INTS 475/595: Research Methods for Social Change (3 credits) Spring 2017

School of Integrative Studies (SIS), George Mason University Wednesdays 4:30-7:10 pm, Music Theater Building Rm 1004

Course Facilitator

Julie E. Owen, Phd Associate Professor, Leadership Studies School of Integrative Studies (SIS), George Mason University 440 Enterprise Hall

jowen4@gmu.edu twitter: @julie_gmu

wk. 703-993-1436 hm. 571-730-4468

Office Hours

I will gladly meet with you outside of class and request that you email me to make an appointment.

Commitment to Diversity

The School of Integrative Studies, an intentionally inclusive community, promotes and maintains an equitable and just work and learning environment. We welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and disability.

Course Goals

This course introduces interdisciplinary research methods for social change and invites participants to interrogate the colonized nature of traditional modes of inquiry which proscribe particular regimes of truth. Participants will explore their own epistemological assumptions, and use tools of inquiry and discovery to explore transformative approaches to scholarship. Participants will examine multiple critical approaches to inquiry including auto-ethnography and ethnography, feminist and indigenous research methods, participatory action research, critical quantitative analysis, and more.

[Note: This syllabus builds upon the shared curricula and syllabi of Dr. Dian Squire (Loyola University Chicago), and Dr. Susan Iverson (Kent State). I thank them for their intellectual contribution and generosity in sharing course materials.]

Learning Outcomes

By actively participating in our learning community, students will be able to:

- Understand the socially constructed nature of knowledge and the historical, economic, political, and cultural factors that influence knowledge;
- Explore your histories, values, and identities and how they influence your epistemology and approach to research;
- Interrogate traditional modes of inquiry including technical rationality, notions of universal truths, scientific neutrality, researcher dispassion, and controlled dissemination of findings;
- Examine systemic and academic processes by which information is validated or invalidated;
- Become familiar with core concepts of social justice and methods of critical inquiry and scholarship;

- Demonstrate understanding of the essential role of trustworthiness, competence, and ethics in research and information sharing;
- Understand the role of research in personal, institutional, and community transformation.

Learning Community Competencies

- *Civic Engagement*: Practice based on an informed understanding of communities and the roles and responsibilities of individuals within those communities.
- *Critical Thinking*: The ability to think clearly and critically, using reason and experience to for considered judgments.
- *Group Collaboration:* The process of working toward a shared agenda and/or common purpose while capitalizing on the diversity within the group.

Course Materials

Davis, T., & Harrison, L. M. (2013). *Advancing social justice: Tools, pedagogies, and strategies to transform your campus*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2014). *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education* [2^{nd} *edition*]. New York: Routledge.

Multiple additional texts (videos, websites, and articles) are provided on our course Blackboard (Bb) site.

Optional \rightarrow if you are new to scholarly research

Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches* [4th *edition*]. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Course Requirements

1) Active Participation (250 points)

This course integrates experiential and community-based learning as a key component. Learning occurs through active participation in community work and class activities, discussion, and personal reflection upon experiences.

Through class discussions and assignments, you will have the opportunity to discover new perspectives and examine ideas that were previously unchallenged. Our dialogues depend on the development of trust and safety among participants, as well as risk-taking and effective facilitation. Participation means being *fully present* and ready to participate in class (having done the readings, arriving with texts and notes, and otherwise prepared). It means participating in class discussion and debates. It means asking questions. It means showing evidence of self-awareness through respectful dialogue, being willing to question your assumptions, and demonstrating inclusiveness. In-class writing, submission of class discussion questions, current events, occasional reading quizzes and the like will be factored into your participation grade.

• Your participation grade also includes sharing a brief Moment of Obligation (MOO) Story: What is at the root of your passion for social change? Each student will reflect on these questions and then share a "moment of obligation," a story about an experience that committed you to doing something to address a problem that you care about. The story (approximately 5 minutes) will illustrate how your life experiences have inspired and motivated you to choose the issue that you will focus your inquiry and learning on through this semester. These stories will also help students practice risk-taking and contribute to the development of 'brave space' in our learning

community. These stories should be authentic and unrehearsed – no visual materials are needed.

2) Group Integrative Blog (250 points)

At the beginning of the semester you will be assigned to a group of classmates with whom you will work the whole semester. For this assignment, your group will hold discussions on blog using the Blackboard Blog tool. Ten times throughout the semester you will post a 500-word response to the assigned readings, viewings, websites and any substantive discussion questions we may provide. You must complete 8 blog posts in total, leaving you the option to either skip posting on the blog two weeks during the semester without penalty or drop your two lowest scores. Your grade will be based on your individual contributions and substantively furthering the conversation within your group (200 points) and the group's overall richness and analysis of the course materials (50 points).

3) Critical Methods Group Presentation/ Class Facilitation (250 points)

Students will sign up for one of six topics related to specific methods of critical inquiry selected from the list below or identified on your own to investigate as a group and facilitate a 60-minute class discussion. This project has several parts (see a - d below).

<u>Possible Topics for Group Presentation on Critical Methods (feel free to propose others)</u>

Appreciative Inquiry

Auto-ethnography

Critical Case Study

Critical Ethnography

Critical Quantitative

Emancipatory Disability Research

Feminist Inquiry

Grounded Theory

Historical Inquiry

Oral Histories

Participatory Action Research/ Community-Based Research

Portraiture

Queer Phenomenology

a. Research and Selection of Class Readings (30 points)

The group will research the chosen method and select THREE readings (of 15 pages or so each) to share with the class (via BB) a week in advance of your presentation. Julie will offer some assistance/ideas. Additionally, groups will also offer 1 or 2 discussion questions for each submitted reading on the Blackboard discussion list.

- One reading should discuss some aspect of how to carry out the type of research being explored in the class: the "how-to" reading (this may be a chapter from a methods book)
- One reading that discusses theoretical or methodological issues related to topic: the "methodological discussion" reading (this may be a book chapter, journal article, or internet source)
- One reading that is an example of a published study using this methodology (try to avoid theses and dissertations if possible).

b. Researcher Interview (40 points)

The group will identify a researcher (faculty or graduate student) who is familiar with your chosen method and interview them in person about the benefits and challenges inherent in the method. Students should learn about the research itself, as well as the scholars' epistemology and beliefs about the role of research in society. This person will likely be a good source of readings/articles to share with the class. Not all group members need to be present at the interview. If your interviewee is willing, you are welcome to film or record the interview in order to share parts with the class during your presentation (and/or you may invite them to class on your assigned day for a 15-20 minute Q&A as part of your presentation). Please be sure and respect people's time and busy schedules both in your interview and requests.

c. Presentation (100 points)

Each group will have approximately minutes (or half the class) to run the seminar on the day of their facilitation. The nature of the teaching activities are up to the group, but all presentations should include:

- 5-10 minute ice-breaker, energizer, or warm up activity
- 25-30 minute review of the presentation topic and 3 assigned readings/websites -- including discussion of social justice issues raised or addressed by the method
- 15 minute active learning activity based on the readings that involves the entire class
- 10 minutes of wrap-up that should include:
 - real world examples of how the topic is manifested in diverse contexts
 - peer feedback / dialogue/ question and answer session

Students will be evaluated as a team and receive points for their evidence of each of the following: collaboration (did the group discuss and integrate their learning versus dividing the presentation into individual "segments"?); planning effort (to what extent was the group prepared by having carefully read and analyzed the readings, collected external research if necessary, and evidence of thought put into the presentation?); and presentation (was the group able to effectively communicate the necessary information? Was the class engaged by the presentation? How thorough and creative was the presentation?). Both peer and instructor feedback will be factored in to the final grade.

d. Annotated Bibliography (40 points)

Each group will distribute a 1 page annotated bibliography (source in APA format and brief paragraph describing contents of source and how it might be used) as part of the presentation. This should include the three sources you identified above + at least 2 additional sources.

e. Peer Evaluation (40 points)

Students will submit a reflection on their group process and a self-assessment (*How did the group work together and take on roles and leadership? How would you assess your own contribution to the group project?*), as well as reviews of other groups presentations through a google form.

4) Individual Written Assignments (250 points)

Ways of Knowing/Situating the Researcher Essay (100 points)

Despite assumptions about researcher objectivity, who we are affects how we know. In this 3-4 page paper, students will explore their epistemological assumptions as well as their aspirations for using research for social change.

- How would you described your preferred ways of knowing, learning, and thinking?
- As you consider your autobiography/personal history/social location/identities/situatedness, what factors (e.g., personal, experiential, familial, sociocultural, historical, and/or disciplinary) influenced your ways of knowing?
- Which social movements, from today or from any point in history, resonate the most with you? Why? Have you been involved in any work that you would define as part of a social movement?
- If you could take on a few big problems in the world (e.g., educational inequity, poverty, environmental challenges), what would they be? How are you currently committing to these causes? How might research inform your approach to these issues?
- What specifically do you hope to gain from this course related to using research for social change?

Final Paper/Project (150 points)

Students will individually select a project/project of interest and value to their ongoing/future scholarly work that will serve as the final for this course. The nature of the project will be proposed by the student and negotiated with the instructor. Some examples of potential projects include (a) the researching and writing of a paper on a topic or question of relevance to critical social research; (b) the design and proposal of a critical research study; (c) a multi-media portfolio (video, website, creative piece) reflecting exploration of topics or questions of relevance to critical social research; (d) essay reviewing additional books or articles related to critical research or critical theory; (e) a paper that reviews critical research on a topic of interest to the student; and so forth.

Grading & Evaluation

Active Participation

Class Participation (up to 10 pts per class), includes Moment of Obligation (MOO) 250 points

Group Integrative Blog

8 blogs minimum x up 25 points/each= 200 points

+ Up to 50 points for overall group blog quality 250 points

Class Facilitation/ Group Presentations

250 points

- a. Research and Selection of Class Readings (30 points)
- b. Researcher Interview (40 points)
- c. Presentation (100 points)
- d. Annotated Bibliography (40 points)
- e. Peer Evaluation (40 points)

Ways of Knowing/Situating the Researcher Essay 100 points

Final Paper/ Project 150 points

TOTAL 1000 POINTS Please note: Should you have a concern about the grade you receive on a specific assignment we ask that you submit your concern in writing to both of the instructors within two weeks of receiving your grade for that assignment.

At the end of the semester, your final grade will be determined based on the following scale:

980 - 1000 = A+	830 - 869 = B	670 - 699 = C-
930 - 979 = A	800 - 829 = B-	600 - 669 = D
900 - 929 = A-	770 - 799 = C+	Below 599 = F
870 - 899 = B+	700 - 769 = C	

Learning Community Policies

• Attendance and Timeliness: You are expected to attend all classes and to be on time. Absences will negatively impact your participation grade, as you clearly cannot participate in classes you do not attend. Late arrivals are disruptive to all of us, so please anticipate traffic, parking, and other possible delays in your planning.

Some class times are in close proximity to religious or cultural observances. If a class date or assignment creates a conflict, please let us know in advance so we can make appropriate arrangements.

• Late Work: All work must be presented on time (defined as turning in all assignments in person at the beginning of class). Please allow sufficient time for technological and printing snafus as these will not be considered valid excuses for late assignments.

Late work may be accepted if a written medical excuse is provided, but generally there will be no grace period for late work. For each day an assignment is late, the paper will be marked down <u>one full letter grade</u> for each day they are past due, including Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Due dates are clearly indicated throughout the syllabus.

- Technology in Class: Since a quality learning experience in this course rests heavily upon interaction and exchange of ideas among students and the instructors, items that negatively impact the quality of your interactions are discouraged. Remember that your ability to listen to and engage with your peers and substantively contribute to learning community discussions is a significant component of your final grade. Laptops and tablets are permissible for purposes of both taking and reviewing notes as well as to search for online resources that may contribute to the class dialogue. Instant messaging, e-mailing, etc., during class communicates disrespect to the rest of the class community, and are not permitted.
- **Email and Blackboard:** Please check your email and our Blackboard course site several times a week, as we will use both email and the Announcement page in Blackboard to communicate with you between classes. We also welcome your emails and usually respond quickly. If you have not received a reply within 48 hours, please be sure to follow up with us.

Please note that it is university policy that we respond only to your Mason email accounts – this is to protect your privacy – and we will not respond to gmail or other email accounts.

• **Honor Code:** The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity.

Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that:

All work submitted be your own;

- When using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and
- o If you are uncertain about the expectations for a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. If you feel unusual pressure or anxiety about your grade in this or any other course, please let an instructor know and also seek help from University resources. The University provides a range of services to help with test anxiety, writing skills, study skills, personal issues, and related concerns.

Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is *plagiarism*, a serious offense. If you wish to quote directly from any text, you MUST use the exact words (including punctuation) just as the words, phrases, and sentences appear in the original text. Additionally, you must follow proper citation rules to indicate that you are quoting directly from a text. If you want to paraphrase ideas from a source, that is, convey the author's ideas in your own words, you must still cite the source, using an established citation format.

Faculty members expect that submitted work has been prepared for that class only. The re-use of papers, presentations, and other materials from one course in another course is not appropriate or acceptable. Violations of the University Honor Code will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity for review and action. For more information on the honor code: http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/.

Professionalism: As a representative of Mason away from campus, we ask that you act
professionally in your interactions off-campus. Students are expected to adhere to agency standards
regarding appearance, conduct and confidentiality.

Relevant Campus and Academic Resources

Leadership Education and Development (LEAD)

The Hub, Room 2400; 993-4186; http://lead.gmu.edu/

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, & Questioning Resources

SUB 1, Suite 2200; 993-2702; http://lgbtq.gmu.edu/

Office of Disability Services

If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB 1, Suite 2500; 993-2474; http://www.gmu.edu/depts/unilife/ods/) to determine the accommodations you might need.

In addition to providing your professors with the appropriate form at the beginning of the semester, please take the initiative to discuss documented accommodations with us. Because of the range of learning differences, faculty members need to learn from you the most effective ways to assist you.

Office of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides a wide range of services to students, faculty, and staff. Services are provided by a staff of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors. The Center provides individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs -- experiences to enhance a student's personal experience and academic performance. http://caps.gmu.edu/

Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education (ODIME) SUB 1, Suite 2400; 993-2700; http://odime.gmu.edu

Women and Gender Studies Center
Johnson Center, Rm 240K; 993-2896; http://wmst.gmu.edu/center

Writing Center

Occasionally, I'll refer students to the Writing Center. The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, on-line and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis. I take these referrals very seriously; therefore, if we have referred you to the Writing Center, I hope you will take advantage of their services. There are multiple locations on Fairfax, Prince William, and Arlington campuses (see website for info about locations and numbers); http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEULE (subject to revision)

Class Date	Themes/Topics and Associated Texts (to be reviewed before class)	Assignments Due
1/25	Introductions & MLK Day of Action (HUB Ballroom, 6-9pm)	
	Texts: The Danger of a Single Story - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie — 20 minutes https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda adichie the danger of a single story?la nguage=en	
2/1	Creating a Learning Community & Intro to Research for Social Change	MOO Sign Ups
	Texts: Arao & Clemens, From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces	
	Johnson & Parry (2015). <i>Introduction</i> . In C.W. Johnson & D.C. Parry (Eds.), <i>Fostering social justice through qualitative inquiry</i> . Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.	
	The Scientific Method (4 min): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMGRe824kak (11 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8wi0QnYN6s	
2/8	Paradigms & Ways of Knowing – Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology	MOO (3)
	Texts: ASJ Preface & C1: Uncovering Epistemology: Frameworks Supporting a Change Agenda	Blog #1 due
	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. Preface & C1: Situating the Research: First Steps	
2/15	Core Concepts in Social Justice Texts:	MOO (3)
	ASJ C2: A Toolkit for Understanding a Social Justice Paradigm	Blog #2 due
	ASJ C4: Critical Pedagogy: The Foundation of Social Justice Educational Practice	
	hooks, b. (1994). Theory as liberatory practice. In b. hooks, <i>Teaching to transgress:</i> Education as the practice of freedom (59-75). New York: Routledge.	

2/22		MOO (3)
2/22	Finding Your Voice as a Researcher: Intersubjectivity and Reflexivity Texts:	Ways of Knowing
	ASJ C5: Situating the Self Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C2: Meeting the Obligations of High Quality Research	Paper due
	What is social capital? http://www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf	
	Tricia Rose Brown, On Becoming a Hip Hop Scholar (9 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl2qK5vZzP4	
3/1	Core Concepts in Research	MOO (3)
	Texts: Henn, M., Weinstein, M., & Foard, N. C1: What is Social Research?	Blog #3 due
	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C4 Designing Research	
	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C5 Perspectives on Sampling	
	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C6 Challenges in Collecting data	
3/8	Critical Research	MOO (3)
	Texts: Henn, M., Weinstein, M., & Foard, N. C2: Critical Social Research	Blog #4 due
	Parry & Johnson C1: Theoretical Perspectives for Social Justice Inquiry. In C.W. Johnson & D.C. Parry (Eds.), Fostering social justice through qualitative inquiry. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.	
	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C3 <i>Incorporating Theoretical Perspectives</i>	
	Read ONE of the following:	
	Bonilla-Silva, E. & Zuberi, T. (2008). C1: Toward a Definition of White Logic and White Methods. In T. Zuberi & E. Bonilla-Silva (Eds.) White Logic, White Methods: Racism and Methodology. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.	
	Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. <i>Feminist Theory</i> , 9 (1), 67-85.	
	Delgado Bernal, D. (2002). Critical Race Theory, Latcrit Theory and critical racedgendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 8(10), 105-126.	

	Renn, K. E. (2010). LGBT and Queer Research in Higher Education: The State and Status of the Field. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , <i>39</i> (2), 132-141. doi:	
	10.3102/0013189X10362579	
	Solorzano, D. & Yosso, T. (2002). Critical Race methodology: counterstorytelling as an analytical framework for educational research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> 8(1), 23-44.	
3/15	Mason Spring break → No class this week	1
3/22	Trustworthiness, Competence, & Ethics	MOO (3)
	Texts: Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C7 Issues in Analysis and Interpretation	Blog #5 due
	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C8 Anticipating and Navigating Ethical Issues	
	Peruse this website: http://retractionwatch.com/	
	Bhattacharjee, Y <u>The Mind of a Con Man</u> http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/28/magazine/diederik-stapels-audacious- academic-fraud.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all&	
	http://www.chronicle.com/article/Harvards-Privacy-Meltdown/128166/	
3/29	Group Presentations (2)	MOO (3)
	Readings to be assigned by presentation groups – see Blackboard discussion board	Blog #6 due
4/5	Group Presentations (2)	MOO (3)
	Readings to be assigned by presentation groups – see Blackboard discussion board	Blog #7 due
4/12	Group Presentations (2)	
1/10	Readings to be assigned by presentation groups – see Blackboard discussion board	Blog #8 due
4/19	From Inquiry to Action Texts:	Blog #9 due, if needed
	ASJ C 6 Media Literacy	
	ASJ C7 Disrupting Organizational Practices to Empower People	
	Harro, The Cycle of Liberation (463-469, Adams)	
	Lorde, A. (1983). The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House. In C.	
	Moraga and G. Anzaldua (Eds.), <i>This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color</i> (94-101). New York: Kitchen Table Press.	
4/26	From Inquiry to Action	Blog # 10 due,
		if needed
	Texts: ASJ C8 Strategies for Reinvigorating Social Justice in Higher Education	
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	Parry & Johnson C10: The Future of Social Justice: Paradigm Proliferation. In C.W. Johnson & D.C. Parry (Eds.), Fostering social justice through qualitative inquiry. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. Love, Developing a Liberatory Consciousness (470-474, Adams)	
5/3	Jones, S., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. C9 Lessons Learned and Future Directions	
	Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, We Make the Road by Walking, pp. 115-138 https://codkashacabka.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/we-make-the-road-by-walking-myles-and-paolo-freie-book.pdf	
5/10	Final Paper/ Project Due by 5pm to Blackboard	