

CPSY 590.5 – Critical Psychology and Social Change – Spring 2017 – 1 semester hour

Instructor: Tod Sloan, Ph.D., email: sloan@lclark.edu – office: Rogers 433, hours by appt.

Course Description: This seminar reviews primary approaches in European and North American critical psychologies and Latin American liberation psychology and their sources, for example, Western Marxism, feminism, critical hermeneutics and poststructuralism. These approaches challenge mainstream scientific psychology's individualism, sexism, essentialism, reductionism, and ideological collusion with the status quo. After reviewing these critiques, the seminar will address implications for psychosocial practices aiming to support community development and movements for social justice.

Textbook:

Watkins, M. and Shulman, H. (2008). *Toward psychologies of liberation*. London: Palgrave.

Book chapters (distributed electronically):

Sloan, T. (2009). "Theories of personality" and "Doing Theory" in Fox, Prilleltensky, and Austin (eds), *Critical Psychology: An Introduction*.

Sloan, T. (1996). Selection from *Damaged Life: The Crisis of the Modern Psyche*.

Course Requirements (Grading based on 90% and above = A, etc.)

1. Full preparation for **participation** in our discussions of the readings. This means reading the assigned material, coming prepared to suggest questions or issues worth further discussion, and actually contributing to the dialogue. Worth 25% of final grade.
2. Prepare to **facilitate** the discussion of one chapter of the readings (submit a one-page plan for guiding the discussion – main points of the chapter and discussion prompts). Worth 25% of final grade.
3. Participate in the design of a 3-hour dialogue session with activists, and write up a 2-page summary of a theme into which you gained insight through that dialogue. Worth 50% of grade.

Department attendance policy: Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45-hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

Course Schedule

April 15 – Overview of Critical Psychology: Discuss Watkins and Shulman (2008), chapters 1-12

April 22 – Critical Psychology and Social Change: Discuss Sloan chapters. Dialogue with activists.