DJS 200/400: Mentoring for Equity and Inclusion

Spring 2022

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Democracy and Justice Studies
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Class Meeting Time: Mo/We 12:45-2:05

Class Meeting Place: MAC 223

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Office hours: M 2:05-3:05, and GLADLY by appointment

Course Description

Students in this course will serve as mentors for Green Bay area public school students through the COMSA after school program. Mentors will help promote the development of skills critical to academic success, encourage students to aspire to college, help overcome barriers to college attainment, and act as a role model and resource for the underrepresented students served by COMSA. A critical component of mentoring will involve learning about the barriers that have historically limited success in school, including low income, immigration and refugee status, racism, and sexism. Mentors will work with students at least four hours per week for fourteen weeks and will provide mentoring as well as tutoring support.

COMSA is a 501(c)3 registered nonprofit organization. The organization was established in order to fill the existing service gap for Somali refugee and immigrant communities in Northeast Wisconsin. COMSA is managed and led by community leaders who understand the special needs and challenges affecting refugees and immigrants on a daily basis. The big picture is to create a welcoming environment for refugees and immigrant families in the community, with services that come alongside families, therefore enabling them to speak English, seek employment, education, and become self-sufficient.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain how interlocking systems of oppression, including but not limited to race, class, gender, national origin, refugee status, ability, and language, shape student experiences in primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

2. Show evidence of effectively mentoring students and practice effective mentoring though on-site fieldwork in the COMSA after school program.
3. Explain the history of initiatives, both top-down and grassroots, which attempt to create a more equitable education system, and reflect on their own position in this system.

Mentor Prerequisites

- At least second semester freshman standing
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Interest in working to advance equity in access and outcomes of education
- Sensitivity to individual and group differences and comfort working with students from diverse backgrounds
- Reliable transportation to COMSA facility (1600 Shawano Ave, Suite 108, Green Bay, WI 54303)
- Available at least two afternoons per week (4:30-6:30 pm)
- Caregiver background check required

Course Requirements

Mentoring Responsibilities (40% of course grade)

- A key component of the course will be field experience. Students will be in the field for 14 weeks, with at least 4 hours on site per week
- Be a positive role model and mentor for program participants while maintaining professional boundaries
- Talk with students about the successful academic experience
- Provide general study skills assistance and subject area tutoring
- Be aware of students' needs and make referrals to director as needed

Reading and Class Participation (20%)

Over the course of their work students will read articles on student development, mentoring, and critical perspectives on the American education system. These readings will be available on Canvas. You should read these assignments on time, come prepared to discuss them in class, and be able to use the information from the readings in your field work.

Reflection Journals (20%)

You will keep a journal to help you process and grow from your experiences as a mentor. In each entry you will spend time reflecting on your experiences (in 400-500 words). In your first

entry, identify three (3) learning objectives that you believe represent the most important outcomes you wish to achieve for yourself through your experiences as a mentor for COMSA. These objectives can be expansions or elaborations of the stated learning objectives for the course, or they can be completely unique. Explain why you seek to achieve these objectives.

[For 400 level students, your initial goal should include at least one research-based goal. What kind of scholarly work do you want to seek out that will help you better understand the impediments to equality that exist in our school system?]

In subsequent journals, reflect on any aspect of your mentoring since your previous journal: how well you are achieving your objectives, how the field experience measures up to your expectations, key challenges you have faced, what practices you have learned worked well, etc. Feel free to ask me if you need prompting on what you should be reflecting.

Final Reflection Paper (20%)

For 200-level students:

In a final reflection paper of approximately 1500-2000 words you will explain what you have learned about your mentoring experience this semester as well as how your experience fits into bigger developments regarding the barriers many high school students face in excelling academically and accessing college education. In this paper, you should plan to explain how knowledge around these barriers can help students of low-income or who are potential "first generation students" overcome these barriers. Your paper should reference at least three specific readings from our course.

For 400-level students:

In a final reflection paper of approximately 4000-5000 words you will explain what you have learned about your mentoring experience this semester as well as how your experience fits into bigger developments regarding the barriers many high school students face in excelling academically and accessing college education. You should also do additional social science research (from the fields of history, sociology, education policy, social psychology, and/or other related fields) to help augment your analysis.

In this paper, you should plan to explain how knowledge around these barriers can help students of low-income or who are potential "first generation students" overcome these barriers. Your paper should reference at least three specific readings from our course, and you should reference at least three additional peer-reviewed scholarly sources.

Grading Scale:

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A—90 and above	AB—87-89
B—80-86	BC—77-79
C—70-76	CD—67-69
D—60-66	F—59 and below

COURSE POLICIES:

Land Acknowledgment

We at the University of Wisconsin Green Bay acknowledge the First Nations people who are the original inhabitants of the region. The Ho-Chunk Nation and the Menominee Nation are the original First People of Wisconsin and both Nations have ancient historical and spiritual connections to the land that our institution now resides upon.

Today, Wisconsin is home to 12 First Nations communities including the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, Potawatomi Nation, Ojibwe Nation communities, Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohican Nation, and the Brothertown Indian Nation.

Statement on Face Covering

In response to COVID-19, and in alignment with the UW Green Bay Building Access Policy OP 15-17-01-c, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, and the established requirements of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System; face coverings are required at all times while on campus. This includes the classroom, laboratory, studio, creative space, or any type of in-person instructional activity, and public spaces. *This also includes field work at COMSA until such time as both UWGB and COMSA remove facemask requirements, and this is regardless of vaccination status.*

Face coverings shall satisfy the stated recommendation in the Phoenix Forward: Return to Campus Plan pages 8 & 9. Students who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability, or who are unable to remove a mask without assistance may seek an accommodation through the Office of COVID-19 Response.

In accordance with UWS 17 and UWS 21 Wis.Admin.Code a student may be subject to disciplinary sanctions for failure to comply with policy, including this syllabus, for failure to comply with the directions of a University Official, for disruptive behavior in the classroom, or any other prohibited action. This prohibited behavior includes but not limited to failure to follow

course, laboratory, or safety rules, or endangering the health of others. A student may be dropped from class at any time for misconduct or disruptive behavior in the classroom upon recommendation of the instructor and subject to the procedure established in UWS 17. A student may also receive disciplinary sanctions through the Office of Judicial Conduct for misconduct or disruptive behavior, including endangering the health of others, in the classroom.

COVID-19 Resources

UWGB Coronavirus Information page: https://www.uwgb.edu/coronavirus/

CDC Coronavirus page:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Excuse Policy/Academic Accommodations:

This is a challenging time to try to teach and learn. We are going to work together in this course, and our learning is going to be guided first and foremost by compassion and understanding.

I need you to do your best to meet deadlines because your learning will be impacted if you do not. But if issues come up, related to COVID, family obligations, child- or elder-care, or mental health, please do not hesitate to ask for accommodations. You are not required to tell me details about your personal life, simply that you are experiencing difficulties that will require assistance. My goal is to help you learn while getting through this time. I also ask that you extend the same patience to me, as I may not answer emails as quickly as I typically do, and I may miss some deadlines myself!

If you experience a major debilitating emergency and cannot get in touch with me, the Dean of Students office will contact your professors for you.

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity:

Students should familiarize themselves with and adhere to the Wisconsin university system code of academic integrity. Plagiarism violations (even those that might be unintentional!) will be referred to the Dean of Students office for disciplinary action, and you WILL receive, at minimum, a failing grade on the assignment. Not only does plagiarism impede your own development as a student, but it is also grossly unfair to your peers who don't cheat, so don't do it.

Religious Observances:

I am happy to accommodate university-sanctioned religious observances. Students should notify the instructor in writing within one week of the beginning of the course.

Disability Support Services:

Not only will the instructor enthusiastically accommodate disabilities, but it is also your right to have those disabilities accommodated. You must present documentation within the first week of the course, however, so that I can properly do so. Failure to follow university policy may result in my being unable to assist you.

Meeting Student Needs:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify your instructor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any accommodations I can to help.

There are also some resources you might want to consider using if you face a financial emergency or food insecurity:

https://www.uwgb.edu/cupboard/

http://www.uwgb.edu/phoenix-cares/

Course Calendar

(Based on course need, the readings and weekly topics are subject to change)

Mon. Jan. 24: Introduction to Mentoring

Wed. Jan. 26: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri. Jan. 28 : Journal #1 due

Mon. Jan. 31: "Re-thinking assumptions about poverty"

Reading: Linda Tirado, *Hand to Mouth*, Chs. 1, 2, 7, 8

Wed. Feb. 2: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Mon., Feb. 7: "The Skills of the Mentor"

Reading: "Interpersonal Communication Skills" (Newton and Ender, Ch. 4)

Wed., Feb. 9: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri., Feb. 11: Journal # 2 due

Mon. Feb. 14: "What is Social Justice?"

Reading: bell hooks "Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope" (Ch. 4, 6, 8)

Wed. Feb. 16: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Mon. Feb. 21: "Empathy and 'Culturally Responsive Pedagogy'"

Reading: Chezare Warren, "Empathy, Teacher Dispositions, and Preparation for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy," *Journal of Teacher Education* 2017

Wed. Feb. 23: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri., Feb. 25: Journal #3 due

Mon. Feb. 28: Mentoring Refugee Students

Readings: Various (See Canvas assignment)

Wed., Mar. 2: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Mon. Mar. 7: Institutional Racism

Reading: Dolinda Carter Andrews and Melissa Gutwein, "Maybe that Concept is Still with US": Adolescents's Racialized and Classed Perceptions of Teachers' Expectations *Multicultural Perspectives,* 19 (1) 5-15.

Wed. Mar. 9 Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri., Mar. 11: Journal #4 due

Mon. Mar. 14-Fri Mar 18. SPRING BREAK! NO CLASS MEETINGS

Mon. Mar. 21: Institutional Racism II

Reading: Christin DePouw, "When culture implies deficit: placing race at the center of Hmong American education," *Race, Ethnicity & Education.* Mar2012, Vol. 15 Issue 2, p223-239

Wed. Mar. 23: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Mon, Mar 28: The Skills of the Mentor (pt. 2)

Reading: "Mentoring Students of Color," (pp. 1-33)

Wed., Mar. 30: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri., Apr. 1: Journal #5 due

Mon, Apr. 4: Adolescence and Sexual Identity

Michael Sadowski, selections from "Safe is Not Enough"

Wed. Apr. 6: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Mon. Apr. 11: Gender and Opportunity

Reading: Catherine Riegle-Crumb, "The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same? Prior Achievement Fails to Explain Gender Inequality in Entry Into STEM College Majors Over Time." *American Educational Research Journal* Dec2012, Vol. 49 Issue 6, p1048-1073.

Wed. Apr. 13: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri., Apr 15: Journal #6 due

Mon. Apr. 18: Barriers in College Entrance Exams

Reading: Regina Deil-Amen and Tenisha LaShawn Tevis, "Circumscribed Agency: The Relevance of Standardized College Entrance Exams for Low SES High School Students" *Review of Higher Education*. Winter2010, Vol. 33 Issue 2, p141-175

Wed. Apr. 20: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Mon. Apr. 25: First Generation College Students

Reading: Tina Wildhagen, "Not Your Typical College Student: The Social Construction of the 'First-Generation College Student"

Wed. Apr. 27: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Fri., Apr. 29: Journal #7 due

Mon. May 2: Bringing together what we have learned

Readings TBD; Bring in a draft of your final reflection paper

Wed. May 4: Individual meetings (as necessary)

Tue May 10: Final reflection due in Canvas by 5 pm!!!