

CPSY 590 – Critical Theory and Liberation Psychology - Summer 2012 – 1 semester hour

Instructor: Tod Sloan, Ph.D. Email: sloan@lclark.edu Office: Rogers 433, hours by appt.

Course Description: This seminar reviews primary approaches in critical social theory that inspired the emergence of European and North American critical psychologies and Latin American liberation psychology, for example, Western Marxism, feminism, critical hermeneutics and poststructuralism. These approaches led to arguments within psychology aiming to correct for mainstream scientific psychology's individualism, sexism, essentialism, reductionism, and ideological collusion with the status quo. After reviewing these critiques, the seminar will address implications for rethinking psychosocial practices in the human services and community development.

Textbooks

Watkins, M. and Shulman, H. (2008). *Toward psychologies of liberation*. London: Palgrave.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Full preparation for **participation** in seminar discussions of readings. This means reading the assigned material, coming prepared to suggest questions or issues worth further discussion, and actually contributing to the dialogue. Worth 20% of final grade.
2. Prepare to **facilitate** the discussion of one chapters of the readings (submit a one-page plan for guiding the discussion). Each worth 10% of final grade.
3. Submit a 2000-word **essay** in response to assigned readings and class discussion. Respond to a deep theme in the readings and explore it in a crafted essay (written as if it were to be published as part of a reflective book review). Bring a 1-page draft outline of the essay to class on July 7. Essay is worth 60% of final grade. Due July 20.

Course Schedule

May 12 – Introduction and overview of critical theory; principles of critical psychology

July 7 – Discussion of Watkins and Shulman, Chapters 1-12, 15

July 20 – Essay due, by email to sloan@lclark.edu