

Equity and Diversity Resource Center (EDRC) Student SEED Syllabus

Background:

SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) is a national project on inclusive curriculum and coordinated by Peggy McIntosh and Emily Style. It has recently been adapted for faculty, staff and students in higher education.

We will use our own personal experiences, as well as readings, videos, reflective writing, guest speakers & group work, to inform how we understand the world, particularly in terms of race, class, age, gender, ability, sexual orientation and other defining aspects of our identities. We will explore these issues within the frameworks of power, privilege, oppression and resistance.

We hope to create a safe and respectful environment for you to reflect on and share your own experiences, learn from your peers' experiences and build community while engaging in deep critical thinking around issues that are pervasive in our society and in each of our daily lives.

Goals:

- To self-reflect on and share our relevant experiences with power, privilege, oppression and resistance across race, class, gender, sexuality, ability and other social groups historically, currently and in regard to the UW campus and Madison community
- To develop a greater understanding of institutional oppression and examine our individual roles as both oppressors and oppressed
- To provide opportunities in which participants are open to being vulnerable with each other in order to have critical, open, and honest dialogues around issues of identity and social justice
- To provide space for relationship building between students who otherwise would not have come together and create a sense of inclusive community and support for each participant
- To promote realization of Goal 6 of Plan 2008: "Foster institutional environments and course development that enhance learning and a respect for racial and ethnic diversity" and extending this to other areas of inequality as well

Meetings:

The seminar meets for 2 hours once a week, with dinner provided. We will meet on Tuesday evenings from 6-8 pm in the MSC Conference Room. Please come 10 minutes prior to the beginning of class in order to get your food.

In addition to the weekly meetings there will be opportunities for seminar movie nights and class/small group gatherings.

Expectations:

- 1) **Attendance** is absolutely critical to the success of the seminar. Absences due to extenuating circumstances such as illness or family emergency must be discussed with your facilitator. Participants may make up absences by writing a 4-page reaction paper about an event, reading or video on the topic addressed during the missed class. The paper should articulate any learning that occurred from that experience and how that learning is relevant to the participant's personal experiences and to the SEED seminar. This should be written in addition to the weekly journal and must be submitted by the following Tuesday, 1-week from the missed class period. As a way to remain accountable to your peers, the make-up paper should be sent to the entire class over the listserv. **See the grading criteria** for specific information on how absences may affect your grade in the class. You can make up a maximum of 2 absences while receiving full-credit for attendance. We will send around a sign-in sheet at the beginning of each class.

- 2) **Engaged participation** goes hand in hand with the above. Sharing your experiences, thoughts, and opinions around these issues is the most powerful learning resource we have available. One of the central goals of the seminar is to provide opportunities in which participants are open to being vulnerable with each other in order to have critical, open, and honest dialogues around issues of identity and social justice. This does not mean that the participant is always talking in class, but journals should reflect engaged class participation. However, it is very important that participants challenge themselves to share during class. At the beginning of the semester we will develop guidelines for discourse to ensure that everyone's needs are met for feeling able to participate openly. If at any point you don't feel comfortable doing so, please share your concerns with one of us. Important points of engaged participation are as follows:
 - **Readings** can be accessed online. We will start most classes with a discussion of the readings. We will also be discussing **Paulo Freire and Myles Horton's "We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change"** at the end of the semester. **You will need to find your own copy of this book** either at the public library, university library or any bookstore.

 - **Meeting with Facilitator** Participants should meet with their assigned journal facilitator at least once during the semester. This meeting is informal and is a way for the facilitator and participant to become acquainted. We ask that you set aside at least 45 minutes for this meeting. If you would like to meet regularly with your facilitator outside of class, you may work that out on an individual basis with your facilitator.

 - **Openings/Closings** Participants will have a chance to sign up for an opening and closing. These are 1-5 minute "presentations" where the participant will share something personal, like *show and tell* for big kids. In the past, participants have read a poem, played an instrument, done a dance, brought food, and showed photographs of family members. It should be something that is meaningful to you that you feel comfortable sharing with other people. The sign up sheet will be passed around during the first class period.

- 3) **Journal** Each week you will need to turn in a journal entry/reaction paper to the readings or some aspect of our discussion that struck you. This is meant to be a way to help you process the tough feelings we will deal with in the course, and a way for you to look back upon the experience. We may sometimes provide questions to help you focus your writing in a particular direction, but we want this generally to be a place where you can work out and express your own reactions through the seminar. This will help us to gauge if you are seeing/understanding the discussions we have and how they relate to you on a personal, social and institutional level. Each journal entry should be at least 2 pages, double

spaced, 12 pt font, 1 inch margins and can focus either on one article/conversation/topic, etc, or could be several thoughts you've had throughout the week. Weekly journals must be turned in on Friday at 4:30 to your assigned Journal Team Facilitator via email. We will read them before the upcoming class and return them with our comments. **Journal Teams will be announced on the first day of class.**

- 4) ***Final Reflection Paper*** The final paper will be a synthesis of your experience and learning process throughout the course. This is a place to reflect on where you were at the beginning of the semester, how and what impacted you throughout, where you are now and where you hope to go from here. Your journals can be a helpful way to review your semester. The paper should be 8-10 pages, 12 pt font, double spaced. Suggestions for questions that you may want to respond to in this final paper include: What questions did you have at the beginning of the semester that you do(not) have now? What did you learn about yourself and the way that you think about social justice? Which areas do you still struggle with? Please respond to any additional questions you may have. You are not limited to these questions.
- 5) ***Participant's Semester Folder*** Each participant will be asked to keep a personal folder throughout the semester for use in the final evaluation by facilitators. At the end of the semester, you will turn in this folder as a way to help facilitators determine your semester grade. Participants should include in the folder the following items: copy of personal assessment activity from beginning of semester, all journals with comments from facilitator, final reflection paper, final personal assessment. This may be submitted electronically.
 - ***Personal Assessment*** Throughout the semester, we will give you an opportunity to evaluate yourself based on the SEED grading criteria and expectations. At the end of the semester, you will be able to give yourself a grade based on these things as well as an explanation as to why you deserve that grade. This personal assessment and self-grading will be used to help facilitators determine your grade.

Attendance, Engaged Participation, Journals: 85% of your grade
Final Reflection Paper and Completed Semester Folder: 15%

The following is the grading criteria we will be using to evaluate each participant in the course:

Student SEED Grade Criteria Fall 2005

A: An A-participant consistently exceeds the expectations of the course as outlined in the syllabus. This participant is able to share relevant personal experiences in a vulnerable way that helps to facilitate their own and other people's learning. This participant completes all journals on time and takes the time to respond to facilitator comments from previous journals. This participant is able to articulate learning through multiple formats including journaling, in-class discussions and one on one meeting with facilitators. SEEDster understands the individual issues as well as the systemic issues involved in social justice. This participant uses a balance of resources (personal experience, assigned readings, in-class discussions, journals and meetings with facilitators) to engage others in dialogue. SEEDster is able to challenge other participants in ways that help facilitate the learning for all participants. This person is absent no more than twice and absences are made up as outlined by the syllabus. This participant is "on" all of the time and constantly and consistently reflecting and showing the SEEDster is fully engaged in the process and works to understand the "self" that is present.

AB: An AB-participant usually exceeds the expectations of the course. This participant not only completes all journals but takes the time to respond to facilitator comments from previous journals. SEEDster is usually able to articulate learning either through journals, class participation or one on one meetings with facilitators and how that learning is relevant to their own personal experiences. SEEDster usually demonstrates the ability to participate outside of their own comfort zone. SEEDster has only 1 absence that is unaccounted for, but a maximum of 3 total absences. This participant is able to clearly reflect on their own personal experiences with power, privilege, oppression and resistance either through journals or through in-class conversations.

B: A B-participant completes all journal assignments in a timely manner. This person reflects on personal experiences in journals but rarely moves beyond that. On occasion this participant is able to articulate some learning either through journals, class participation or one on one meetings with facilitators. This participant may have up to 4 absences total, 2 of which are accounted for with 2 make-up journals. This person has not accounted for 2 missed classes. On occasion SEEDster demonstrates the ability to participate outside of their own comfort zone. This participant comes to class and makes an effort to participate in and contribute to their own learning.

BC: A BC-participant does the bare minimum in terms of the expectations of the class. This participant has been absent up to 5 times and has completed make-up journals for 2 missed classes. This person has not accounted for 3 missed classes. This participant just shows up to class and doesn't make an effort to participate in and contribute to their own personal learning as well as the learning of others.

C: A C-participant does not meet any of the expectations of the class. This participant does not see the importance of using self as textbook. This participant has been absent from the class more than three times. Basically...this person just came for the food. If you fail to submit 4 journals and/or exceed 4 absences that are not accounted for, you may not receive a grade higher than a C.

D: Why did this person even *take* this class?

F: Who is this person...and why am I giving them a grade?

Contact Information:

Laura Klunder Email: ljdklunder@wisc.edu	Eric Mata Email: egmata@bascom.wisc.edu	Jena Olson Email: jenaolson@wisc.edu
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Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. We need your feedback to make this a positive learning experience for all and improve this seminar in the future.

Weekly Class Topics:

**These may change based on the needs of the group*

- 1/17 Class 1: Intro to the semester; creation of community guidelines and goals
- 1/24 Class 2: Building relationships (Homework Assignment: Do a 1:1 relationship building meeting with another SEED student you do not know)
- 1/31 Class 3: Exploring our experiences with our various identities
- 2/7 Class 4: Experiences with Ability
- 2/14 Class 5: Experiences with Ability con't.
- 2/21 Class 6: Experiences with Race
- 2/28 Class 7: Experiences with Race con't
- 3/7 Class 8: Experiences with Race con't
- 2/21 Class 9: Experiences with Socioeconomic Class (Video: "People Like Us" – 124 min) & mid-semester evaluation
- 3/28 Class 10: Experiences with Socioeconomic Class con't
- 4/4 Class 11: Experiences with Gender
- 4/11 Class 12: Experiences with Gender con't and Sexual Orientation
- 4/18 Class 13: Experiences with Sexual Orientation con't
- 4/25 Class 14: Making change through political organization and activism
- 5/2 Class 15: Closing and end-of-semester assessment

2 pg. weekly journals due beginning 1/24

8-10 pp. Final seminar reflection paper and written semester evaluation due 5/2

Course Book:

Paulo Freire and Miles Horton "We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change", Temple University Press, 1991.