paper. Class time is where most of the work for this course is carried out. Our discussion will suffer in your absence, your papers will suffer without input from the class …. and plus your comrades will miss you.

**Attendance Policy and Late Papers:**
No more than one absence will be permitted without dire circumstances. The work happens in class and in collaboration. DO NOT MISS CLASS. 2 and ½ hours of discussion is hard for anyone to sit through, and yet this kind of attentive discussion is an important skill. If you find yourself impatient or unsatisfied with class discussion, bring it up so that we can address it as a community and student needs are better met.

**Course Calendar**

**Week 1: intro and social theory**
Intro to syllabus
Introduction to students and organizations
Beginning social theory analysis
Introduction to active listening and dialogue practice
Set up learning partners/peer reviewers

**Sept. 3**

**Week 2-3: social theory cont.**
Continued introductions
Theory and practice: Social theory and how we practice it
Mission and Vision
Sept. 17 – For IE students only – Focus on IE overarching research question for semester

**Sept. 10 & 17**

Readings:
- bell hooks, “Theory as Liberatory Practice” (chap 5) in *Teaching to Transgress.*

*Optional:*
Write out questions we deal with in class in essay form, including these elements:

- **Social Theory:** Describe your organization. What does it do, why, what does it accomplish, why/how? What does “it” believe about the world and about the issue(s) “it” deals with, that “it” does what “it” does? Who are they (who run it) that they believe this?
- **Discuss the “buffer zone”:** use Kivel’s concept of the buffer zone as it applies to your org.
- **STPEC Core Material:** pull ideas and resources (theory) from the STPEC seminars that can contribute to content and analysis
- **Self-reflection:** Make sure you include a discussion of why YOU are drawn to the work or the organization (who you are that you are interested)?

**Week 4: Organizational Structure and Funding**

**Sept 24**

Handout on organizational structure and decision-making

*Readings:*
Review section on funding and on Community leadership:


<<<<<< Social Theory Write up due (see above)

**Week 5: identity and oppression**

**Oct 1**

- Intersectionality/internalized oppression/levels and types
- Identity/belonging/prejudice (implicit bias)
- privilege

*Readings:*
  - Robin Diangelo****race and class
  - Intersectionality 101
  - Vanissar, *Surviving Oppression, Healing Oppression*

*Optional:*

**Week 6: Race and Whiteness**

**Oct 8**

Race and whiteness, power and identity

*Readings:*
  - Healing from the Effects of Internalized Oppression

And EITHER:


OR:


*Recommended:*

Week 7: Race and Whiteness in your Organizations

Oct 15

Follow up and discussion: intersectionality in organizations and experience

Readings:

For white students:

Week 8: Gender and Patriarchy

Oct 22

Gender (sexuality): Patriarchy

Readings:

Recommended:
-- Melissa Harris-Perry http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIX2YHdqUJA

Week 9: Gender and Patriarchy in your Organization

Oct 29

Follow up and discussion race and gender, intersectionality

Readings:

-- students will each find their own article that brings an analysis of gender pertaining to their own internship.

Recommended:
Week 10: Class  Nov 5
Class: class as process; kinds of wealth; review of process of appropriation exploitation/necessary and surplus labor/social welfare
Individualism and accumulation

Readings:

<<<<<<<Section draft: Gender in your org. due to your peer reader

NO Class – Nov 12 (Tuesday Schedule)

Week 11: Class dynamics/culture in your organization  Nov 19

Readings:

<<<<<<<Section draft: Gender in your org. due

No Class – Nov. 26 (Work on Self-Reflection)

Week 12: self-reflection  Dec 3
Self-reflective group dialogue: in class discussion of educational experience at the university, observations of learning and skill sets, in terms of how you want to be in the world as a global citizen.

<<<<<<< Section draft: Class Dynamics in your org. (or Race and/or gender in context of class, or draft of final internship paper) due

Final Paper Due Friday, December 5th ON MOODLE