

Diversity and Inclusion at Work
Course Number: 37:624:364
School of Management and Labor Relations
Rutgers University

Course Syllabus

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| Instructor: | Lindsay Dhanani |
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| Office Hours | By appointment |
| Office Location: | 208 Janice H. Levin Building |
| Class Dates: | January 17 th – May 10 th |
| Credit Hours | 3 |
| Class Time/Location: | Thursday 10:20-1:20 JLB 004 |

Course Description: This course provides an overview of how the increasing demographic diversity of American workplaces affects social relations, cultural dynamics, and organizational effectiveness. During our time together, we will explore a number of theories related to prejudice and discrimination to understand what motivates the negative treatment of minoritized employees. We will also consider a variety of social identities (e.g., race, sexual orientation, religion, age) and how employee experiences are impacted by having those social identities. This course will further identify and critically examine organizational strategies aimed at improving diversity and inclusion.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, fully engaged students will be able to:

- Critically evaluate complex organizational issues related to diversity and inclusion
- Explain the various dimensions of diversity and their relevance to employees' experiences in the workplace
- Apply knowledge and skills gained in this course to create more inclusive workplace environments

This course additionally fulfills the following learning objectives outlined by the *School of Management and Labor Relations*.

| Knowledge of Theory, Practice and Application |
|---|
| <p>IV. Theoretical Perspectives - Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of the practical perspectives, theories and concepts in their field of study • Evaluate and apply theories from social science disciplines to workplace issues |

V. Understanding Context – Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience of, and perspectives on work
- Analyze a contemporary global issue in the management field from a multi-disciplinary perspective
- Analyze issues related to business strategies, organizational structures, and work systems
- Analyze issues related to selection, motivation, and development of talent in a global context

Required Text: There is no required textbook for this class. All readings that will be completed this semester are available through Canvas and are presented in the course schedule below.

Prerequisites/Course Information: There are no prerequisites for this course and it is open to HRM majors and minors and well as non-majors. This course counts toward the Core Curriculum 21C requirement. It also counts as an elective toward the HRM major, as well as toward various majors and minors offered by the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department.

Instructional Mode and Technology Requirements. This course will be offered face-to-face but may require virtual instruction for some portion of the semester. Should we move to virtual instruction, we will prioritize meeting via Zoom at the scheduled times for our course so we can continue to engage synchronously. All course materials will be distributed through Canvas and all course assignments will be submitted through Canvas.

To be successful in this course, students will need access to Canvas, internet connection, a device that supports Zoom (should we move to virtual instruction for any period of time), and a device that allows students to complete written assignments. Closed captioning is available through Zoom for any virtual meetings to increase the accessibility of the course content. Any posted videos will also contain closed captioning. Students are also encouraged to use Zoom for virtual office hours and meetings if they feel most comfortable meeting virtually.

Attendance Policy and Course Engagement. It is expected that you attend every class, arrive on time, do not leave early, and participate the best you can. Attendance and participation are critical to your success in this course. If you cannot attend class, please let me know beforehand and I’ll be happy to review any class materials you have questions about at a later date.

Health-Related Absences. Although attendance is important for your success and engagement in this course, I understand that some students may experience physical and/or mental health concerns during the semester. I do not require students to submit any documentation of such concerns to protect your privacy. Instead, please communicate with me that you are experiencing a health concern that will affect your attendance and/or coursework. We will work together to arrange extensions for missed coursework that are commensurate with the severity and length of the health concern experienced. Long term health concerns may require further documentation as per university policy.

Religious/Cultural Observances. I am also aware that many religious/cultural observances outside of the dominant/Christian tradition are not officially recognized by the university. Excused absences will be granted for any absences that correspond to religious/cultural holidays or observations. Please communicate with me about these absences ahead of time.

Course Grades. Your grade in this course will be based on five components: a series of in-class activities, three exams, a final project, leading a brief class discussion about a current event, and a final reflection. Each of these components is described below:

In-Class Activities. The first component of your grade for this course is a series of activities that will be completed each week during class time. These activities might vary but will generally consist of participation in small group discussions. The purpose of these activities is to provide students with an opportunity to apply the content learned in class. Each activity is worth up to 10 points. I understand that there are times that you will not be able to make it to class. For that reason, your two lowest grades will be dropped (i.e., we will complete 10 activities but only 8 will count towards your grade). That means that you can miss two activities with no penalty and documentation is not required for those absences. **80 points**

I will use the following rubric for evaluating your participation in in-class discussions:

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| Full Mastery 10 points | Made high-quality contributions to the classroom discussion. Integrated information from the course material into the discussion. Responded to the instructor and other students in an informative and respectful way. Responses indicate clear preparation prior to class and active listening during class. |
| Proficient 6-9 points | Made contributions to the classroom discussion that were either the same quality as those described above but were infrequent or were frequent but did not meet the qualities described above. |
| Room for Growth 2-5 points | Made small contributions to the classroom discussion that were limited in their scope and/or their support. Perhaps contributions were only made when specifically prompted by the instructor. |
| Incomplete 0 points | Did not participate in the classroom discussion or was absent. |

Exams. Three noncumulative exams will be given during the semester. Each exam will consist of 30 multiple choice questions (worth 1 point each), 10 fill-in-the-blank questions (worth 1 point each), and 2 short answer questions (worth 5 points each). All material covered in class (e.g., lectures, discussions, etc.) and all material in the textbook (unless otherwise stated) may be covered on an exam. Therefore, topics not covered in class but included in the textbook, or not in the textbook but covered in class, may appear on the exams. **150 points (3 x 50 points each)**

Final Project. Students will also complete a final project that focuses on translating information from the course to a broader audience. The goal of this project is to design content that could be used by popular press outlets to inform and guide organizational

leaders regarding issues related to diversity and inclusion. Students will select 5 topics related to the course content and create brief summaries for a lay audience. You may choose to create written summaries, or you may select another format such as a presentation, podcast, or other medium. More detailed instructions can be found in Canvas. The final project is due on May 4th at 5:00pm. No late submissions will be accepted for the final project. **100 points**

Current Events Presentation/Discussion Lead. Our understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices are ever evolving and there are many real-world examples of organizations attempting to navigate DEI-related challenges. We will therefore devote time each class period to discussing current events related to diversity, equity, and inclusion at work. Our goal will be to consider real-world organizational practices and apply course content to critique those practices.

Students will work in small groups to identify a current event (i.e., something that has been in the news in the last year or so) relevant to diversity, equity, and inclusion at work. Groups will then present the current event to the class and facilitate a discussion about the event. More detailed instructions are available through Canvas. **50 points**

Final Reflection. The final component of your grade will be a brief reflection exercise that will be completed outside of class. The goal of the reflection exercise is to use the material learned in this course to design a plan for implementing what you know about diversity, equity, and inclusion into your future workplaces. This can focus on your own behaviors, how you might challenge the behaviors of others, how DEI would be integrated into your leadership approach, and so on. The full prompt will be available in Canvas. The final reflection is due April 20th at 5:00pm. There will be a penalty of 10% per day for late assignments. You will have one week beyond the due date to receive partial credit for this assignment. **20 points**

To summarize, the total points available in the course and the points that can be earned for each assignment are shown below:

| Activity | Points |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| In-class activities | 80 |
| Exams | 150 |
| Final project | 100 |
| Presentation/Discussion lead | 50 |
| Final reflection | 20 |
| Total | 400 |

Exam Makeup Policy. Makeup exams will be provided in the event that students have a legitimate reason for missing the scheduled exam. That includes family emergencies, religious holidays, illness, and other forms of emergencies. Please reference the absence policies stated above in the syllabus for more details. Please let me know as soon as possible if you need to arrange a makeup and we will work together to identify an alternative date and time for the

exam. I reserve the right to offer an alternative exam in the same format (i.e., an exam containing different questions) if there are concerns about test security.

Grading Scale. The grading scale used in this course is presented below.

| Percentage | Points | Grade |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 90-100 | 360-400 | A |
| 85-89.9 | 340-359 | B+ |
| 80-84.9 | 320-339 | B |
| 75-79.9 | 300-319 | C+ |
| 70-74.9 | 280-299 | C |
| 60-69.9 | 240-279 | D |
| ≤ 59.9 | ≤ 239 | F |

Grade Dissemination Plan. Grades for coursework will be disseminated through Canvas. In addition to numeric grades, feedback will be provided to students for all written coursework. Students are encouraged to review the feedback provided before submitting subsequent assignments.

Grade Inquiries. Students are encouraged to ask questions about their grades or seek additional feedback on graded assignments. However, I ask that any inquiries or disputes about grades in this course be made within *one week* of the test or assignment being graded to allow for a prompt resolution to any issues that arise.

Email. I try to respond to all emails as quickly as possible. However, in the event that I cannot get back to you right away, please give me 24 hours to respond. If you haven't received a response in 24 hours, please try an alternative route (i.e., if you tried my Rutgers email, try my Gmail, and vice versa). Technology issues have been known to occur and I don't want you to go without an answer because I did not receive an email.

Grades of "Incomplete". The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course. If an incomplete is awarded, the remaining work must be completed within a reasonable timeframe after the end of the course as determined by the instructor. Once the additional course work has been submitted, your grade will change to a regular letter grade.

Students with Disabilities. Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services at 848-202-3111 or dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu. Students can alternatively visit the office located in Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145. The Office of Disability Services will identify a Coordinator who will then provide documentation to the student. Students can register with the Office at the following link: [Getting Registered | Office of Disability Services \(rutgers.edu\)](#).

Ethics Statement. Students in this class and in all courses at Rutgers University are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism in written work, receiving and providing unauthorized assistance, and sabotaging the work of others are among the behaviors that constitute violations of the Academic Integrity Policy. The Academic Integrity Policy defines all forms of cheating and the procedures for dealing with violations. You should be familiar with this policy: [University Policy 10.2.13 \(rutgers.edu\)](https://www.rutgers.edu/policy/10.2.13).

Responsible Employee Reporting. Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendix A to University Policy 10.3.12. For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance – Rutgers University | Division of Student Affairs – New Brunswick](https://www.rutgers.edu/division-of-student-affairs).

Point of View. The course materials and in-class discussions may suggest a particular point of view on course topics. This perspective is my own and I do not expect students to uncritically adopt it. I encourage you to disagree with the ideas presented in the course material as well as the perspectives of your colleagues in the course. **Please express yourself.** A significant part of a college education is learning about the complexity of various issues; therefore, it is important that we listen and respect one another but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented in class for discussion.

Class Climate. In our class, we will engage in some difficult topics, including, but not limited to homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, and sexual violence. It is important that you engage with these topics as they shape our field of study. However, I also recognize that you may find some of these topics emotionally challenging. I have been careful in selecting how these topics are discussed in class to balance the learning goals of the course with the potential for psychological distress. Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns you have about the course material. If needed, I encourage you to utilize resources on campus.

Engaging in these difficult conversations also requires students to participate in the course in an inclusive way that respects the diverse backgrounds and experiences of your classmates. I encourage everyone to participate and offer their input into the course. This includes being able to respectfully disagree with your classmates and challenge their ideas. However, it is crucial that we do so in an appropriate way. Any form of discriminatory language, including heterosexist,

sexist, transnegative, racist, ableist, ageist, bodyist, or otherwise derogatory comments, are not welcome in this course. Additionally, I ask students to adhere to the following during class discussions: present well-reasoned arguments that draw on evidence from the course and other sources, be mindful of the language you use, and avoid personally criticizing your peers.

It is also my commitment to provide a class environment where, if something is occurring that prevents us from being able to succeed, we will talk about and address it. I may not always be aware of misconduct that happens, and I encourage students to bring any issues to my attention.

Pronouns and Names. It is my desire that I, and your fellow students, will honor the name and pronouns that you would like used when addressing you. I will create space within the classroom for you to notify me of your name and pronouns, but you may also contact me privately.

Child Policy. It is understandable that parents may occasionally have parenting responsibilities that conflict with the time of our class. Bringing a child to class on these occasions is permitted, as long as we do not exceed the COVID-19 safety capacity for the room. Additionally, exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class. We can also discuss makeup work for occasions when you are required to stay home to provide childcare.

Student Well-Being. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available at Rutgers University. Please contact Counseling Services at (848) 932-7884 or by visiting <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>. We additionally have a survivor advocacy program for students who have experienced violence and/or assault: (848) 932-1181 (for the crisis intervention line); <http://vpva.rutgers.edu/>.

Credit. Some components of this syllabus were created with guidance from the university of Michigan (<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/inclusive-syllabus-language/>).

Course Schedule and Reading List

Week 1 January 19th

Introduction to Course

Topics:

Identify the aims of the course
Introduce the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion
Identify the importance of DEI for organizations and employees

Reading: Sherbin, L., & Rashid, R. (2017). Diversity doesn't stick without inclusion. *Harvard Business Review*. Available at <https://hbr.org/2017/02/diversity-doesnt-stick-without-inclusion?registration=success>

Week 2 January 26th

Diversity Theories

Topics:

Introduce terminology to discuss DEI and social identities
Identify key theories related to diversity, equity, and inclusion
Examine current legal protections in the United States

Reading: DeLamater, J. D., & Hyde, J. S. (1998). Essentialism vs. social constructionism in the study of human sexuality. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 35, 10-18.

Week 3 February 2nd

Race

Topics:

Review the historical context of racism in the United States
Examine unique barriers facing specific racial/ethnic groups
Evaluate evidence of racial bias in the workplace

Reading: Quillian, L., Pager, D., Hexel, O., & Midtboen, A. H. (2017). Meta-analysis of field experiments shows no change in racial discrimination in hiring over time. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114, 10870-10875.
<https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.1706255114>

Current Events Presentation 1

Week 4 February 9th

Sex and Gender

Topics:

Understand the impact of sex and gender on workplace experiences
Evaluate evidence of gender bias in the workplace
Discuss gender roles and stereotypes, and their contribution to gender bias in the workplace
Exam 1 Review

Reading: Hyde, J. S. (2005). The gender similarities hypothesis. *American Psychologist*, 60, 581-592.

Current Events Presentation 2

Week 5 February 16th

Exam 1

Students will take the first noncumulative exam during our regularly scheduled class time.

Week 6 February 23rd

Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity

Topics:

Identify terminology related to sexual orientation and gender identity
Discuss the unique experiences of LGBTQIA+ employees
Examine the impact of organizational practices on LGBTQIA+ employees

Reading: Thoroughgood, C. N., Sawyer, K., & Webster, J. R. (2020). Creating a trans-inclusive workplace. *Harvard Business Review*. Available at <https://hbr.org/2020/03/creating-a-trans-inclusive-workplace>

Current Events Presentation 3

Week 7 March 2nd

Ability Status

Topics:

Identify common barriers faced by employees with disabilities
Examine the differences between having a disability and other social identities
Evaluate ways that organizations can increase accessibility for employees

Reading: Henneborn, L. (2021). Make it safe for employees to disclose their disabilities. *Harvard Business Review*. Available at [Make It Safe for Employees to Disclose Their Disabilities \(hbr.org\)](https://hbr.org/2021/03/make-it-safe-for-employees-to-disclose-their-disabilities)

Current Events Presentation 4

Week 8 March 9th

Spring Break

No class

Week 9 March 16th

Religion

Topics:

Examine how organizational practices are influenced by the dominant religion
Evaluate evidence of bias related to religious identities
Identify ways organizations can offer religious accommodations
Exam 2 review

Reading: Ghumman, S., Ryan, A. M., Barclay, L. A., & Markel, K. S. (2013). Religious discrimination in the workplace: A review and examination of current and future trends. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 28, 439-454.

Current Events Presentation 5

Week 10 March 23rd

Exam 2

Topics:

Students will take the second noncumulative exam during our regularly scheduled class time.

Week 11 March 30th

Age

Topics:

Identify and evaluate common stereotypes about the impact of aging at work
Examine evidence of bias toward older workers
Discuss the challenges and opportunities of our aging workforce

Reading: Truxillo, D. M., Finkelstein, L. M. Pytlovany, A. C., & Jenkins, J. S. (2015). Age discrimination at work: A review of the research and recommendations for the future. In A. Collella & E. B. King (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Workplace Discrimination*, pp. 129-142.
[Available here](#)

Current Events Presentation 6

Topics:

Introduce intersectionality as a conceptual perspective
Examine how multiple social identities intersect to influence employee experiences
Evaluate how intersectionality changes our understanding of DEI

Reading: Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *The University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 140, 25-32. (**read pages 139-152**)

Current Events Presentation 7

Topics:

Determine best practices for actively managing diversity at work
Critically evaluate the efficacy of common organizational interventions
Identify newer practices for increasing employee inclusion
Exam 3 review

Reading: Lindsey, A., King, E., Membere, A., & Cheung, H. K. (2017). Two types of diversity training that really work. *Harvard Business Review*. Available at <https://hbr.org/2017/07/two-types-of-diversity-training-that-really-work>

Current Events Presentation 8

Class is cancelled due to conference travel

Final Reflection due at 5:00pm

Students will take the third noncumulative exam during our regularly scheduled class time.

Students will submit their final projects via Canvas by 5:00 pm on May 4th.