HR 5013-493: Current Problems in Human Relations

Course Description:
The United States as well as the global community that we are part of is replete with ever-changing social problems. In this class, we will grapple with some of these issues in order to examine the role of HR professionals in addressing concerns such as racial discrimination, refugees, gender-based violence, and many other pressing and current problems.

Course Dates:
September 1 – December 31, 2018
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: August 3, 2018

Site Director:
This is a three-credit hour online course. Please see your local Site Director or email our online site coordinator at aponline@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Zermarie Deacon, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: Department of Human Relations
601 Elm Ave
PHSC 709
Norman, OK 73069
Telephone Number: 405-325-2749
Email Address: Zermarie@ou.edu
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-4:30PM, Thursdays 1:30-4:30PM CST

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK, and can be ordered online, by phone, by email, or by fax. Ordering online at http://www.bkstr.com/oklahomastore/home is strongly recommended – students can track the status of their order within 48 hours. If an order has not been shipped within three days, students can contact the Follett textbook manager by phone (405) 325-3511, (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or email 0831mgr@fhg.follett.com. Phone orders (ask for the textbook manager and identify yourself as an Advanced Programs student) can be placed 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). Fax orders can be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Text prices are available online.


2. Materials posted on the OU Canvas learning management system: Access Canvas at https://canvas.ou.edu, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material.
The goal of this course is to familiarize you with some of the major current problems facing our global population. We will approach our discussion from the perspective of intersectionality, allowing you to develop the skills necessary to analyze these problems taking into consideration the interplay amongst factors such as race, class, gender, nation of origin, etc. Finally, we will begin to grapple with solutions to these concerns. Ideally, you will leave the class better prepared to identify and analyze significant social problems.

Course Outline:
You will be able to follow the course progression under the “modules” tab on Canvas. You will be expected to complete module-specific work and assignments as well as four major assignments. Module-specific work substitutes for time spent in the classroom. These assignments will include completing the assigned reading, participating in discussion posts, and providing reactions to materials posted online (e.g., videos, notes, etc.). Each module-specific assignment will be worth ten points. Five points will be possible simply for completing the assignment, two points will be possible for following the directions correctly, and three points will be possible for the overall quality of the work that is completed. If you complete a module-specific assignment late, your grade for that particular project will be reduced by 50%. Major assignments will receive a grade out of 100. Specific grading criteria will be provided for each major assignment.

Information regarding coursework is provided below, including information about major assignments. In addition, module-specific content will be updated by Monday of each week. You should thus aim to log on to Canvas on Monday or Tuesday of each week. Relevant content will be placed under the “modules” tab. Please also check the announcements and calendar regularly.

All assignments are due by 5:00pm CST on the due date.

See below for the order in which modules will be completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Chapter Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Chapter IV. Identities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Chapter V. Families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Chapter VI. Constructing gender in the workplace</td>
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<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Chapter VII. Education and Schools</td>
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</table>
Assignments, Grading, and Due Dates:

Reading material:
Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to complete numerous reading assignments. You will be expected to read all assigned chapters from your textbook as outlined in the module-specific instructions posted on Canvas. Additional materials such as news articles or TedTalks may additionally be required for certain modules. Finally, you will be expected to complete a book review relevant to this class. You may select a book from the list below, or you can select your own text. Any text that is not the list below needs to be approved by the instructor first. **These books will not be provided by Advanced Programs.**

Book List:
1. Sex object: A memoir, J. Valenti, 2017
2. Blood and earth: Modern slavery, ecocide, and the secret to saving the world, K. Bales, 2016
3. $2.00 a day: Living on almost nothing in America, K. J. Edin & L. Shaefer, 2015

Types of module-specific assignments:

Discussion posts:
During weeks where discussions posts are due, you will be expected to make two postings to the relevant discussion forum. First, you will be expected to post a response to the posed question. This response will be due by Wednesday of the week during which the assignment is due. Then, by Friday of that same week, you will be expected to post a response to at least one of your classmates. You are encouraged to engage in a dialogue with one another, however, a minimum of one response to your classmates is necessary. The professor will additionally make relevant postings to the forum.

During weeks that discussion posts are due, you will need to make both postings in order to receive full credit for the assignment. However, the assignment will only be considered late if you do not make the second posting on time. Failure to make the first posting on time will result in a two-point deduction for not following instructions correctly.

Reactions/responses:
During weeks that a response to online notes, videos, or the assigned readings are due, you will be expected to complete a written response to a reaction question. A question to which you are expected to respond, as well as the material needed to respond to the question and any relevant instructions, will be posted under the relevant module. Your response should be at least two double-spaced pages long.

Major assignments:
Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to complete four major assignments. These will be outlined below.

Reaction papers:
You will be expected to complete two reaction papers in response to two subchapters/papers of your choice. Your reaction papers provide you with an informal, yet scholarly forum in which to respond to the assigned reading. Your papers should be three to five double-spaced pages long and should be proofread and spell and grammar checked. You are not expected to use outside sources, but rather, are expected to provide your own response and reaction to the assigned reading material. However, any outside sources should be cited appropriately. You should consider the following questions when completing your
reaction papers: How are the issues the author raises relevant to current problems human relations? Do you agree with the author’s perspective and the argument that they are making? Why or why not? How does the chapter relate to the other material we have covered? What are your reactions to the chapter?

Additional information will be posted on Canvas. Your reaction papers will receive a grade out of 100, with papers demonstrating a high degree of critical thinking in response to the framing questions receiving the highest grades.

Book review:

Throughout the semester, you should be reading your selected text. You will be expected to complete a written review of this book. The book review should be three to five double-spaced pages long and should include your critical analysis of the book. You should discuss the content of the book, the author’s perspective, and your thoughts on this, and the book’s relevance to our course material. Any outside sources should be cited appropriately using correct APA formatting.

Your paper should be typed using 12-point font and conventional margins, should be proofread and spell and grammar checked, and should be formatted using APA stylistic guidelines. All papers should be submitted to Canvas. Your paper will receive a grade out of 100 and will be graded using the following criteria: 20% for using appropriate formatting, etc.; 30% for critical thinking (i.e., the degree to which you provide a thoughtful analysis and discussion of the book); and 50% for the content of your paper (i.e., the degree to which you meet the requirements of the assignment).

Unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor, or you experience a documented personal emergency, all late papers will be subjected to a grade deduction. Five points will be deducted from papers handed in on the due date but after 5pm. Following the due date, ten points will be deducted for each day that your paper is late.

Do not hesitate to contact the professor if you have any questions about this assignment.

Final paper:

For your final paper, you will be expected to select an issue relevant to current problems in human relations to analyze. You will be required to obtain approval for your topic from the professor by the relevant date. It is highly recommended that you select an aspect of the problem to discuss; this will make your paper more manageable (e.g., rather than looking just at drug use in general, look at teenage drug use or discuss urban homelessness, etc.). Draw upon your textbooks and the book review books for examples of the kinds of problems you may want to consider. You may also email the instructor with any questions.

Your paper should include an overview of the problem that you have selected. You should explain the various dimensions of the problem (e.g., the ways that race, class, gender, culture, etc. interact when considering this problem) and the reasons why you have selected it as a current problem for human relations. In addition, you should provide an analysis of some of the ways in which the problem can be addressed (what has already been done, why has this worked or not worked, what do you think should be done to address the problem and why, etc.).

You need to use at least seven sources for your paper, of which no more than two may be reports published by governmental, non-governmental, and/or non-profit organizations. The remainder of your sources needs to be scholarly books and/or journal articles. Only one of these may be a chapter we covered in class. Your paper should be approximately seven to ten pages long and should be typed, double-spaced, and should use conventional margins. Finally, your paper needs to conform to APA formatting guidelines.

Your paper will receive a grade out of 100. Late papers will receive an automatic 10-point deduction for each day the paper is late. Final grades will be assessed in the following manner: 10 points for stylistic considerations (correct use of APA format, font, margins, page length, etc.); 60 points for content (the thoroughness of your discussion of the problem you selected, the completeness of your analysis of potential solutions to the problem, etc.); 30 points for critical thinking (the degree to which you provide a thoughtful analysis of the dimensions of the problem, the thoughtfulness of your discussion of potential solutions to the problem, etc.)
Grading:
This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. The following scale will be used: A = 90%-100%; B = 80%-89%; C = 70%-79%; D = 60%-69%; F = < 60%

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Course Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module-specific online assignments:</td>
<td>See Canvas</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper topics due</td>
<td>October 14, 5PM CST</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Paper 1 due</td>
<td>October 21, 5PM CST</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Paper 2 due</td>
<td>November 18, 5PM CST</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review due</td>
<td>December 16, 5PM CST</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper due</td>
<td>December 31, 5PM CST</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.

Policy for Late Work:
Please contact the professor regarding his/her policy for late work

Attendance Policy:
In addition to interaction via Canvas and email contact, students are required to contact the instructor via email or telephone before the beginning of the course term for an initial briefing. Although physical class meetings are not part of this course, participation in all interactive, learning activities is required.

Student assignments and student/instructor communications will be conducted via Canvas, although students may contact the instructor via telephone, postal mail, email, or fax as needed

Incomplete Grade Policy:
A grade of “I” is not automatically assigned, but rather must be requested by the student by submitting to the instructor a “Petition for and Work to Remove an Incompleted Grade” form. An “I” can never be used in lieu of an “F” nor can an “I” be assigned because of excessive failure to participate in class activities.

Technical Support Information:
If you experience technical problems, contact Information Technology by visiting their website at: http://webapps.ou.edu/it/ or contacting them by telephone at: (405) 325-HELP (4357).
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Note: Attendance/absences do not apply to online courses. However, participation in all course activities is extremely important to student success in online courses.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore, all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc…in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc…; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at http://studentconduct.ou.edu/

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Adjustment for Pregnancy/Childbirth-Related Issues

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see http://www.ou.edu/content/eeo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html.
Title IX Resources

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24/7, counseling services, mutual no-contact orders, scheduling adjustments, and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at smo@ou.edu or (405) 325-2215 (8-5), or the Sexual Assault Response Team at (405) 615-0013 (24/7) to report an incident. To learn more about Title IX, please visit the Institutional Equity Office’s website at http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo.html

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Zermarie Deacon

Education

• 2003 M.A., Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan Department of Psychology. Thesis: The well-being of Muslim refugee women in resettlement: A needs assessment
• 1997 B.A. (Honours) Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, Department of Politics; Major: Political Philosophy
• 1996 B.A., Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, Major: Politics; Major: Philosophy

Current Positions

• 2007 - 2013 Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma, Assistant Professor
• 2007 – Present Affiliate Faculty, School of International and Area Studies
• 2008 - Present Women’s Studies Program, University of Oklahoma, Adjunct Professor
• 2012 – Present Women’s and Gender Studies Program Center for Social Justice, University of Oklahoma, Affiliate Faculty
• 2013 – Present Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma, Associate Professor

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

• International Human Relations
• Current Problems in Human Relations

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

• In addition to Current Problems in Human Relations I also teach International Human Relations and Strategies for Social Change at the graduate level. At the undergraduate level I teach a class entitled Gender and War as well as International Human Relations and Social Change Processes.
• My primary research interests are in cross-cultural definitions of health and wellbeing and factors that facilitate individuals’ attainment of wellbeing across different ecological contexts.

Representative Publications and Presentations

Refereed Publications:


**Presentations:**


**Representative Honors and Awards Received**

- **2011**  
  PI: Deacon; Co-PI: Pendley (Center for Applied Social Research, OU); Co- PI: Jervis (Center for Applied Social Research, OU) – CHRs as facilitators of health for Chickasaw elders. *OU Center for Research Program Development and Enrichment, Faculty Research Challenge Grant Program;* $44,225
- **2011**  
  University of Oklahoma, College of Arts and Sciences, *Junior Faculty Summer Fellowship*
- **2011**  
  University of Oklahoma, College of Arts and Sciences, *Faculty Enrichment Grant*
- **2011**  
  PI: Miller; Co-PI: Deacon; Co-PI: Wedel; Co-PI: Fitzgerald – Norman Center for Children and Families Photovoice Project/Girl Power Photovoice. *Seed grant awarded by the OU-TULSA Program in Community Health Research;* $38,477
- **2010**  
  University of Oklahoma, College of Arts and Sciences, *Faculty Enrichment Grant*