Global Perspectives: Social Justice and Making Change
LSC Practicum
Fall 2016

Instructor: Jara Connell, PhD Student in Anthropology
jarac@brandeis.edu
Faculty Sponsor: Janet McIntosh, Associate Professor of Anthropology
janetmc@brandeis.edu

Course Description:
This course explores several humanitarian and social justice issues that challenge humanity worldwide. Diversity – a central value of the Brandeis community – is an increasingly promoted ideal in our contemporary political landscape. Advocating and appreciating diversity requires one to consider and take seriously the different values, priorities, and beliefs held by communities of people around the globe. This course will consider inequality in light of these diverse world views as well as global power structures by focusing on themes with global relevancy such as race, healthcare, and environmental justice. This course will introduce tools for thinking through complex social problems as well as ways of conceptualizing the global, the local, and the relationship between those shifting and constructed locations.

While this course is focused on social problems, it also considers how communities have attempted to solve these problems. Students will analyze and evaluate local responses to these global inequalities in order to build models for effecting social change in ethical and conscientious ways. The class will work alongside faculty experts to understand and untangle case studies from around the world on a variety of relevant contemporary issues – including economic inequality, development, and gender identity. Ultimately, students will gain a nuanced understanding of some of the most urgent challenges facing humanity today, as well as a toolkit for facing these challenges, be it with policy, protest, or both.

Final Project:
Students will work in small groups (3-5 students) to understand a contemporary social issue of their choosing in its specific global and local context. This assignment involves three components: a research paper, a presentation, and a product.

- Research Paper: Students will collaborate on a 6-8 page research paper that explores both global and local perspectives on their topic. Students will also evaluate local and global responses to their topic and make suggestions for future action on their topic.
• Product: Students will create and promote a product that addresses the social issue their project addresses. This component could take many forms, and direct engagement with the issue is encouraged.
  o Example: Students could create a short documentary or PSA (5-10 mins) exploring a social issue and organize a viewing and discussion on campus.
  o Example: Students could contact an organization (an NGO or an educational program) working on their topic and offer to create useful promotional/educational materials for them, such as a
  o Example: Students could create a blog or social media account that contributes several (the range will depend on the medium) significant and thoughtful posts to an existing online conversation.
• Presentation: Students will present their project to the class in a 10-15 minute talk. This presentation should provide a summary of the group research paper, an explanation and presentation of the product, and connect their project to the themes of the course.

Sample Units:

**Topic: Race and Ethnicity**
**Case Study:** Land Reform in Zimbabwe  
**Faculty Expert:** Janet McIntosh, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Faculty Head of Global Perspectives LSC  
**Sample Readings:**

**Topic: International Development**
**Case Study:** Development NGOs in Papau New Guinea  
**Faculty Expert:** Rajesh Sampath, Associate Professor of the Philosophy of Justice, Rights, and Social Change and Associate Director of the Master's Program in Sustainable International Development  
**Sample Readings:**