

Stetson University
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Education

FSEM 100 – HYR

Advancing Human Rights and Social Justice: Art as Activism

“The activist (artist +activist) uses her artistic talents to fight and struggle against injustice and oppression – by any medium necessary. The activist merges commitment to freedom and justice with the pen, the lens, the brush, the voice, the body, and the imagination”. -M.K. Asante

Contact Information

Class Section: FSEM 100 – HYR

Class Day & Time: Tuesday; 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Class Location: Sage Hall 243

Class Format: Hybrid

Instructor: Dr. Rajni Shankar-Brown

Office Location: Davis Hall 104-B

Email: rshankar@stetson.edu

Text/Phone: 386- 873-8019 (cell)

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 10 AM to 1:00 PM; or by appointment. I am always happy to meet at an alternate time – please email or text me to set up a meeting.

**Please include your name and course (FSEM 100-HYR) in all communications. Thank you!*

Course Overview and Purpose

This community-based course introduces human rights and social justice theoretical frameworks and issues from global perspectives and through interdisciplinary service-learning, providing students with opportunities to explore art as activism and participate in civic engagement. Specific topics including the intersectionality of identities including race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, language and education will be examined. The course encourages reflective practice, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity through community engagement art projects focusing on historically situated and currently unfolding social justice issues. Writing as an inquiry-oriented and developmental process will be emphasized, along with multimodal literacies and communication with attention to applied critical thinking. Community engagement and service-learning field experiences in schools and with nonprofit organizations are required for successful completion of this course.

Detailed Description

This community-based course introduces human rights and social justice theoretical frameworks and issues from global perspectives and through interdisciplinary service-learning, providing students with opportunities to explore art as activism (i.e. activism). and participate in civic engagement. Dimensions of diversity (race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, religion, (dis)ability, linguistic diversity, education, etc.) will be examined in connection to human rights and the arts. Students will have opportunities to explore historical and contemporary examples of activism, described by the Center for Artistic Activism (2020) as "the dynamic practice combining the creative power of the arts to move us emotionally with the strategic planning of activism necessary to bring about social change" -- and will also directly engage in the process of activism, individually and collaboratively.

The course encourages reflective practice, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity through community engagement art projects focusing on the intersectionality of social justice issues. Writing as an inquiry-oriented and developmental process will be emphasized, along with oral communication with attention to applied critical thinking. Art forms that will be shared during this course include poetry, painting, collage, theater, sculpture, improvisations, music, and dance. Students will also have opportunities to self-select mediums to engage in activism as a means to deepen their understanding of activism and to use their voice to advocate. Activism draws from culture(s) and critically examines social inequalities and power structures, to create and impact (transform/change) culture(s). The course will include heavy discussion on the the ongoing struggle for Civil Rights around the world, and especially in the United States. Students will learn how activists have used (and continue to use) a variety of art forms including songs, quilts performance theatre, and imaginative imagery to dismantle oppression and articulate new visions for a better, more just future.

This course will explore human rights, social justice, and art as activism through historical and present-day perspectives. Social change theory and transformative servant-leadership will be used as social justice frameworks throughout the course. Students will deeply study the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and regularly make connections (text-to-self; text-to-text; and text-to-world) between the articles and persistent issues/abuses/violations. The course will employ multimodal literacies including diverse fiction and nonfiction readings, interactive discussion, intensive writing, oral presentations, debates, experiential learning activities that are interdisciplinary in nature, educational technology, and civic engagement. Additionally, the course will encourage reflective practice, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity through community engagement projects focusing on the intersectionality of current social justice issues by learning with and/or partnering with local schools and organizations; examples include high poverty or Title 1 public schools including Citrus Grove Elementary and Southwest Middle School, the Coalition for Immokalee Workers, the Spring Hill Boys and Girls Club, the Neighborhood Center of West Volusia, the Zebra Coalition, Habitat for Humanity, the Museum of Art DeLand, African American Museum for the Arts, Tomoka Correctional Institution, Volusia Homeless Education, and CATALYST Global Youth Initiatives.

Students will engage in intensive writing including critical self-reflections and rhetorical analysis using primary sources. Through writing workshop strategies, students will have the opportunity to

engage in scaffolding; students will be asked to work in stages on one of their reflective papers connecting to a self-selected justice issue impacting our community. On this particular assignment, students will be given opportunities throughout the semester to revise and strengthen their work; offering students the opportunity to steadily develop, construct and strengthen their written paper. All students will be required to revise this particular assignment, particularly based on detailed feedback from the instructor and their peers. Students will have experiential opportunities to learn about the writing process and grow as writers. Students will also have opportunities to give oral presentations on social justice topics inside and outside of class. Students will engage in experiential learning activities (such as making vision boards and designing graphic t-shirts) and in fieldwork with community partners as mentioned previously. Students will showcase their learning through creative inquiry, strategic planning, and advocacy (artivism!), and the class will hold a culminating artistic activism event(s) on campus and in the community at the end of the course -- this will be collaboratively designed and implemented.

Conceptual Framework

This course is designed to focus on key components of Stetson's Department of Education conceptual framework, committed to assisting graduates in becoming: 1) reflective practitioners, 2) responders to diversity, 3) instructional leaders, and 4) facilitative change agents.



Course Objectives

Students will:

- Form and articulate theoretical and practical understandings of human rights and social justice issues in the United States and across the globe
- Identify and critically study examples of art as activism
- Comparatively examine strategies for responding to injustices and human rights abuses
- Analyze primary and multimodal sources on human rights, social justice, and activism
- Develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills

- Reflect and articulate the intersectionality of a wide range of social justice issues through experiential learning activities and civic engagement
- Identify effective study habits and academic support resources
- Practice intensive writing including critical self-reflection and rhetorical analysis
- Collaborate to employ art as activism by developing creative advocacy platforms to raise awareness of social justice issues and speak out for human rights
- Engage with the community to advance social change including in planning and implementing social justice projects with diverse community partners
- Showcase learning through creative inquiry and advocacy

Departmental Strands

Stetson University's Department of Education has adopted the following four strands for all education programs: 1) reflective practitioner; 2) responders to diversity; 3) collaborative instruction leaders; and 4) facilitative change agent.

Means of Instruction

The active construction of knowledge by the individual student will be emphasized in this course through independent and collaborative work, applied learning activities, student sharing, interactive lecture, demonstration, case studies, debates, instructor-facilitated discussions that cover essential content, community engagement (service learning), guest speakers, and audio-visual support. In addition to a variety of learning approaches, face-to-face and online learning platforms (Blackboard) will be utilized in this course.

Department of Education Mission Statement

Develop creative and reflective practitioners capable of assuming leadership roles within culturally diverse educational settings in a rapidly changing world.

Stetson University Diversity Commitment

As an institution of higher learning, Stetson University represents a rich diversity of human beings among its faculty, staff, and students and is committed to maintaining a campus environment that values that diversity.

Department of Education Diversity Commitment

The Department of Education strives to ensure that all teacher candidates are prepared to teach diverse learners. Florida schools are growing in diversity, and our unit recognizes the serious implications of this evolving change. We expect that candidates will: have knowledge of issues involving teaching and schooling in a complex and culturally diverse society; have knowledge of unique learning characteristics, needs, and capabilities of students of different ages, cultural, language and socio-economic backgrounds, and exceptionalities; demonstrate the ability to bridge theory to practice in a variety of educational settings; plan and implement strategies in cultural diversity and nurture human relations with pupils, peers, teachers, and other stakeholders. Teacher candidates will have opportunities to develop multicultural and global perspectives.

Respect Statement

In an effort to increase access and inclusion, this course actively fosters, encourages, and promotes inclusiveness, mutual respect, acceptance, and open-mindedness. Our learning community will work towards: affirming the dignity of all persons; encouraging the right of every person to participate in the free exchange of thoughts and opinions within a climate of civility and mutual respect; striving for openness and mutual understanding to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions; eliminating prejudice and discrimination through education and interaction with others; promoting learning and growth for all.

Academic Integrity

The Honor Pledge is at the heart of the Honor System at Stetson University. The Honor Pledge is a promise to abide by the highest standards of integrity and honesty in academic work. As an institution of higher learning, Stetson University depends upon its members--students, faculty, staff, and administration--to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. More information regarding Stetson's Honor System may be found at www.stetson.edu/other/honor-system.

All incoming undergraduates affirm the following Pledge during orientation:

As a member of Stetson University, I agree to uphold the highest standards of integrity in my academic work. I promise that I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid of any kind on my tests, papers, and assignments. When using the ideas, thoughts, or words of another in my work, I will always provide clear acknowledgement of the individuals and sources on which I am relying. I will avoid using fraudulent, falsified, or fabricated evidence and/or material. I will refrain from resubmitting without authorization work for one class that was obtained from work previously submitted for academic credit in another class. I will not destroy, steal, or make inaccessible any academic resource material. By my actions and my example, I will strive to promote the ideals of honesty, responsibility, trust, fairness, and respect that are at the heart of Stetson's Honor System.

Stetson University Litany

We come together to celebrate and reaffirm our commitment to each other and to Stetson University, and to proclaim ourselves as active members of a loving and inclusive community.

We strive to transform life for the welfare of all.

We celebrate and reaffirm our commitment to excellence in education as learners and teachers, and to our heritage which inspires us to center our lives on the quest for meaning and truth.

We strive to transform life for the welfare of all.

We celebrate and reaffirm our commitment to integrate education and action, scholarship and social responsibility, for the purpose of promoting justice on our campus, in our nation, and throughout the world.

We affirm our quest for knowledge and our commitment to transform life for the welfare of all.

Disability Resources

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, you should meet with me to discuss ways to ensure full participation. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Success Center (386-822-7127; www.stetson.edu/asc) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. You and I along with the Academic Success Center will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.

Information about the Academic Success Center

In addition to providing disability services, the Academic Success Center (ASC) provides free programs and services that support students as they develop independent learning strategies, personal responsibility, intellectual maturity, transferable skills, and a respect for diverse learning experiences. It is important to remember that tutoring is not remediation. The ASC serves all students who want to increase the quality of their learning.

Tutoring is provided to currently enrolled Stetson University students free of charge. Students can meet with a tutor to review principles, learn content-specific study strategies and enhance content area knowledge.

Phone: 386-822-7127

Email: asc@stetson.edu

Website: <http://www.stetson.edu/administration/academic-success-center/>

Inclement Weather and Emergency Procedures

If the weather appears hazardous, please refer to Public Safety's Emergency Guidelines System at Stetson University.

Information can be found at: <http://www.stetson.edu/other/hatter-alert/>

Course Requirements and Expectations

Attendance:

A great deal of the information shared in this course will stem from discussions, activities, and lectures. Additionally, in class and online activities will be assigned throughout the semester. Therefore, prompt attendance and active participation during our online and face-to-face sessions are crucial to this course.

Students are expected to regularly check Blackboard and Stetson email.

If a course absence is the result of an emergency situation, students are expected to contact me as soon as possible and provide written documentation of the emergency. Two tardies will equal 1 unexcused absence. Two absences will cause your grade to drop one letter grade. More than three absences will result of a grade of F in this course.

Participation:

Careful preparation for class meetings and discussions will require reading, writing, and research. Professional participation in all activities and discussions (in-class and online) is expected. Students are expected to be respectful towards each other and respectful towards all individuals whom we work with (peers, university staff, and members of the community). Maintaining professionalism is an important part of this course.

Assignments:

All course assignments are due as specified during the semester. With the exception of emergency situations, late assignment submissions will not be accepted. If you have to be absent on a day when an assignment is due, you may email the assignment or have someone turn the assignment in on your behalf. Additionally, if you encounter technical difficulties with an online assignment submission you are expected to contact me immediately (with the exception of emergencies, notifications after the due date will not be accepted). I encourage you to proactively submit assignments online in order to avoid any last minute difficulties or technical issues.

All course assignments must follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style manual guidelines; for more information on this editorial style refer directly to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Edition) – the manual can be found online, as well as at the Stetson library and bookstore.

Assignments should be carefully edited and proofread. Excessive errors in conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, inconsistent verb tense, etc.) will result in a lower grade. FSEM uses writing to help students develop their writing skills and cultivate an in-depth understanding of course content; therefore, the technical aspects of writing are an essential part of this course and will be regularly assessed. With the exception of in-class activities, please note that hand written work will not be accepted.

Field Experience Hours:

Students are expected to successfully complete community engagement and service learning experiences; applied learning hours will be completed virtually with community partners including nonprofit organizations and schools dedicated to advancing human rights and social justice.

Grade of Incomplete:

Incomplete grades will only be granted in cases where there are extreme circumstances. You must be passing the course to request a grade of incomplete, and you must be able to demonstrate that extenuating circumstances have prohibited you from completing course requirements. If during the semester you feel that you will be unable to attend class or complete assigned work for an extended time, you are advised to seek assistance and resources from the Academic Success Center (ASC). Only upon the recommendation of Disability Services will an incomplete be issued.

Required Texts

- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: International Publishing Group.
- Acevedo, E. (2018). *The poet X*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.
- In addition, there will be many supplemental readings assigned throughout the semester.

Course Assignments and Percentage of Total Grade

Critical Self-Reflection	15%
Social Justice Analysis Paper	15 %
Pre/During/Post Reflections	10%
Learning Mini-Assessments	10%
Community Engagement Project	20%
Justice and Civic Engagement Manifesto	15%
Presentations & Participation	15%

[Total 100%]

Evaluation and Grading Scale

Evaluation of student performance will include assessment of the course assignments, which include on-line communication, projects, class activities, and exams. The assessments are based on course goals and created to meet the needs of diverse student populations. Successful completion of the course requirements will determine the final grade for this course. The grading scale for this course is based on the following percentages.

A+	=	100%	C	=	73-76%
A	=	95-99%	C-	=	70-72%
A-	=	90-94%	D+	=	67-69%
B+	=	87-89%	D	=	63-66%
B	=	83-86%	D-	=	60-62%
B-	=	80-82	F	=	59% and Below
C+	=	77-79%			

Please Note: The course assignments and schedule may be adjusted to meet the particular and diverse needs of this class and to take advantage of the teachable moment. It is also subject to slight variation as the semester progresses and clinical needs are more clearly defined.

Thoughts to Ponder...

"Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral." - Paulo Freire

There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal." - Toni Morrison.

"Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." - Nelson Mandela

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change world." - M. Mead

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. - Frederick Douglass

"It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains." - Assata Shakur

"The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn." - G. Steinem

"When we choose to love, we choose to move against fear, against alienation and separation. The choice to love is a choice to connect, to find ourselves in the other." - Bell Hooks

"I can do things you cannot; you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things." - Mother Teresa

"Be the change you want to see in the world." - M. Gandhi

"We need to...cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community and this nation." - C. Chavez

"We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion." - Max de Pree

"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength." - M. Angelou

"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept." -Angela Davis

"Social justice is an ongoing goal and journey. Let us collectively work towards Nyāya (justice) beginning with advancing human rights, equity, inclusion, and the arts. May we live, learn, liberate, and lead with love and intention; together reimagining and creating a better world for all." - R. Shankar-Brown (aka. Dr. S-B)

COVID-19 Community Standards

The Office of Community Standards has added an addendum to the current Code of Community Standards related to specific COVID-19 policies focused on increasing the health and safety of the community.

Policy sections in the addendum include conduct policies for individual students and organization as well as possible sanctions for each of these categories. Policy categories included in the addendum include facial coverings, visitors and guests, physical distancing, screening, isolation/quarantine, reporting, and physical spaces.

It is expected that students abide by all policies in the regular Code of Community Standards and the COVID-19 policies addendum. Students are expected and encouraged to report their own or other symptoms community members may be experiencing to Stetson's Health Services. Reporting symptoms is necessary to keep the Stetson community safe and healthy at this time.

Additionally, the Report a COVID-19 Policy Violation form is available for anyone in the community wanting to report a concern for a fellow community member (faculty, staff, students) not following current Stetson University COVID-19 guidelines. The form is available to access on the Stetson Report It (stetson.edu/reportit) website. Concerns reported regarding faculty and staff will be directed to human resources on the individual's respective campus and concerns for students will be sent to Office of Community Standards (Deland) and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (Gulfport).

Any questions or concerns regarding COVID policies can be directed Director of Community Standards Barbs Hawkins at bhawkins@stetson.edu.

<https://www.stetson.edu/administration/community-standards/media/covidadd.pdf>