JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Fall, 2026 August 28 -- December 14 (Dec. 15 final exam)

Syllabus

Course Title and Section: EDU 300-SK02 (34751): Education for Social Change in the United States
Course Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 10:50AM until 12:05PM
Course Location: Room 122 Westport
Faculty: Schevaletta (Chevy) Alford, Ed D. (salford@jjay.cuny.edu) Office: 432.07 HH
Contact Hours: By Appointment (All students must have 2 appointments with instructor)
Phone: SEEK Office 212 237-8169 or 8168 or 8171
Learning Facilitator: Tasfia Islam
Contact: SEEK Learn Center --phone 212 237-8883

Course Belief:
1. "Learning is self-improvement, while ignorance is stagnation. The spirit of learning leads to peace, progress, and prosperity, while ignorance leads to misery, misfortune and impoverishment…"
Ikeda, D. (April, 2016). *Living Buddhism*

2. "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."
(Fredrick Douglass, 1857)

3. "Social Action occurs when everyday people band together to develop their power in order to change policy." Myers-Lipton, S. (Change, 2022)

4. "Education is the great equalizer…" (Horace Mann, 1848)

Course Description and Overview:
Based on the information garnered from readings, lectures, and videos, the class will consider whether higher education has or is doing anything to equalize the lives of the citizens—nationally, statewide, citywide or in your immediate community. Students will engage in critical analysis of the ongoing struggles for access and equity in society. By viewing the methods used to change unfair practices, students will develop and participate in a social actions project to improve a negative aspect of society. Finally, students will have the opportunity to move from social action to critical reflection by contextualizing their own educational experiences and ambitions in the context of the struggle for justice not only in education but in other arenas requiring reform, such as health care, prisons reform, environmental change and political funding.

Learning Outcomes:
By the end of the course, you will recognize that

- Social actions are collective efforts aimed at addressing issues and advocating for change in society. This could include protests, movements, policy changes, or community projects.
- Higher education has played a significant role in social actions, both as a catalyst for change and as a site for critique. Many social movements have been influenced by university-led research, activism on campuses and the education of future leaders. Over

time, these educational and social actions can change the way society functions—either by shifting laws, changing cultural norms, or creating new educational models that better serve historically excluded populations.

- The impact on social, political, economic, and cultural structures: Universities and educational institutions have historically influenced movements for civil rights, gender equality, labor rights, and more. They also shape policies that can shift power dynamics and reshape the culture of the nation.

1. You will **understand the ideas and concepts of social actions** and be able to integrate your understanding of these concepts with lessons learned from the work done on your social action project. You will also have a fundamental idea of how higher education has impacted social actions effecting the social, political, economic, and cultural structure within the United States.
2. You will be able to a**nalyze** how the individual and collective quests for the American Dream have resulted in **struggles for social justice, requiring social actions in education** which have led to the reshaping of U.S. society and culture.
3. **You will be able to use research and data analysis skills to establish a position and support it** with evidence and
4. You will be able to mount a simple campaign social action platform that reflects your beliefs and critically considers your understanding of the views of others as it relates to education, justice, equality and opportunity**.**
5. **Finally, you will be able to understand your ability to work with others and identify factors that will cause you difficulties in doing social actions activities.**

Below is a list of requirements and expectations necessary for the successful completion of this course:

(1) Attendance you will be responsible for all material covered in any meetings held with the entire class as well as your group (once assigned). Your discussion board submissions and portfolios will be used to evaluate whether you have understood the material covered and the readings in meetings.

(2) Assignments are the basic academic types: Reading, writing, video viewing, and speaking. During meetings comments can be made about all subjects covered in the class—and in the news. (Information from other classes may be brought in as long as that information can be linked to social actions. In addition, you may use the ***Journal function*** if you decide the topic is too controversial and you only want the instructor to see it.) This function will be useful for creating midterm and final projects. When you write on the Discussion Board the entire class will see it. Although AI can be helpful don't let it control your thinking. **AI will create its own truths**. Please cite information you have discovered. (If you use AI remember other students may end up with the exact same words as you. This may appear as plagiarism which will not go well for you.)

(3) You will be creating a portfolio and log (journal), campaign notebook, and final group presentation.

(4) E-mail**:** Students are expected to use their John Jay email address and check emails regularly, as professors will use it to disseminate important information regarding assignments and syllabus changes. Students must use professional salutations, language and format. Do not write "Hey Ms," or "Ms" or

simply start writing without a greeting. You can use a more relaxed format when you are writing in your Journal.

(4) Brightspace **(LMS):** Students are required to check their Brightspace course page regularly for updates on class assignments, projects, discussion questions, and/or any changes to the course syllabus.

On some occasion participants will be required to go to the internet.

Myers-Lipton, S. (2023). Change! A student guide to social action (2nd Ed.) Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.

Grading:

A letter grade will be assigned to each student. Grades will be calculated by instructor; Brightspace calculations will only be used to support the instructor's views. This will be translated into a letter grade. (We must try to avoid incomplete grades except in the event of an emergency, which must be documented by an official note.) You will be asked to write a self-evaluation as part of your midterm and final.

Final Grade will be calculated as follows:

- **25% Identification of Issue**--participation in class discussions and small group which reference readings or viewings. You select an issue and can explain why you have chosen this issue. You can work with your team to map out a fundamental design for getting your concern before the individuals who can do something about it.
- **20% Oral presentations throughout the class**
- **25% Portfolio submissions which will be connected to Discussion**
- **30% Final Social Action Project and Paper**
  Advocate for Change in your chosen area. Were you able to bring about a change:
  Utilizing the best action to advocate for issues you want to see changed, you will attempt to implement social change for your issue. Create with your group a project that will change the situation about which your group is concerned. This can be presented as a group policy paper which requires all members of your group to submit at least 2 pages and a power point presentation. This presentation will show how your group put together their platform. The presentation will be done in ZOOM Meeting final examination. It must be on a platform which can be viewed by all members of the class.

College Wide Policies for Undergraduate Courses:

(1) Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the presentation of someone (or something) else ' ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one ' own creation. Using the ideas or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. It is the responsibility of the student to recognize the difference between statements that are common knowledge (which do not require documentation) and restatements of the ideas of others. Paraphrase, summary, and direct

quotation are acceptable forms of restatement, if the source is cited. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation. (John Jay College of Criminal Justice Undergraduate Bulletin, http://www.jjay.cuny.edu)

(2) Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or part of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the Internet without citing cuny.edu/academics/654.php, see Chapter IV Academic Standards) the source, and "cutting and pasting" from various sources without proper attribution. (From the John Jay College of Criminal Justice Graduate Bulletin, p. 89). Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has free guides designed to help students with problems of documentation.

(3) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policies: If you have a documented disability as described by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 933-112 Section 504) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)and would like to request academic and/or physical accommodations please contact The Office of Accessibility Services (212) 237-8031, as soon as possible. Course requirements will not be waived but reasonable accommodations may be provided as appropriate.

Assignments

There will be class sessions Tuesdays and Thursday (10:50PM UNTIL 12:15PM).

WEEK 1 Tuesday September 1 - 8

"Getting to know you" Get to know your classmates and their concerns.

Assignment

Write a brief Self-Introduction (Bio). The Bio should include one paragraph describing who you are: information such as where you live, how long you have lived there. Another paragraph should **c**onsider three areas:

Do you have any concerns about your community?

Do you have any concerns about the education you have received thus far?

Do you have any concerns or problems other than education or community which can be seen as **issues** that need to be addressed?

Lastly what are you presently studying? Have the courses that you have been taking connected to your concerns?

Read **the** Bios of at least 4 other classmates and post comments to at least two who appear to express interest in **issues** like your own.

(History of Higher Education—What were some of the issues that have been impacted by higher education?)
Watch
Brief History of Higher Education parts 1 and 2 Video.
Library of Alexandria You tube

WEEK 2 Tuesday September 8th through 15th

Watch

1. ***What is Activism (YouTube Helpful Professor video) Activism explained in 3 minutes***

2. ***https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtGbYi4KtlE***
   Reflections on the Greensboro Lunch Counter
   The 5 Demands (PBS channel)

Read: Change! A Student Guide to Social Action, Student Victories (XI-XII), & P. 1-16.
Start to look at organizations within **Citizen Action of New York *(citizenactionny.org)***

Write: Portfolio Assignment 1
Issue Development: Is your concern, issue, or cause focused on an individual or is it a societal concern? What is the difference? If you can resolve this issue, will it just fix your situation or will it impact a larger community—who will that include?

Watch 2 videos and consider the attitudes of the individuals involved and identify the activity in which they were involved; list at least three key factors that caused them to participate in the social action.
Then write a brief statement describing whether their actions have broadened your understanding of what it means to be involved.

WEEK 3 September 15 through 22

Assignment 2
Meet with classmates to discuss issue that you will be working on
Read Change! A student Guide to Social Action P. 21-25 and 28-37.

Write Portfolio Assignment #2.1 through 2.7

WEEK 4 September 22 through 29

Assignment 3
Movements for Social Change
Campus Protests and Unrest the Gateway for the Common People

Watch

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DNdS-JXrLo
The Kent State Massacre

Consider each documentary: What are your beliefs about the attitudes of the students? In what ways are they similar the students in Greensboro; in what ways are they different?

Read: Markowitz, G. (2004). Educating for Justice: A history of John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Pg 117-137.

WEEK 5 September 29 through October 6

What to do if your group has a plan or does not have a plan
Portfolio #4

Week 6 October 6 through October 13

Tuesday no class
Watch
Five Demands (the film by request, in class viewing)
Five Demands Documentary One to One (CUNY TV)
Group Meetings for Campaign Planning, Timeline and Implementation
Read Change! A student Guide to Social Action P. 44-59
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Week 7 October 13 through October 20

Research –Identify your target audience and/or individuals
Change! A student Guide to Social Action P.60-71
Portfolio #5

Week 8 October 20 through 27

Strategies and Tactics -- Outline campaign and identify dates of activities (Draft for review and discussion with class)

Week 9 October 27 through November 3

Strategies and Tactics – Finalize campaign actions Confirm dates and verify action of each committee member. Make certain that all appropriate letters have been received and gatekeepers have been verified. Identify any possible elements or individuals who might serve or become a hinderance or interfere with plan of action. Collect and Review video recordings made by team members. Review any narratives from journals of team members to date.

Week 10 November 3 through November 10

Campaign Kick Off (This date will vary depending on group calendar)

Week 11 November 10 through November 17

Discussion of strengths and weaknesses in Campaign
Portfolio #6

Week 12 November 17 through November 24

How to get your event to the press

Write the Press release

November 24 through December 1

Thanksgiving Week

Week 13 December 1 through December 8

Holiday Breakfast

Week 14 December 8 through December 15

Report on project result

Week 16 December 15 Final Exam

Writing and Show group video

Final Presentation December 15, 2026