**Equalizing Access to Justice**

***UNST 421, 6 Credits***

Khalil Zonoozy

**COURSE Description:**

A comprehensive and engaging examination of contemporary multicultural and cross-cultural imperatives, this capstone explores the barriers to justice for ethnic and racial minorities. Special attention will be given to the U.S. institutional structure and the justice system. Utilizing a progressive and proactive approach, students will acquire a deeper understanding, awareness and appreciation of the root causes of the existing disparities through substantive reading, lecture, discussion, case analysis,

team project research and formal presentation. Their learning outcome will be further enhanced as a result of design and formulation of proactive solutions to secure fairness, equity and justice for all.

There will be a community partnership with **"Uniting to Understand Racism**" **UUR**, a non-profit organization committed to reduce prejudice and discrimination in our communities through study and personal examination. Created in response to issues identified by the Oregon state Task Force on Racial Ethnic Issues in the Judicial System (Instructor served as the vice chair of that task force), UUR offers a highly effective and engaging dialogue on race, race relations and discrimination. Concurrent with their regular class, students enrolled in this capstone, will participate in a six weeks long dialogue, specially designed to enrich their awareness of personal and institutional bias, disparities of justice and progressive solutions to achieve fairness, equity and justice for all.

**Final Product, Project Description:**

Assisting with realization of our mutual objective of "equalizing access to justice for all" , students will work in small project teams investigating selected topics related to the differential treatment of minorities in the Justice System. Each team will follow a strategic plan, conducting a comprehensive examination of the problem; identification of the underlying causes; and presentation of alternative solutions. Project outcomes will be shared through a formal presentation at a UUR colleague's law firm, with the UUR members and supporters; representatives from PSU and Portland legal as well as general communities; and invited student's friends and family members.

**NOTE: *This course is specially recommended for students in: Administration of Justice, Child & Family Studies, Sociology, Social Work, Political Science, Conflict Resolution, Linguistics, International Studies, Pre-Law and Law as well as professionals within the Justice System.***

**EVALUATION:** Requirements include attendance, participation, in class small group exercises, weekly reflective journals, critical analysis and reflection papers and the final team projects .

 (*Revised, 04,2017)*