

**San José State University**  
**Justice Studies Department**  
**JS 132: “Race, Gender, Inequality [class] and the Law” Fall**  
**2010**

**Instructor:** William Armaline (Will or Bill please ☺)  
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**Office Hours:** Mondays 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
**Class Days/Time:** Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00-10:15 a.m.  
**Classroom:** MH 520

### **Course Description**

From Catalog:

“History of legal issues and individual and institutional discrimination of women, ethnic/cultural and religious minorities, gays and lesbians and the disabled in education, employment, criminal justice and the family. Affirmative action and [so-called] reverse discrimination [sic.]. Solutions for structured inequality in the U.S. Prerequisites: Completion of core GE, satisfaction of Writing Skills Test, and upper division standing. For students who begin continuous enrollment at a CCC or a CSU in Fall 2005 or later, completion of, or co-requisite in a 100W course is required.”

This course is broadly designed to give students a theoretical and historical background into the major, intersecting social systems of privilege and oppression that shape and constrain contemporary society, including the contemporary U.S. “state” and U.S. domestic and foreign law/policy. Where it is impossible to touch on every significant form of structured inequality in this course, we will primarily focus on the following systems and corresponding concepts as they relate to social structure, individual experience, and the state (law): (1) Capitalism/class; (2) Patriarchy/gender; (3) Racism/race; (4) Heterosexism/sexual preference or sexual (self)identification.

### **Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

Students should be able to identify and discuss central concepts and current theoretical trends in the social scientific study of structured inequalities (and their intersection, forming what Patricia Hill Collins calls the “matrix of domination”) along lines of race, class, gender,

and sexuality—particularly as these structured inequalities relate to the form and formal action (law/policy) of the (U.S.) state. As such, readings for this course were selected to represent these contemporary literatures in social science.

Students should be able to apply critical understandings of intersecting systems of privilege and oppression to their interpretations of current, relevant issues concerning public policy.

Students should be able to demonstrate their capacity for critical self-reflection, where they might locate themselves in the broader spectrum of intersecting systems of oppression/privilege (racism, capitalism, patriarchy, heterosexism) and their corresponding micro-identities (race, class, gender, sexuality).

Students should be able to demonstrate a critical consciousness of the (U.S.) state and its historical development with regard to significant systems of structured inequality.

Students should demonstrate their ability to synthesize and apply course readings (and other relevant materials) in written research (see writing assignments below).

## Required Texts/Readings

### Texts

Parenti, M. (2010). *Democracy for the Few*, (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

ISBN: (paperback) 0495911267

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

ISBN: 1595581030

### Other Readings

All other additional readings will be provided by instructor, primarily via email (pdf).

## Classroom Protocol

- 1) Foster an environment that encourages participation, rather than silencing other students (be respectful, considerate, etc.)
- 2) Complete readings and assignments by dates indicated on syllabus
- 3) Show up for and participate in class
- 4) STUDENTS are responsible for any and all notes and materials missed in their absence. You may want to make a friend or two in class...☺.
- 5) Students are expected to make an honest effort to stay informed on current events so that our class discussions can relate to the world beyond SJSU. In the words

of C.W. Mills, we will be helping each other to develop a “sociological imagination.”

- 6) Students are expected to contribute to and participate in class discussions and activities to the best of their abilities and comfort levels. For those students with special needs, several other avenues and measures of participation can be pursued to ensure an equitable environment. (For instance, alternative avenues can be used in lieu of verbal participation.)
- 7) USE OF LAPTOPS, PHONES, AND PDA’S WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IN THIS COURSE. If you would like to spend the hour “online” (rather than with the rest of us), you should do so elsewhere. If you are unhappy with this new rule, you can blame others who have abused such privileges—sorry ☹. Exceptions will only be made for students with documented special needs.
- 8) Now that I/we will have your attention, take some risks, make this a class of your own, and enjoy yourself!

## **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html). [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

## **Assignments and Grading Policy**

### **In Class Writing Assignments**

Rather than applying a “participation” or “attendance” score to the grading rubric for this course, students will be expected to complete brief in-class writing exercises. These exercises will occur at random (instructor will decide). Generally speaking, in-class writing assignments will require students to write for 5-10 minutes at the beginning of selected classes in response to course readings. Then, these in-class responses will be employed for student-driven class discussion, and collected at the end of class by the instructor.

In-class writing assignments will be graded as credit/no-credit, and will be worth **20%** of the final course grade.

### **Critical Reflection Papers [CRP]**

There are no exams in this course. Students will be expected to complete four critical reflection papers [CRP], through which they will reflect on relevant course materials as they apply to students’ lives and relevant/current policy issues.

Each CRP should: (1) demonstrate the student’s comprehension and ability to apply assigned course material; (2) be written in a standard 12-point font (double spaced, standard 1-inch margins), at a length of 5 pages (not including reference page) with references and

citations in APA format; (4) demonstrate the student's ability to clearly express their ideas through written expression.

In completing CRP's, students are encouraged to use the SJSU Writing Center (see below) to revise and edit their work. Extra credit will be awarded to those who provide proof of their use of the writing center (via email confirmation) for CRP assignments. This will be the only source of extra credit in this course.

In order for students to improve their writing throughout the course, written feedback will be provided by the instructor on each CRP assignments. Thus, students are encouraged to reflect on how they might improve on each assignment as the course progresses.

For each CRP, students will be given a prompt or question(s) from the instructor, to which students will respond by the assigned date with a completed CRP (see course schedule below for due dates). The substance and substantive details of CRP assignments will be discussed further in class.

Generally speaking, CRP's will be graded based on: (1) substantive coverage of the assigned prompt or question(s); (2) ability to apply and synthesize course materials; (3) clarity and quality of writing; (4) application of credible sources (research) and use of appropriate (APA) citation structure. Again, we will discuss these assignments (and their evaluation) further and in more detail in class.

CRP's will be worth **80%** of the final course grade (20% each).

### **Final Grade Calculation**

Final grades will be calculated as a final percentage, translating into letter grades as follows:

98-100%	A+
94-97	A
90-93	A-
88-89	B+
84-87	B
80-83	B-
78-79	C+
74-77	C
70-73	C-
68-69	D+
64-67	D
60-63	D-
<60	F

## **University Policies**

### **Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial\\_affairs/Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy\\_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

## **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

## **Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

## **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers.

[The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

## **Peer Mentor Center**

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. [Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/](http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/).

## JS 132: “Race, Gender, Inequality [class] and the Law” Fall 2010, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change by instructor with fair notice to students via email. Please make sure that your university (“mysjsu”) email account is active and accurate.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/25	Course introduction: Review syllabus and course materials Central terms: power, systems of structured inequalities, etc.  Email readings: Communist Manifesto
2	8/30  9/1	Defining “class” and capitalism, theoretical underpinnings; <i>read Communist Manifesto</i>  Theoretical introduction continued: History of “Labor Day”
3	9/6 9/8	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY (NO CLASSES) A brief history of class, capitalism, and the (U.S.) state; <i>read Parenti chaps 1-5, &amp; 12.</i>
4	9/13  9/15	Class, capitalism, and the shaping of contemporary law/policy; <i>read Parenti chaps 5-7, &amp; 14</i>  The role of media and ideology; <i>read Parenti Chap 13</i>
5	9/20  9/22	Where do we go from here? Ecological and political-economic crises; <i>read Parenti chaps 8 &amp; 19</i> ASSIGN CRP #1  The contemporary anti-capitalist movement(s) and political economic alternatives; Email readings: Omi and Winant, “Racial Formation”
6	9/27  9/29	CRP #1 DUE; Theoretical underpinnings: defining race and [systemic] racism; <i>read Omi and Winant</i>  Theoretical underpinnings on race and racism continued; watch short film (TBA)
7	10/4  10/6	Applying “critical race theory”: Mass Imprisonment in the U.S. and the U.S. War on Drugs; <i>read Alexander chaps 1-2</i>  Continued... ; <i>read Alexander chaps 3-4</i>
8	10/11  10/13	Continued... ; <i>read Alexander chaps 5-6</i>  ASSIGN CRP #2; Contemporary anti-racism as it pertains to “whites” and people of color in the U.S. (materials distributed in class): contemporary issues and movements. Email readings: Lorber and MacKinnon excerpts.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
9	10/18  10/20	Theoretical underpinnings: feminisms, patriarchy, gender, and the state; <i>read Lorber and MacKinnon excerpts</i> .  CRP #2 DUE; Theoretical underpinnings continued: historical strands of feminist theory (liberal, socialist, radical fem, and “black feminism” or “womanism”); Email Patrica Hill Collins readings
10	10/25  10/27	“Black feminist thought,” intersectionality, and the matrix of domination; <i>read Patricia Hill Collins excerpts</i> Email Readings: Sudbury excerpts  Application of intersectional feminist theory (on criminal justice and imprisonment); <i>read Sudbury excerpts</i>
11	11/1  11/3	Intersectional visions of revolution and empowerment: The Spanish Civil War and the intersection of class/gender/sexuality  Watch film: “Libertarias” (in Spanish, subtitled)
12	11/8  11/10	Continue film  More intersectional (race/class) visions of revolutionary social change: Watch excerpts from the Black Panther Party Archives; read (in class) the BPP 10 point program.
13	11/15  11/17	ASSIGN CRP #3; Theoretical underpinnings: Heterosexism and the politics of sexuality in the U.S. Email readings: Katz and Rust excerpts  Theoretical underpinnings continued; <i>read Katz and Rust excerpts</i>
14	11/22  11/24	CRP #3 DUE; Sexual politics and resistance to heterosexism in California; assign film: “Milk”; email readings (Prop 8) TBA  Library day (instructions TBA)
15	11/29  12/1	Sexual politics and resistance in CA continued; <i>readings (Prop 8) TBA</i>  Sexuality and contemporary social justice movements; <i>readings and materials TBA (awaiting publication...)</i>
16	12/6 12/8	ASSIGN CRP #4; Class activity TBA TBA
<b>Final Exam</b>		CRP #4 DUE, Friday, December 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2010 at 9:00 a.m.