

**Human Issues 404; Section 001**  
**Bridging the Great Divide:**  
**The Achievement Gap in Schools and Society (3 Credits)**  
**Summer 2007 - June 19<sup>th</sup>-August 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**1:30-3:30 p.m. in Library 3**

**Co-Instructors:**

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**Office Hours:**

By appointment

**Course Description:**

The purpose of this interdisciplinary course is to investigate and analyze the construct of achievement, the complexities of the achievement gap that have been well-documented in American education, and the relationship between the gap in education and gaps that have been identified in the world beyond the school. Our inquiry into this *human issue* will be guided by the following questions:

- What is achievement?
- What explains the achievement gap in schools and society?
- How does our understanding of the achievement gap inform how we act to address the achievement gap?

Students will explore conceptions of achievement, the nature of the achievement gap, explanations for its existence, and initiatives attempting to bridge the gap including school-specific, and broader community-based, efforts. Students will examine the value-laden nature of scholarship in terms of defining achievement and framing how the achievement gap is constructed and addressed. Through this exploration, students will construct their own understanding of achievement and the achievement gap. Particular emphasis throughout this course will be placed on community-based, asset development initiatives. Approximately 15-20 hours of work with a community-based organization (outside of class time) is required. Junior or senior standing is a prerequisite for the course. Successful completion of this course satisfies the Human Issues requirement for degree-seeking undergraduates.

**Focus Questions**

In addition to the three guiding questions identified above, the content and learning experiences provided in this seminar will be organized around the following focus questions:

What are the different explanations for the achievement gap and what theoretical perspectives inform different explanations?

What initiatives are being implemented at national, state, and local levels to address the achievement gap?  
How do school-based initiatives compare and contrast with community-based efforts?  
What are the roles and responsibilities of different social institutions and organizations?  
How do we evaluate the success of the initiatives?  
What is the relationship between the achievement gap in schools and larger societal gaps that have been documented particularly regarding issues related to race, class, gender, family, community, and access to higher education?  
How do assumptions, disciplinary perspectives, beliefs, values, and paradigms affect how the concept of achievement, and the achievement gap, is constructed and addressed?

### **Learning Outcomes:**

As a result of this course's educational experiences, students will be able to:

#### **Knowledge:**

- Articulate traditional and holistic definitions of achievement.
- Explain and characterize the nature of the achievement gap as it plays itself out in schools and society.
- Identify, analyze, and draw upon different perspectives and orientations to the causes of the achievement gap and the implications these different perspectives have on solutions.
- Articulate the roles and responsibilities of schools and broader community-based agencies in addressing the achievement of society's youth.
- Discuss the relationship between the specific issues of culture, class, gender, family involvement, and access to education and the achievement gap.
- Develop a more comprehensive understanding of achievement, the achievement gap, and why it exists.

#### **Skills:**

- Develop and apply problem-solving skills to the issue of the achievement gap.
- Utilize traditions of inquiry from different disciplines to describe, critique, and reconstruct the construct of achievement from multiple perspectives.
- Critique, and identify the value-laden nature of current scholarship, on the achievement gap.
- Take an informed, justified stand on fundamental questions related to the achievement gap.
- Conduct inquiry using qualitative research tools of participant observation, interviewing, and document analysis to construct a case study of a community-based program.
- Demonstrate the capacity for informed positive action, on behalf of this human issue, through publicly sharing their learning with interested stakeholders.

### **What Makes This a Human Issues Course?**

The Human Issues Studies Program represents Edgewood's commitment to providing you with a capstone – an opportunity for you, as you prepare to graduate, to pursue focused study on an issue of interest (i.e., achievement and the achievement gap). You will learn about that issue through three different “ways of knowing”: interdisciplinary inquiry, values exploration, and engaged learning. You'll be challenged to integrate your prior learning, passions, and experiences with the experiences of this course to construct a new understanding of achievement.

So what makes this particular course a Human Issues seminar? You may be asking yourself this question. We **hope** you are asking yourself this question! As we start the session, we want to share with you three aspects of the course that distinguish it as a Human Issues course:

First, we will study achievement and the achievement gap through **interdisciplinary inquiry**. In most of your courses, you study a specific subject area. In this course, the issue (rather than the subject area) will frame our study. Since one disciplinary perspective alone cannot explain the achievement gap, we will bring in different disciplines as tools to help us better understand our human issue. In particular, the perspectives of economics, education, sociology, cultural studies, public policy, and community development will be the primary fields of study influencing our learning this session. For example, the social sciences (including sociology, public policy, economics, and cultural studies) can help us define and understand contemporary issues within our community as well as detect patterns, generalizations, and trends in both schools and society. Pairing education with community development allows us to investigate achievement both within and beyond the walls of schooling. Taken together, these different disciplines, or ways of knowing, will be tools that we employ to problem-solve and create a more comprehensive understanding of the human issues questions that provide the framework for the course.

Second, the course will be a vehicle for us to explore, clarify, and challenge our own **values**. Values filter how we understand the world. Values exploration allows us to reach beyond our own perspectives, giving us additional interpretive lenses. In academic study we are often encouraged to be “objective” or to remove ourselves from the content, engaging with it in the third person. In this Human Issues course, values (personal values, Edgewood College values, and societal values) will be front and center as we encourage each other to grapple with questions like the following: Why is this topic of personal and societal significance? How do my life experiences influence how I see issues related to student achievement and gaps in school and society? What are the assumptions I, and others, bring to the study of this human issue? How might this class help clarify and challenge my values? What is the range of value perspectives that exist in the community and what influences those perspectives? How would I like to influence those perspectives? What are the value tensions or conflicts that exist with regards to the achievement gap? The ultimate purpose of exploring such values-related questions is for individuals to

strive for more consistency and integration between belief and action.

Third, our **engaged learning** will take us outside of the walls of the Edgewood College classroom both as individuals and as a class. It is intended that through engagement with community-based agencies that work to enhance student achievement, we will develop a more sophisticated and systemic understanding of the very complex and challenging issues related to achievement and gaps in schools and society. In particular, our work with the community will focus on asset and capacity building models rather than deficit models. Community engagement will also help us integrate both the scholarship of academics and the voices of community members into our work. More details about this engaged learning piece are presented under the course requirements section of the syllabus.

### **Course Readings**

The following types of readings will be required:

- (1) Readings that reflect disciplinary scholarship on the interdisciplinary topic of the achievement gap will be assigned by the instructors and available on reserve. These readings will consist of book chapters and journal articles.
- (2) Each student will be expected to locate readings from the popular press that relate to our human issue in order to integrate scholarly and popular perspectives.
- (3) You will be required to locate and read material specific to your community engagement work that allows you to integrate academic and experiential learning.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **(1) Professional Participation**

**30%**

##### ***a. Attendance and Participation***

Regular attendance and participation are essential because you are part of a classroom community and the total learning environment depends upon the contributions of each individual. Absences must be handled like they would in any professional setting – communicated and planned for in advance. The following attendance policies are in effect for HI 404:

- If you are missing a class, call or e-mail an instructor **in advance** to let us know why.
- Find a partner from whom you can obtain important information and notes. You are responsible for knowing what happened while you were gone.
- If an assignment is due on a day you are absent, it is your responsibility to get it to us on or before that day in order to not be considered late.
- We understand that things come up – “life happens” so to speak. One absence may be made up without having a negative impact on your grade. After the first absence, any absence FOR ANY REASON may have a negative impact on your grade. When you are gone you must, by the following class period, demonstrate to us that you have processed the content and ideas related to the class period you missed.

♣ Note that coming to class late or leaving early will be treated as an absence with two or more episodes equaling one absence.

Participation is expected in both large and small group settings. Each of you is expected to share responsibility, with the instructors, to make class meaningful. You are expected to raise questions, give feedback, share experiences, and be active. You are expected to complete small miscellaneous assignments to fuel class discussions and activities. You may also be asked to lead discussions in small groups about readings or do some peer teaching. Participation is also expected in any outside of class meeting time that is required to complete collaborative work. **NOTE: You need to have and check (at least weekly) an active e-mail account since we may communicate with you over e-mail. You also need to use Blackboard.**

### **Group Agreements**

Please note that while the content and questions of our course can be viewed as interesting, important, and thought-provoking, we also need to respect that they can also be highly personal. What is an academic exercise or requirement to meet for some of us is also a very real part of daily, lived experience for others. As such we need to be highly attuned to the fact that we are all in very different places and come from diverse perspectives regarding the content and questions of our course. We need to be constantly mindful of each other's lenses and perspectives. Thus, the following group agreements will guide our interactions with each other.

### **As a community member of HI 404, I agree to:**

1. Be open and honest
2. Participate fully (at my own comfort level)
3. Speak from personal experience using "I" statements to share thoughts and feelings.
4. Listen respectfully with curiosity and the willingness to learn and grow
5. Share air time and encourage others to participate
6. Suspend judgment; avoid critiquing the experience of others
7. Be fully present
8. Be open to new and different perspectives
9. Take risks; lean into discomfort
10. Respect and maintain confidentiality
11. Assume positive intent; try not to take comments personally
12. Notice and name group dynamics in the moment
13. Name if I feel triggered
14. Have fun and laugh!

(adapted from the work of Vernon Wall and Kathy Obear, Richard Davis, and YWCA)

### **b. Course Readings**

All course readings need to be thoughtfully and thoroughly completed prior to class time on the day for which they are assigned. It is really, really important

that you read on time. In order to facilitate your thoughtful completion of the readings we are asking that you ACTIVELY read by marking or taking notes on the readings and coming prepared with things you want to talk about. Your questions and interpretations will form the basis for our class discussions.

For each day a reading assignment is due, you are to come to class having completed a reading log capturing questions/observations, in writing, drawn from the readings. These assignments can be *neatly* hand-written or word-processed and will be collected. For each reading log, you will develop questions/observations from the following four categories:

- A **clarification question** – identify concepts or ideas that need to be clarified for you
- A **thought question** – create open-ended discussion questions about issues raised in the readings that you see as important and significant
- **Embedded values/assumptions** – identify one or two values or assumptions that are embedded in the perspectives of the author(s) that influence how issues are framed and discussed in the reading(s) and the impact that such assumptions might have on framing issues or implementing action
- **Connections** – identify a connection(s) you observe between issues in the readings and your own personal or community-based experiences, other readings, or other classroom content including discussions

## **(2) Community-Based Project**

**40%**

The broad aim of this class is to explore the ways in which the concept of achievement—and thus, the achievement gap—is manifested both in schools and society. While it is quite common to view student achievement as a school-based human issue, one important goal for our class this summer is to study student achievement as a community responsibility. Readings, class learning experiences, and discussions will inform our understanding of how *schools* define and measure the achievement gap, along with the assumptions that accompany school-based approaches to addressing this gap. Our intent is to juxtapose these approaches with *community-based programs* whose missions also include addressing the issue of achievement.

We have identified four community-based organizations (CBO)/initiatives who have agreed to work with our class this summer: (1) Northport/Packer Community Learning Centers; (2) The Odyssey Project; (3) Girl Neighborhood Power; and (4) Madison School District – Title VII, American Indian Education project. For more detailed descriptions of the community partners, please refer to pages 19-22 of this document. As you work with one of these four partners, you will be asked to complete a case study. In small groups and using the concept of *achievement* as a framework, you will conduct an ethnographic study of the community organization (or a particular initiative) that results in a case study of the organization's origin, mission, funding, programs, accomplishments, impact, etc. The process of developing this case study will likely include interviews with staff and youth, analysis of existing documents and reports, and observation of, or service learning with, programs in action.

More specifically, as you develop this case study of your community partner, you will be applying two lenses. First, how does the partner think about the concept of achievement and the achievement gap – what it is, how to address it, etc.? Second, what assets are most evident in the individuals, associations, and institutions associated with the CBO, and how are those assets being used to promote individual and community development? Class discussions, dialogue journals, and small group work will provide opportunities for you to integrate what you're learning both in and outside the classroom.

Your case study should include the following categories:

- Name of the Community-based Organization
- Brief History and Founders
  - When and why did the organization begin? Who were the founders and what roles did they play? Are the founders still involved? What public policy issues are linked to the founding of the organization? In what ways are these issues still evident?*
- Mission and Vision Statements
  - What is the purpose of the organization? Why do they exist? For whom – who do they serve (population, geographic area)? What are the 3-5 primary things that the organization does to accomplish its mission? What would they like to accomplish? What are they trying to make happen?*
- Staffing and Structure
  - How many staff does the organization have and what are their roles? How do they organize themselves to get the work done? How do they utilize volunteers? Do they have a board of directors? If so, who comprises that board and what is their purpose? What are their sources of funding? In what ways does their funding link to the organization's priorities and mission?*
- Achievement
  - How does the organization define and think about the concept of achievement? Do they see an achievement gap and, if so, what do they think are the root causes of the gap? Of the three achievement gap frameworks that we studied in class, from which one does this organization primarily seem to be operating? How does their understanding of the gap relate to their programs and services? Does the organization use the language of "assets" to talk about those they serve and how they approach their work? How does the organization know whether they are being successful; how do they measure their impact?*
- Assets
  - *What are the assets of the individuals who this organization serves, and how are these assets being leveraged to improve the community?*
  - *What are the assets of the local associations and how are these assets linked to the work of the organization?*
  - *With whom does the organization partner to accomplish its work, and what are the assets of those partners/institutions?*
- Conclusion

- *What is your overall assessment of the role and impact that this organization is having in addressing the achievement gap?*
- *What did your group do to contribute to the work of the organization?*
- *What went well, and what contributed to making this a good experience?*
- *What didn't go well, and what could have been done to avoid problems?*
- *What would you do differently next time?*
- *What plans, if any, do you have for staying connected to this organization?*
- *Finally, how have your definitions/beliefs about "achievement" and "the achievement" gap been expanded, redefined, or reconfirmed through this case study and work with your community partner?*

Through this project, you will come to understand how the achievement gap is being reframed and reconstructed through the work of these community organizations. In the process, together we will develop a more complex, comprehensive, and systemic understanding of the construct of achievement and the role that different institutions, agencies, and people (including ourselves) play in building a more just and equitable society.

### **(3) Blackboard Dialogue Journal**

**30%**

Each of you will be expected to contribute to a dialogue journal that captures your thinking and learning in relation to focus questions that guide the course. Your dialogue journal will be electronic, using Blackboard technology, and created in a base group comprised of approximately four peers and at least one instructor. Each person will contribute a minimum of three entries and five responses to the dialogue journal using the attached schedule. Your writing should integrate your service, class learning activities and discussions, interdisciplinary study, and your reading. This journal will be a place for you to respond to and interact with your peers in the class. See course calendar for specific due dates, but your entries will follow this pattern:

#### **Entry 1:**

You will write a well-developed, essay-like response to focus questions that we provide. This entry will establish a "baseline" of where each person is at the start of the session. You will then read and post at least one Blackboard response to the essays in your base group.

*Here is the prompt for the first dialogue journal entry:*

In approximately three (3) double-spaced, typical font pages, please construct an essay that responds to the following focus questions:

- What is achievement? How do you describe and define it?
- What is the achievement gap?
- What is being done in schools and communities to address the achievement gap?
- To what extent are these efforts successful?

A well-developed essay will pay attention to quality writing standards and include at least a paragraph introduction, one section devoted to each focus question, and a one paragraph conclusion. Completed essays should be posted on the course's Blackboard site under the Discussion Forum section.

#### **Entries 2-5:**

Each person in the base group takes a turn submitting an entry – one per week – around an inquiry question or issue that is emerging for them in the class to date. The person who is framing the entry should write a well-developed, essay



response to their question/issue and post it to Blackboard by Thursday of the assigned week.

By Tuesday of the next week, each of the other students in the base group should post a response, comments, and/or questions using the threaded discussion mechanism. Then when the next person does the entry, she/he should pick up on, expand, and/or add to some aspect of the conversation. To summarize, each person will pose one full-length entry and post a minimum of one response to each of the other entries. We encourage you to go beyond the one response minimum and use this space as a forum to think about and process your learning and experiences from class.

**Entry 6: We provide similar focus questions as to the beginning to get a final read on where students are at the end of class.**

You will write a well-developed, essay response to focus questions that we revisit from the beginning of the semester. You will be asked to share your best thinking around the focus questions as you take a stand on how we, as a society, can best address the achievement gap. The intent of this writing is to document the growth and change in your thinking over time, and identify the critical incidents that have contributed to such learning with particular attention to the human issues dimensions of interdisciplinary inquiry, values exploration, and experiential learning. This final entry will be posted on Blackboard, and you will post at least one response to the final entries in your base group.

*Here is the prompt for the final dialogue journal entry:*

The purpose of this essay is to provide a space for you to document your understanding of our human issue at the conclusion of the course. Go back and read your initial journal entry, review the group dialogue from weeks two through five, and consider your learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Then, in approximately three (3) double-spaced, typical font pages, construct an essay that responds to the following focus questions with an eye toward where your thinking is now as compared to where it was at the beginning of the session. **Explain how interdisciplinary inquiry, values exploration, and engaged learning with your community-based agency have shaped your responses to the focus questions.**

- What is the achievement? How do you describe and define it?
- What is the achievement gap and why does it exist?
- What represents the most promising efforts to address the achievement gap and why?
- Why does this issue matter to you individually and to us as a society?

A well-developed essay will pay attention to quality writing standards and include at least a paragraph of introduction, approximately one paragraph devoted to each focus question, and one paragraph of conclusion. A well-developed essay will also draw explicitly from course content, readings, learning experiences, and discussions. Completed essays should be posted on the course's Blackboard sit under Journal Six in your group's discussion forum.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

The following rubrics will be used to assess and evaluate your learning.

#### **(1) Professionalism**

**30%**

**Unacceptable (**

| <b>C or Below) Acceptable (B or BC) Target (A or AB) Criteria Points Possible Points Earned</b>  |   |  |                            |  |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|--|
| Missed two or more classes, or did not make up absences due to extenuating circumstances.  | Missed one class and or/makes up absences due to extenuating circumstances.   | Attends all classes.   | Attendance 7               |  |
| Limited or no participation, or monopolized class time.  | Good, but perhaps limited range of, contributions (i.e. small versus large group).  | Excellent and varied contributions including offering ideas, raising questions, giving feedback, sharing experiences, etc. that promotes the learning of others.   | Participation 8            |  |
| Limited to no evidence of active reading as shown by lack of understanding of main ideas; infrequent to few contributions to class discussions; surface level, sporadic or undocumented written responses. | Solid evidence of reading as evidenced by responses and questions that show general understanding of course content; complete written responses, and regularly documented discussion questions; regular contributions to class discussions. | Unquestionable active reading as evidenced by consistently thoughtful written responses and discussion questions that are documented in writing; complex understanding of main ideas; and thoughtful, relevant contributions to class discussions. | Readings and Processing 15 |  |

**(2) Community Partner Case Study**

**40%**

**Unacceptable (C or**

| <b>below) Acceptable (B or BC) Target (A or AB) Points Possible Points Earned</b>  |   |  |                             |  |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>Does not fulfill expectations as contracted.</p> <p>Evaluation indicates patterns of being unreliable or undependable.</p> <p>Contribution to the community partner is not evident, or is of unprofessional quality. Fulfills expectations as contracted.</p> <p>Feedback from community partner indicates you are typically professional, reliable, and dependable.</p> <p>Makes recognized contribution to community partner. Exceeds expectations as contracted with community partner. Feedback from community partner indicates you are highly professional, reliable, and dependable.</p> <p>Makes significant contribution to the community partner.</p> | Participation 5   |  |                             |  |
| <p>Conceptual understanding is questionable and represents a narrow range of perspectives. Contains significant misconceptions.</p>  | <p>Demonstrates conceptual understanding that reflects multiple perspectives, but interdisciplinary integration is implied rather than explicit.</p> <p>Minor misconceptions.</p> | <p>Unquestionably demonstrates conceptual understanding that explicitly integrates interdisciplinary perspectives. Free from misconceptions.</p> | Conceptual Understanding 10 |  |
| <p>Understanding remains unchanged over</p>  | Perspectives 10   |  |                             |  |

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| <p>time. Work remains at a surface, or superficial level. . Some evidence of constructing a changed and deepened understanding of the human issue. Work is generally reflective and insightful, but could go into more depth.</p> <p>Unquestionably constructs more complex, nuanced understandings of the human issue. Work is exceptionally reflective, analytical, and insightful.</p>   |   |  |                         |  |
| <p>Integration of community experience, course learning activities, readings, and/or personal ideas is not evident. from your writing. It is difficult to tell that you have been in this particular course! Integration of community experience, course learning activities, readings, and personal ideas is generally present, but could be more explicit. Thoughtfully integrates community experience, with course learning activities, readings, and personal ideas. There is no doubt that you are in this particular course!</p> | <p>Integration 10</p>   |  |                         |  |
| <p>1<sup>st</sup> draft quality with style, organization, and/or technical issues that detract from professional</p>  | <p>Solid writing skills, with minor revisions necessary in order to proudly share your work to professional</p> | <p>Excellent writing skills such that your work can proudly be shared with professional audiences.</p> | <p>Writing Skills 5</p> |  |

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| presentation. | audiences. |  |  |  |
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**(3) Dialogue Journal**

**30%**

|  |   |   |                                    |  |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>Unacceptable (C or below) Acceptable (B or BC) Target (A or AB) Points Possible Points Earned</b></p>  |   |   |                                    |  |
| <p>Does not complete all parts of the assignment, or minimally completes dialogue journal.</p>   | <p>Thoughtfully completes dialogue journal, but could provide more attention or detail to one part.</p> | <p>Thoughtfully makes all contributions to dialogue journal on time.</p>            | <p>Thoroughness 5</p>              |  |
| <p>Conceptual understanding is questionable and/or contains significant misconceptions.</p>  | <p>Demonstrates conceptual understanding with minor misconceptions.</p>                                 | <p>Unquestionably demonstrates conceptual understanding with no misconceptions.</p> | <p>Conceptual Understanding 10</p> |  |
| <p>Ideas remain unchanged over time. Work remains at a surface, or superficial level. Some evidence of constructing a changed and deepened understanding of the human issue. Work is generally reflective and insightful, but could go into more depth. Unquestionably constructs more complex, nuanced understandings of the human issue. Work is exceptionally reflective, analytical, and insightful.</p> | <p>Perspectives 5</p>   |   |                                    |  |
| <p>Integration of community experience, course learning activities, readings, and/or personal ideas is not evident. From</p>   | <p>Integration 5</p>  |   |                                    |  |

|  |  |  |                         |  |
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| <p>your writing it is difficult to tell that you have been in this particular course! Integration of community experience, course learning activities, readings, and personal ideas is generally present, but could be more explicit. Thoughtfully integrates community experience, with course learning activities, readings, and personal ideas. There is no doubt that you are in this particular course!</p> |  |  |                         |  |
| <p>1<sup>st</sup> draft quality with style, organization, and/or technical issues that detract from professional presentation.</p>   | <p>Solid writing skills, with minor revisions necessary in order to proudly share your work to professional audiences.</p> | <p>Excellent writing skills such that your work can proudly be shared with professional audiences.</p> | <p>Writing Skills 5</p> |  |

**FINAL GRADE:** Final grades will be assigned with the following scale:

A = 93-100   AB = 88-92   B = 80-87   BC = 77-79   C = 71-76  
 CD = 67-70   D = 60-66   F = 0-59

**Learning Support Services**

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability, which requires accommodations in this course, please contact Deb Tobin in Learning Support Services, located in the Student Resource Center in DeRicci 206, 663-2281. She will work with you to provide appropriate accommodations, and all information will be kept confidential.

**Learning Support Services:** Learning Support Services, located in the Student Resource Center in DeRicci 206, provides academic support for students. Peer tutoring is available in some courses, and one-on-one assistance in time management, study skills, test-taking skills, and writing skills is offered. Please contact Learning Support Services at 663-2281 for more information. Note that the Writing Lab is open to assist you during the summer.

**Academic Honesty Policy (from Academic Dean)**

As members of a scholarly community dedicated to healthy intellectual development, students and faculty at Edgewood College are expected to share

the responsibility for maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work. Each student should reflect this sense of responsibility toward the community by submitting work that is a product of his or her own effort in a particular course, unless the instructor has directed otherwise. In order to clarify and emphasize its standards for academic honesty, the college has adopted this policy.

The following are examples of violations of standards for academic honesty and are subject to academic sanctions: Cheating on exams, submitting collaborative work as one’s own; falsifying records, achievements, file or laboratory data, or other course work; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting work previously submitted in another course, unless specifically approved by the present instructor; falsifying documents or signing an instructor’s or administrator’s name to any document or form; plagiarism; or aiding another student in any of the above actions.

Students who violate the Academic Honesty Policy will not receive credit for the work related to the violation, and, consequently, may fail the course.

**Provisions for Changes to Syllabus**

The above schedule, policies, and assignments are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.

**Course Schedule**

| <b>Course Meeting Date</b>  | <b>Topics</b>  | <b>Due</b> |
|---|--|------------|
| <b>Week One Change Lives Including Your Own: An Introduction to Human Issues</b>  |  |            |
| 6/19 (T)  | ♦Welcome and Introductions♦ ♦Syllabus and Background♦ ♦Human Issues Dimensions: Interdisciplinarity, Values Exploration, and Community Engagement♦ |            |
| 6/21 (Th) ♦Constructing “Achievement”♦ ♦Constructing “the Gap”♦ ♦Community Partner Orientation♦ ♦Group Agreements♦ -Dialogue Journal Entry #1 |  |            |
| <b>Week Two What You See is What You Get:</b>   |  |            |

**Developing Multiple Perspectives**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>6/26 (T) ♦Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Construct of Achievement♦ ♦Theoretical Orientations to Explain the Achievement<br/>Gap♦ ♦Achievement Gap Initiatives: Linking Perspectives to Action♦ -Community Partner Placement</p> | <p>-Dialogue Journal<br/>Response #1<br/>Reading and Reading Log #1<br/><br/><b>Reading Set #1</b><br/><br/>-Irvine, Chapter 1, The Education of Children Whose Nightmares Come Both Day and Night -Thernstroms, Chapter 7, Schools that Work - Rothstein, To Improve Student Learning: Ask the Right Questions - Ladson-Billings, Chapter 2, Does Culture Matter?</p> |
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|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>6/28 (Th) ♦Case Study Assignment Overview♦ ♦Methodology Workshop♦ -Initial Community Partner Meeting by the End of this Week -Dialogue Journal Entry #2 -Reading and Reading Log #2</p> | <p><b>Reading Set #2</b><br/>-Tips on Doing Field Research: A How-To Guide on Participant Observation</p> |
|--|---|

**Week Three Beyond the Walls of Edgewood: Launching Community Partnerships**

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| <p>7/3 (T) NO CLASS MEETING ♦Community Partner Connections♦ -Dialogue Journal Response #2</p> |
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| <p>7/5 (Th) NO CLASS MEETING ♦Community Partner Connections♦ -Dialogue Journal Entry #3</p> |
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**Week Four Cultural Contexts: Race, Class, Gender and Student Achievement**

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|---|--|
| <p>7/10 (T) ♦Cultural Identity and Connection♦ ♦Investigating Difference, Power, and Privilege♦ ♦Developing Intercultural Sensitivity and Humility♦ -Dialogue Journal Response #3</p> | <p>-Reading and Reading Log #3<br/><br/><b>Reading Set #3</b><br/><br/>-Reitenauer, et al. Chapter 5, Creating Cultural Connections - Gage, Chapter 3, Listening to the Voices of African American Males - Barone, Ways of Being at Risk: The Case of Billy Charles Barnett - Hagendorn and Tierney, Cultural Capital and the Struggle for Educational Equity -Chronicle of Higher Education, What Research Says About Race-Linked Barriers to Achievement</p> |
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| <p>7/12 (Th) ♦Cultural Contexts: Core Concepts♦ ♦Community Connection: Percy Brown,</p> |
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Minority Student Service  
Coordinator, Madison Memorial  
High School ♦ -Dialogue Journal  
Entry #4

**Week Five Asset-Based  
Approaches: Families,  
Caregivers, Community  
and Achievement**

7/17 (T) ♦Asset vs. Deficit  
Orientations to  
Achievement♦ ♦Asset  
Mapping♦ -Dialogue Journal  
Response #4 -Reading and  
Reading Log #4 **Reading Set  
#4**

-Kretzmann and McKnight, Assets-  
Based Community Development -  
Laueau, Chapter 12, The Power and  
Limits of Social Class -Jun and  
Colyar, Chapter 9, Parental  
Guidance Suggested -Asset Article

7/19 (Th) ♦Family  
Involvement and  
Achievement♦ ♦Community  
Connection: Rev. Carmen  
Porco, Director of  
Northport/Packers Apartments  
and Community Center♦ -  
Dialogue Journal Entry #5

**Week Six Beyond K-12:  
Access to Higher  
Education and  
Achievement**

7/24 (T)

♦Class-Community Integration  
Activity♦ ♦Understanding  
Access: Conceptions and  
Misconceptions♦ ♦Pathways to  
College Activity♦

-Dialogue Journal Response  
#5

-Reading and Questions #5

**Reading Set #5**

-Schmidt, What Color is an A? -  
Lewis, et al, Working-Class  
Students Speak Out -Sternberg,  
Finding Students Who Are Wise,  
Practical, and Creative -Adelman,  
Do We Really Have a College Access  
Problem? -Oakes, et al, Chapter 5,  
The Social Construction of College  
Access

7/26 (Th) ♦Community  
Connection: Emily Auerbach,  
Director of UW Madison  
Odyssey Humanities Project and  
Odyssey Students Denise  
Maddox, Annette Bland, and  
Ella-Oroki Rice♦ ♦Case Study  
Presentation Planning Time♦ -  
Final Dialogue Journal Entry  
#6

**Week Seven Putting It All  
Together: Sharing the  
Fruits of Integration**

7/31 (T) ♦Presentation of Case  
Studies♦ -Girl Neighborhood

Power -Title VII: American  
Indian Education -Case Study  
Write Up due 7/30 by 5:00  
p.m. -Final Dialogue Journal  
Response #6

8/2 (Th) ♦Presentation of Case  
Studies♦ -Odyssey Project -  
Northport/Packers Community  
Center

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Madison's Girl Neighborhood Power initiative provides girls ages 9-14 with the opportunities and support they need to become confident skilled young women through a comprehensive approach including leadership, community service, health education and career development. Girl Neighborhood Power uses the power of youth, family and the community to strengthen resilience, build skills, and provide opportunities, so that girls make responsible choices and reach their highest aspirations.

Girl Neighborhood Power provides daily after school activities and evening activities including community service projects, exercise, health education, discussion/support sessions, special workshops, field trips to job sites with non-traditional career opportunities, and special weekend family activities. Over 250 girls participate on an annual basis with a daily average participation of 60 girls.  
(From [www.madison.com](http://www.madison.com))

This Summer 2007, Girl Neighborhood Power will run programming from July 9- August 17. There are several possible ways for you to get involved with GNP to learn more about the program, interact with program leaders and participants, and offer something of value. Here are a few possible examples:

- Participate with GNP's Girl's Council, a subset of GNP participants, who provide leadership and engage in projects that meet program goals. You could take part in a reciprocal teaching and learning experience where you learn from the work of Girl's Council and they in turn learn from you.
- Learn about and document the school-based experiences of GNP participants. Young girls often have much to say about how they experience school and their interactions with other youth and adults in formal school settings. There are rich possibilities to learn their perspectives, engage in research related to their experiences, and even develop learning

experiences to empower girls to process and negotiate their experiences.

- Get involved with an ongoing priority of GNP. One example of this is their current initiative to combat youth and teen obesity through education and the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. The girls currently have developed fundamental knowledge and experiences. Perhaps you could help them take that to the next level?
- GNP girls have many talents and interests in art, music, performance, poetry, etc. They are working to showcase the creative talent of Madison youth in a multicultural celebration that will take place later in August. Working with girls around the planning and production of this event is yet another possibility.

An initial meeting with Sara Staszak [sstaszak@ATWOODCC.org] during the week of June 25<sup>th</sup> will introduce you to the possibilities that GNP has to offer.

## Title VII - Indian Education

### Description and Goal

Title VII Indian Education is a federal project designed to provide eligible Native American students with tutoring, cultural enrichment, and other services designed to meet the "culturally related academic needs" of AI/AN students.

All Native American Students in the Madison Metropolitan School District will be academically successful and meet the district's criteria for proficiency in the areas of Language Arts & Math, as well as have access to cultural enrichment activities and opportunities.

- Assist Native American students and their families in finding school and community resources for academic student success.
- Provide afterschool academic and cultural programs in partnership with school and community agencies.

### Programs

- Tutoring assistance partnerships (Edgewood College, MATC, AISES, Indigenous Law Students, VISTA project)
- Monthly Parent Advisory Committee Meetings
- 6th-12th grade youth student groups
- AISES (American Indian Science and Engineering Society)
- Cultural Activities: after school enrichment clubs at some elementary schools (year-round), Mid-Winter Gathering (December), Fall Feast (October), Annual end of year "Honoring Children" pow-wow (June)

(FROM MMSD Website - <http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/tnl/titlevii/programs.html>)

This Summer 2007, Madison Metropolitan School District's Title VII, Indian Education, has work to be accomplished and can use your assistance! There are several possible ways for you to get involved with Title VII to learn more about the program, interact with program leaders and participants, and offer something of value. Here are a few possible examples:

- Assist with web page updating and development
- Help redesign a program guide to increase emphasis on culturally responsive teaching and learning.
- Contact and interview parents to learn more about their child's/childrens early health history

Northport Community Learning Center  
&  
Packer Community Learning Center

The Northport and Packer Community Learning Centers are unique, place-based community centers that emphasize holistic education and empowerment of those whom they serve. Located on the northeast side of Madison, they engage closely with children, youth, and adults from the Northport Apartments and the Packers Townhouses, in addition to others who commute to the centers to participate in programs and activities. Unique features of these centers include their location (located directly where the residents live), their innovative and development programming, their significant partnerships, and their commitment to hiring as staff those who live there. In particular, these CLCs host the PeoplePrep Program, a distinct college preparatory program offered in collaboration with UW-Madison. Northport CLC is directed by Pat Steele and Packer CLC is directed by Jacki Thomas. Both of these women are long-time residents of the neighbor and dynamic individuals and leaders.

Those of you who choose to work with one of these CLCs will be expected to commit approximately two hours each week to working with one of the programs/initiatives. Northport CLC activities include Arts and Crafts; Pottery Club; Children's Garden; Spanish/Multicultural Club; Pic Movie Club; and Talent Club. Particular needs exist in the areas of multicultural club, math assistance (making math fun), and videotaping/editing. Packer CLC activities include the Pod Squad (audio-visual simulation, community stories and radio; technology projects); crafts, and cultural exploration. Particular needs/opportunities exist with Pod Squad. In addition, both CLCs offer opportunities in the late afternoon and early evening in computer labs.

An initial meeting with Jacki and Pat will introduce you to the organizations and assist you in determining the ways in which you might meaningfully engaged with the CLCs. Jacki and Pat reserve Fridays for planning and administrative work, and they both suggested that those would be the best days for face-to-face meetings with you for purposes of exploring questions and ideas related to your experience there and completion of your assigned case study. Also, although they have pre-established

summer programs in which you can assist, they both are open to other ideas for ways that you could contribute to their programs.

The Odyssey Project is a nine-month introductory college humanities course for adults facing economic barriers to higher education. Through demanding studies and lively classroom discussions, this weekly six-credit UW course in the humanities helps students find a voice and sense of empowerment. The Odyssey Project was inspired by the work of Earl Shorris, who received the Presidential Humanities medal for demonstrating that the gateway out of poverty and disenfranchisement could come through exposure to philosophy, literature, art, and American history.

Launched in Fall 2003, this initiative is directed by Dr. Emily Auerbach and made possible by partnerships with many UW campus, community, and state organizations. Each year approximately 24 students are provided with free tuition, books, and childcare as they actively explore great works of Plato, Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Thomas Jefferson, Henry David Thoreau, Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes, and many others. Graduates report life-transforming changes (see [www.odyssey.wisc.edu](http://www.odyssey.wisc.edu)).

Although The Odyssey Project course is most active during the academic year, opportunities exist during the summer months for obtaining a deep understanding of this program and contributing to its efforts. For those of you choosing to work with Emily, the most likely project will be the following:

- A need exists for developing profiles of Odyssey alumni. One project would involve interviewing (and hopefully videotaping) some of these alumni to understand what they're doing now, what impact Odyssey has had on them, whether they've continued their education (why or why not), what students have been helped the most by the program and why, etc. Results of these interviews would be documented and reported in a profile format.

Other potential projects may include one of the following:

- The Odyssey Project now has over 100 graduates. Given that a physical "campus" doesn't exist, one challenge is to think of ways to keep these graduates connected when you aren't in the same physical space. Another project idea would involve researching and presenting findings on models and strategies for responding to this challenge. It may also include exploring ways in which promotion of the program can reach those individuals who could most benefit from participation in it.
- Assisting with the update of the Odyssey website
- Some other effort mutually agreed upon by you and Emily.

You will meet with Emily sometime during the week of June 25<sup>th</sup>. Prior to that meeting, you will need to review (thoroughly) the Project website ([www.odyssey.wisc.edu](http://www.odyssey.wisc.edu)) and other background

materials provided by the instructors.