Instructor: Jen Wallin-Ruschman
Office Hours in Bowen 216: Mon. & Wed. 5-6:30; Tues. & Thur. 9:30-11 and 12:15-2, and by appointment
Email: jwruschman@abac.edu I prefer to be emailed directly at this address (please do NOT email me through D2L)
Office Phone: (229) 391-5092

How to address me? I’m fine with Jen, but if you want a more formal title then Dr. Jen is good. I really don’t care for Ms. or Mrs. and no need to say Wallin-Ruschman.

Overview:
Welcome! This outline provides you a resource to consult for frequently asked questions. Read it completely before our second class meeting and consult it throughout the semester. This is an upper division course designed to offer an exploration of the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation within rural settings. A central focus will be developing an understanding of how systems of oppression reinforce each other and intersect to create an overall matrix of domination. We will not study four different systems of oppression; rather, we will explore how our lives are shaped by various combinations of these target and agent groups. Course content will introduce you to the social, psychological, relational, linguistic, and institutional mechanisms that support oppression as well as interventions aimed at transforming oppressive systems. Class time will include discussions, presentations, activities, group work, lecture, videos, and/or other interactive material.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Examine the social, psychological, relational, linguistic, and institutional mechanisms that support systems of oppression involving race, class, gender, and sexual orientation
2. Explain the intersection of these systems of oppression
3. Understand the psychological and social impact of oppression on both “agent” and “target” groups, particularly in rural settings
4. Evaluate an array of theoretical perspectives on oppression

Pre-requisites/Co-requisites:
Exit learning support English and Reading.

Course Requirements:
For this course you will need to purchase the book Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, 3rd edition. You will also need a pack of index cards.
Desire 2 Learn:
This course will rely on the D2L system (https://abac.view.usg.edu/) as an additional resource for learning. I will be using D2L to post additional readings, slides, links, grades, and announcements. D2L is also a place to continue in-class discussions. I sometimes send important announcements out through D2L so please check it daily.

Turnitin.com:
For this class all written assignments (except the introduction and closing assignments) are to be submitted electronically to turnitin.com. When you register for turnitin.com use the class code 8135373 and password empowerment.

Classroom norms:
This course will rely heavily on active participation from students. To have a productive learning environment, I believe it is essential to promote a respectful class climate. Some guidelines to keep in mind in accomplishing this goal are: speak from your own experience, engage thoughtfully with the content of the class, do not expect yourself or other class members to speak as a representative of a social and/or cultural group. Differences of opinion are welcome, as they help us to re-examine our own thinking. You should always maintain respect for opinions differing from your own and practice confidentiality if other students choose to share personal information. In addition, please avoid side conversations, texting/cell phone use, off topic computer work, and other behavior that is distracting to me and other students. These guidelines are just a starting point, on the first day of class we will work together to develop a set of classroom guidelines. It is also expected that you come to class having read the assigned text and be prepared to discuss the text each and every class period.

Instructor norms:
I am committed to facilitating your learning of course material. Please feel free to contact me by email or speak to me after class or during office hours about any questions or concerns you have. You can generally expect me to respond to emails within 48 hours during the week. Also, I will make every effort to return assignments in a timely manner. Expect assignments to be handed back one to two weeks after they are taken/ submitted.

Office Hours:
My office hours are listed on the first page of the syllabus. If my designated office hours do not work with your schedule feel free to email me so we can find an alternate time to meet. If you have a question about the material, want to review your exam, or have a concern about any of the assignments – please come by office hours.

Ethical Behavior:
Students are expected to maintain a high standard of personal ethics. Any evidence of cheating, helping others to cheat, or plagiarism will lead to serious academic consequences, such as zero credit for associated work, and/or failing the course. To avoid plagiarism on written assignments students must use citations and references when they quote or paraphrase the work of other authors, including our text.
College Policy on Academic Dishonesty:

*Academic Dishonesty:* Academic irregularities include, but are not limited to, giving or receiving of unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any academic assignment; taking or attempting to take, stealing, or otherwise obtaining in an unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the education process; selling, giving, lending, or otherwise furnishing to any person any question and/or answers to any examination known to be scheduled at any subsequent date; fabricating, forging, or falsifying lab or clinical results; plagiarism in any form related to themes, essays, term papers, tests, and other assignments; breaching any confidentiality regarding patient information.

*Disciplinary Procedures & Appeals Process:* Incidents which violate this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the current procedures outlined in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. Students will have the right to appeal any disciplinary decision.

**Attendance**
Attendance is essential to this course as much of the course time will be spent on in-class activities and discussions that require your presence.

**Missing Class**
When you miss a class meeting you should utilize your peers to get notes and handouts from the class. **You do not need to let me know when you are missing class and please do not email me to ask what you missed in class or “if we did anything important.”** Everything we do in class is important.

**Late Assignments**
Late assignments will be marked down one letter grade for every day they are late. So, if you wrote a “B” paper, and turn in it one day late, you would receive a “C”.

**Student Resources:**
**Disability Accommodations**
If there is a student in this class who has specific needs because of learning disabilities or any other disability, please feel free to contact the instructor.

**Weather Hotline:** In case of inclement weather during class we will move to the safety of the designated shelter. If you have experienced inclement weather and want to check on the ABAC status for class meetings, check the ABAC website or call the Inclement Weather Hotline: 229-391-5225

**Other:**
If you feel there is something about you that might impact your experience in this class that I should be aware of, please let me know. If anything arises during the term, please speak to me as soon as possible. These policies are firm but not rock-hard (i.e., things happen). I encourage you to contact me sooner rather than later if you are having any sort of issue that affects your completion of the course.
Grading Scheme:

- **Class Participation & Attendance:** 100 points
- **Section Responses:** (40 points x 5) 200 points
- **Section Facilitation:** 50 points
- **Photovoice Assignment:** 50 points
- **Action Assignment:** 150 points

**Total: 550 points**

Letter grades are based upon total points earned.


**Assignments:**

**Class Participation and Attendance (100 points)**

Attendance and participation are essential components of this class and all college courses. We will strive to create a classroom atmosphere in which open dialog and communication is comfortable and encouraged. Please ask questions, offer observations, and suggest alternative perspectives during class. Participation will also make up a portion of your grade and will be divide among the following three categories.

**I. Introduction Assignment (10 points)**

On the first day of class you will write a statement (about a page or two) about why you are taking this course (your objectives), what you want to learn, and some information about yourself (e.g., major, your future goals).

**II. Participating in class discussions & activities, filling out exit cards, and bringing discussion questions (80 points)**

This course will include discussions and activities designed to increase your understanding of the material. ALL portions of in-class time (including lecture) require active engagement for you to learn. Additionally, it is important that you read the assigned readings BEFORE you come to class. This will not only allow you to participate, but also help you comprehend the material, which will set you up to do well on class assignments.

To be awarded the full 80 points for participation in this course you must come to class AND be an active participant by participating in the following THREE ways:

1. Being active in class discussion and activities by contributing your voice and being a vocal participant in both large and small group discussions and activities. Asking questions is also a great way to be an engaged class member. Further, you cannot be engaged if you are on your phone or doing off topic work on your computer- so please avoid these activities that are distracting to yourself, myself (yes, I can see you), and other class participants.

2. In addition to active participation, daily reflection cards or Exit Cards will be collected. These will be written on index cards during the last few minutes of class. Each exit card should include a brief reflection on the day, which might include some combination of answers to the following questions:
   i. What did you learn?
ii. What are you confused about?
iii. What went poorly?
iv. What went well?

You will need to put your name on your exit cards so I know you are turning in thoughtful responses. **These cards not only let me know you are attending class and are an engaged class participant, but also help me be a better teacher and make the class the best it can be.**

3. **You should bring 2-3 discussion questions to every class period that has assigned readings.** These discussion questions should address issues in at least 2 different readings assigned for the day. Some days I will collect discussion questions and on other days I will ask individuals to ask their discussion question to help stimulate class discussion on the readings. Your questions should address some aspect of the reading you found interesting, confusing, or problematic.

Your 80 potential points in this category will be assigned utilizing the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>72-80</td>
<td>Actively participates every week. Asks questions and brings up discussion points without having to be prompted. Discussion questions are exceptionally thoughtful and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the readings. Completes high quality class activities and thoughtful exit cards. Attends at least approximately 90% of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>64-71</td>
<td>Actively participates each week. Demonstrates an understanding of the readings on a weekly basis. Discussion questions are relevant, and demonstrate an understanding of the readings. Completes the class activities and exit cards. Attends at least approximately 80% of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>56-63</td>
<td>Participates each week. Engages with the week’s topic and readings although some gaps in understanding may be evident. Listens but rarely comments. Occasionally does not have discussion questions prepared. Only completes some of the class activities. Attends at least approximately 70% of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>48-55</td>
<td>Does not participate actively. Responds to direct questions but does not volunteer opinions. Comments reveal only surface level understanding of the readings/topic. Rarely has prepared discussion questions. Does not volunteer information and lack of preparation may be evident. Does not complete class activities. Attends at least approximately 60% of class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 47</td>
<td>Does not participate in class. Is distracted in class (e.g., on phone, side conversations, off topic computer work). Does not read before class and does not have discussion questions. Attends approximately 50% or less of classes.</td>
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**III. Closing Assignment** (10 points)

On the final day of class you will bring in a short response (approximately 1-2 pages) detailing your experiences in the course. Specifically, some examples of what you took away from the course, what you would do differently if you took the course again, and what I could do differently if I taught the course again. There is no right or wrong answer, the assignment is simply intended to facilitate reflection on what you have taken away from this course and help me improve the course in the future.
Section Responses (40 points x 5 responses= 200 points)
This response paper should be 3-4 double spaced pages and submitted on turnitin.com on the due dates indicated in the attached schedule. **This and all other assignments in this course should cite your sources using APA format.** There will be one response paper due for each of the sections we cover in the class (e.g., foundations, sex & gender, sexual orientation, race & ethnicity, class, and intersections). There are 6 sections covered in the class so you have the option of skipping one of the responses or dropping your lowest grade. **However, late assignments will not be accepted and will count as your missed assignment.**

Responses should include 3 areas of discussion:
1) Identify and discuss at least 4 theories, concepts, or ideas from the readings. You should reference multiple readings from the assigned section. Your response should integrate what you have learned in this section of the class (from readings, class discussion, and other course activities) with concepts we have previously discussed in the course. In other words you should be synthesizing the information from this section of the course much as you would if you were writing a brief literature review on the assigned readings.
2) Apply the readings to some aspect of your life and/or apply the readings to your work or expected future work in rural communities.
3) Offer at least one example of how the information in the reading can help you create social change or work against oppression.

Photovoice Intersection Assignment (35 points + 15 points= 50 points)
Early in the semester we will read and discuss an article detailing the photovoice method. After becoming more familiar with this method you will begin to take pictures that capture some aspect of intersectionality in your life. Although we will be spending the first few weeks of the course talking about individual aspects of identity that are associated with privilege and marginalization (race, class, gender, and sexual orientation) it is important to always consider that these (and other) identities do not exist in isolation but in a complex and unique matrix within each of us.

Your pictures may demonstrate intersectionality in one of three ways:
1) Photos represent the intersection of your own various identities, including those that are associated with privilege and oppressed identities.
2) Photos that attempt to illustrate intersectionality as a concept. You might take pictures of items, locations, and abstract images that would help others understand intersectional theory and the matrix of oppression and privilege.
3) Photos that focus on one particular aspect of intersectionality or one particular social location that you belong to. For example, you might use the photovoice assignment to address experiences of disabled Latino men or perhaps working class Black women.

Your grade for this assignment will come from 2 areas, an in-class presentation, including the description of your photos, and a 2 page paper. You should choose 5 or 6 photos that best represent the aspect of intersection you choose to address. You should title and write a brief description for each photo that includes content from the course as well as any other relevant and reliable sources you use to make your argument. Towards the end of the semester we will
have two days dedicated to these photovoice presentations (see the attached schedule). On your presentation day you will need to come to class with some way to display your 5-6 photos largely (print or electronic is fine). You will spend 5-7 total minutes describing your photos to the class and how each connects to the concept of intersectionality. You will also turn in a 2 page reflection paper and each of your photos and their descriptions to turnitin.com before class on the day you are scheduled to present. Your reflection paper should address what this project has taught you about intersection as a concept and how this concept applies to your life and has impacted your thinking about race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. You should strive to make connections between theories of intersection and oppression discussed in the course and the explanations/descriptions of your photos. **The 50 points for this project will be based on the quality of your presentation and photo descriptions (35 points) and the quality of your reflection paper (15 points).**

**Action Assignment (50 points + 75 points + 25 points= 150 points)**
For this assignment you will work as an individual or a group (the choice is yours but the maximum groups size is 4) to design and implement an action in a community. Your action should focus on either raising awareness about one of the forms of oppression or privilege discussed in the course or seek to take action to alleviate some of the negative impacts of your chosen form of oppression. Possible projects could be, videos, art installations, informational brochures/websites, curriculums, trainings, demonstrations, advocacy campaigns, or anything else really!

You will **work with a community partner** to develop an action that they have identified as a need or they see as helpful. In the beginning of the semester, we will discuss the communities you will have the opportunity to work with. If you already have connections with a community or community organization you should meet with me so we can discuss if you can work this community and how you will come up with a project with them. Developing connections and actions in this course may be helpful to other aspects of your studies including your internship and/or capstone project.

**You must not only plan but also carry out this action assignment during the term.**

**Preliminary action papers** that detail your action project are due on the date in the attached syllabus. This 4 page paper details:
1) A description of the community you will be working with
2) Description of meetings and discussions you have had with the community
3) Details of action you have planned to undertake
4) Research and course content that supports your action rationale

**This preliminary paper is worth 50 points.**

Your **final action paper** is due on the date in the attached syllabus. This paper should be 7-8 pages the first part of the paper will be **an update** of the preliminary paper you submitted earlier in the term. Your final paper should include:
1) A description of the community you will be working with
2) A description of meetings and discussions you have had with the community (this should include more meeting than your preliminary paper)
3) A description of the action you undertook, including evidence documenting your action AND course theories and content that support your action (this should include content from throughout the semester)

4) A reflection on your action. What went well? What could have gone better?

5) A plan to follow-up with your community or continue working with them

This final paper is worth 75 points.

Your final 25 points will come from presenting your action project to the community. We will schedule an afternoon or evening celebration towards the end of the term and reserve a large room at ABAC. We will invite members of the ABAC community, your family, friends, and members of the communities you worked with to come to our gathering (we will have food!). Each individual will present for approximately 5 minutes on their action project. Groups that worked together should present together, so a group of 3 would present for 15 minutes. Presentations should include visual documentation of your project.

Section Facilitation (50 points)
Towards the beginning of the term we will break into groups of 3. Each group will be assigned to a course section and associated date. Each group will be responsible for facilitating the entire class (75 minutes) on their assigned day. The 50 points will be awarded from 20 points from peer evaluation, 20 points from my evaluation, and 10 points from other group member evaluation. The grading rubric for each of these aspects are posted in D2L. Groups should not lecture for the entire class but will utilize other creative ways of facilitating learning (e.g., activities).

It is the job of each section facilitation group to take what we have learned about their assigned section (e.g., sex & gender, sexual orientation, race & ethnicity, class, intersection, and action) and apply the concepts and theories from the course readings and discussions to the rural experience. Groups will be graded on the effectiveness of their presentation as well as how well they apply their assigned section to rural lives and communities. Groups should seek out and use at least 2 scholarly sources in preparing their presentations. Groups should also have a handout to give the class that list their sources and other resources they found for addressing rural experiences of their assigned section.

Extra Credit: (up to 10 pts)
This term we will cover a wide range of topics, each of which people dedicate their entire lives to understand. As such, I do not know everything. If someone asks a question in class that the instructor or another classmate is unable to provide a satisfactory answer to, then you will be given an opportunity to independently research the question. Please let me know if you decide to take this opportunity and what you will be writing about. To receive any credit you must submit your findings in writing (at least 2 double spaced pages) by the date indicated in the schedule. You should be using at least one scholarly source for your response. Students may be encouraged, but not required, to spend a few minutes presenting their results in class. There may be opportunities for this throughout the term but there is designated time during the last week of class.

Grade Disputes: All grade disputes must be submitted in writing. The written grading dispute should clearly articulate your justification, or principled argument, for the grade adjustment.