

**BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE:  
Active Citizenship in a Multicultural World  
EDUC 444B**

**Fall, 2008 Tuesday, Thursday 4:10-5:30 pm Room: SERC C Classroom**

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**What is an Inquiry Course?**

*(from The Discovery Program web site)*

Taught by pioneering faculty, inquiry courses take a single topic, such as cloning, global warming, nutrition, human rights or the origin of life, and examine it from multiple perspectives. Inquiry courses prepare first-year students to succeed at the college level by helping them become active, independent thinkers who look at subjects and challenging problems from a number of viewpoints. All inquiry courses are small and involve experiential learning, e.g., learning by doing. Inquiry courses are designed to encourage students to reflect on their learning processes, to develop their own strategies to address questions, problems or subject matter in their coursework, and to effectively convey and present the results of their inquiry.

**Course Inquiry Questions:**

1. Who are we as a community of learners? How will this course help us to become active citizens at UNH and other communities?
2. How do we understand the concepts of democracy, citizenship, social identity, community, civic agency, engagement, and learning?
3. What literature, films, art help us to access and express these concepts?
4. How have I developed my understanding of myself as a citizen in community? What has enabled me to participate in community? What have been the barriers to participation?
5. What is civic agency? How can I act, both alone and with others, to strengthen community and democracy? What are the principles of civic engagement and how do they guide my actions?

**Course Description:**

The Living Learning Community Seminar provides an opportunity for first year students to actively engage in exploring active citizenship. The overall goal of this Inquiry seminar will be to apply multidisciplinary perspectives to an examination of how the knowledge and skills of active citizenship are acquired and exercised in a pluralistic democracy. The primary organizing

concept of the course will be that of *community*. In addition, community is a fundamental component of democratic practice and citizenship. Students will participate in community-based activities that require engagement, deliberative dialogue, public reasoning, collective action, and civic agency. Specifically, course content will draw on theories, concepts, and practices associated with civic engagement, deliberative democracy, human development, and social justice.

**Course objectives include:**

1. Define the theories, concepts, and practices of a pluralistic democracy, focusing on the American experience but including other western and non-western societies.
2. Recognize how democratic principles and practices are taught and learned in elementary, secondary, post-secondary, and informal educational settings.
3. Analyze various challenges to the creation of democratic culture as a function of discriminatory or excluding practices associated with race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, or ability; economic disadvantage; place of residence; or other traditionally marginalizing factors.
4. Examine the meaning, obligations, responsibilities, and rights of active citizenship in a democratic society.
5. Distinguish the ways in which democratic principles are applied in a university context, including residential communities and student and faculty governance.
6. Compare and contrast the concepts and practices of leadership, including those particular skills and knowledge needed by citizen leaders.
7. Practice active citizenship in university and community contexts.
8. Learn the skills of deliberative democracy, based on tools of intergroup dialogue, conflict resolution, public reasoning, and related arts of democracy.

**Required Books and Readings:**

Lappe, Frances Moore. 2006. *Democracy's edge: Choosing to save our country by bringing democracy to life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

In addition, we will use a packet of selected readings that are available on Blackboard under "Course Documents."

Students will also select one book to read from among the following. We ask that a roughly equal number of students pick each book for the sake of class discussions on October 21.

Tatum, Beverly Daniel. 1997. *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race.* New York: Basic Books..

Kozol, Jonathan. 1995. *Amazing Grace: The lives of children and the conscience of a nation.* New York: Harper Perennial.

Grandin, Temple. 1996. *Thinking in pictures: And other reports from my life with autism.* New York: Vintage Books.

OR, you may pick a book of your own preference related to social identity and its impact on individuals living in a pluralistic democracy. It would be great if several students decided on the same book to read and discuss together.

***Be the Change You Want to See is organized around five core themes:***

- I. *Theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of Active Citizenship*
- II. *Speaking from the one to the many: Personal articulations of Active Citizenship in a pluralistic democracy*
- III. *Moving from talk to action: Practicing Active Citizenship in community*
- IV. *Reflection: Who am I as an Active Citizen? What forms of collaborative social change are best suited to who I am? How will I practice this knowledge and these skills in the future? What are the roles and responsibilities of universities vis a vis communities and social change?*
- V. *Synthesis: How can I demonstrate what I have learned? As an individual? As part of a community?*

**Course Requirements: Responsibility of Students**

1. Students are responsible for reading assignments, as they have been selected to facilitate class discussion and activities. You are required to come prepared to share your reflections and questions with the class. For each class session listed below, reading assignments are for that day—that is, read those assignments before coming to class.
2. Students are expected to follow political developments and other news in the media and be prepared to informally and briefly share reactions during the beginning of each class.
3. Students are expected to attend class and be prepared to participate actively in class discussions of course material. If the instructors do not know your name and something about your background by the end of the second class, you are not being active. If at the end of the semester, the instructors can't remember a profound, moving, hilarious, or puzzling statement you made during the course, you were not being sufficiently active. If you miss a class, it is professional courtesy to notify the instructor(s) by telephone or

through e-mail. You should contact a classmate to review any notes, activities, or assignments you may have missed. Continual late arrivals and multiple absences will negatively affect your grade. (15%)

4. Blackboard will be used to post readings, announcements, and resources.
5. Each student will participate in an Active Citizenship Project (ACP), to include a reflective journal and public demonstration of learning (in teams of 2-4) as the culminating course assignment. ACP's may take a number of forms and occur in diverse venues, from the residence hall to the wider campus to the external community, including virtual communities. Goals, methodologies (primarily collaborative action research and participant observation approaches), activities, and means of assessment will be discussed in class. Team-led oral presentations of the ACP's will occur in classes from Dec. 2 through 11. (30%)
6. Each student will serve as a seminar or dialogue leader for half of one class session, on a topic to be determined. Students may do this as individuals or with 2-3 partners. Formats and methodologies will be discussed in class. These activities will take place over the four classes from Nov. 13 through 25. (20%)
7. Each student will submit two reflective essays (3-5 pages each). The first will be framed as a "This I Believe" essay and will address the student's understandings of her or his social identity as an active citizen in a multicultural democracy. This essay is due on October 21. The second essay will describe and analyze the student's participation in a dialogue activity either on campus or off. Criteria for selecting a dialogue activity will be distributed in class, and suggestions for venues will be provided. Student-selected venues may be accepted with the instructors' approval. This essay is due on Nov. 25. (10% each)
8. Each student will submit a final integrative essay one week after the last class session (December 18, 2008), in lieu of a final exam. The essays will be 5-7 pages in length and demonstrate how the student has acquired, integrated, and synthesized the experiences and content of the course. Further guidance will be provided in class. (15%)
9. All students are expected to have read and know the contents of the UNH Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities handbook. The section on "Academic Policies" applies to this course (and all courses). Information about grading, academic honesty, and related topics may be found there.

To summarize, your course grade will be based on the following assignments and weights.

| CRITERIA   | PERCENTAGE |
|--|------------|
| Attendance/Participation/Preparedness in Class Discussions | 15%        |
| Active Citizenship Project                                 | 30%        |
| Seminar/Dialogue Leader                                    | 20%        |
| Two Reflective Essays                                      | 20%        |
| Final Essay  | 15%        |

## **Semester agenda**

### **Inquiry Question One:**

*Who are we as a community of learners? How will this course help us to become active citizens at UNH and other communities?*

**September 2: Introduction to Course:** Who are we, where have we come from, what do we believe about community, democracy, and citizenship?

#### Activities:

Introductions

Educating for Democracy Survey on Blackboard

Our Connections to Community Discussion

#### Housekeeping:

Plans for the Brown Center

Oct. 18 trip to the Heifer Project, Overlook Farm

Blackboard registration and use

### **September 4: Building a Learning Community**

#### Activities:

Meet at SERC C driveway at 4:00 for bus to Browne Center

Experiential learning for community building

Followed by cookout (5:30—6:30) and bus return to campus

#### Reading Assignment:

Lappe. The Path, The Frame, The Long Arc, X1-27

#### Written Assignment for next week:

Reflections: 3-2-1

### **Inquiry Question Two:**

*How do we understand the concepts of democracy, citizenship, social identity, community, civic agency, engagement, and learning?*

### **September 9: Democracy**

#### Activities:

Research on student learning with Taras Ferencevych

Reflections on Browne Center experience

Rock the Vote (<http://www.rockthevote.com/home.html/>)

November 5<sup>th</sup> Coalition (<http://www.novemberfifth.org/>)

Reading Assignment:

Handbook: American government structure, branches, federalist 10  
Urch Druskat, Vanessa. Your Most Important Role in Democracy: Thinking for Yourself.

**September 11: Democracy**

Activities:

Class discussion of assigned reading, in small groups

Reading Assignment:

Palmer, Parker. The Politics of the Broken-Hearted: On Holding the Tensions of Democracy

**September 16: No regular class, University Day**

Activities:

Attend Democracy Dialogue @ 7:30am and/or the President's Inauguration at 12:40, both events in the MUB.

Participate in University Day Picnic activities, including a visit to the Discovery Program/University Dialogue table, and participate in the "wealth divide" activity. You can also volunteer to staff this activity if you like (contact Michele Holt-Shannon). In other words, this is not a day off from class, just a different way of being part of the UNH community and thinking about how it all relates to our class.

You will be asked to reflect on your experiences at University Day in Thursday's class.

**September 18: Citizenship**

Activities:

Reflection on University Day  
Citizen/Community Member Role Map  
Civic engagement survey

Reading Assignment:

Lappe. Power is Not a Four Letter Word, Our Coat, The Elephant, 29-108  
Kozol, Letters to a Young Teacher, Chapter 12: It is Evil to Tell Lies to Children, 151-170

**September 23: Civic Engagement at UNH and Durham**

Activities:

Panel of UNH community members

**Also Attend Movie and Discussion: *People Like Us: Social Class in America***

Wednesday, September 24, 6 PM, MUB Theatre II

It's the 800-pound gorilla in American life that most Americans don't think about: how do income, family background, education, attitudes, aspirations, and even appearance mark

someone as a member of a particular social class? Class can be harder to spot than racial or ethnic differences, yet in many ways it's the most important predictor of what kind of financial and educational opportunities someone will have in life. But class is a hard subject to talk about in a society like ours, where the idea that all people are created equal and that a poor child can become President is enshrined in national legend. Facilitated by Professor Nick Smith and Sociology PhD candidate Chris Colocousis.

**Inquiry Question Three:**

***What literature, films, art help us to access and express these concepts?***

**September 25: Representing Social Challenges and Social Change**

Activities:

Watch Film, *When the Levees Broke*

Reading Assignment:

The Growing Divide University Dialogue Monograph

**September 30: Representing Social Challenges and Social Change**

Activities:

Discussion, *When the Levees Broke*

**Behind the Swoosh: Sweatshops and Social Justice**

Wednesday, October 1, 2008, 7:00 PM, The Strafford Room

This interactive multi-media presentation includes slides, role-playing, and powerful video footage of the month Jim Keady spent in an Indonesian factory workers' slum living on \$1.25 a day, a typical wage paid to Nike's subcontracted workers. Sponsored by the MUB Lecture Series.

**October 2: Representations of Social Change**

Activities:

Share a video, YouTube link, reading, poem, piece of art, or other cultural representation of civic agency—of individuals or groups being the change they want to see

Reading Assignment:

Lappe. Part Three, Democracy as a Verb, 109-248

Bloom, J. Your (Nonpartisan Message Here)

**Inquiry Question Four:**

*How have I developed my understanding of my self as a citizen in community? What has enabled me to participate in community? What have been the barriers to participation?*

**October 7: Power and privilege**

Activities:

Guest Speaker, Michele Holt-Shannon  
Identity wheel, One Up and One Down Model

Reading Assignment:

Tatum, Beverly. The Complexity of Identity: “Who am I?”  
Harro, Bobbie. The Cycle of Socialization  
Jones, Steven. The Right Hand of Privilege.  
Solomon, Deborah. Interview with Maya Soetoro-Ng, All in the Family

**October 9: Stereotypes, bigotry, prejudice**

Activities:

View and discuss videos by Jane Elliott, 1970, 2001

Reading Assignment:

Lappe. Part Four: Democracy in Our Bones, 249-323

**October 14: Difference through the eyes of the majority**

Activities:

View and discuss Mirrors of Privilege

Reading Assignment:

Choice Books

**October 16: Social Identity**

Activities:

Guest Speaker, Richard Haynes

Reading Assignment:

Choice Books

**October 21: Diverse perspectives on social identity**

Activities:

Book club discussions

**Inquiry Question Five:**

***What is civic agency? How can I act, both alone and with others, to strengthen community and democracy? What are the principles of civic engagement and how do they guide my actions?***

**October 23: The power of words**

Activities:

Small and large group discussion of assigned readings:

Reading Assignment:

Three documents--Barack Obama, A More Perfect Union; Martin Luther King, Letter from a Birmingham Jail; Seneca Falls Declaration

**Reflective essay #1 due**

**October 28: Advocacy, activism, agitation**

Activities:

What is a change agent? Small and large group discussion

Reading Assignment:

Mallory, B.L. (2007). Advocacy and leadership in early childhood education. In New, R.S., & Cochran, M. (eds.), Early childhood education: An international encyclopedia. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

**October 30: Acting locally and thinking globally**

Activities:

Guest speakers, City Year New Hampshire co-executive directors Pawn Nitichan & Alexandra Allen

**Mid-semester course evaluation**

Reading Assignment:

Read City Year Website

Come prepared with 3-5 questions for the guest speakers

**Inquiry Question Six:**

***What is deliberative dialogue? How is it practiced? What forms of dialogue are most useful for particular community purposes?***

**November 4: Deliberative Dialogue, The Democracy Imperative**

Activities:

Small and large group discussion of assigned reading and review of The Democracy Imperative website (<http://www.unh.edu/democracy/>)

Reading Assignment:

Mallory, B.L., & Thomas, N.L. (2003). When the medium is the message; Promoting ethical action through democratic dialogue. Change, September/October, 2003.

**November 6: Everyday Democracy**

Activities:

Overview of study circles, review and discussion of Everyday Democracy website ([www.everyday-democracy.org](http://www.everyday-democracy.org))

Reading Assignment:

Toward a More Perfect Union in an Age of Diversity: A Guide for Building Stronger Communities Through Public Dialogue (<http://www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Resource.12.aspx>)

**Moving from Talk to Action: Practicing Active Citizenship**

|                                |         |                                  |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| November                       | 11      | No class, Veteran’s Day          |
| November                       | 13      | Student-led seminars, topics TBD |
| November                       | 18 & 20 | Student-led seminars, topics TBD |
| November                       | 25      | Student-led seminars, topics TBD |
| <b>Reflective Essay #2 due</b> |         |                                  |
| December                       | 2 & 4   | ACP demonstrations               |
| December                       | 9 & 11  | ACP demonstrations               |

**Final Essay due December 18**