LIS 9160 Anti-Racism in Library and Information Science
MLIS Program, Faculty of Information & Media Studies, Western University
Summer 2023

Course Outline

1. Course Information

Fridays 1:30-4:20 pm
FNB 2230
Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the MLIS program
Prerequisites: LIS 9001, 9003, and 9005 (pre/co-requisite)

2. Instructor Information

Course Instructor: Amber Matthews
Email: amatthe4@uwo.ca
Office Hours: By appointment in person or via Zoom

3. Course Description

An introduction to anti-racism and racial social justice in library and information science. In this course, students will develop an understanding of historical and contemporary approaches to race in LIS along with key individual and collective strategies to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization.

4. Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of readings, assignments, and class participation, students will be able to:

- Identify and contextualize potential forms of racism in library and information organizations and in broader Canadian society through a foundational understanding of concepts related to anti-racism including privilege, power, intersectionality, microaggressions, and bias.
- Assess the impact of racial bias and discrimination on individuals and communities in library and information organizations and gain knowledge of best practices to address systemic barriers to support the development of equitable and responsive library and information services.

- Appropriately identify and respond to the unique information and service needs of equity-deserving groups by developing a contextual understanding of cultural competence.
- Identify, research, and present theoretical and professional issues related to anti-racism and EDID in library and information organizations.
- Appropriately develop and lead initiatives and advocate with and for equity-deserving groups in library and information organizations.

5. Course Expectations

We all arrive at this class possessing various forms of privilege and benefiting from them whether we'd personally like to or not – be they racial, gender, socioeconomic, education, language, amongst many other advantages. As part of our work to enhance our knowledge of anti-racism, it is vital that we ground our work this term in a sincere intention listen to the perspectives of those who experience racial discrimination in our field. For our purposes, this means coming to class have done all the readings and prepared to have thoughtful and meaningful discussions on the course content. Engaged participation will also be important to ensuring the success of your case study projects. This class presents a unique opportunity in your MLIS journey (outside of a co-op placement) to work directly with a community organization to further racial equity and anti-racism. To that end, students should come prepared each week to work collaboratively on their case study projects.

Given the scale and importance of growing social movement to address racial injustices in LIS and broader society in general, it is hoped that students will approach this course with an open mind and understanding of the strong need for the library community to actively engage in racial justice to address cultural, social, and political biases. Advocating for a *truly* inclusive approach that recognizes that racism is a serious form of exclusion and must be taken seriously by all members of the library community, this class has adopted a collaborative model of community partnership with local groups undertaking anti-racist action in librarianship. Through these partnerships, students have a unique opportunity to engage with communities facing racial discrimination and work together to address and solve real-world problems. As we do this work, we learn, grow, and create together – leaving a lasting impact on librarianship.

6. Class Correspondence

The primary mode of correspondence from me will be via our OWL site. Please check there regularly for announcements related to the class. To reach me, please use email and include "LIS 9160" in the subject line. You can reasonably expect a response within 48 hours during the week. I check my email infrequently on weekends and may not respond until Monday.

7. Course Materials

All required readings are available electronically through the course OWL site.

8. Method of Evaluation

Assignments are due at the beginning of class in the week they are due and should be submitted via the assignments tab on OWL. Written assignments should be labelled with the course name and number, assignment title, instructor's name, your name, and date. You are free to use whatever citation style that you would like, but please make sure that you choose and consistently use a style that is appropriate to the assignments required in this course. Assignments will be graded in accordance with the MLIS Grading Scale. L*ate assignments will be reduced at the rate of 5% per day. Assignments 7 or more days late will not be accepted.*

Preparation and participation (15%)
Preparation and participation will be assessed based on overall contribution to class discussions through demonstrated evidence of reading and engagement with course materials (10%) and preparation of a brief online response once for the class (5%). These posts should help inform the class discussion for the week and are not meant to be formal or overly academic. Rather, they are an opportunity to explore topics, ideas, and questions from the class readings, group projects, or assigned materials. Posts should be in the range of 400 to 500 words and posted to our OWL course site no later than 4:00 pm the day before the scheduled class. Students are also encouraged to share other materials and reflections throughout the term on the OWL site.

Short Reflection Paper (15%)
For this assignment, students will reflect on a reading(s) of their choice from the introductory weeks of the course (May 19, May 26 or June 2). Reflection papers should consider how the author(s) arguments have impacted your understanding of library and information science, insights into your role as a future library or information professional, and personal reflections on anti-racism and undertaking anti-racist work. Papers should be in the range of 1,000 to 1500 words.

Case Study Project (20% group and 5% individual)
The case study projects are group community-engaged learning projects that have been developed in collaboration with the London Black History Coordinating Committee. Project descriptions will be shared and assigned during our Community Partner Visit on May 26. There will be dedicated time each week to work on these projects in class. In our final class, groups will prepare an informal presentation for the class on their project and the outcomes. This could take a variety of forms including a brief narrative, infographic, or photo exhibit. These needn't be onerous presentations, it's just a chance to share what you have achieved and learned through your case study project. As the outcome of the case study project will vary between projects, this grade for this project will be comprised of the following elements:

- Overall quality and contribution of the case study project – 15%
- Overall quality and clarity of final presentation – 5%
- Overall contribution to project (assessed individually) – 5%

Annotated bibliography (20%)
Group project to prepare a list of resources for your peers, community partner, and the broader community that respond to the needs of your case study project. Resources should comprise a broad selection of 15 to 25 scholarly and professional resources. Annotations should be written in paragraph form (200 words) and include the following information:
1. an explanation of the main purpose of the source
2. a short summary of key findings or arguments of the source
3. the academic or professional credentials of the source or authors
4. any shortcomings or areas for improvement in the work
5. the value of this work as a contribution to your case study project

Self-Reflective Journal OR Creative project (25%)
Weekly prompts will be provided and a minimum of five (5) journal prompts will be completed throughout the term. The outcome of this assignment could take a variety of forms (i.e., podcast, series of b/vlog posts, narrative, etc.) and aims to provide you with an opportunity to engage with self-reflection and critique as core element of anti-oppressive work and practice.

8. Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Format	Assignment Due Date
1	May 12	**Introduction to class**	• Class Discussion	
2	May 19	**Brief history of race and racial justice in the context of LIS**	• Class Discussion • Group Activity	
3	May 26	****Community Partner Visit**** Christina Lord, London Black History Coordinating Committee	• Partner Overview • Introduction to case study projects	
4	June 2	**Critical inquiries into whiteness** Guest Talk by Sunday Ajak, Spoken Word Artist	• Class Discussion • Guest Lecture • Case Study Work	
5	June 9	**Cultural competence for library and information professionals** *Our Dance of Revolution* viewing in collaboration with FIMS Grad Library	• Film Screening	Short Reflection Paper

6	June 16	**Learning from the experiences of racialized professionals** Guest Talk by Cecily Pouchet Alexander, author of *Immigration, Race and Survival - Trinidad to Canada Living in Parallel Worlds*	• Class Discussion • Guest Lecture • Case Study Work	
7	June 23	**Anti-racism in academic libraires**	• Class Discussion • Case Study Work	Annotated Bibliography
MLIS RESEARCH WEEK				
8	July 7	**Anti-racism in public Libraires**	• Class Discussion • Case Study Work	
9	July 14	**Anti-racism in archives**	• Class Discussion • Class Activity • Case Study Work	
10	July 21	**Anti-racism in information management**	• Class Discussion • Case Study Work	
11	July 28	**Community-engaged practice** Guest Talk by Bridget Ofosu Andam, Founder Developing Communities Everywhere	• Class Discussion • Guest Speaker	
12	Aug 4	**Envisioning anti-racist practices in the future**	• Class Discussion • Case Study Work	Self-Reflective Journal OR Creative project
13	Aug 11	Course wrap-up	• Class Discussion • Project colloquia	Case Study Project

10. Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.

11. Health/Wellness Services
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.
12. Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.