



Short Course Class Title: SOCIAL JUSTICE and TACKLING DISCRIMINATION IN A CHANGING WORLD

Rationale

This course provides a wide ranging introduction to the concepts and principles involved in social justice and tackling discrimination. In particular it addresses the way in which attempts are being made to apply them in the private, public and voluntary sectors. It is specifically designed for course members 16 -25 approximately.

The course will address the wide range of factors that determine and describe the opportunities, life chances and safety of different groups and their members. Challenging all forms of discrimination has become a central policy issue in the Scottish Parliament and its Executive and increasingly features in the development of new legislation.

There is considerable local, national and international evidence to demonstrate the existence of broad patterns of discrimination, oppression and exclusion for particular groups and their members. These patterns will be identified at the structural, cultural, institutional and personal levels within discrete areas. Issues of class and poverty, race, sex, disability, homophobia, anti-semitism and age will also be considered. These areas will be drawn together in order that course members will be able to contemplate a broader theory of social justice and relate this to their own interests needs and concerns. Particular attention will be paid to the interests and concerns of young people.

Undertaking this course will introduce members to the academic disciplines that contribute to the field of discrimination, inequality and social justice. This will allow them to develop an understanding of oppression and discrimination at theoretical, conceptual and practical levels and consider the ways in which these may be challenged and resisted

The course will be of particular interest to those who wish to start from first principles and apply them practically in community settings, their workplace or everyday lives. It is directly related to available courses on Institutional Discrimination and Resistance/Campaigns for Change: An Investigative Report.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course members will be able to:

- demonstrate a basic knowledge of the concepts and theories of equality, inequality, oppression, discrimination and social justice;
- briefly describe these concepts using examples drawn from contemporary society
- show a basic awareness of some of the explanations that have been offered theoretically, politically, ideologically and through research for the ways in which inequality, discrimination and social exclusion are maintained;
- discuss some of the inter-relationships and differences between various forms of discrimination;
- describe simply and illustrate how the principles and concepts of the module can be applied to institutional and community settings;

OUTLINE

Active consideration will be given to the existence of discrimination including, racism, sexism, disability, sectarianism, homophobia and classism

There will be a description and analysis of those influences that can create and maintain discrimination and anti-discrimination at structural, cultural, institutional and personal levels.

Main features of the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and practices including legislation will be broadly described in a context of ongoing contemporary political and social developments in respect of social justice.

The foregoing will be applied to community and workplace settings via the experience and developing knowledge of the participants

A detailed programme of activities for each session will be published in advance of the course

Mode of Delivery and Methods of Presentation

The class will be organised around formal expositions from the university and associate tutors with particular expertise and post graduate qualifications in the discrete areas of discrimination. They will develop issues and an agenda for a series of workshops and seminars that will assist student understanding and develop prior knowledge via case studies, audio video materials, course texts, simulation and value clarification exercises.

There will normally be 6 teaching sessions, each of 3 hours that will all require preparatory work and further development.

Course members will be encouraged to raise and, where appropriate, explore issues of individual interest and concern in class. Particular attention will be placed upon the internal dynamic of the group since it is anticipated that difficult and sensitive issues, tensions and contradictions can arise in mixed "identity" groups. It is anticipated that this class will bring together such a mixed group. This "process" is seen to be a part of an intrinsic learning process. Experience tells us that these features are particularly significant with younger groups of course members

This "student-centred" approach places this class and others in the Open Studies Certificate programme within the liberal adult education tradition.

Assessment

Assessment for this class will be by attendance and some preparatory diagnostic work between sessions in the form of a portfolio. Precise content of the portfolio will be agreed in advance between each student and the tutor(s), but they will ensure that the learning outcomes will have been overtaken

Each course will be supplied with a pack of reading material and a course booklet containing workshop and seminar materials at the start of the class. The cost of this will be included in the class fee.

Recommended Reading

Each session carries key references but a core selection includes

Gilbert, N., *Researching Social Life*, Sage, 1996)

Gluck, S. B., *Women's Words, The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, Routledge 1993

Ashcroft, K. Biggar, S. and Coates, D., *Researching Into Equal Opportunities*, Kogan Page, (1996)

Selected texts, press cuttings and papers from within campaigns in action