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Ignatian Pedagogy Certificate Final Project Assisnment

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Ignatian Pedagogy Certificate Final Project Assignment

One important concept in Ignatian pedagogy is nurturing students' spirit and character, or what Dr. Rendon called a connection between heart and mind. Thus, my project for the Ignatian Pedagogy Certificate was to revamp the journaling in my CJC 345, Social Justice and Crime, class. Last year, the mind was emphasized and service was required. This year, the heart and character building is emphasized through the concept of developing a self-narrative and a better understanding of one's self-identities. Service was not required, though opportunities were made available. Students were clearly told that whether they did social justice service or not was entirely their choice, and would not affect their grade; whatever they chose was to be authentic and justified at the end of the class.

I intentionally infused my psychological education with Ignatian Pedagogy to create what I call, "self-identities narrative blogging". The blog connects well with the class as stories about self and others are ways that we communicate our character, values, and priorities. Social justice is inherently personal, as the "personal is political" (Hanisch, 1970) and stories are how we discover who we are and are relationship to communities and nature. The specific assignments are below, which were included in my CJC 345 Social Justice class this spring (2017).

Self-identities Narrative Blogging:

"Not until we are lost do we begin to understand ourselves." "To regret deeply is to live afresh."
"What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lives within us."
Henry David Thoreau

"Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted." Martin Luther King, Jr.

Consider the blog a personal diary of how your heart and mind are grappling with class materials to form a more developed self-narrative. This is more an exercise of spirit and heart rather than calculated unfeeling reflection. We all are not Mother Teresa (Saint Teresa of Calcutta) or Henry David Thoreau. First and foremost, the blog should be a journey in your **HEART, SPIRIT, and MIND** where the end destination is a more complete self-narrative as it relates to the topic of social justice, responses to violations of social norms, and the distribution of wealth and protection of the natural environment. Second, the blog should convey to the reader that you have:

- Thought and felt deeply (what were the emotional connections and how did the class material and discussion develop your thoughts and contribute to your anticipated future self?)
- understood the material,
- Considered how it relates to your evolving narrative about your self-identities.
- How do you consider your norm violations in your reactions to the norm violations of others, and how much compassion do you provide to yourself?

The blog should be submitted via Sakia with each entry dated and submitted on time. The blog should be mindful of correct grammar, and **should not use contractions**. A blog will be written each week, except for three weeks. To begin this assignment and throughout this assignment ask yourself: What story will you

tell me about yourself vis-à-vis social justice and crime? What future stories do you anticipate? Please see the specific directions for each week on my blog or the last page of this syllabus. Please copy the blog assignment and week in your blog entry. You may choose from three levels of privacy as we discussed in class.

Self-identities Narrative Blogging: Weekly Assignments

Week 1: How do you define and connect to the concept of social justice, and the terms: nobody, somebody, and anybody? In 600 to 900 words, please describe your definition of social justice and how the three terms to describe people, nobody, somebody, and anybody, are connected to your intentions to contribute to social justice and address social injustices. Finally provide a link to a song that captures your feelings about social justice and its similarities and differences to Johnny Cash's Nobody <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYQMh7SG2CM> (1 point)

Week 2: Share a personal experience (either directly or vicariously experienced) that made you want to enforce justice through bringing a lawsuit or charging someone with a crime. Describe why you did or did not (if it is vicarious, why you would have or would not have actually acted on the emotional desire to use the legal system), and discuss how the readings are consistent or inconsistent with your own inclinations about demanding your legal and constitutional rights. (at least 400 words) (1.5 points)

Week 3: Watch the movie: Park Avenue: Money, Power, and the American Dream. In a 900 to 1100 word essay, discuss how the concepts and main ideas in the readings are depicted or not represented in the film. How is your ideology about achieving success confirmed or challenged by this movie? What are the primary emotions you feel for those who gain wealth and those who reside in poverty, and how are these emotions related to your ideologies? (4 points)

Week 4: Imagine that you opened your backpack and it contained the feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and actions that you have about the concept of privilege. Describe the content of your backpack, and make sure to describe how intersectionality and stigma relate to privilege and your social identity. Be vivid in your writing and provide specific, concrete descriptions and examples to explain how these concepts relate to your personal life. The essay should be at least 900 words. (3 points)

Week 5: Write a six word story about a response of authority to a time when you violated a norm. See (<http://www.sixwordstories.net/about/>). You should also post it to the sixwordstories cite. Write a brief paragraph after your six word story to explain it fully. (1.5 points)

Week 6: Please turn in your Social Justice for Two Days Essay. There is no required blog.

Week 7: Watch Buried My Heart at Wounded Knee, and discuss how the film depicts social justice, institutionalized power, and colonialism. What actions, if any, do you want to make to address the social injustices toward Native Americans and why? What feelings did you have while watching this film? (Essay should be between 700 and 1000 words and should demonstrate that you have read the readings). Please cite the readings in your essay. (3 points)

Week 8: There is no blog assignment (Spring Break).

Week 9: Discuss in 300 to 600 words your self-compassion, especially when you do not live up to significant others' or societal expectations. In what ways do you need to improve on self-compassion? (1 point)

Week 10: There is no blog assignment (Exam on 3/20) and leadership essays

Week 11: Discuss the concepts of state/corporate crime and criminogenic structure as it relates to the movie *Oil and Water*. Provide your personal view of what actions, if any, you have taken to protect the environment and create a sustainable natural environment for all plants, creatures and animals. **(600 words) (1.5 points)**

Week 12: In a 300 to 400 word response, describe your thoughts and emotional reactions to the information about mass incarceration and prison life. **(1.5 points)**

Week 13: In a 300 to 600 word blog, what were your emotional reactions and cognitive thoughts about the readings? What were the lessons or points that challenged your common sense notions of rehabilitation? **(1.5 points)**

Week 14: Find a song, take a picture, and write a six word story that captures your views on forgiveness as a response to serious norm violations. Write a 300 to 500 word essay that conveys how you would describe your self-identity in relation to forgiveness as a response to crime. **(1 point)**

Week 15: We have covered a lot of information about social justice, and throughout the semester you have been encouraged to perhaps find a way to give back. Now, it is your opportunity to reflect on your choice. In what ways did you provide service to others? Did those you assisted define the type of service that was needed or did you find a problem and contribute? How has your self-narrative on social justice and responses to norm violation been deepened, clarified, transformed? Alternatively, articulate your personal story on these topics and explain why it has remained rather steadfast. In these responses, explain what service you have done or why you chose not to do service and attempt to relate it to class concepts. (Essays should be between 900 to 1200 words). **(6.5 points)**

Implications

Self-identities narrative blogging is based on some key foundational assumptions of Ignatian pedagogy. First, both teachers and students bring experiences, values, and beliefs that inform and affect how the class materials are interpreted, understood, and reacted to. Second, *cura personalis* is at the center of this blogging. It allows the instructor to have a deeper understanding of her students, and to respect students' circumstances and experiences. For example, by not requiring social justice service, this instructor was able to discover all the social justice service that students have been and were continuing to do. Consistent with Ignatian pedagogy, the self-narrative and qualitative open-ended questions reduced the assumptions that I, as an instructor, might have held. The open-ended questions also allow students to engage and take responsibility for demonstrating and sharing how they are feeling about and thinking about class material.

Preliminary Results

I have now read, provided feedback, and graded all blogs submitted through Week 12. What have I learned? Students are very eager to share their lives and to connect with me, as a professor and person. Students shared very personal stories about their experiences with discrimination and privilege, analyzed their compassion toward themselves and how it related to compassion toward others, and also demonstrated that they had thought and felt deeply about the materials. Emotions were discussed at length.

Here are a few representative quotes from different students and different weeks:

“For me, this was an extremely powerful film that has left me questioning a lot about myself and my beliefs. I had a conversation with my mom about it and I asked her “as a woman who was born in South America, why do you follow and believe in Middle Eastern religion?” I asked her to consider forced colonization and how people both believed and accepted or they were murdered. I left her pretty stunned and she, someone that works for the _____ (I deleted the religious organization to keep the identity of the student confidential), could not answer. Simply, she said that this was a very difficult question to answer and she did not know how to.

“I believe that in order for there to be change, it has to start within myself. Voting is not simply done at the booth, my dollars have value and I know that I can create change by simple not purchasing from companies that support indigenous genocide. I need to also spread information and educate those that do not know what is going on with the Natives. The film impacted me so much that I watched it a second time and posted the link on Facebook for others to watch. To my surprise, a few had also seen it. Having conversations and creating an action plan is the next step to continue this resistance against institutionalized powers!”

“For me, people in my life will not take it seriously when they learn of our relationship, and treat her as a sort of 'phase', or 'fling' that I am going through, or even accuse me of from me, or having some sort of abnormal condition or fetish that makes me attracted to her. The attacks on us in public by people we don't even know are the worst. People have threatened to literally kill me, used physical aggression and violence to intimidate us, accused her of being a prostitute, accused me of beating or abusing her, tried to 'buy' her even just shown outward signs of disgust at our relationship in general. Therefore, I feel that the intersection of our social identities has given us a lot of stigma that is really hard to deal with. I feel that we can work through it as a team/couple, and overcome the negativity and hatred that people we know and do not know direct at us constantly, and use it to build a stronger relationship in the end.”

Future Directions

I am looking forward to students' evaluation of their learning experience this spring, and reading their remaining blogs. I particularly want to see how much their ideas of social justice have changed, and how they justify and reflect upon their choices to take or not take actions to address social injustices or further social justice. As this class was writing-intensive, my next step will be to think about how a scaled down version of self-identities narrative blogging can be used in a non-writing intensive class, and what aspects I want to incorporate in my other 300-level elective classes. Finally, I would like to conduct some systematic evaluation of self-identities narrative blogging in my future classes.