



UNST 421: Social (In)Justice in K-12 Settings

Partnerships with Kairos School, Open School East, Hosford School ESL, and the Reading Is Resistance Project

Basic Course & Contact Information

Winter 2020

6 credits

Instructor Contact Information:

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Office Hours & Location: by appointment (CH 117R)

About Me:

I've been teaching writing and community-based learning courses since 2004 and feel so humbled to work with community partners and students as my job. I believe in creating a strong learning community in our class in order to, in turn, support our community partners. And I work in the community to support advocacy efforts for anti-racist curriculum and racial equity in schools. I'm also a mom to two kids. I love to garden, paint, and read YA fiction.

It is my belief that it's important to the integrity of our work as a learning community to be an explicitly anti-racist educator and to facilitate this class with accountability to the [Black Lives Matter in Schools movement](#) and to active decolonization of the classroom (as described by the [NCTE Standing Committee on Global Citizenship](#)).

I am a cis-gender woman and was raised as white, experiencing the world with white



over-privilege¹, and that positionality has real repercussions and impacts in the classroom. I have also recently found out that my great-grandmother attended the [Morris Indian Industrial School](#), a boarding school Native American children in the area were forced to attend after being separated from their families. Although my family did not talk about the indigenous part of our identity, I am also Ojibwe and Metis, with ancestral lineage back to Red River, Manitoba, and Minnesota.. Identity is complex. And this is something I continue to explore with curiosity and care. This piece of my puzzle is important to our study of racial inequity in the education system as the history of boarding or residential schools for Native American youth is part of our country's true history of genocide, cultural erasure, and school as a tool for assimilation.

I am committed to the continued work to dismantle oppressive practices and to center the experiences of people of color in this course. For more information on the concept of “anti racist education,” feel free to read the following:

- [On Contemplative Practices for Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy](#)
- [A Book Review of Anti-Racist Teaching](#)
- [How Can We Build White Anti-Racist White Educators](#)
- [White Anti-Racism: Living the Legacy](#)

Instructor Communication & Role:

I am generally available during the school week during regular school hours, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. via text, phone, or email. Please allow 24 hours for response. I will not respond to text, phone, or email communication on the weekends or on school holidays. If you do need to schedule a phone call with me on a weekend, I am happy to do so on an individual basis.

I encourage frequent communication, so please don't hesitate to be in touch.

My job is to serve as a facilitator and advisor and to be an honest, vulnerable, supportive co-learner in our community. Our work in our online learning spaces should build a context for thinking more deeply as you provide support to the community. This is a community-based class not only in your volunteer work but also in the classroom. The class community is built by all of us in an open, honest, and critical space and requires participation from the entire group for full learning to occur.

Online Capstone Learning:

It is important to be able to budget your time for this online class by thinking through the time you will need to complete your assignments and to form a close learning community. Most courses at PSU are offered for 3-6 credit hours. One credit is equivalent to one hour of lecture

¹ I use the term “white over-privilege” to acknowledge the way that white privilege holds a level of excess, of greed, and of unearned-ness. When white people are privileged, it is because we are taking from (or being given from) resources that rightfully belong to other people (in the white supremacy system, black, brown, and indigenous folx).

or class per week (or two hours of lab or studio activity per week).

PSU advisors usually recommend at least two hours of study time per week for every credit hour of lecture or class. Since this is an online 6 credit course, you should allow 6 hours per week for taking in content through readings and videos and participating in class discussion.

You should allow approximately 3+ hours per week of work with the community partner/project management and 1-2 hours per week with your Anti-Bias Book Club. The remaining hours should be spent on journal reflections and any other odds and ends that are needed.

Required Texts

CHOICE OF PRIMARY TEXT

Option 1: *A Different Vision: A Revolution Against Racism in Public Education (2018)* (Susan Bradley)

- ★ Susan Bradley is a writer, educator, activist, and organizer living in Portland, Oregon. She was awarded the National Education Association H. Council Trenholm Human and civil Rights Award in 2013. Visit www.SusanAngladaBartley.org for more information. This book is locally written and dives into a vision for radical transformation of public education in the United States. Bradley concentrates on the way systemic racism and white supremacy are perpetuated in schools and how this impacts students. She provides strategies to move toward greater social equity.
- ★ ISBN for paperback: 978-1944733506.
- ★ This book can be purchased in independent bookstores or at the PSU bookstore.

Option 2: *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching & the Pursuit of Educational Freedom (Bethany Love)*

- ★ [Dr. Bettina L. Love](#) is an award-winning author and Associate Professor of Educational Theory & Practice at the University of Georgia. Dr. Love is one of the field's most esteemed educational researchers in the area of Hip Hop education....Her work is also concerned with how teachers and schools working with parents and communities can build communal, civically engaged schools rooted in intersectional social justice for the goal of equitable classrooms.
- ★ ISBN: 978-0807069158
- ★ This book can be purchased in independent bookstores or at the PSU bookstore.

Note: You will preference your top choices in your first reflection in Week 1. Then, I will put you in groups. Please do not purchase your secondary text until groups are assigned.

YA FICTION OPTIONS

- ★ [Look Both Ways](#) by Jason Reynolds

YA NON-FICTION OPTION

- ★ [Indigenous People's History of the](#)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ I Can Make This Promise, by Christine Day ★ The First Rule of Punk, by Celia Perez 	<p>U.S. for Young People by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz</p>
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Note: Once your Anti-Bias Book Club is announced, you can purchase the book/magazines that your group will read. Or buy all of them -- so good!

Course Vision

Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, the “achievement gap” has been at the forefront of discussions about school equity. The public has been tuned into this so-called “achievement gap” alongside shocking high school dropout rates, lack of access to equitable early childhood education, public disinvestment in the education system, disparities in access to higher education, and more. According to the Children’s Defense Fund’s *State of America’s Children Report*, the gaps (more accurately and truthfully described as opportunity, wealth, or access gaps deeply rooted in systemic inequities) between high and low income students is 30-40% greater now than a generation ago. This same report details that a lack of access to early childhood education can lead to 25% of at-risk youth dropping out and 60% never accessing higher education. This study goes on to state that while 76% of high school students graduate within four years, only 2/3 of black and Latino students graduate within this same time frame (Children’s Defense Fund).

But what are the roots of these gaps and disparities? To dig deeper, we will read and use critical race theorist Dr. Camika Royal’s attention to “wealth gaps” and American Federation for Children’s Kevin Chavous’ “opportunity gap” model and other texts/models in order to investigate the ways that cultural and institutional racism play a pivotal role in disparities in public school education.

The Social Justice in K-12 Education Capstone is a fully online model focused on (1) current local and national education issues, (2) racial (in)equity in public education, and (3) the personal, cultural, and institutional work needed for transformative personal and social action. Capstone students will volunteer either in a hands-on (recommended) or virtual (only in special circumstances) placements working directly with youth or with an education advocacy organization (in the case of virtual placement). There are three different tracks for participants. Local Face-to-Face partnerships facilitated by the instructor are recommended; however, each participant will pick a custom track that works for them in consultation with the instructor:

1. **Local (Portland Metro Area) Face-to-Face Work with Long-Standing Community Partners** These will include the partnerships listed above. Placement will be facilitated by the instructor, who has a longstanding partnership with these organizations. This is the recommended placement for this course.
2. **Out-of-Area Work (elsewhere in Oregon, the nation, or abroad) (only upon approval)**. Please contact the instructor to discuss.

3. **100% Virtual Volunteer Work with Long-Standing Local Community Partners.** We currently have several positions for students work on projects that will either require no or very little presence on-site.

In this Capstone, we will question and critique this idea of “gaps” and investigate the roots of the social injustice we can so clearly see in our nation’s schools as we work in community with our community partners (institutions, organizations, or teachers seeking to narrow the gaps and prepare underserved students for success). Each community partner has a social justice mission in alignment with the objectives of the teaching and learning in this course. The alignment is vital to the work we can do together.

Critical Service Learning Model: Using Dr. Tania Mitchell’s Traditional vs. Critical Service Learning model (2008) with transparency and as a touchstone throughout the term gives rigor to our work and presents an opportunity for deeper social justice learning. Three concepts: (a) building authentic relationships, (b) working in a social justice perspective, and (c) redistributing power, are woven throughout the coursework and used to assess and analyze everything from individual actions in work with the community partner to teamwork.

Students will volunteer 25-30 hours with a community partner in addition to working with a Reading Is Resistance team of students from this class.

Course Goals & Outcomes

Course Goals

As members of this learning community, students will

- become familiar with key issues in local education, national education, and education policy.
- identify processes, core concepts, and modes of action and engagement relevant to the key issues in education discussed in class
- empower themselves and each other to apply knowledge in those key issues as informed action in the community
- apply these civic engagement skills within hands-on community partner placement experiences and beyond (either within education or other key social justice issues impacting our community)
- use technology to mobilize, connect, and share information about educational equity

Through the course goals and outcomes, students will engage deeply with learning in the four key university studies areas: [inquiry and critical thinking](#), [communication](#), [diversity of human experience](#), and [ethics and social responsibility](#).

Course Outcomes

- Evaluate, analyze, and compare primary and secondary sources detailing key issues of education and educational equity in order to challenge assumptions about schools and learning in the U.S. Pieces of the AACU Critical Thinking rubric will be used for evaluation. ([UNST Inquiry and Critical Thinking Goal](#))
- Make connections between course materials and experience at the volunteer placement

site and provide evidence through discussion and reflective writing of a willingness to challenge personal and systemic assumptions about our course's key education issues. (UNST Inquiry and Critical Thinking and Diversity of Human Experience Goals)

- Learn and use diverse forms of communication (blogging, email, oral presentations, and letter writing) to nurture relationships within small groups, with the community partner, and with the larger public. In-class workshops on these forms will be included. (UNST Communication Goal)
- Use multiple models/scales of intercultural sensitivity (including the Bennett scale) and understanding of the culture of power (from Lisa Delpit's "The Silenced Dialogue") to read, interpret, and discuss/write reflectively and to use these scales to analyze bias and privilege. (UNST Diversity of Human Experience and Ethics and Social Responsibility Goals)
- Analyze written and hands-on best practices in community volunteering, outreach, and school reform and to develop modes or plans for future civic engagement on a small or big picture level (voting, continued activism, parenting practices, support for extended family, etc.) (UNST Inquiry and Critical Thinking and Ethics and Social Responsibility Goals)
- To apply in-class and on-site learning to empower youth, the self, or others to initiate new content, create new partnership possibilities and/or take ownership of specific aspects of the of the small group work, role at the community partner site, and/or classroom discussion (online or face to face). Evidence of this work will take place in reflective journals and the culminating assignment. (UNST Communication and Ethics and Social Responsibility Goals)

The overarching course rubric appears here:

<http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/pdf/CivicEngagement.pdf>.

Course and Community Assignments

ONLINE COURSE LEARNING AND PARTICIPATION (50% of final evaluation)

Weekly FlipGrid and/or Zoom Participation and Interaction (35%)

This is a highly engaged 100% online course. You are required to participate in weekly online discussions and in weekly online coursework. Frequent and ongoing participation is required.

Weekly Discussion Participation:

A big part of community-based courses is the class discussion and information sharing, which will take place in our course in FlipGrid, where students can participate in discussion through quick video conversation responses.

Participation is required weekly. You will be given a score based on participation level. Lack of engagement (0 points), limited engagement (12-14 points), active participation (16-18 points), excellent participation and engagement (20 points). You will compile, self-evaluate, and submit a work sample of your discussion participation mid-term and end-of-term; at that point, you will also receive substantial feedback on your participation from the instructor.

Co-Facilitating FlipGrid or Zoom Discussion (15 %) (once in the term)

The core content on each week's theme will be provided by the instructor (via links in D2L) and by the course text. I will also initiate our conversation in Weeks 1 and 2 by providing specific prompts in FlipGrid. Along with this provided content, each student will sign up to co-facilitate one week's discussion. Instructions will be provided. You will also self-evaluate your facilitation experience as part of your grade.

Discussion Mode? Discussion will happen via FlipGrid, Zoom, or both options (this is up to the facilitators for the week).

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LEARNING (50% of final grade)

This portion of your grade will be evidenced in your interactions with your community partner and with one another in Anti-Bias Book Club project (together totaling at least 30 hours).

Documentation of this work will take place in (a) the mid-term community partner check-in, and an end-of-term community partner review; (b) weekly journal reflections on your work ending in a culminating reflection at the end of the term in lieu of a final; and (c) weekly documentation of team work ending in a final video and book review/reflection to be shared in the final week of the term.

Community-Based Work (30%):

Before the term begins, we will be solidifying your community placements and the volunteer schedule for the term. You will be able to choose the days and times you will volunteer each week. These should be consistent week-to-week.

If you are ill or not able to attend your community placement, please directly contact the community partner to let them know in advance.

It is critical that you do not miss or be late to your sessions. The community partners and the students will be depending on you; also, you will be representing PSU in the community, so responsible behavior is obviously essential.

Anti-Bias Book Club (ABC): Social Justice in Young Adult Fiction and Publications for Teachers (20%)

The ABC project will be detailed in course content. Students will self-select into conversation groups focused on a YA fiction book related to race and social justice for youth. Group work will include four sessions and a final public blog post:

- Week 3: Working Definitions, Agreements, & Identity Work; Book/Articles Discussion
- Week 5: Story Stream Activity; Book/Articles Discussion
- Week 7: Historical Perspectives; Book/Articles Discussion
- Week 9: Anti-Racist Action; What Might It Look Like?
- Week 10: Team Anti-Bias Boom Club Blog Post Due

I will use a point system to track your performance during the term. Read the following information on how I will be evaluating you in various aspects of the course. Please note that participation is equally important to your grade as your writing. I have done this because the writing process and your communication with each other is as important as the work you do individually on your writing.

Course Evaluation

Your evaluation is based on all of the criteria for course requirements and policies. However, as indicated in the Student Capstone Guide, you are not evaluated only on the service aspects of the course in themselves, but on the learning demonstrated by your contributions to group work and the quality of group and individual written production and/or oral presentations.

This Capstone is evaluated using a number of American Academy of Colleges and Universities VALUE Rubrics (all are included in our D2L course shell). Within each 8-point rubric, there are the following three categories:

1. Emerging (3-4 range) (B-/B)
2. Proficient (5-6 range) (A-/A)
3. Exemplary (7-8 range) (A+)

In the first two weeks of the course, you will have the opportunity to look at the evaluation rubrics and evaluation methods of the class thoroughly. You will take part in a variety of evaluation methods: self-evaluation, work sample submission, peer evaluation, evaluation from the community partner site, and instructor feedback.

If you fall below the “Emerging” range on any piece of coursework, we will discuss the work and talk about ways to get into the Emerging-Proficient range. All students are expected to fall in the Emerging-Proficient range in the majority of their course work across all categories of our Capstone learning.

Policies:

Presence & Participation:

Consistent weekly participation is expected and required both in class and with your community partner. The community partners and the students will be depending on you; also, you will be representing PSU in the community, so responsible behavior is obviously essential. The Capstone handbook (a link appears in CONTENT) will contain rules around this.

Notify in advance if you must miss a session of your volunteer work.

More than 1 week of lack of participation (equal to 1 PSU absence) will lower your grade by one grade (i.e., B becomes B-). Two or more “absences” (weeks of lack of traceable participation online) may result in failure or mandatory withdrawal.

Late Work: Late work is not accepted unless previous arrangements have been made at least 24 hours in advance.

Paper/Discussion Format: Thoughtful; use of [linguistically diverse dialects of English](#) or “[standard](#)” English are equally welcomed

UNST 421 Week-by-Week Course Map: Schedule of Readings, Activities, and Due Dates²

- All work must be submitted by 11:55 p.m. on the due date.
- Online Discussions taking place in [FlipGrid](#) and will start on Mondays. First posts are due Wednesdays, and weekly conversations wrap up on Sundays.
- Online Discussions taking place in Zoom will take place as noted in the course calendar.
- Journal entries are due Sundays.
- Please keep track of your own weeks for co-facilitating. You will need to add your self-evaluation to your Reflective log within 1 week of facilitation/posting.

NOTE: This is a living document. You will see that I have left room toward the end of the term to add content based on where we are in this particular group's learning and in our world situation. Any major additions or changes will be announced in D2L.

Week 1: Orientation & Community Building

COURSE ORIENTATION (optional but recommended)

- Zoom Call Wednesday, January 8, NOON OR Zoom Call Wednesday, January 8, 8:00 p.m.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

- Radical Gratitude Spell & Kairos Love

READ/WATCH/LISTEN

Week 1 Content in D2L, especially...

- "Courageous Conversations and Restorative Justice Practices for Discussion"

² Specific instructions will be given for all course work in weekly D2L CONTENT modules.

- “Traditional vs. Critical Service Learning”
- “When Civility Is Used as a Cudgel Against People of Color”
- “Una Persona Educada”

DISCUSS

- Week 1 Discussion: Introductions, Agreements, and Other Communication Frameworks (first posts due Wednesday, 01/08; follow up posts by Sunday, 01/12)
- General Course Questions

REFLECT/WRITE

- Week 1 Journal (due Sunday, 01/12, in your Reflective Log in Google Docs)

Week 2: Context Building

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

- In Lak'Ech: You Are My Other Me (video and poem in weekly journal)

READ/REVIEW

For Discussion A, read Week 2 Content in D2L, especially...

- “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education”
- “The Silenced Dialogue”
- “Decolonizing the Classroom”

For Discussion B, read at least 2 of the following:

- [Teaching Tolerance Guide -- Let's Talk: Guide for Educators and Discussion Leaders](#) (please read before co-facilitating your discussion)
- [Speak Up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry](#)
- [What Is/Isn't Transformative Justice: Three Questions for Mediation/Facilitation](#) (by adrienne maree brown)
- [Trust the People](#) (by adrienne maree brown)

DISCUSS

- Week 2 Discussions: A & B on Power and Place (first posts due Wednesday; follow up conversation by Sunday, 01/19)
- Orientation to the Anti-Bias Book Project (optional Zoom on Wednesday, January 15)

WRITE/REFLECT

- Week 2 Journal (due Sunday, 01/19, in your Reflective Log in Google Docs)

SIGN UP

Sign up to facilitate discussion once in the term [HERE](#).

Week 3: Tracing the Historical Roots of Educational Inequity

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

- Counter-Storytelling, and Nichole Watson

READ/WATCH/LISTEN

Week 3 Content, especially...

- [A History: The Construction of Race and Racism](#)
- [What Is Racism?](#)
- [Timeline: History of the Race Construct](#)
- [Revisionist History \(Season 2, Episode 3\) on Brown v. Board](#)

Read your chosen primary course book:

- *A Different Vision* Introduction and Chapter 1 OR
- *We Want to Do More Than Survive* Chapters 1-3

DISCUSS

- Week 3 Discussion: Understanding Brown v. Board (first posts due Wednesday; with follow up by Sunday, 01/26)

TEAMWORK

- Week 3 Anti-Bias Book Club (schedule with your team members)

WRITE/REFLECT

- Week 3 Book Club Group Assignment 1 (due Sunday, 01/26, to your group)

folder)

- Week 3 Journal (due Sunday, 01/26, to your Reflective Log in Google Docs)

WEEK 4 Focus on Residential Schools, Native American Student Experience, and Decolonization

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

- “[They Don’t Love You Like I Love You](#)” (Video) or ([written poem](#)) by Natalie Diaz
- “[Back to the Body](#),” an interview with Natalie Diaz
- “[A Crash Course in Trauma-Informed Teaching](#)”

READ/WATCH/LISTEN

Week 4 Content, especially

- Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor (required)
- At least three other texts of your choice.

DISCUSS

- Week 4 Discussions (peer led, details coming soon)

TEAMWORK

- Keep reading your Anti-Bias Book Club text.

WRITE/REFLECT

- No journal this week.

Week 5: Whose Standards?

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

- Posted to D2L

READ

- Week 5 Content in D2L, especially content related to standardized testing

Week your primary course text

- Bartley, Part II, Chapters 3 & 4 OR

- Love Chapters 4 & 5

DISCUSS

- Week 5 Discussions (peer led; details coming soon)

WRITE/REFLECT

- Week 5 Journal (due Sunday, 02/09, in your Reflective Log in Google Docs)

Week 6: How We Talk About Opportunity Gaps & Restorative Justice

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

Restorative justice can enhance self-compassion. Here are some exercises to experiment with restorative justice for the self:

- [self-compassion exercises](#)
- [Healthy ways to forgive yourself](#)

READ/LISTEN/WATCH

- Week 6 Content in D2L, especially content related to opportunity gaps, discipline, and restorative justice

DISCUSS

- Week 6 Discussions (peer led; details coming soon)

TEAMWORK

- Anti-Bias Book Club Work (schedule on your own time)

REFLECT & WRITE

- Week 6 Journal (due Sunday, 02/16, in your Reflective Log in Google Docs)

Week 7: DACA, the DREAM Act, Youth Detention, & Sanctuary

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

Coming soon.

READ/LISTEN/WATCH

- Week 7 Content in D2L, especially content related to immigration and education

Read your chosen primary course text:

- Bartley, Part III, Chapters 7 & 8 OR
- Read this article from Bettina Love: "[How Schools Are Spirit Murdering Black and Brown Students](#)"

DISCUSS

- Week 7 Discussions (peer led; details coming soon)

TEAMWORK

- Anti-Bias Book Club Assignment 3 (due to your Group folder Sunday, 02/23)

EXTENDED PRACTICE

WRITE/REFLECT

- Week 7 Journal (due to your Reflective Log Sunday, 02/23)

Week 8: Ethnic Studies, Bias in Curriculum, and Speaking Up

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

Coming soon

READ/LISTEN/WATCH

- Week 8 Content in D2L, especially content related to ethnic studies and curriculum bias

Read your chosen primary course text:

- Bartley, Part III, Chapter 10 OR
- Love, Chapters 7 & 8

DISCUSS

DISCUSS

- Week 8 Monday Discussions (peer led; more information coming soon)

TEAMWORK

- Anti-Bias Book Club Group Work (schedule on your own time.)

WRITE/REFLECT

- No Week 8 Journal
- Anti-Bias Book Club Assignment 4 (documentation on progress on final lesson plan and blog post content due to your Group folder Sunday, 02/01)

Week 9: Pause, Breathe, and Self-Care

READ/LISTEN/WATCH

- "I Am From" Poetry Prep.

DISCUSS

- Week 9 Discussions
- "I Am From" Poetry Exercise

REFLECT/WRITE

- Week 9 Journal (due Sunday, 03/08)
- Continue to work on Anti-Bias Book Club Materials

Week 10:

READ/LISTEN/WATCH

- Week 8 Content in D2L
- Especially Bartley, Part III, Chapter 10

DISCUSS

- Week 10 Discussions (instructor led; more details coming soon)

REFLECT/WRITE

- Week 10 Journal: Culminating Reflection (due Sunday, 03/15, to your Reflective Log)
- Anti-Bias Book Club Final Self and Team Evaluation (due Sunday, 03/15, via Google Form)
- Anti-Bias Book Club Materials (due Wednesday, clearly labeled in your group folder)
- Comment on each team's Anti-Bias Book Club Posts (5 extra credit points each)

