Honors 200
Honors for Social Change

Instructor:
Dr. Ryan Alaniz
(Sociology)
Phone:
756-6261
Email:
ralaniz@calpoly.edu
Office Hours: T/R 7-9am
W by appointment
Office Location:
47-13F
Course Time and Place:
Tuesday 1:10-2pm
Bldg 53-201

Required Texts:
Readings listed as “Polylearn” can be found on the course polylearn site.
Instructions for accessing the site are as follows:
First, log on to: www.mycalpoly.edu
Search for our course by name and number. You will not be able to log on unless you are formally registered for the course.

Course Description
In the song Revolution John Lennon noted that “We all want to change the world.” Yet, how does significant change happen? The goal of Honors 200, Honors for Social Change, is to teach students how to deconstruct the complexity of social problems, how to critically examine the benefits and drawbacks of previous social change efforts, and to think innovatively about how to affect change in the future. Each student will choose a group based on similar interest in a particular local social problem. Over the course of the quarter, we will be utilizing social science theories and development strategies to define each group’s problem and offer creative and plausible solutions. Groups will also be encouraged to work with community partners to identify, research, and implement projects by the end of the class.

Course Pedagogy
The pedagogy of the course will be based on a Freirian approach (Freire 1983) and learn by doing philosophy. Freirian pedagogy encourages problem-solving learning through student interaction and discussion. In this system, knowledge is not meant to be memorized but rather wrestled with internally in order for a student to claim it as her own. The Cal Poly learn by doing philosophy will also be implemented. The students will be required to live social problems they choose in order to empathize with those who are suffering from the issue. Along with the experience, students will be required to meet with
and discuss problems with community members who are currently living through the challenge or have survived the problem. Combined, students will have a holistic educational experience through interaction, discussion, practice, and connection with community. All of these experiences align well with the recent strategic plan set forth during the WASC evaluation by Cal Poly administration (Cal Poly 2012).

Since Honors courses by their very nature are interdisciplinary, tackling issues will also force students out of their disciplinary silos and to wrestle with the issues from different perspectives. It is rare for an engineering student and a liberal arts student to investigate a problem together and utilize each perspective’s strength to create a more complete solution. This cross-pollination of problem-solving will provide broader and more holistic knowledge creation. Additionally, the problems investigated cannot be understood without taking into account broader social, economic, and historic forces, which will be discussed in class and through readings. Finally, students will also be able to grow in their own discipline. In small groups each student may be the only representative of their major and will necessarily need to share their disciplinary perspective with others.

**Learning Goals and Outcomes**
As noted earlier, the learning goals attempt to provide students with a holistic, collaborative, and interdisciplinary understanding and approach to the problem solving of social issues.

By the end of the Honors 200 course, students will:

1. Think critically and creatively
2. Communicate effectively
3. Work productively as individuals and in groups
4. Use their knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society
5. Demonstrate an understanding of relationships between diversity, inequality, and social, economic, and political power both in the United States and globally
6. Consider perspectives of diverse groups when making decisions
7. Explain how natural, economic, and social systems interact to foster or prevent sustainability
8. Analyze and explain local, national, and global sustainability using a multidisciplinary approach

These learning goals will be evaluated through a final product (research paper) as well as reflection papers discussing the various topics of the course.

**Course Requirements**

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage of the Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentations</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Paper or project</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day in the Life</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual reflection paper</td>
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**Participation and Attendance**
Attendance is a necessary part of this class.

**Everyone will be expected to participate equally and often.** I have three goals in having students participate: to learn from one another, to be able to articulate clearly to others sociological theory via their experience, and to build confidence in speaking their opinion publicly. Effort is more important than right answers.
Readings—do them. I have chosen to go for depth rather than breadth so time should not be an issue. I recommend doing the reading and making notes in the margin, then going back later that day or the next day and reviewing the reading. This will help you “set” the information in your memory. These notes may also be useful as a reference for later classes or work.

Assignments
All assignments will be turned in on Polylearn unless otherwise noted. All assignments should be in PDF format. No late assignments will be accepted.

Day In the Life (DITL)
Please see Polylearn for further details.
You are required to write a reflection paper on your day in the life experience connecting it to class concepts and issues.

Group Presentation
Each group will present their findings on the final class period. Please see polylearn for further details.

Group Paper
The final group paper will be due during finals week. Please see polylearn for further details.

Other Issues
Late and Make up policy: Tardiness is not accepted in other work environments and will not be accepted in this class. Late homework and papers will not be accepted unless there is documented illness/other emergency. If it is an emergency, please see me individually. Homework will only be accepted as an upload on polylearn.

Incompletes: No incompletes will be given unless you have a prior written agreement with me and will only be given out in rare situations with extenuating circumstances present.

Email: The simplicity of writing emails, I believe, has encouraged students to email their professor at every whim. I received dozens of emails last quarter in which the answer could have been found in the syllabus, from a classmate, during class, or during office hours. Please only email me if it is critically urgent.

Disabilities: It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. I encourage you to contact me to discuss any individual needs for accommodations. The sooner you do the better.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Theme</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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| 1    | 4-1   | Introduction and Review
Create groups                                                                                | Freire Ch. 1                 | Choose groups                                    |
| 2    | 4-8   | What is the problem? Is it really a problem?
Defining Social Problems                                                                  | Your chosen article          | Upload 1 article per person concerning problem/solution |
| 3    | 4-15  | How have theorist and survivors defined this problem in the past?
Students will meet with survivors                                                         | Read for your bibliography   |                                                  |
| 4    | 4-22  | What are the root causes of the problem?
Historical Context, colonialism, capitalism, education, discrimination                   | Read for your bibliography   |                                                  |
| 5    | 4-29  | What are the proximate causes of the problem? How is the problem maintained by the larger system?
Organizations, institutions, relationships, support                                      | Read for your bibliography   |                                                  |
| 6    | 5-6   | How does social change happen?
Sociological and Philosophical theories, scale, time, actors, motivations                | Jesus, MLK, Gandhi, Mother Theresa and Scholars |                                                  |
| 7    | 5-13  | How do I affect change?
Experiential Learning, empathy                                                            | TBD (depending on the problem) | Bring in examples of social change activities currently happening |
| 8    | 5-20  | What are current solutions to the problem? Are they sustainable?
Who, What, How, is                                                                        | Alaniz “Conscientious Gringo” | Week in the Life Reflection Due                  |
| 9    | 5-27  | No Class                                                                        | TBD (depending on the problem) |                                                  |
| 10   | 6-3   | What are our creative solutions?
Review of Course                                                                            | TBD (depending on the problem) |                                                  |
| 11   | 6-10  | Finals week                                                                    |                              | Final Presentations due Final Paper due             |