

**Ethnic Studies
University of California, San Diego
Winter 2023**

ETHN189: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE UNIVERSITY

Instructor: Sam Museus
Time: MWF 12-12:50
Location: SEQUO 147
Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Description

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This course examines the role of social justice in U.S. higher education. The course introduces the field of higher education and student affairs and the wide range of issues facing college educators and college students. Students in the course will learn about critical issues related to social justice on college campuses, including free speech controversies, the efforts to cultivate equitable campus environments, student identity development, and student activism. After taking this course, students will...

- Be familiar with higher education as a field of study and profession.
- Better understand how systemic oppression shapes higher education.
- Deepen their knowledge of efforts to advance social justice in higher education.
- Gain knowledge about how oppression and social justice influence their experience.
- Have a better sense of how their identity shapes their educational experience.

Required Texts

You will not be required to purchase any texts for this course. All readings for this course will be accessible online, available through the university's digital library, or distributed electronically.

Guiding Principles

It is important to have a set of shared principles upon which we can cultivate relationships and engage in learning as a community. The following principles can be an important part of any community that cares about its collective well-being:

- **Care:** As part of a learning community, we have a responsibility to care about each other and help each other thrive. This involves valuing each other and what everyone brings to the class, committing to the larger community's learning, and serving as a source of support for each other in the learning process.
- **Community:** We should see the learning process as a valuable tool to cultivate stronger relationships with each other. The process can also foster stronger connections between us and our respective communities, as we increase our understanding of them and their experiences.
- **Compassion:** Learning is enhanced by understanding how the world shapes our life, but also the lives of others. It is also enhanced by our desire to eliminate all suffering in the world. When engaging in discussion, we should make concerted effort to understand how society might

shape the experiences of other communities and people differently, recognize that we can never fully know what it is like to be those people or experience the world as they do, and care about their well-being.

- **Humility:** Engaging in difficult conversations requires humility and an understanding that everyone is continuously learning about the complex issues that exist within society and education. It requires us to understand that everyone makes mistakes and acknowledge when we have done so ourselves.
- **Respect:** We all should treat each other with respect, even when we disagree. We should avoid language that demeans people, acknowledge the validity of their experiences, and listen to their perspectives. Any bullying, intimidation, or discrimination based on identity is especially damaging to the learning environment and unacceptable.

Course Format

With regard to structure, I value fluidity and flexibility in teaching. Fluidity and flexibility are necessary to adapt to new information, new circumstances, and unexpected challenges. Therefore, this syllabus might change throughout the quarter.

This course will be taught via hybrid format. Although there might be exceptions, the weekly format will look generally as follows:

- **Mondays:** You will be assigned lectures, videos, podcasts, and/or other activities to view/complete on your own or with your classmates.
- **Wednesdays:** We will meet on campus for an in-person class, which might include lecture, activities, guest speakers, and/or discussion.
- **Fridays:** You will use class time to conduct individual research and meet in groups to work on your final projects.

Some lectures might be digital and posted on Canvas and some meetings might take place via zoom (details below).

Office Hours (Zoom)

To select a time to meet with me, please sign up for a [15-minute timeslot here](#) or a [30-minute timeslot here](#) depending on how much time you think you will need.

Course Management (Canvas)

We will be using the Canvas online learning management system to manage content and grades for this course. The Course Finder page (coursefinder.ucsd.edu) will display your Canvas courses, and it is recommended that you use this page to access your classes. To log in, select the login button and enter your Active Directory credentials.

Should you need any technical assistance with Canvas, please alert your instructor and send an email to servicedesk@ucsd.edu. In the header of the email, please write "Canvas." Make sure to include your name, course title and section, as well as your contact information in the email body. A representative will get back to you within 48 hours (Monday through Friday). You can also call 858-246-4357. Please refer to <https://edtech.ucsd.edu/contact/index.html> for more information.

Using Zoom

General guidelines for joining all zoom calls, meetings, and discussions:

- If you have not used Zoom before, download the Zoom app on your device prior to the day of the meeting and familiarize yourself with any features you may need to use whenever joining a synchronous meeting (i.e., mute/unmute microphone, stop/start video, chat, screenshare etc.).
- While the course interactions are virtual, we are still a community so please be considerate.
- Try to join the session a few minutes before the meeting start time (join early rather than late to not distract from the conversation).
- When joining meetings synchronously, find a quiet space with strong wifi that is free of distractions. You can test your internet connection speed by visiting Zoom's suggested third-party bandwidth [Speedtest](#). If you absolutely do not have a wifi connected device, use the phone in option as a last resort.
- Test your headphones, microphone, and camera to ensure the class can hear and see you.
- To test your microphone, click "Test Computer Mic & Speakers" in the pop-up window that appears when first opening a test meeting or beginning your scheduled meeting. More information on audio testing can be found [here](#).
- To test your camera, just look at the Zoom window to see that you are clearly visible, not pixelated, and can move and speak without noticeable delays. Click [here](#) for more video testing tips.
- You may need to give Zoom permission to access your camera and microphone beforehand. Typically, the request for permission will appear in a pop-up window the first time you open a Zoom Meeting, and will carry over to future meetings. If you declined permissions in the past, you would need to go into your PC or Mac's settings to allow Zoom to access your camera and microphone. You can [contact the IT Help Desk](#) to assist you in this process, or find information on the internet for your specific device.
- Close any windows or programs open on your device that are unrelated to your meeting. This focuses your device's power to provide the best Zoom meeting experience possible.

Use of camera:

- Unless you are phoning in because you don't have access to a stable wifi connection, it would be much appreciated if you could turn on your video feed so that we can see you, especially when you talk. As always, there might be circumstances that warrant exceptions. If you need to leave your video off, please let me know ahead of time.
- Log into your meeting from a distraction free, quiet environment.
- Adjust your camera to be at around eye level if possible – especially take note of the angle of your laptop screen if using the built-in camera.
- Have a plain background – avoid backlight from bright windows.
- Getting clear video is a lot like taking a good selfie – it's all about contrast. Light your face more brightly than the background to make it to see you.
- Feel free to use virtual background if they're not super distracting. Also, a plain-colored flat surface behind you helps make your virtual background look better.
- Be aware you are on camera and try to avoid doing other tasks, such as checking emails, text messages, news, etc.
- There are videos on the internet now of people who forget that they are on video and do really embarrassing things on their Zoom calls. Let's not be those people. If you have your

camera on, remember that we can all see you, even if you switch to another app that covers your Zoom video window.

Mute and communication:

- Please keep your audio on mute until you want to speak. This will help to limit background noise.

Use of hand raising:

- If you would like to speak or answer a question, use the “Raise Hand” feature (you can google it if you don’t know where the button is).
- Don’t forget to unmute yourself after you are called on.

Use of chat:

- If you would like to use the chat box, remember that it is public, and a record of the chat is kept and archived.
- Also, please refrain from using the chat for engaging in side-conversations that will distract students from the ongoing conversation.
- Chat messages might be best for sharing validating comments and submitting (short) questions via the chat box.
- Please refrain from typing up long commentary or long questions during a session which can be distracting to people that are trying to follow the audio.

Honor Code

None of us want to spend our time navigating the university’s academic misconduct processes, and you should not want to deal with the consequences of academic misconduct hearings and penalties. More importantly, you have to invest the intellectual energy in the coursework to benefit from it and be a contributing member of the learning community. Our experiences as a learning community are enhanced if all of us can cultivate authentic relationships built on trust. For these reasons, please follow the university honor code.

All members of the university community are expected to assume the responsibility of observing certain ethical goals and values as they relate to academic integrity. Essential to the fundamental purpose of the University is the commitment to the principles of truth and honesty. This Honor Code is designed so that responsibility for upholding these principles lies with the individual as well as the entire community.

The purpose of this Honor Code is to foster and advance an environment of ethical conduct in the academic community of the University, the foundation of which includes the pursuit of academic honesty and integrity. Through an atmosphere of mutual respect, we enhance the value of our education and bring forth a higher standard of academic excellence. No member of the University community, including students, faculty, staff and administrators, shall act in any way that could reasonably be construed as an intentional misrepresentation or deception in academic or professional matters. For the university academic integrity policy, please see <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>

Academic misconduct is forbidden and can result in serious negative consequences. Academic misconduct includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- **Plagiarism**, including any representation of another's work or ideas as one's own in academic and educational submissions.
- **Cheating**, including any actual or attempted use of resources not authorized by the instructor(s) for academic submissions, and/or any actual or attempted effort to assist another student in cheating.
- **Double submission**, including any submission of an academic work for more than one course without expressed permission.
- **Fabrication**, including any falsification or creation of data, research, or resources to support academic submissions.
- **Use of AI software (Chat GPT)**, including using AI software to write your paper and then editing it. It is often easy to identify such papers.

The Associated Students Office of Student Advocacy is a free and private resource that works with students who have been accused of violating Academic Integrity or Student Conduct. Via one-on-one zoom sessions, their Student Advocates provide support and guide students through this complicated process to make sure they understand their options and ultimately receive due process. You may contact them at asadvocacy@ucsd.edu.

For specific policies regarding academic misconduct at the university, please refer to <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/consequences/index.html>. Students are advised to retain a copy of this syllabus in their personal files for use when applying for certification, licensure, or transfer credit.

Please note that I will not accept duplicate assignments. In other words, I will not accept an assignment turned in for another course, unless you receive prior permission in writing from the previous instructor and we agree on the necessary conditions for the submission.

University Resources

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Section 504 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 offer guidelines for curriculum modifications for students with documented disabilities. If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from the Office for Students with Disabilities. Information about the office can be found on the following website: <https://students.ucsd.edu/well-being/disability-services/>. The following site also has additional information about university disability policies: <http://adminrecords.ucsd.edu/ppm/docs/200-9.html>. Students should discuss recommendations with each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the drop/add deadline.

Accommodations for Religious Activities

Students shall be excused from class or other organized activities or observance of religious holy days unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship. Students are responsible for completing assignments given during their absence but should be given an opportunity to make up work missed because of religious observance.

Once a student has registered for a class, the student is expected to examine the course syllabus for potential conflicts with holy days and to notify the instructor by the end of the first week of classes of any conflicts that may require an absence (including any required additional preparation/travel time). The student is also expected to remind the faculty member the week prior to the missed class, and plan (with the faculty member) in advance to make up any missed work or in-class material within a reasonable amount of time. The student is to be trusted that he/she will observe the holy day as promised; no proof will be expected.

Counseling and Psychological Services

UCSD is committed to enhancing and caring for the psychological well-being of the entire campus community. The UCSD Counseling & Psychological Services Office is here for you. Please refer to this link for more information on services available and how to make an appointment:

<https://wellness.ucsd.edu/caps/Pages/default.aspx>

Disclosures of Sexual Violence

UCSD fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as an UCSD student, the course instructor is required to notify administrators. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact: Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) – (858) 534-8298 or ophd.ucsd.edu

Assignments

Grading: The assessment and grading for this course is based on the concept of ungrading. You can learn more about the concept of ungrading through [the writing of Dr. Jesse Stommel](#), who is an expert on the topic. You all navigate different challenging conditions, and you are most knowledgeable about (1) how you have navigated those challenges and (2) how you have contributed to and learned through the course. Therefore, the primary basis for your grade will be three self-assessments described below. There are two caveats: (1) all assignments must be completed for a final grade to be submitted and (2) while the grading process will be heavily based on the self-assessments, the instructor reserves the right to determine the final grade.

A Note on Health: The assignments are designed to both facilitate your learning and maximize the positive elements of your experience this quarter. Research from human flourishing, positive psychology, and education shows that several acts (e.g., recognizing one's strengths, savoring your opportunities, expressing gratitude, and embracing moral values) contribute to human thriving. Many of these elements are worked into the nature of the assignments in the course so that you not only learn, but hopefully also have an empowering experience doing so.

Please note that the following guidelines apply to all papers that you submit in this course:

- Unless otherwise noted, all papers should be double-spaced.
- Assignments should be submitted on due dates indicated in the syllabus (or, in some instances, on revised dates announced in class).
- Unless otherwise noted, assignments should be submitted via Canvas electronically and papers should be submitted in Microsoft Word format. Students are encouraged to keep a copy of all assignments for their records.

- All assignments should be proofread and free of grammatical errors.
- Title all files shared with your last name and summary of the paper/project topic in brackets. For example, the file name for a literature review might look like this: Museus [Identity Paper]. This is generally good practice, as it makes it easy for you, your collaborators, and your instructors to find files on your computers.

Class Participation

You are expected to have processed assigned materials before the on-campus class session for the week they are assigned. The purpose of class discussions is to collectively construct/facilitate spaces where we can work individually and collaboratively to ask critical and difficult questions, grow in our own understanding of ourselves and the world, and seek solutions to complex and challenging problems. Please always hold onto the ethic and practice of generosity while speaking, critiquing, reading, and listening. Remember that we all are in different stages of coming into an understanding of our lives and our worlds.

Please come to class having reflected on the material and be ready to share at least one thing (e.g., a thought, question, feeling, current event, individual experience) related to the designated material for the week.

Self-Assessment #1

For your first self-assessment, please write a brief description of the following in a maximum of 2 double-spaced pages:

- Identify and define 2-3 strengths (e.g., forms of knowledge, values, skills, perspectives) that you bring to the learning community we are creating. You can [view this site](#) to spark ideas about potential individual character strengths you want to highlight.
- Clarify 2-3 things you would like to get out of your experience in this course.
- Explain how you might leverage your strengths and desires from the previous two prompts to engage and contribute to the larger learning community in the course.

The goal is for you to bring to deepen your understanding of yourself and how your strengths can be used to support others.

Project/Paper Type: Individual

Length: Maximum 2 double-spaced in 12-point font

Due: Friday, 1/13 at 3pm PDT

Self-Assessment #2

For self-assessment #2, you will be asked to reflect on your self-assessment #1 and respond to the following prompt in a maximum of 2 double-spaced pages:

- How did you do in the course so far? For example....
 - How do you feel about your contributions and impact on the learning community in class? And, why?
 - Were there unexpected ways you contributed? If so, how?
 - Were there ways you wanted to or felt like you should contribute but did not? If so, what held you back? How might you refine your practice?
 - What did you learn about yourself along the way?

This self-assessment is designed to allow you to develop a deeper understanding of your experience and contributions during the quarter, as well as allow you to make any changes you want to make in the final weeks of the course.

Project/Paper Type: Individual

Length: Maximum 2 double-spaced in 12-point font

Due: Friday, February 27 at 3pm PDT

Self-Assessment #3

The final self-assessment should be 2-3 double-spaced pages in response to the following prompt:

- Identify one or more things from the course that had the greatest impact on you throughout the quarter. How and why did this impact your thinking, dreams, perspective, etc.?
- How, if at all, has your purpose changed?
- Reflecting back on the quarter, what grade would you give yourself?

The reflection is designed to deepen your understanding of the connections between the course content and your own life and experiences. It will also allow you to reflect deeply on any changes (in thoughts, feelings, goals, behaviors, emotions, etc.) that occurred in the course.

Project/Paper Type: Individual

Length: Maximum 2-3 double-spaced in 12-point font

Due: Friday, March 17 at 3pm PDT

Thank You Letter

For the mid-term paper, you should write a “thank you” letter to someone who has made substantial contributions to social justice in higher education. It could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Someone involved in the 20th century movements for free speech, Ethnic Studies, or another aspect of higher education that shapes your current opportunities and experiences.
- Someone who has been a leader for Ethnic Studies or equity efforts in higher education or at UCSD specifically.
- A teacher who you have had in another class who profoundly impacted your experience and fostered your commitment to social justice.
- A scholar who wrote academic work that inspired you to be more interested in social justice.
- Former student activists who fought to ensure you would be able to thrive at the university.
- Current student activists who are fighting for social justice causes.
- A community-based organization that is advocating social justice in your community.

Regardless of the recipient of the reflection, the aim is for you to think deeply about how other people have impacted your life and expand your awareness of connections, including the impact of historical figures on our present conditions and the impact of our community on our lives. The letter will also allow you to convey the gratitude you feel for the contributions of the recipients.

The letter should, at minimum, accomplish the following:

- Introduce yourself and explain why you are writing the letter to them specifically.
- Highlight what you appreciate about their contributions.
- Discuss why their efforts are so important, which can include the impact of their efforts on you, current students generally, and/or future generations of students.
- If you feel so inclined, share how you will continue their legacy and/or contribute to social justice movements moving forward.

Project/Paper Type: Individual

Length: Maximum 2 single-spaced pages in 12-point font and letter format

Due: Wednesday, February 15 at 12pm PDT

Final Project

Modeled after [Tell Us How UC It: A Living Archive for Student Activism at UC San Diego](#), your final project will be a creative perspective. For your final project, in groups of 2-3, you will design and produce your own creative product that conveys (1) something valuable you have learned over the course of the quarter and/or (2) a message that you feel the need to voice about social justice in higher education. You can think about social justice in the context of U.S. higher education broadly, the state of California, or UCSD specifically.

You are encouraged to embrace your creativity for this project. You can produce something via a variety of multimedia formats, including posters, slideshows, videos, podcasts, poems, infographics, memes and GIFs, songs, and more. In addition to your creative piece, you will also submit a 1-page overview that details your inspiration for your submission and the message you are hoping to convey.

As you are putting together your final project, consider the following questions to help generate possible foci and ideas:

- What observations have you made about systemic oppression in college?
- What is most important to you when it comes to social justice in higher education?
- How can UCSD or higher education change to be more socially just?
- What change would you like to see at UCSD or in U.S. higher education in 10-20 years?

You will present your final project during the last class session.

Project/Paper Type: Individual

Due: Friday, March 10 at 3pm PDT

Class Schedule

****Syllabus subject to change.*

****All readings are listed in the recommended order of consumption.*

****Please note that course material may cover difficult topics (e.g., racism, sexism, etc.).*

****You can click on hyperlinks for news articles, online videos, and podcasts. Other academic journal articles and reports can be accessed on Canvas.*

Week #1: Introduction and Overview

Dates: 1/9- 1/13

Readings: [Understanding Oppression](#)
[Internalized Oppression](#)
[What Is All This Talk About "Social Justice"?](#)

Video: [What is Internalized Racism?](#)

Assignment: [Self-Assessment #1](#) due at 3pm on 1/13

Week #2: The Higher Education Profession and Social Justice

Dates: 1/16-1/20

Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (1/16)

Readings: Toward a History of Student Affairs (Canvas)
[Student Affairs Leaders](#)
A Bold Vision Forward (Canvas)

Week #3: Free and Hate Speech Wars on Campus

Dates: 1/23-1/27

Videos: [50th Anniversary Free Speech Movement UC Berkeley](#)
[The Price of Free Speech and Controversy](#)

Readings: [Excommunicate me From the Church of Social Justice](#)
[Defining and Practicing Deep Civility](#)

Week #4: Identity Development and Consciousness

Dates: 1/30-2/3

Readings: For this week, you will find and select 2-3 self-selected articles related to one of your identities to read. The readings should:

- Focus on a social identity (e.g., race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, religion) and not a positional identity (e.g., student status, major, employment, etc.).
- Address how systems of oppression shape this identity and experiences related to it.
- Be published in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

These readings can inform your identity paper if you choose to do one.

Due: [Submit brief summary \(2 double-spaced pages max\) of the most important thing you learned about yourself from the reading before class](#)

Week #5: Critical Agency and Resistance

Dates: 2/6-2/10

Readings: Examining Transformational Resistance (Canvas)
Centrality of Critical Agency (Canvas)

Week #6: Mid-Term Presentations

Dates: 2/13-2/17

Assignment: Thank You Letters due before class on 2/15

Week #7: Equitable Campus Environments

Dates: 2/20-2/24

Holiday: President's Day (2/20)

Readings: Cultural Integration in Campus Subcultures (Canvas)
The Freedom to Learn (Canvas)

Week #8: Student Movements I

Dates: 2/27-3/3

Podcast: "On Strike! Blow It Up!"

Readings: We Demand, Intro and Chapter 1-2 (Canvas)
Black Study, Black Struggle

Assignments: Self-Assessment #2 due by 3pm on 2/27

Week #9: Student Movements II

Dates: 3/6-3/10

Video: History of UCSD Activism

Readings: We Demand, Chapter 3-4 and Conclusion (Canvas)
UC's Academic Workers Strike

Assignment: Final Projects due at 3pm on 3/10

Week #10: Wrap-Up

Dates: 3/13-3/17

Assignments: Self-Assessment #3 due by 3pm on 3/17