

Human Diversity, Power and Opportunity in Social Institutions (summary of comments)**STUDENT LEARNING****1. What are the most valuable things you have gained from this course? (Possibilities may range from acquisition of very concrete skills or knowledge to changes in perspective or ways of thinking.)**

I think the most valuable thing I gained was the knowledge of how discrimination/power/privilege is real and prevalent, along with how I can try to counter it when I teach.

Knowledge about how social injustice plays out in schools. How race, economic class, gender, linguistics, create privilege with differences in each, and then how many differences altogether puts one at a overall disadvantage or disadvantages among fellow classmates.

The most valuable thing I gained from this course is a great deal of terms to express my views and experiences (social reproduction, structure vs. agency, resistance theory...) in a more academic way. I have also gained a greater academic understanding of many of the issues that I have dealt with my whole life (White privilege, cultural capital...). Though there was not a whole lot that was revolutionary for me, witnessing others begin to understand the concepts in this course, was very encouraging to me.

- The way I look at people who are different from me. I was never mean to them, but would always subconsciously stick my nose up at them.
- recognizing that differences aren't (always) bad.
- Methods for trying to deal with children of different race, social class, etc...

The application of ideas that I was already knowledgeable about to real life situations and how it affects my life and future career in teaching.

COURSE ACTIVITIES**2a. What specific course activities and materials did you find most valuable? (Consider lectures, section discussions, case studies, guest speakers, readings, field activities, written assignments, videos, feedback from the instructor(s), etc.) How did these activities or materials help you to learn?**

Service learning project, no better way than actually going into the field. Power points sum everything up. Funding exercises; shows what admin. & board must go through and choose.

I think the most helpful part was the class lectures, mini lectures & the videos. It really helps me when I see material in a real life situation.

I found that the most effective teaching tools were the activities and the case studies, specifically the videos. They brought the abstract, distant, and sometimes disconnected themes and ideas from the readings down to earth and provided a better understanding of how the issues function in the real world.

- The activities made us like what we were doing, and then we found out how it was connected to our lecture that day. I liked the funding activity, the “step” activity, card game with different rules, and pretty much all the activities.
- I liked the quick writes because they introduced us to our lessons.

The activities that helped me the most were the small group activities. I felt less afraid to discuss my ideas and opinions to a smaller group of people. Being in the smaller groups also made it easier to ask questions and discuss the readings.

2b. In what ways does this course introduce and encourage consideration of diversity and/or diverse perspectives? (Consider content and process.)

It was a constant theme...it forced you to think about it and in turn deal with it.

- The material
- The presentation
- The requirements

Becoming more aware of how these factors affect a student’s learning, encourage me to work hard as a teacher to break these barriers in my classroom.

This course promotes a dialogue about many issues that are avoided in other classes, forcing many of the diverse perspectives that aren’t often heard into the open. I felt that this, above anything else, was the defining feature of the course.

Everything. I do not remember a day where we didn’t talk about how people have differences. We would talk about it through discussions, quick writes, activities and writing ideas on the board.

Forces you to apply the material to real life teaching situations; students in class come from different upbringings- by learning about each other we learned to battle misconceptions.

INSTRUCTOR(S)

3a. In what ways was the instructor most effective and why?

Used many different methods of teaching (videos, groups, lecture, activities...) this helped me as a multi-intelligence learner to grasp concepts that I may not have gotten out of a lecture.

Working to gain knowledge about the subjects and be knowledgeable about the different areas. Always learning! Transparent teaching.

By going deep in meaning in her lectures. She made sure the class completely understood all terms used in class.

Connects with students, not afraid to share ideas/feelings/experiences with class to help them learn.

Our in class discussions were very valuable. She was also very informative and passionate about the information she taught.

Dr. Carter knows many of the issues we discussed (particularly racial issues) inside and out, and demonstrates a clear opinion of how the various issues affect schools and other systems. She was very open about what she thought, and attempted to create a safe environment for us to discuss issues which are normally off-limits.

- She really knew what she was talking about.
- She always tried to look deeper and ask us “why?” and other questions to make us think from different perspectives.

INSTRUCTOR(S) continued

3b. What recommendations would you make to the instructor to strengthen his or her teaching and/or make the course more valuable? (Consider content, materials, activities, assignments that should be dropped or added, grading procedures, amount and kind of feedback, as well as changes in instructor behavior.)

Make final Presentation/Paper worth more to reflect amount of work.

Reduce amount of readings per subject of week to allow more reflection upon reading instead of less reflection upon more readings.

While I wholeheartedly agree with nearly everything that was presented in the course, the information was presented as absolute, which it clearly is not since there are a number of people that wholeheartedly disagree with it. Many of the issues are split down political lines of liberal/conservative, but the conservative view was never argued, and hardly ever presented.

- The final is way too much to do with paper and project.
- Be more open to other students ideas.
- I liked the videos.
- We can see your expressions on your face.
- Maybe make some “reading questions” mandatory so people are forced to think about it.

- more field activities

ADVICE TO STUDENTS

- 4. To help prospective students choose wisely, what advice would you give to students who are thinking of taking this course (about its level, the amount of work required, any prior training needed, ways to get the most out of the course, etc.)?**

Keep an open mind, good to take even if they're not going to become a teacher.

Take it, just know going into that you have to work, but that's a good thing. Do the readings, and do the service learning project for you not the paper you have to write about it...get into the experience.

That if education is a subject you are serious about possibly pursuing, this class will provide a general overview of what one will likely face from their students, fellow teachers, class rooms, and education all around. The problems of inequalities are revealed to show what issues a teacher will face.

The class was one of the most challenging classes I've had at MSU, but its been the most informative. There is a heavy work load, but its worth it in the end. I highly recommend taking Dr. Carter's section.

This course is far more involved than most students expect. I wasn't necessarily misled about the content and workload; I had little expectations whatsoever when I signed up for the course. I do not suggest this to be an education major's first education course, as it can be very disarming at times and isn't necessarily representative of what being a teacher will really be like (unless of course it's intended to weed out the squeamish ones...in which case, I strongly suggest it).

Be prepared to read a lot. Aside from the tedious overwhelming amount of readings, this class can change your life, or at the very least your perspectives and your future teaching methodology/pedagogy.

- 1) Be prepared to do a lot of reading. It is necessary to write a good paper.
- 2) Know how to write a good paper.
- 3) Express your opinion and try to learn the views of others' to get the most out of class.
- 4) Be open-minded!!