CRP3850/5850: Fostering Diversity in Organizations

Spring 2015
318 Sibley Hall
Mondays, 2:30-4:25

Instructor: Yael Levitte, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity
122 Day Hall, yael.levitte@cornell.edu, 255-5489

Office Hours: By appointment (e-mail me).

Grading: SU/Letter, 2 credit hours

Overview:
This class will advance students’ theoretical, practical, and experiential understanding of diversity and inclusion in organizations. Building on the instructor’s last six years of working to foster diversity at Cornell, we will try to balance readings with applied projects to maintain a critical and change-oriented focus. The course will address how diversity may be conceptualized in organizational life, examining its various aspects, such as race, gender, physical ability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, as well as the intersectionality between these aspects. Students will have the opportunity to explore practices and policies that can be implemented to foster inclusion and full engagements of members of an organization. The class will also touch on some skills that foster inclusion. For the final project, students will have a choice of either working with an organization to identify its current accomplishments in building inclusive planning or work environments or working with organizations that are seeking to broaden their reach and engage a more diverse audience (e.g. in a comprehensive planning process). Example of possible projects may be exploring how a city’s transportation department engages low income communities to increase access, or collaborate with a unit at Cornell to come up with an initiative that will increase its target population engagement/inclusion.

Course Requirements:

Class attendance: you are expected to attend every class, and actively participate in discussions. You are graded for your active participation.

Course readings (available on blackboard and online journals):
See reading list below

Grading
(a) Participation (10%) – including reading, engaging in class.
(b) Journal entries (weekly, 20% of your grade). The purpose of keeping a journal is for you to reflect on the topics covered in class. You may also choose to write about your reactions to class readings, or to personal experiences you’ve had on or off campus. You might also choose to write about how you felt after class and why. Your journal is the space in which you reflect upon your learning.
In addition to providing personal reflections, please comment on the readings for each week: what have you learned? Do not to provide a summary of the results; instead, highlight the lessons that you remember from the week’s readings. You will be expected to share these lessons at class. Please e-mail your journal entries an hour before class. I will not grade your journals. Satisfactory journals are turned in on time, show attention, address questions posed in class, and provide insights. Journal entries should be around 1-2 pages.

(c) Opinion page on a class topic (meant as a blog post, letter to the editor, opinion page, etc.) (10%), due March 23.

(c) Final project (60%)
1. proposal (10%) – a paragraph due February 9; final proposal due February 23rd;
2. presentation (25%), starting week of April 20;

Academic Integrity
Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. Collaboration is allowed for the final project.

Violation of this Code can may lead to University disciplinary action.

Accommodations for students with disabilities
In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Comment about Class Discussions
Talking about diversity can be both exciting and anxiety-provoking. It is imperative that we create a classroom environment in which we can all learn from each other. We will create an environment that is supportive of, and nurtures, the open exchange of ideas, perceptions, experiences, and feelings. Here are some “rules” that I would like for us to uphold together in this class.

- Participate fully, openly and honestly.
- Speak from personal experience using “I” statements.
- Share air time; encourage others to participate.
- Be open to new and different perspectives.
- Take risks and lean into discomfort.
- Everyone’s experiences are valid and should not be minimized or discounted.
- Individuals who belong to historically marginalized groups may choose to share their experiences since we all have much to learn from each other, but it is not their responsibility to educate the class or be “representatives” of their group.
- Ask questions. Listen.
• Just because you are, doesn’t mean that you understand everything about it. And just because you’re not doesn’t mean that you don’t or can’t understand.

Course Schedule (May change to accommodate guest presenters)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: January 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Week 2: February 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity in Organizations – What is it and why do it?</td>
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<td>Week3: February 9 (first proposal due)</td>
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<td>Unconscious bias, discrimination and stereotypes</td>
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<td>February 16</td>
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<td>February Break – No class</td>
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<td>Week 4: February 23 (final proposal due)</td>
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<td>Measuring diversity and inclusion</td>
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<td>Week 5: March 2</td>
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<td>Organizational climate and culture</td>
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<td>Week 6: March 9</td>
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<td>Voice and Power – who gets it and how?</td>
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<td>Week 7: March 16</td>
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<td>How can the law help us? Compliance, diversity and inclusion</td>
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<td>Week 8: March 23 – Intergroup Dialogue</td>
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<td>March 30</td>
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<td>Spring Break – No Class</td>
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<td>Week 9: April 6</td>
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<td>Implementing Diversity</td>
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<td>Week 10: April 13</td>
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<td>Examples from the field</td>
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<td>Attend Scott Page Lecture, April 22</td>
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<td>Week 11: April 20</td>
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<td>Project presentation</td>
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<td>Week 12: April 27</td>
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<td>Project presentations</td>
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<td>Week 13: May 4</td>
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<td>Wrap-up</td>
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<td>May 9: Final Papers due</td>
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Class Readings

1. **Introduction and course layout**

2. **Diversity in Planning and Organizations – What is it? Why do it?**


Optional:


3. **Stereotypes, and unconscious bias (choose 2-3 and coordinate with peers).**

4. **Measuring diversity**
- Cornell University Diversity Dashboards: [http://irp.dpb.cornell.edu/university-factbook/diversity](http://irp.dpb.cornell.edu/university-factbook/diversity)

Optional:


5. **Climate and “Culture”**
6. **Voice**

**Optional:**

7. **Compliance: Guest speaker.**

8. **Intergroup dialogue**

**Optional:**
- Hou & Kinoshita “Bridging Community Difference Through Informal Processes”

9. **Implementing diversity in organizations:**
- The City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative http://www.seattle.gov/rsji/