This course is designed to teach you to think seriously about structural power. It is easy to imagine that individual people, or even numbers of individual people, affect things (or don't) -- or, we might say, exercise power(s) (or don't). But individuals are not the only type of social entity that causes effects in the world. Relationships **between** people (e.g., institutions such as the state, and whole systems, such as capitalism, racism, patriarchy, and heterosexuality) do too. In this course, we will examine the different "logics" of capitalism, racism, patriarchy, and heterosexuality. We will also think through the fact that the systems are inter-related, with an aim to conceptualizing the situation as a whole through the lens of “intersectionality.” Do the different systems work in unique ways? How? If so, how do they condition each other when they are all in place in a society? These questions will be addressed via an investigation of identity, experience, and/or “difference.”

**General Expectations**

This is an upper-level course in social and political philosophy, which means that I am assuming that you enjoy thinking abstractly, and have experience doing it. The bottom line requirement for this course is that you do difficult reading very, very carefully (more than once, in most cases), and come to class prepared to talk about the material with others, in order to understand and evaluate it. **If, for whatever reason, you are not in a position to take on a high level of intellectual responsibility and commitment, you should think hard about whether or not you will be able to meet this expectation;** this may not be the course for you to take this semester.

In this class, we will at times discuss topics that are politically and personally sensitive in nature. It is important that we value respectful and informed differences of opinion in the classroom. Rich discussion about structural inequality may entail disagreements not only about issues, but also about basic values. **As a member of this class, you are expected to be respectful towards others and their views, even if those radically oppose your beliefs.**

**Class Policies**

Regular attendance is important for class discussion. You are allowed one “free” absence in the course. Every subsequent absence will result in a full letter grade deduction off of your final participation grade. Absences will be considered “excused” in accordance with University Policy, in the event of extreme circumstances.

**Cell phones, laptops and other electronic devices must be turned off during class.** In keeping with the 5 principles of Jesuit education at SLU, I take it that conduct in the classroom will be good-natured, considerate and intellectually disciplined. I also expect that you will come to class on time.
The easiest way to contact me is through e-mail, which I check frequently. In most cases I will be able to get back to you within 24 hours. I also retrieve phone messages when I am in my office, but I am not on campus every day. I’m also delighted to talk to you in person, so if you are unable to come to my office hours email me to arrange an alternative time.

**Academic Integrity and Honesty**

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty:

http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml

**Students with Special Needs—Disability Services**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.
Assignments and Grade Breakdown

1. Participation, including attendance, in-class participation, posting discussion questions*, final research presentation, etc. – 30%

*Regarding discussion questions, you are required to post one discussion question on BB by 8pm the day before each class. I will use these questions to guide our class discussions.

2. 3 short analytic response papers, corresponding to each of the substantive sections of the course - 30% (10% each)

3. Final research paper (8-10pp) – 40%
   - This paper will be an analysis of an issue of your choosing, using what you have learned in the course. You will be required to address, and critique, alternate accounts of the issue, in the course of developing your own analysis. Due at the end of the term.

Your grade will be based on your performance on the assignments listed above. You must submit all assignments in order to pass the class. There is no extra credit available for the completion of additional work. Also, I do not accept late papers, unless you have contacted me ahead of time or it is an emergency.

I give letter grades, corresponding to the following assessment criteria:

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Books
The following required texts have been ordered through the SLU Bookstore:
Rigging the Game: How Inequality is Reproduced in Everyday Life, Schwalbe
The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy, Johnson
Racism Without Racists, Bonilla-Silva
Poverty and Power: The Problem of Structural Inequality, Royce

POLSCI 374: Capitalism, Racism and Patriarchy
Projected Reading Schedule

**Theoretical Foundations: Examining Structural Power**

Aug 28— First meeting; what to expect from the course; Adrienne Rich, "Claiming an Education" (BB)
Aug 30— Schwalbe, Rigging the Game, Intro
Sept 4— Schwalbe, Rigging the Game, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
Sept 6— Schwalbe, Rigging the Game, Chapter 4 and Chapter 6
Sept 11— Schwalbe, Rigging the Game, Chapter 8
Sept 13— Marilyn Frye, “Oppression” (BB); Kathy Davis, “Cultural Dopes and She-Devils” (BB)
**White Supremacy: Structural Racism**

Sept 18— Charles Mills, "White Supremacy as Sociopolitical System: A Philosophical Perspective" (BB); Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege– Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" (BB)

Sept 20— Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists*, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2;

Sept 25— Michelle Alexander, “The New Jim Crow” (BB)

Sept 27— Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists*, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5

Oct 2— Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists*, Chapter 7 and Chapter 9

Oct 4— Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists*, Chapter 10; Michelle Alexander, “The Fire This Time” (BB)

*Response Paper 1 Due*

**The Logic of Capitalism: Structural Poverty**


Oct 11— Royce, *Poverty and Power*, Chapter 1

Oct 16— Royce, *Poverty and Power*, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6

Oct 18— Royce, *Poverty and Power*, Chapter 7 and Chapter 8

Oct 23— **Fall Break— No Class**

Oct 25— Royce, *Poverty and Power*, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10


*Response Paper 2 Due*

**Patriarchy and Heterosexism: Gender and Sexual Subordination**

Nov 1— Deborah Rhode, "The No Problem Problem" (BB); Johnson, *The Gender Knot*, Chapter 1

Nov 6— Johnson, *The Gender Knot*, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3

Nov 8— Johnson, *The Gender Knot*, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7

Nov 13— Johnson, *The Gender Knot*, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10

Nov 15— Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (BB);

Karin Martin and Emily Kacyak, "Hetero-Romantic Love and Hetero-Sexiness in Children's G-rated Films" (BB)

Nov 20— **No class**

Nov 22— **Thanksgiving Break— No Class**

Nov 27— Suzanne Pharr, "Homophobia as a Weapon of Sexism" (BB); Iris Marion Young, "Reflections on Families in the Age of Murphy Brown: On Justice, Gender, and Sexuality" (BB)

*Response Paper 3 Due*

Nov 29— Kimberle Crenshaw, "Traffic at the Crossroads: Multiple Oppressions" (BB); Bonnie Thornton Dill and Ruth Enid Zambrana, “Critical Thinking about Inequality: An Emerging Lens” (BB)

Dec 4— Student Research Presentations

Dec 6— Student Research Presentations

*Final research papers are to be turned in (in person, with a hard copy) during our final exam period on December 13 at noon.*