Justice Studies Course Catalog

JUST 101 – Introduction to Social Justice
Examines the theme of justice as a foundational goal of all social institutions in a democracy. Introduces students to critically examining social injustices, especially in institutions and social structures. In order to arrive at a vision and practice of justice, we will study those “acceptable” injustices through the lens of justice and equality for all.

JUST 109 – First Year Experience: Justice in Chicago
Using Chicago as a lab, students will experience justice in many forms, from courthouse visits and artistic expressions, to discussions with attorneys, judges, and formerly incarcerated persons. In this course, the five foundations of the First-Year Experience (Future Planning, Integral Preparation, Research, Self-discovery and Transitions) are interwoven with the introductory concepts and terminology of the criminal and social justice systems to provide first-year students with an opportunity to critically examine social injustices in institutions and social structures through a critical lens.

JUST 201 – Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
Overview of police, court and prison practice with attention to class, race and sex discrimination in the criminal justice system. Emphasis on the relationship between crime and key political and economic structures.

JUST 202 – Writing Intensive Program: Justice and Inequality
This course focuses on the unfair and unequal treatment occurring in contemporary U.S. society based on people’s race, gender, sexual orientation, and class. The course analyzes the ways in which race, class, gender, and sexual orientation work as interlocking systems of privilege and disadvantage affecting all of us. The course also focuses on biases and discrimination in the criminal justice system and in the delivery of justice. Discussions will also identify strategies for reducing injustice. This course fulfills the Writing Intensive Program (WIP) graduation requirement for Justice Studies majors.

JUST 241 – Research Methods in Justice Studies
This course introduces majors to quantitative and qualitative research methods used in the social sciences with a focus on Justice Studies issues. Students develop analytical skills through learning how researchers construct and use data to answer questions about human behavior, beliefs, and institutions.

JUST 301 – Theories of Justice and Social Change
Explores general theories of social change, such as social evolutionism and historical materialism, and the relationship between social change and the pursuit of justice. The starting point is unjust social structures and processes, leading into analysis of how social change occurs, especially through social movements.
**JUST 307 – Prisoner Reentry Systems**
This course examines how the prison reentry system works, the causes of recidivism, and how recidivism rates could be lowered. Students will gain applied knowledge of how the criminal justice system works and of patterns of incarceration and release, as well as trends in prisoner reintegration.

**JUST 309 – Portrayal of Crime in Media**
Analysis of the media’s presentation of crime in the 21st century with attention to the historical development of the portrayal of crime and its effect on public attitudes regarding “crime” and the “criminal.” Various forms of the media are individually considered, most notably television, film, and newspaper.

**JUST 311 – Women, Crime, and the Criminal Justice System**
The position of women in society; theories of female criminality; crimes committed by and against women such as prostitution, rape, woman abuse, and forced sterilization. Treatment of women by various social and criminal justice agencies.

**JUST 312 – Theories of Criminal Behavior**
Historic overview of theories of crime from the classical school to currently popular viewpoints, including Marxist and radical theories, with emphasis on the relationship between theory and criminal justice policy formulation.

**JUST 313 – Prisons and Jails**
Study of the historic development of prisons focusing on current practice and emphasizing consequences of expanding the prison population and community based alternatives to incarceration.

**JUST 314 – Police in the Minority Community**
Overview of the social, political and economic consequences resulting from historical and contemporary treatment of U.S. minorities by law enforcement personnel, with emphasis on the development of policy focusing on police methodology in controlling and creating levels of crime within urban areas. Theoretical and practical issues involving bias, discretion and excessive force.

**JUST 316 – Crime, Violence and Culture**
Exploration of interpersonal and structural violence and aspects of culture that promote it. The course considers: the criminalization of some and tolerance of other violence; competing theories of violence; and strategies for reducing and preventing violence.

**JUST 317 – White Collar Crime and Elite Deviance**
This course examines the problems of defining crimes of the elite, theories related to white collar crime and elite deviance, and the impact of white collar crime and elite deviance on society and justice. We also examine the impact of social institutions upon white collar crime and elite deviance, reactions to these, and the forms of punishment available.
**JUST 318 – Gangs in Chicago**
This course provides an analysis of the history of, and theories about, gangs in Chicago. It examines how and why gangs develop, how they are structured, their gradual development, and how societal injustices impact the development of gangs generally, and in Chicago.

**JUST 319 – Latinos/as and the Criminal Justice System**
Examines the relationship between Latinos/as and the criminal justice system. Issues addressed are what distinguishes Latinos/as from other racial and ethnic groups in the criminal justice system? What sociological and criminological theories can explain these differences? Key variables that are discussed are historical context, race and ethnic relations, and current criminal justice policies.

**JUST 321 – Violence Against Women**
Overview of the legal, sociological, psychological, and medical aspects of rape, battering, and related forms of gendered violence. Explores social and cultural context of violence against women, changing definitions of violence, and the criminalization of sexual assault and family violence and response to violence, including the anti-rape and battered women’s movements.

**JUST 322 – Women, Justice and the Law**
A discussion of justice and its intersection with gender. The course focuses on federal statutes and their interpretation, on sexual harassment and employment, and on state statutes focusing on family law and criminal law.

**JUST 323 – Introduction to Child Advocacy Studies (CAST)**
This course provides a survey of the emerging field of Child Advocacy Studies, which researches and seeks remedies for the maltreatment of children and youth, including specific acts of violence and neglect, in the context of the pernicious effects of racism, poverty, sexism, and heterosexism, including the unique problems faced by immigrant and displaced children. The course examines the various economic, political, social, and cultural circumstances that may contribute to the abuse and maltreatment of children and youth. It also teaches students about the strategies and tactics used by various local governmental and nongovernmental agencies, courts, and medical establishments to address these problems.

**JUST 324 – Women as Political Prisoners**
This course examines the three areas in which women can be defined as political prisoners: 1) women imprisoned for political acts; 2) women imprisoned for self-defense measures; 3) women imprisoned for petty ‘economic’ crimes such as prostitution.

**JUST 325 – Women and Revolution: Theories of Justice**
Theories of justice informing revolutionary practice with attention to the role played by women in revolution, especially in liberation struggles in Central America.
JUST 326 – Juvenile Justice System
Socio-economic analysis of the history of the juvenile justice system in an effort to understand how the system functions and whom it serves.

JUST 328 – Social Justice and LGBTQ Issues
This course explores lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer social justice issues. Students will study LGBTQ issues and theories in the context of both historic and contemporary social justice practices. This will include an examination of race, class, gender, and ethnicity in LGBTQ communities, along with a discussion of legal, social, and political steps taken and contemplated to end the oppression of LGBTQ people.

JUST 329 – Politics of Punishment
Exploration, from a global perspective, of the history, development, and philosophies of punishment, and of the debate within the United States and the countries of Western Europe over the purpose of correctional institutions.

JUST 330 – Legal Research and Bibliography in Criminal Law
Study of basic reference and source materials. Visits to law libraries are required. Presentation of a written and oral argument.

JUST 331 – Law and Racism in America
The nature of racism, its essential features and their relationship to the legal, social, and economic practices in the United States.

JUST 332 – Race and Ethnic Relations
Course provides critical examination of the social construction of race, focusing on how ethnicity, ancestry and phenotype are used historically to separate people. Students explore concepts, theoretical perspectives, and research patterns of cooperation and conflict between different racial and ethnic groups. Sources of prejudice, discrimination, power relations, and stratification are discussed. Students examine contemporary problems and issues in the area of racial and ethnic relations and global justice.

JUST 333 – Community Law
General introduction of the impact of law on the public: consumer law, family law, and individual rights.

JUST 334 – Criminal Law and Procedure
The basic principles of American criminal law, current issues, and controversies surrounding the criminal justice process, and the constitutional rights of the accused.

JUST 335 – Legal Process I
Analysis of common law and the role of precedent with emphasis on appellate courts, particularly the U.S. Supreme Court.
JUST 336 – Postmodern Law and Criminology
This course will introduce the core concepts of postmodern analysis and their application to law, criminology, and social justice. It will be a challenge to modernist thought that has dominated the social sciences whose basic assumptions evolved from the Renaissance period. Discourse analysis and chaos theory, along with other emerging perspectives, will be explicated. Causation, the subject, objectivity, order, linearity, neutrality of language, rationality, universals, among others, will be re-thought via postmodern analysis.

JUST 337 – Workers’ Rights and Human Rights
Basic labor law: workman’s compensation, unemployment compensation, National Labor Relations Act, etc., discussions on worker influence on factories.

JUST 338 – Introduction to Human Rights
This course provides an introductory overview to human rights. Human rights are examined from several different points of view: as a legal and moral discourse in which justice claims are expressed; as an international regime consisting of many different treaties, legal bodies, United Nations agencies and non-profit organizations which seek to prevent, investigate, and punish human rights violations; as a global social movement that promotes minimum universal standards of human dignity and respect; as a contested philosophical concept that is compared and contrasted with other types of moral claims; and as an increasingly important strategy being used by various communities in the United States to overcome many different types of social injustice. The main human rights organizations and their methods of working will be explained. Each student will also get an opportunity to research one human rights issue in depth.

JUST 339 – Tenant’s Rights Clinic
Under the supervision of a licensed attorney, students study issues relating to landlord/tenant disputes and conflicts. Students are trained to define and negotiate such problems.

JUST 340 – Sociology of Law
This course concerns the development of law in society. We cover: historical development of law; functions of law; the connection between political economy and law; various perspectives in studying law; classical thinkers; current and emerging thought; the emergence of lawyers and their language and form of reasoning; the emergence of legal rights and the legal subject; substantive biases of law (gender, race, class, intersectional); how “realities” are constructed in the courtroom; and freedom and coercion in law.

JUST 343 – Conflict Transformation
Conflict is part of human daily experience. When properly managed, it can lead to awareness, growth, and better human relationships. However, when misdiagnosed and mismanaged, it can sour things and destroy relationships. It also leads to intra- and interpersonal, intra- and intergroup/organizational violence, as well as large scale intra-state and international violence. This course explores the connection between justice, peace, and conflict by seeking to understand social conflict and the mechanisms used in its transformation. We begin by examining the
theories of conflict analysis and resolution and conclude by exploring methods and best practices.

**JUST 345 – Practicum in Justice Studies**
Specific skills necessary for entry-level agency/community work.

**JUST 346 – Introduction to Oral History for Communities**
This course introduces students to oral history, a practice that has expanded to many disciplines for its ability to providing information on aspects of life missing from documentary sources and offering different perspectives on historical events and processes. Notably, oral history is used in recovering the experiences of ordinary people. Students will gain knowledge and skills for engaging people in communities in telling their own stories. Students will learn the principles of oral history methodology by analyzing theoretical, ethical, and practical challenges interviewers and researchers face. Students will also learn basic skills on interviewing, transcribing, and abstracting oral histories.

**JUST 347 – Restorative Justice Theories and Practices**
Restorative Justice (RJ) is one of several umbrella concepts gaining in prominence in the Justice Studies arena. It refers to philosophical strategies and diverse practices to resolve conflicts in a way that is less litigious than traditional, adversarial legal proceedings. This course will introduce students to the origins, theories, controversies and practices of restorative justice—both past and present—as an alternative response to harm. It will also interrogate such questions as: When is it appropriate to forgive rather than to punish? What all is entailed in coming to forgiveness, both for the perpetrator and the victim? Students will come to understand the meaning of restorative processes by examining the ways in which they are practiced around the world.

**JUST 350 – Field Work Seminar**
Application of the specific skills learned in the Practicum, as well as other classroom theories and concepts, in an agency/community setting. Two-hundred volunteer hours at work in the field and a 1½-hour weekly seminar.

**JUST 351 - Advocating for Social Justice in Illinois**
This course provides students with a practical introduction to advocating for social justice in Illinois. It is taught from the perspective of marginalized communities that historically have been significantly less able to influence elected officials by donating large sums of money. However, these communities have been able to impact public education, legislation and policy formation/implementation through strategic injections of expertise, organizing, smart coalition building, access to media, litigation, direct action and other techniques. The course will include analyses of such issues as: the legislative process at the local and state levels; an introduction to the players; how to follow the money; the types of power such communities are up against in Chicago and suburbia; strategies to access media and produce a coherent message; the necessity of and methods to reframe and label issues; and the use of organizing, coalition-building, direct action, the courts, initiatives and referendum.
JUST 357 – Social Justice, Mental Health, and the Law
Though one in six Americans suffers from some form of mental illness, there has been little progress in the last fifty years in our protection and treatment of patients who suffer from mental illness. We accept with tolerance almost any other form of physical illness but continue to systematically discriminate against those who are diagnosed with emotional and psychological disorders in terms of our laws and treatment policies. In this course the student will learn about the laws, rights, and treatment of mental illness. We will explore the definitions of mental illness and the stigma and discrimination which ensues for those who are labeled. We will examine the arbitrariness of labels and diagnosis in the mental health system, and the devastating impact that this labeling can have on patients and their families.

JUST 361 – Five-Hundred Years of Resistance
This course is a basic study of the over 500-year history of colonization imposed by Europeans and Euro-Americans. It also examines indigenous resistance to colonization and globalization. In this course, critical thinking and reasoning are introduced through the evaluation of historical developments, key contributors, and principle issues of resistance and revolutionary theory.

JUST 362 – Justice Issues in Africa
Having lived/living through probing explorers, colonists, imperialists, and natural resources hunters, Africa has also attracted good-intentioned development and international collaboration. Even though independence gained from Western nations has improved self-determination in some of its 53 countries, the struggle for justice continues to dominate many political and social activities. This course examines factors that generate inequalities in South Africa; conflict, race, class, ethnic, gender violence, post-apartheid dynamics, neoliberal politics, access, housing, the environment, and exploitation issues in the light of global democracy and social justice.

JUST 363 – Globalization and the Pursuit of Justice
We live in a world interconnected through economics, politics, communications, entertainment and migration. This course explores the emergence of globalization in its contemporary form, and its implications for the lives of everyday people in the global north and south, east and west. Through case studies, we will examine how globalization affects movements for democracy and justice, and vice versa.

JUST 364 – Terrorism in Media and Law
Whether used by governments, militaries, corporations, religious institutions, gangs or individuals, terror is an intense overpowering fear caused by the threat and use of violence. This course examines five categories of terrorism. One case study explores how the U.S. responded to 9/11 by framing a long term “War of Terror.” Students will learn how to analyze the constantly changing images, propaganda, and tropes manufactured by media to know how to distinguish between terrorists, and those who use violence to defend themselves from aggression and invasion. Also covered are how terrorism is addressed in law; how terrorism impacts institutions/practices; causes of terrorism; ways to prevent/stop terrorism.
JUST 370 – Immigration in Global Perspective
This course looks at contemporary international population movements and state policies in highly developed countries through the prism of social justice. The course provides an overview of the major theories explaining the nature, causes and consequences of migration including key dimensions such as control policies, integration, security, and citizenship. The course also analyzes current public conversations debating unauthorized immigration, assimilation, and membership and belonging. Through readings, lectures, videos and newspaper articles the course offers students tools for a critical understanding of migration by addressing questions of justice such as the rights of people to mobility, to work, to equality and to inclusion.

JUST 371 – U.S. Immigration Policy and Human Rights in the Americas
This course explores the social forces shaping the United States’ relations with the Americas as they structure U.S. economic, security and immigration policies and respect for human rights. Through a historical overview, it discusses U.S. policies in Latin America since the 1800s, paying special attention to U.S. security policy and economic interests influencing regime change in Central America and subsequent immigration and refugee flows. The second part of the course analyzes U.S. economic policies that promote free trade and their impact on the displacement of people in the region and human rights. It will also discuss the contrasting immigration and refugee policies toward different nationalities and analyze the extent to which they are linked to social justice.

JUST 382 – Social Justice and Literature
Writers and artists often reflect and inspire major social realignments and radical shifts in the social structure. They have a unique lens with which to focus on society and institutions of power. This course explores the work of several writers and filmmakers to understand how their works mirrored and ignited aspects of social justice. It analyzes how artistic works serve as social critique to enable or inspire social protest and change. The course traces the author’s/filmmaker’s point of view in each work studied, and examines how they developed their central themes through plot and character.

JUST 383 – Social Justice and the Visual Arts
Visual artists are important critics of institutions of power and social inequality. Through an exploration of visual media, students will gain insights into issues of power and social inequality based on gender, class, race and sexual orientation. Students will analyze visual media and images utilizing social justice theories, and compare and contrast different visual media to consider their relevance to social change.

JUST 390 – Social Justice and the Environment
This course is a comprehensive overview of the connections between environmental justice, social justice, and animal ethics. The topics will be viewed from the following perspectives: 1) Justice and Sustainability; 2) Poverty, Economic Development and Environmental Justice; 3) Eco-Feminist Perspectives on Environmental Justice; 4) Native American Perspectives; 5) Animal Ethics and the Relationship to Environmental Justice; and 6) Environmental Law.
JUST 391 – Independent Study in Social Justice
This course provides a student with the opportunity to undertake an individualized investigation into a topic of the student’s choice, under the personalized supervision of a Justice Studies faculty member. The topic cannot duplicate what is taught in a regularly offered course. The student must fill out the Justice Studies department’s Independent Study form and get the project approved two weeks before the semester begins. (1 credit hour)

JUST 392 – Independent Study in Social Justice
This course provides a student with the opportunity to undertake an individualized investigation into a topic of the student’s choice, under the personalized supervision of a Justice Studies faculty member. The topic cannot duplicate what is taught in a regularly offered course. The student must fill out the Justice Studies department’s Independent Study form and get the project approved two weeks before the semester begins. (2 credit hours)

JUST 393 – Independent Study in Social Justice
This course provides a student with the opportunity to undertake an individualized investigation into a topic of the student’s choice, under the personalized supervision of a Justice Studies faculty member. The topic cannot duplicate what is taught in a regularly offered course. The student must fill out the Justice Studies department’s Independent Study form and get the project approved two weeks before the semester begins. (3 credit hours)

JUST 395 – Hunger and Homelessness
This class focuses on the lives of people who are underfed, homeless, or in precarious housing. Examined are paths to poverty and how poverty is lived in America. Also explored are the structural barriers that prevent one from leaving poverty. These issues are looked at from a variety of perspectives that are introduced through readings, service learning, and guest speakers. One of the perspectives from which hunger and homeless is explored is from the point of view of advocacy, i.e., How can one advocate for homeless people? What assumptions underlie such advocacy?