Teaching for Social Justice

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Defining Social Justice

social justice  n. justice at the level of a society or state as regards the possession of wealth, commodities, opportunities, and privileges; cf. distributive justice
Much of the debate surrounding social justice has been concerned with the precise nature of fair distribution, and to what extent this may conflict with individual rights of acquisition and ownership.

Oxford English Dictionary

so·cial jus·tice
noun
  1. justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.
  2. "individuality gives way to the struggle for social justice"

Google: “define social justice”

The fair and proper administration of laws conforming to the natural law that all persons, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possessions, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice. See also civil rights.

The Business Dictionary

“When we talk and argue about social justice, what exactly are we talking and arguing about? Very crudely, I think, we are discussing how the good and bad things in life should be distributed among members of a human society. When, more concretely, we attack some policy or some state of affairs as socially unjust, we are claiming that a person, or more usually a category of persons, enjoys fewer advantages than that person or group of persons ought to enjoy (or bears more of the burdens than they ought to bear), given how other members of the society in question are faring.”

David Miller, Principles of Social Justice (page 1)
Transparent Assignment Template

This template can be used as a guide for developing and explaining in-class activities and out-of-class assignments. Making these aspects of each course activity or assignment explicitly clear to students has demonstrably enhanced students' learning in a national study.1

Due date:

Purpose: Define the learning objectives, in language and terms that help students recognize how this assignment will benefit their learning.

Skills: The purpose of this assignment is to help you practice the following skills that are essential to your success in this course / in school / in this field / in professional life beyond school:

Terms from Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives may help you pinpoint a particular skill in language that students will understand. Listed from cognitively simple to most complex these skills are:
- understanding basic disciplinary knowledge and methods/tools
- applying basic disciplinary knowledge/tools to problem-solving in a similar but unfamiliar context
- analyzing
- synthesizing
- judging/evaluating and selecting best solutions
- creating/inventing a new interpretation, product, theory.

Knowledge: This assignment will also help you to become familiar with the following important content knowledge in this discipline:
1. 
2. 

Task: Define what activities the student should do/perform. List any steps or guidelines, or a recommended sequence for the students’ efforts. “Question cues” from this chart might be helpful: <http://www.asainstitute.org/conference2013/handouts/20-Bloom-Question-Cues-Chart.pdf>.

Criteria for Success:

Define the characteristics of the finished product. Provide specific examples of what these characteristics look like in practice. With students, collaboratively analyze an example of good work before the students begin working. Offer a critiqued example of excellent work with specific indicators of what makes the work successful. Explain how excellent work differs from adequate work. It is often useful to provide a checklist of characteristics of successful work to help the student know if s/he is doing high quality work while s/he is working on the assignment. This enables students to evaluate the quality of their own efforts while they are working, and to judge the success of their completed work. Students can also use your checklist to provide feedback on peers’ coursework. Indicate whether this task/product will be graded and/or how it factors into the student’s overall grade for the course. Later, asking students to reflect and comment on their completed, graded work empowers them to focus on changes to their learning strategies that might improve their future work.

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Task:

Criteria for Success:
Selected Readings on Teaching for Social Justice

Books


Articles


Shaffer, Kris. 2015. “Homework is a Social Justice Issue.” Hybrid Pedagogy [Online], May 19.


Articles on social justice education also appear regularly in the following journals:
