STPEC 494A: Praxis

Class time/Location: Monday 11:15-1:45, Dickinson 209
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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 are 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. As such, 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. They 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 sections 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.

- 4 written section drafts/final: 55%
- reflection: 15%
- dialogue participation: 30%

Papers will be graded based on:
- Completion of Assignment
- Observational skills
- Depth of Thought / Critical Thinking
- Writing Quality – should be clear, concise, organized and proofread

It is unwise to 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.
REVISED FOR SNOW DAYS

Course Calendar:

Week 1: intro and social theory  Jan 26
Intro to syllabus
Introduction to student and organizations
Beginning social theory analysis
Introduction to active listening

FEB 2 AND 9, SNOW DAYS

Week 2-3: social theory cont.  Feb 17 (Tuesday)
Continued introductions
Theory and practice: Social theory and how we practice it
Mission and Vision

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  Feb 23
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**
**Mar 2**
- 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**
**Mar 9**
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**
**Mar 9**
Follow up and discussion: intersectionality in organizations and experience
Readings:

For white students:

FRIDAY, MARCH 13
<<<<<<Section draft: Race and Whiteness in your org. due

********SPRING BREAK ********

Week 8: Gender and Patriarchy Mar 23
Gender (sexuality): Patriarchy

Readings:

Week 9: Gender and Patriarchy in your Organization Mar 30
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.

References:

**Week 10: Class**

April 6

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

**Week 11: Class dynamics/culture in your organization**

April 13

Readings:

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

**Week 12: self-reflection**

April 22 (Wed)

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 gender in context of class, or draft of final internship paper) due
Week 13: April 28

Final Paper due Dec 13 at 5pm.