

**ONT 101: Critical Community Studies: Prison/Education
Inside-Out Prison Exchange Course
Fall, 2017**

Instructor: Tessa Hicks Peterson, Ph.D
Class times: Thursdays, 12:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. (Inside, 1:30-3:30)
Class location: CASA Ontario & California Rehabilitation Center
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:15-5:00 & by appointment
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“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us walk together...”

- Lila Watson, Australian Aboriginal woman

Course Purpose:

This course will explore current movements, theories and narratives centered around critical issues in our local communities, namely education and incarceration. It will also focus on theories and approaches to social service and social change and the tensions between them. The course will apply theory to practice through interdisciplinary scholarship, in-class dialogues, critical reflection and analysis, policy reform efforts, and seminars with guest practitioners and scholars involved with local change-making organizations and movements. The course’s theoretical frameworks are grounded in a cross section of disciplines, including contributions from cultural studies, critical education theory, prison studies, community studies, sociology and anthropology. Course praxis (theory + action +critical reflection) will play out in large part through the Inside-Out Prison Exchange, wherein “outside” students (Claremont College students) and “inside” students (incarcerated at California Rehabilitation Center) will spend almost the entire semester on site for a shared educational journey. Through experiential learning students will engage in hands-on applications of community-based education and become aware of local knowledge, assets, and approaches to social change. The ethics of community building will be explored and practiced in this weekly shared-course practicum, including how to negotiate responsibility, respect, and reciprocity with the inside-out students working together in this partnership.

“In this classroom, the instructor’s role will be to call forth, with subtlety and grace, the voices of those in the class, through dialogic exchange among equals.”

- Lori Pompa, Teaching from the Inside Out

Course Learning Outcomes:

The key learning outcome for this class is to apply theory to practice. By the end of term, students demonstrate oral and written mastery of topics, integrate personal experience into discussion and writing, and develop written and oral argumentation skill regarding the issues covered. The student learning outcomes are matched to Educational Objectives at Pitzer College: Intercultural Understanding-Domestic, and Social Justice Theory.

Intercultural Understanding

1. Students will be able to identify and describe different global and local manifestations of culture and discern cultural complexities.
2. Students will be able to critically analyze their own cultural norms and biases and describe how these affect their world-view.
3. Students will be able to draw upon personal experiences and class learning to develop common ground for interactions with those from other cultures.
4. Students will be able to identify, describe, and analyze important social issues from multiple cultural perspectives.
5. Students will be able to engage with diverse groups of people while recognizing cultural and individual differences in interaction and communication.
6. Students will be able to identify and describe how power, positionality, privilege, and other socio-structural factors impact their own life circumstances and those of people locally and globally.

Social Justice Theory

1. Students will be able to identify and describe the ethical and political implications of injustice, such as social problems, social stratification, the interdependence and intersection of systems of oppression, interpersonal and structural discrimination, and unequal distribution and access to power and resources (including natural resources).
2. Students will be able to identify barriers to equality and/or inclusiveness and explore strategies to remove them.
3. Students will be able to identify and describe the hegemonic structures and practices that further social injustice and oppression as studied in their course.

“’Radical’ is from a Latin words that means ‘root.’ Radical means going to the roots of the matter, and the roots of the spirit. A radical person is a person who searches for meaning and affirms community.

- Ed Chambers, Roots for Radicals

Practicum: Community Engagement through Partnership with CRC

The community-campus partnership between Pitzer and CRC has been thoughtfully established and carefully maintained. Open communication, accountability, respect, reciprocity and consistent participation are keys to the success of these partnerships; please take this component of the course seriously and follow through on your commitments. You will be expected not only to contribute respectfully in the partnership, but also to reflect critically on the experience through regular writings and discussions in this course.

In this course we confront social, cultural, political and structural issues, histories, and power dynamics related to critical education and to the prison industrial complex. The realities of seeking educational collaborations within the workings of the prison industrial

complex result in an experience that has tremendous potential but is also inherently problematic, (given what it means for us to engage in critical, liberatory educational practices within an environment informed by the systems of domination and punishment). These issues will be explored in the class to prepare you for this component of prison education but, generally speaking, you will need to execute the height of respect, responsibility, open-mindedness, and accountability. Working within the prison system also requires that you be willing to adhere to the prison's standards, time frames, rules, and circumstances, which requires tolerance, flexibility and patience. Given the nature of this course, there are specific aims of our partnership and boundaries that surround it which we need to be mindful of. Most importantly, the purpose of this endeavor is to co-create an experience of rigorous learning and teaching and giving and receiving for our individual and collective aims for education and social change. Outside students are not coming in to “save,” “help,” or “serve,” inside students, nor should anyone use the context of this class for the purpose of inciting havoc or manipulating this opportunity for one's own personal agenda, whatever it is. It is a privilege we are all afforded to pursue the possibility of this prison education partnership and we must take the opportunity seriously. We must also be mindful of the boundaries of our relationships—as such, only first names will be used by all students and teachers/ lecturers; **no contact** will occur between inside and outside students aside from our class time; confidentiality will be expected (but within limits—if anyone reveals intentions to hurt themselves or others, authorities will be notified); privacy about individual backgrounds will be expected and roles/expectations of each student will be maintained. Outside students must abide by the dress code of the prison and bring their state ID each Thursday to gain entry to the prison.

Almost all the classes will take place at the CRC prison in Norco in the shared “inside-out” model. The professor will also facilitate individual class sessions with each group of students (CRC and Pitzer, respectively) before and after the 12 shared courses. The professor will also be available for individual meetings in pre-arranged office hours for those students who are interested.

“Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a covenant between equals. [...] Compassion is always, at its most authentic, about a shift from the cramped world of self-preoccupation into a more expansive place of fellowship, of true kinship.”

—Gregory Boyle, Tattoos on the Heart

Course Structure

Your total participation in each facet of the course is crucial to your individual success in this class (i.e., the grade you earn) and to the collective success of our efforts at creating community-based education in our local community (and the commitments we have made to our community partnership). This class promises to challenge, inspire, and teach you; your promise (by virtue of your enrollment and consistent participation) is to give back fully to the course content (fully completing all readings and writings, as well as community engagement activities). Thus, expect a rigorous commitment of time and personal/mental energy and expect to receive much in return. Accordingly, your

participation (in terms of being consistently present, well-read and vocal at each class) is not only something expected in respect to your grade but out of respect for your peers. I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate students with disabilities; if students need to request accommodations or need additional assistance, feel free to contact the Academic Support Services Office at campus extension 73553. If you feel you are faltering in your ability to keep up with the course content, please see me immediately.

While critical thinking, reading, and discussion involve exercising skepticism, useful and constructive ways of thinking, talking and reading also call for a spirit of generosity. When we practice “generous” reading and listening we look for the contributions and possibilities for learning and growth a piece of writing or comment can offer. Take a moment to ask yourself, “What new ideas or experiences does this reading bring into my life? How can another students’ comment help me think and grow in new ways? Whether or not I agree with its argument, how can this author’s work help me sharpen my own thinking, writing, and argumentation? How can I be conscientious of our shared space in terms of my contributions to our class discussions?” The main idea is this: you will not really like or really agree with everything you read or hear in this or any course; instead of having a knee-jerk reaction or shutting down, practice searching for the “kernel of truth” or discovering how the reading or student opinion contributes to your thinking, discussion, and writing and become curious about those things that you don’t understand or agree with. Finally, any lack of compliance with the College’s Code of Student Conduct as stated in the *Pitzer College Student Handbook*, (which prohibits academic misconduct such as plagiarism, cheating, etc.) will be dealt with according to the academic integrity guidelines.

In each class, we will review the readings together, individually and in groups, so come prepared for rigorous intellectual discourse. In many instances, we will host a guest lecture and/or participate in an experiential learning activity related to the topics of the course. For all assignments: Inside students will submit written work to directly to the professor; Outside students will upload essays to the “assignments” section on Sakai. It is also expected that you will complete all readings prior to class and submit all writing assignments on the due date; that is, the day an item is listed on the syllabus). Assignments will be docked a ½ grade for each day that they are turned in late (i.e., from an “A” to an “A-“).

Please note that anything on this syllabus is subject to change.

“Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself”

- Unknown

Course Requirements

Critical Reflections

These four short essays will provide a review of the month’s readings, discussions, and lectures, weaving together both personal reflection and critical analysis (2-3 page essay, drawing on at least three readings).

Topics:

Who and how are people imprisoned today? (literally and figuratively)

Critical Reflection #1 Due 10.5

What are qualities of empowering and disempowering education?

Critical Reflection #2 Due 10.26

What approaches to social change and social service do you think are most effective?

Critical Reflection #3 Due 12.14

Letter to an Elected Official

This assignment will be done in pairs of inside-out students and involves writing a clear and compelling two-page letter to an elected official identifying a federal or state policy problem, proposing a solution to the problem, and conducting and interpreting research to bolster the letter. In the letter, students must identify one federal or state public policy problem to be addressed and analyze how this problem impacts them personally, people in their community, people in their state, and, if a federal issue, people across the United States. In the letter, students must recommend at least one legislative solution. The students may recommend an original legislative solution (fund a NASA mission to Jupiter) or they can support or oppose a portion of a bill that is currently pending before Congress or their state legislature. In both cases, the students must support their solution with data and examples from at least two outside sources (books, journals, reliable internet sources) and discuss why their solution is better than other options. *All outside research must be properly cited.* In addition to the letter, a 1-2 page proposal should be provided that presents the authors' strategy for a specific local action/project they could mobilize to have a meaningful impact on the topic they tackle in the letter. Additional instructions, examples, and a workshop with tips on how to write this paper will be provided.

Due 11.16

Literature Review

A literature review is a paper that presents prominent studies, theories, and approaches around a specific topic, comparing author's arguments, addressing gaps in and opportunities to expand the literature on the topic, and demonstrating a knowledge of what exists in the field. Additional reading will be made available to inside students so they have access to relevant research sources. Papers will be approximately 6 pages and draw on 6-8 sources. Additional instructions, examples, and a workshop with tips on how to write this paper will be provided.

Due 11.30

Presentation of learning

Weaving together both personal reflection and critical analysis around any of the topics from the other papers, each student will prepare a 3-minute presentation on what they learned over the course of the semester. Presentations may be done in any format (poster presentation, power point, speech, poem, zine, song, you name it) and will be presented both orally and in written form.

Due 12.7

Evaluation plan:

In-class attendance and participation	10%
Reflection paper (10% each x 3 = 30%)	30%
Literature Review	25%
Letter to an Elected Official	25%
Presentation of learning	10%
Total grade	100%

Grading scale:

100-97 = A+; 96-93 = A; 92-90 = A-
89-87 = B+; 86-83 = B; 82-80 = B-
79-77 = C+; 76-73 = C; 72-70 = C-
69-67 = D+; 66-63 = D; 62-60 = D-
59-Below = F

Course Calendar:

8.31 (OUTSIDE @ CASA)	Syllabus overview/CRC Orientation
9.7 (OUTSIDE @ CASA)	“Disorientation” lecture by prison anthropologist Readings: Service-Learning in Prison Facilities Turning Teaching Inside Out, Ch. 2, 4,13 Watch Jarecki, <u>The House I live in</u> (documentary)
9.5 (INSIDE @ CRC)	Syllabus overview/Pitzer-Inside-Out Orientation Readings: Service-Learning in Prison Facilities Turning Teaching Inside Out, Ch. 2, 4,13 Watch Jarecki, <u>The House I live in</u> (documentary)
9.14 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC)	<i>Focus on Inside-Out Prison Exchange introductions</i> <i>Focus on Education and Incarceration</i> Readings: NAACP <i>Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline</i> Devine, <i>Can Metal Detectors Replace the Panopticon?</i> Malcolm X, <i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i>
9.21 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC)	<i>Focus on Incarceration</i> Readings: Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> Hernandez, <i>City of Inmates</i>
9.28 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC)	<i>Focus on Incarceration</i> Readings: Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete</i>

Sudbury, J. *A World Without Prisons: Resisting Militarism, Globalized Punishment, and Empire.*

- 10.5 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC) *Focus on Incarceration*
Readings: Gilligan, Preventing Violence
Activist Panel: Vonya Quarles; Romarilyn Ralston; Ella Turenne
Due: Critical Reflection Paper #1
- 10.10 (10:30-12:30 @ CRC) *Focus on Education*
Readings: Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed
Shor, I. Empowering Education
- 10.19 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC) *Focus on Education*
Readings hooks, Teaching to Transgress
hooks, Teaching for Community
Weiston, Critical Mentoring (TBD)
Watch *Waiting for Superman* (documentary)
- 10.26 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC) *Focus on Education*
Readings Bernal, et al., Chicana/Latina Education in Everyday Life
Steinberg and Kincheloe, Students as Researchers
Moshá, “The Inseparable Link Between Intellectual And Spiritual Foundation In Indigenous Knowledge And Education: A Case Study In Tanzania.”
Activist Panel: Torie Weiston, Delacy Ganley, Paul Treesuan
Due: Critical Reflection Paper #2
- 11.2 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC) *Focus on theory and policy*
Workshop: Conducting research for letter to an elected official and literature review
- 11.9 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC) *Focus on theory and policy*
Workshop: Conducting research for letter to an elected official and literature review
- 11.16 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC) *Focus on Social Service and Social Change*
Readings Kivel, *Social Service or Social Change*
INCITE, *The Revolution will not be funded*

Kretzman and McKnight, *Building Communities*

Powers, *Future Zarahs*

Due: Letter to an Elected Official

11.23 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Focus on your reading and writing!

11.30 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC)

Focus on Social Service and Social Change
Readings: Notes from Nowhere: We are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism.

Kaufman, C. *Ideas into Action*

Jones, *The Better World*

Handbook

Activist Panel: Jose Calderon, Lourdes Arguelles, Ben Woods

Due: Literature Review

12.7 (INSIDE-OUT @ CRC)

Focus on presentations/party/closure

12.14 (OUTSIDE @ CASA)

Presentations in Ontario / Outside debrief

Due: Critical Reflection Paper #3

12.15 (INSIDE @ CRC)

Inside debrief

Due: Critical Reflection Paper #3

Course Readings:

Book

Davis, Angela. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* 2003. New York: Seven Stories.

Articles/Book Chapters on “Files” section of SAKAI or in Reader

Alexander, Michelle. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press.

Bernal, D.D., Elenes, C.A., Godinez, F.E., Villenas, S., Eds. *Chicana/Latina Education in Everyday Life: Feminista Perspectives on Pedagogy and Epistemology*. Albany: New York Press: 2006. Pp. 261-280

Davis, S., Roswell, B. (Eds.) (2013). *Turning Teaching Inside Out: A Pedagogy of Transformation for Community-Based Education*. New York: Palgrave MacMillian.

Freire, P. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum: 2000.

Gilligan, J. 2001. *Preventing Violence*. Thames and Hudson Press.

Hernandez, K.L. 2017, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965*, University of North Carolina.

Hinck, Shelly Schaefer, Hinck, Edward A. and Withers, Lesley A. (2013) “Service-Learning in Prison facilities: interaction as a source of transformation” in Wood, Jennifer K., Novek, Eleanor, Hartnett, Stephen J., *Prison Communication, Activism, Research, and Education Collective.; Working for Justice : A Handbook of Prison Education and Activism*

hooks, bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Jones, E., Haenfler, R., B., Johnson. 2007. *The Better World Handbook: Small Changes That Make a Big Difference* New Society Publishers.

Kaufman, C. 2016. *Ideas for Action: Relevant Theory for Radical Change, 2nd Ed.*

Kivel, Paul. “Social Service or Social Change?” In INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, Eds. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*.

Kretzmann, J.P & McKnight, J.L. *Building Communities From The Inside Out; A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets*. Chicago: ACTA, 1993

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, *Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline*.

Notes from Nowhere, (Ed). 2003 *We are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism*. Zed Press.

Powers, William. "Future Zarahs." *The Sun Magazine* Sept. 2008: n. pag.

Shor, I. *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*. University of Chicago: 1992.

Steinberg S.R. & Kincheloe, J.L. (1998). *Students as Researchers: Creating Classrooms That Matter*. London: Falmer Press.

Sudbury, J. (2004). “A world without prisons: Resisting Militarism, globalized punishment, and empire.” *Social Justice*, Vol. 31, No. 1/2 (95-96),

Weiston, T. 2017. *Critical Mentoring: A Practical Guide*. Stylus.

X, Malcolm; Haley, Alex (1965). *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1st ed.). New York: Grove Press

Optional readings:

Gilmore, R. 2015, The Worrying State of the Anti-Prison Movement, *Social Justice*.

Richie, Beth. "How anti-violence activism taught me to become a prison abolitionist."

<http://stopmassincarceration.net><http://criticalresistance.org>

<http://newjimcrow.com/take-action>

<http://www.incite-national.org>
