

Psychology of Oppression & Liberation

PSYC 142

Summer Session II 2014
Tues & Thurs, 9 am to 12:30 pm
Social Sciences 2, #165

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Connecting with students is one of the best parts of my job. Taking advantage of office hours is to your benefit and enjoyable for me.

Course Description

Welcome to PSYC 142, not your typical psychology course. This course is designed as an integrative and holistic educational experience. As a community of learners, we will delve under the surface of traditional/mainstream psychology to examine the deeper relations of the “self” to “society.” The concepts of oppression and liberation will be the guideposts on this educational journey. The course creates a learning space for students to gain and expand their critical analysis of oppression and liberation. Specifically, we will examine oppression’s, i.e. racism, sexism, classism, and other systems, impact on psychological consciousness, as well as how communities develop tools for social and psychological liberation. The course follows a praxis (engaged) model of education, thus critical analysis will be tied to students’ own action in the world. **Please note, although this course includes writing assignments, it cannot be used to fulfill writing requirements for graduation (e.g., the “W” or “DC” requirements).**

Course Objectives

- To sharpen perception and recognition of oppression in the social world and in one’s life.
- To gain an understanding of the social and psychological effects of various forms of oppression.
- To become adept in the thought and practice of liberation psychology. To understand psychology’s role in both oppression and liberation.
- To acquire “tools” for liberation psychology and begin to put them into practice.

Required Texts:

Moane, G. (2011). *Gender and colonialism: A psychological analysis of oppression and liberation*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave.

Watkins, M., & Shulman, H. (2010). *Toward psychologies of liberation*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave.

Reading Packet: The articles are available on eCommons and a packet can be purchased at the Bay Tree Bookstore.

Course Requirements:

1. **Attendance and participation** (70 points) – How important is coming to class? In a word: very. We only meet 10 times. Students can miss one class with no questions asked; after that students will lose 10 points per class no matter the reason. Come prepared to class, on time, and ready to engage in discussion. Liberation is a collective act.
2. **Discussion questions** (10 points per day; 90 points total) – Before every class, students will submit discussion questions based on each of the required readings for that day. One question per reading at least (e.g. if there are 3 readings due for a day, then 3 questions at least). Questions ought to be thoughtful and stir discussion. Students submit questions by **8 pm every day before class** to the class's eCommons website under the "Discussion Forum" tab.
3. **"Who am I" paper** (40 points; 2 pages) – This is a short critical reflection paper that asks students to write about who they are. The prompt will ask you both to position yourselves socially, while also asking you to outline your dreams, passions, strengths, and challenges. The goal is to promote reflection on where you have come and where you are going. Paper is due **Tuesday, 8/5**.
4. **News article analysis paper** (75 points; 2-3 pages) – This assignment has students apply their critical analysis of the concepts in the course to the larger world. Students find a newspaper article online or in print and connect to one of the theories covered in the readings. The primary goal is to apply the critical analysis that you are gaining in this course. Paper is due **Tuesday, 8/12**. An assignment prompt will be posted on eCommons.
5. **Consciousness-raising assignment** (100 points) – This is an open, flexible assignment that gives students the opportunity to reflect and scheme on changing the world around them. Students are asked to create a plan and preliminary materials that will contribute to raising awareness of a social issue within their communities. The assignment is flexible in the sense that the issues and "materials" used to raise awareness are up to the students: a research report, art display, community action plan, etc. The plan and materials will be due on **Tuesday, 8/19**.
6. **Praxis assignment** (125 points) – In small groups, students will participate in a day of social justice, and then write about these experiences. The assignment is designed to help you integrate your learning from the readings and in class, while also applying your learning to action in the world. If it makes sense, this could be putting your consciousness-raising assignment into practice, or a synthesis of your assignments with classmates. A short presentation of your action and reflections to the rest of the class will take place on the last day of class, **Thursday, 8/28**.

Grading schema:

There are 500 total possible points for the class. The letter grade breakdown is as follows:

485+ = A+	435-449 = B+	385-399 = C+
465-484 = A	415-434 = B	350-384 = C
450-464 = A-	400-414 = B-	300-350 = D

Tips for the assignments

- Like most courses in the social sciences, students' work will be evaluated in terms of professionalism. Is your writing clear, well-supported, and grammatically clean? For tips on good writing, see this website: <http://ic.ucsc.edu/~vktonay/psyc169/writing.html>
- Liberation psychology also encourages us to be open-minded and creative. Breaking conventions that promote new and fresh ideas and perspectives will be valued in this course. Taking assignments outside the convention will be valued in this course. At the same time, it is important to discuss major breaks with your instructor before doing the assignment in such a manner. Be sure to make time to do some well before the assignment is due.
- Late assignments will lose 10 points per day late. An assignment is considered late 15 minutes after class begins. Be sure to not leave things until the last minute. As this is a summer course and we have so little time, assignments later than 2 days will not be accepted.

Ground Rules

- This course centers liberation. Fundamental to liberation is an ever more fully participatory, critical, and active learning community. This may be new for students, and as such may take some time to develop. Critical education means that we increase our engagement, activity, and responsibility in and outside the classroom. We will spend class time developing what a liberatory education means to us as a *learning community*.
- Liberation requires breaking free from oppression and “business as usual.” Activities designed to break from the typical and get us “out of the box” will be a part of this course. This will include listening to intentional music, mindfulness techniques, guest lecturers, field trips, and other non-traditional formats.
- Academic and other forms of integrity are expected in this course. If you are unsure about how to cite, what to cite, or other forms of dishonesty please see me and/or visit http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/ or <http://nettrail.ucsc.edu/ethics/index.html>.
- If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me, during my office hours, no later than Tuesday, 8/5. Contact DRC: 459-2089 V, 459-4806 TTY.

Course Outline:

[This schedule is not set in stone. We may get ahead or behind. There may be reading additions or subtractions based upon the flow of the class. We will talk about any changes during class time.]

7/29

Day 1

Introduction to the Psychology of Oppression and Liberation

Readings: Watkins, M. & Shulman, H. Introduction

7/31

Day 2

Systems of Oppression: Taking an Ecological Perspective

Readings: Watkins, M. & Shulman, H. Chapter 1
Moane, G. Chapters 1 and 2

8/5

Day 3

Power: Oppression and Privilege

Readings: Harro, B. "Cycle of Socialization"
Lorde, A. "Age, Race, Class, Sex..."
Tatum, B. "Defining Racism..."

Due: "Who am I" paper!

8/7

Day 4

Consciousness and Conscientization

Readings: Moane, G. Chapter 5
Martín-Baró, I. "Role of the Psychologist..."
Montero, M. "Political Psychology of Liberation..."

8/12

Day 5

Dialogue across Difference

Readings: Watkins, M. & Shulman, H. Chapters 2 and 10
Tatum, B. "Embracing a Cross-Racial Dialogue..."
Rhizome Communication "Communication Tools..."

Due: News analysis paper!

Further readings:

Bulhan, H. A. (2004). *Frantz Fanon and the psychology of oppression*. New York: Springer.

Byrne, C. C. (2009). Proactive versus defensive ethics: Re-humanizing Psychology. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 15(2), 215-225.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Glass, R. D. (2001). On Paulo Freire's philosophy of praxis and the foundations of liberation education. *Educational Researcher*, 30(2), 15-25.

hooks, b. *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Keating, A. (2008). "I am a citizen of the universe:" Gloria Anzaldua's spiritual activism as a catalyst for social change. *Feminist Studies* 34 (1/2).

Martin-Baro, I. (1996). *Writings for a liberation psychology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

White, A., & Rastogi, S. (2009). Justice by Any Means Necessary: Vigilantism among Indian Women. *Feminism & Psychology*, 19(3), 313-327.

Ziegahn, L. (2005). Critical reflection on cultural difference in the computer conference. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 56(1), 39-64.