

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION (SJE)

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In the past decade there has been a tremendous demographic shift in the U.S. population with unprecedented growth among communities of color. In turn, this growth among communities of color has continued to bring rich cultural wealth and knowledge bases to American society. Unfortunately, these rich cultural traditions and assets have met with an assimilationist response as opposed to an inclusionary perspective, emerging from outdated ideologies and paradigms which promote and sustain white privilege and male privilege that continue to prevail greatly in the areas of politics, everyday life, and of course, education. As a result, students of color, like myself, experience disparate treatment within the educational system. Even though I resist each day and continue the battle against the hegemonic ideologies that are built to oppress me, I still trip over the lingering effects of that internalized racism and the institutional racism around me.

In large part due to my experiences not only in the educational system but also as a member of our society, I entered the University of Utah seeking an Ethnic Studies major. Unfortunately the University of Utah does not offer an Ethnic Studies major. Regrettably I lost a lot of time exploring other majors, which I did not feel passionate about and which didn't reflect my experiences. Existing majors do not adequately address the issues of youth, education, oppression, identity and society through a lens of social justice, in ways that can help one to critically analyze our educational system and create ways to establish equity. Therefore it is impossible for me to gain the necessary tools through any established major or combination of majors currently available.

In the past few years my peers had informally told me about the BUS degree. With their help and the help of a mentor, we have created the Social Justice Education (SJE) Baccalaureate Degree. Overall, the Social Justice Education Degree combines ethnic studies with educational studies, humanities, and the social sciences. I have borrowed and slightly changed the methods

of my peers in order to cluster the courses. It is important to note that although these classes have been divided into clusters, a lot of the courses overlap into different clusters.

The Social Justice Education Degree is separated into a few different sections. I consider the core of the major the *Introduction to Ethnic Studies* course. This course provides foundational ideas relied upon and studied throughout the rest of the major. Issues such as racism, sexism, and heterosexism are introduced. For my Experiences classes I've chosen the African American Experience, and Chicana/o experiences courses. I have been working and I will continue to work with these two communities in the future. Thus, these courses will help me obtain knowledge about how history has impacted these two communities as well as issues that continue to oppress them. I thought these classes were also important because they tell stories of struggle and resistance of communities that were and continue to be marginalized, especially in our educational system. Knowing the history of both communities is crucial for further research and for new school programs.

The next cluster is the Social Justice Education Foundations, which use the understandings of the above courses and explicitly apply them to an educational context. Theories, praxis, and pedagogies are all examined in the pursuit to make equitable educational programs. These classes also help one become a critical thinker and to know how to apply experiences in to the educational system. It's important to notice that these classes are meant to prepare one for graduate school and research, thus these courses are highly challenging.

This next group of courses focuses on psychosocial issues. These are courses that will help me to better understand the experiences of people of color and the impact of one's culture in attempts to create one's identity. The second to last cluster are the Comparative courses, which analyze the current situation that communities of color are facing in our society in comparison to each other. These classes will also provide a way to look at these groups collectively;

furthermore, I will be able to examine the similarity in the struggles that people of color are currently facing.

The last course in the SJE major is the standard senior thesis. As of now my senior thesis will focus on an aspect of youth and education. I want to tell the stories of those who are oppressed, specifically stories of student resistance in relation to education. I intend to conduct an ethnographic qualitative study of a mentoring program in a local high school, which focuses on working with students from underserved populations. I would like to explore how the mentoring program evolves in relation to the students and which mentoring methods seem to work best. I would also like to observe how students describe their negotiation of and interactions within the educational system and observe the different methods students utilize to resist oppressive ideologies within the school setting.

More than anything, I hope to help inspire youth to become more conscious and take part in social change. I would also like to begin to develop strategies which help eliminate the power battles that are typically present in schools, discovering methods which create meaningful relationships with students that do not restrict them from exploring different dimensions of their identity. My plans are evolving and will change accordingly as I gather observations of the mentoring program.

If accepted I believe that the Social Justice Education Degree will provide me with a unique educational experience. After graduation I plan to attend graduate school. More specifically I want to complete a graduate degree in Education, Leadership and Policy, or Education Culture and Society. In the future I want to become a public school counselor or work in administration. Whether in K-12 or higher education, I will not discard the possibility of obtaining a teaching license, because that is another option that I have in mind. No matter what I do, my intent is to further understand how educational inequities can be transformed and eradicated to empower not only youth but people of color as a whole.

MAJOR-EMPHASIS COURSES

| CODE | COURSE NUMBER & TITLE | | DEPARTMENT | CREDIT HOURS | LOCUS | |
|------|-----------------------|--|------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| + | 2500 | Intro to Ethnic Studies | ETHNC | 3 | CORE | |
| + | 2560 | Chicano/a Experience | ETHNC | 3 | Community, Experience, and Resistance | |
| + | 2550 | African American Experience | ETHNC | 3 | | |
| | 2590 | Pacific Islander Experiences | ETHNC | 3 | | |
| + | 3100 | Protest and Movements | GNDR | 3 | | |
| | 4600 | US Women to 1870 | GNDR | 3 | | |
| | 3365 | Ethnic Minorities in America | ETHNC | 3 | | |
| | 4330 | Chicana/o Culture Through Film | ETHNC | 3 | | |
| | 5830 | Chicana Feminist Theories | ETHNC | 3 | | |
| + | 1010 | Intro to Teaching | T & L | 3 | | Social Justice Education Foundation |
| IP | 3150 | Intro to Multicultural Ed | ECS | 3 | | |
| + | 4111 | School and Society | ECS | 3 | | |
| + | 1010 | Introduction to Teaching | T & L | 3 | | |
| | 5709 | Family School Partnership | ECS | 3 | | |
| + | 1010 | Intro to Sociology | SOC | 4 | Psychosocial Emphasis | |
| | 3041 | Sociology of Rock and Roll | SOC | 3 | | |
| | 3592 | Internship | SOC | 6 | | |
| IP | 3381 | Exploring Social Inequality Through Music and Film | SOC | 3 | | |
| + | 3920 | Education Equity: Race Class and Gender | ETHNC | 1 | Contemporary Issues in Social Justice | |
| + | 3920 | Cross Cultural Leadership | ETHNC | 1 | | |
| | 3520 | Asian Pacific American Contemporary Issues | ETHNC | 3 | | |
| + | 4670 | Specialty Reporting | COMM | 4 | | |
| IP | 5860 | Youth Culture and Identity | ETHNC | 3 | | |

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|----|------|---------------------------------------|--------|---|--|
| IP | 3700 | Honors Think Tank (Social Change) | HONORS | 3 | |
| | 3180 | Indian, Land, Water, and Resources | ETHNC | 3 | |
| IP | 3700 | Honors Think Tank (Social Change) | HONORS | 3 | |
| | 5810 | Independent Study | ETHNC | 3 | |

TOTAL MAJOR-EMPHASIS CREDIT HOURS: 82

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS ABOVE THE 4000 LEVEL: 25

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

| CODE | COURSE NUMBER & TITLE | | DEPARTMENT | CREDIT HOURS | FULFILLS |
|------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------|--------------|----------------|
| | | | | | |
| + | 1010 | Introduction to Music | MUSIC | 3 | Fine Arts |
| + | 1033 | Acting 1 | THEAT | 3 | |
| + | 2560 | Chicano/a Experiences | ETHNC | 3 | Humanities |
| + | 2550 | African American Experiences | ETHNC | 3 | |
| + | 1210 | Principles of Biology | BIO | 4 | Science |
| + | 1020 | Nutrition and Health | NUTR | 3 | |
| + | 2500 | Intro to Ethnic Studies | ETHNC | 3 | Social Science |
| + | 3600 | Geography of Utah | GEOG | 3 | |
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|---|------|----------------------|------|---|------------------|
| + | 1050 | College Algebra | MATH | 4 | Mathematics (QA) |
| | 1040 | Intro Stat Thinking | MATH | 3 | Mathematics (QB) |
| | | | | | |
| + | 2010 | Intermediate Writing | WRTG | 3 | Writing |

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

| CODE | COURSE NUMBER & TITLE | | DEPARTMENT | CREDIT HOURS | FULFILLS |
|------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| + | 2212 | American Institutions | HONORS | 3 | American Institutions |
| + | 4670 | Specialty Reporting | COMM | 4 | Upper Writing |
| + | 2500 | Intro to Ethnic Studies | ETHNC | 3 | Diversity |
| + | 3060 | Advance Grammar and Composition | SPAN | 3 | B.A. Requirement |

OTHER COURSE WORK

| CODE | COURSE NUMBER & TITLE | | DEPARTMENT | CREDIT HOURS |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| + | 3050 | Community Health Issues | H EDU | 3 |
| + | 1060 | Trig | MATH | 2 |
| + | 2100 | Intro to International Relations | POL S | 3 |

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|---|------|--------------------|------|---|
| + | 1010 | Intro to Sociology | SOC | 4 |
| + | 1010 | Intro to Writing | WRTG | 3 |

TOTAL HOURS OF COURSES BY COLLEGE:

Education – 15

Fine Arts – 6

Health – 3

Humanities – 13

Science – 7

Math – 9

Social and Behavioral Science – 28

Undergraduate Studies – 9

Ethnic Studies – 35

TOTAL COURSE HOURS YET TO BE COMPLETED: 39

TOTAL UPPER-DIVISION HOURS (3000 AND ABOVE): 68

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS FOR GRADUATION: 125

Because of the nature of the Ethnic Studies Program, the actual totals for the above colleges may vary.