

## **Syllabus NCLC 295: Leadership and Community Engagement**

Spring 2017

Fridays 10:30-11:45am, Robinson B 201

George Mason University

### **Course Instructor**

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### **Course Description**

In this course, students will explore concepts of leadership, social justice and community engagement, with particular attention to: social change, effectiveness in groups, and personal leadership development.

### **Course Goals**

- Students will work collaboratively to learn about a social change issue and address it through community engagement strategies such as service or advocacy
- Students will reflect on the leadership and social change issues that arise from this work and continue to inform their own personal approach to these issues
- Students will have a supportive community in which to experiment with leadership approaches and explore their passions around social change.

### **SIS Competencies**

#### **Civic Engagement**

Civic engagement is practice based on an informed understanding of communities and the roles and responsibilities of individuals within those communities. Students will:

- Develop the ability to examine contemporary issues and their historical contexts.
- Recognize and value multiple perspectives in civic life.
- Understand how actions are shaped by multiple forces, including values, and economic and social inequity.
- Make informed choices regarding personal community involvement, social justice issues and leadership roles.
- Work collaboratively with diverse partners to solve problems for a common good

#### **Communication**

Communication is the process of creating and sharing meaning through human interaction. A competent communicator will be able to:

- Speak, read, write and listen effectively, with attention to audience, purpose and context.
- Use appropriate language, nonverbal and visual symbols.
- Organize ideas and information strategically.
- Design, revise and produce work tailored to diverse audiences.

#### **Group Collaboration**

Group collaboration is the process of working toward a shared agenda and/or common purpose while capitalizing on the diversity within the group. Effective group collaboration means that students should be able to:

- Create shared expectations and a common purpose.
- Understand and choose roles and tasks.
- Make decisions and track progress collaboratively.



- Facilitate constructive consensus building, compromise and conflict.
- Integrate individual talents and strengths toward the accomplishment of goals and tasks.
- Be inclusive and value the diversity of the group.
- Demonstrate pro-social behaviors and emotions (e.g., compassion, joy, gratitude, cooperation).

### **Principles Grounding an SIS Learning Community**

A learning community differs from most other courses in several specific ways. As YOU are an important part of creating a learning community, it is important that you understand their basic principles. Learning communities emphasize:

- Valuing of multiple sources of knowledge
- Learning from experience and reflection
- Working collaboratively with others
- Integration of knowledge from multiple sources
- Self-directed learning facilitated by clearly articulated learning competencies
- Learning through evaluation and assessment

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.

As a member of this learning community, it is an expectation that you will help contribute to the creation of an open and welcoming learning environment. You are welcome to question and challenge, but with civility and respect for the variety of perspectives reflected here.

### **Assignments**

*Please note all assignments and due dates are subject to revision by the instructor.*

#### **Social Justice Cinema:**

A 1-2 pages *reaction* paper discussing the critical social issues found in the movie selection of your choice. Writing prompts will be given. ***Due February 24<sup>th</sup>***

***The “Art” of Social Change Project and Presentation: April 7<sup>th</sup>*** Many students assume that social change strategies always involve a form of political or community action; in fact, social change movements occur in all realms of society. One of the most interesting to study is how artists engage in social change efforts through their art. This assignment asks students to reflect upon the role of the arts and artists in inspiring social change. Can use poems, art, music and create a presentation on how their chosen subject can be used to facilitate social change.

#### **Service:**

Volunteering 15 hours during the fall semester, students will engage with the local community utilizing and reflecting upon what they are learning in class in their service experience. A commitment has been made to this community partner and students are expected to be present, positive and engaged during their service experience. You must commit to one community partner for your hours, track your hours online and regularly reflect on service experiences. You will be graded on your service logsheet.

### **Active Engagement in this Learning Community and LLC Activities**

In a learning community, learning is understood to occur through active participation in classroom activities, small and large group discussion, and personal reflection upon experiences and readings. Effective participation involves active listening, honest but respectful dialogue, and comments that reflect



thoughtfulness on ideas. Learning community participants are expected to arrive to class on time, prepared to engage in active learning by having read the assigned work. When you are unable to attend class, notifying the instructor in advance is appreciated. Documented reasons to miss class will be taken into consideration in calculating the final grade.

SIS highly values learning from experiences. In this course, these experiences are valued as highly as assigned readings. You cannot successfully engage in the learning community without attending the following assigned events. If you are unable to attend any of these events, contact me as soon as possible to arrange for another assignment.

- LLC Rejuvenation Retreat: January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 10am-4pm
- End of Year Celebration: May 6<sup>th</sup>- 4pm-7pm

Assignment		Total	98 - 100 = A+ 93 - 97 = A 90 - 92 = A- 87 - 89 = B+ 83 - 86 = B 80 - 82 = B- 77 - 79 = C+ 70 - 76 = C 67 - 69 = C- 60 - 66 = D Below 59 = F
Social Justice Cinema		15	
Art for Social Change Project		25	
Active Engagement in Learning Community		30	
Service Hours	Logsheets/Journal	30	
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	

Should you have a concern about the grade you receive on a specific assignment you should contact the instructor within two weeks of receiving your grade for that assignment.

#### Tentative Schedule

Date	Theme	Due
1/27	Welcome Back!	
<b>1/28 (Saturday)</b>	<b>Rejuvenation Retreat</b>	
2/3	Social Movements	
2/10	Intro to Art for Social Change (Separate Classes)	
2/17	396 Teach	
2/24	Community Partner Panel (Separate Classes)	<b>Social Justice Cinema Paper Due</b>
3/3	396 Teach	
3/10	Guest Speaker (Separate Classes)	
<b>3/17</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK-NO CLASS</b>	
3/24	396 Teach	
3/31	Art for Social Change Presentations (Separate Classes)	<b>Art for Social Change Presentation Due</b>
4/7	396 Teach	
4/14	Art for Social Change Presentations (Separate Classes)	
4/21	396 Teach	
4/28	TBD	
5/5	Wrap-up and Reflection	<b>Service needs to be completed</b>
<b>5/6 (Saturday)</b>	<b>End of Year Celebration- Location TBD</b>	



## **Class Expectations and Policies**

Technology: As a learning community, our classes will be based on discussions and we will be learning from each other. Laptops, cell phones and mp3 players detract from this kind of learning environment. Unless you have a documented reason to use certain forms of technology during class time, web-enabled devices and phones should be silenced and put away.

Late Work: Assignments will be reduced by a letter grade for each day they are late. Late work may be accepted if a written medical excuse is provided, but generally, there will be no grace period for late work.

Professionalism: Since you will be representing George Mason University and the LCE LLC on and off campus, behaving as a professional is imperative. Students are expected to adhere to their experience learning site standards regarding appearance, conduct and confidentiality.

Mason E-mail: Because we meet just once a week, expect communication from the instructor and class members between class times via e-mail. In keeping with university policy, I will correspond only with your Mason email account.

SIS's Commitment to Diversity: School of Integrative Studies is an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and strives to have faculty, staff and students that reflect the diversity of our plural society. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, class, linguistic background, religion, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, or physical ability.

Religious or Cultural Observances: Some class times are in close proximity to religious or cultural observances. If a class date or assignment creates a conflict, please let me know in advance so I can make appropriate arrangements.

The Honor Code and Academic Integrity: The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. This is especially true in New Century College. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on 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 talk with us or to a trusted friend or counselor to get your situation in perspective. The University provides a range of service to help with test anxiety, writing skills, study skills, and other related concerns.

Some projects are designed to be undertaken individually. For these projects, you may discuss your ideas with others or ask for feedback; however, it is not appropriate to give your paper to someone else to revise. You are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on an assignment, your professor has the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.

As in most learning communities and in many other classes, your final integrated group project in this unit is designed to be completed by a study group. With collaborative work, names of all the participants should appear on the work. Over the course of the semester you may find that it is necessary for different group members to take the lead on various assignments leading up to the integrated final group project. However, the faculty do expect that all group members will contribute equally and that the pieces will be conceptually integrated in the final end product.



Using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious offense. It is very important to understand how to prevent committing plagiarism when using material from a source. If you wish to quote verbatim, you must use the exact words (including punctuation) just as it appears in the original and you must use quotation marks and page number(s) in your citation. 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 MLA or APA format.

The re-use of papers, presentations, etc., from one course in another course is not appropriate. In every NCC course, faculty expect that work that is submitted has been done only for that class. An exception is made for materials included within course and year-end portfolios.

### **Student Support**

Office of Disability Services: If you have a learning difference which may influence your work in this class, please provide the form from the Disability Resource Center which details the accommodations you need to complete the course enjoyably and successfully. Faculty can only offer accommodations to students who have identified themselves to the Disability Resource Center. Contact information: SUB I Rm 211, (703) 993-4306, <http://ods.gmu.edu>.

Writing Resources: The University's Writing Center, offers free, expert tutoring to writers at all levels who want to improve their writing. Each individual session lasts for 45 minutes, and you should try to book an appointment in advance. Located in the Johnson Center room A114, [writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu). NCC's online writing guide, is also a useful resource: <http://classweb.gmu.edu/nccwg/>

Student Technology Assistance and Resources (STAR) Center: This resource is available to assist you with questions about technology. Johnson Center 229, (703) 993-8990

Counseling Center: While coursework and academic expectations are stressful enough, many times personal events or circumstances can also affect your ability to handle the stress of college life. Please know excellent resources are available to you at the Counseling Center, SUB I, third floor, (703) 993-2380.