

**The Office of Social Justice Education and  
LGBT Communities  
Social Justice Institute Application  
2006-2007**



*Balancing the scales of justice to create  
a community of inclusion, education and  
civic responsibility.*

**The Social Justice Institute is perfect for you:**

- 1. If you are a student leader who wants to make change outside the classroom;**
- 2. If you have always wanted to find a way to fight against racism, sexism; homophobia/heterosexism, class oppression, and other forms of prejudice;**
- 3. If you want help influence others to fight for social justice;**
- 4. If you want to influence social policy;**
- 5. If you want activism and organizing for social change to be a part of your life;**
- 6. If you have a 3.0 GPA.**

**Read further and apply!**

## **I. Mission**

The mission of the Social Justice Institute is to offer diverse groups of undergraduate students' co-curricular opportunities, whereby they can accomplish social justice advocacy in campus and/or community organizations.

## **II. Goals:**

The Social Justice Institute

Is designed to empower and educate Rutgers University students to approach, critically and practically, issues of equity, power, and privilege.

Will bring faculty, staff, and students into dialogue on issues of race, culture, class, gender, sexuality, and the equitable distribution of resources.

Will prepare students to educate their peers and others in order to create a campus environment where social justice theory and practice can flourish.

## **III. Objectives:**

Upon completion of the Institute, students will

Gain competence in the application of critical thinking and theorizing to social justice issues and social justice advocacy;

Become social justice advocates and articulate to the Rutgers administration and the greater community their/our responsibility to address issues of exclusion and discrimination; By initiating, facilitating, and sponsoring programs for their peers and the Rutgers University community, serves as social justice ambassadors.

## **IV.**

**Components of SJ Institute: (30 hours over the fall and spring semesters, about one weekend a month.)**

- A. **On Campus Institute:** Each student will complete a sequence of three training sessions addressing. Each segment will be ten hours over a two day period. The sessions will include small group and large group discussions among tools of introspection and reflective processing. The institute will make available counseling services as these issues tend to leave students with questions and concerns that surpass the time allotted.
1. "Social Justice and the LGBT Community": This segment of the institute will examine sexual identity, gender expression, and their histories. How heterosexism, homophobia, and hetero-normative practices perpetuate prejudice and discrimination; how these issues intersect with race, class, gender; and how LGBT communities and allies can strategize for change are among the topics of this segment. (**Friday, November 3 and Saturday, November 4**)
  2. "Race, Class, and Citizenship": This segment will examine the intersection of race and class and the ways in which citizenship has been historically denied, granted, or withdrawn on the basis of race and class. How race, class, and citizenship play into

power and privilege; how they structure and stand in for one another; and how they align with the distribution of resources are among the topics of this segment. **(One weekend in early December To Be Determined)**

3. “Women, Men, and Social Justice”: This institute will examine the construction of gender and its role in creating gender oppression and gender domination. How women and men can become allies in the pursuit of social justice; how gender identity and expression go beyond biology; and how the women’s movement for global human rights is a multiracial/multi-gender movement will be topics of discussion. **(One weekend mid January 2007 To Be Determined)**
4. “From Theory to Practice: Activism”:  
**(Saturday, March 3, 2006: This is an orientation to prepare for the Alternative spring break in Tennessee)**

**B. Off-Campus Institute: (35 hours)**

1. Students will attend a week-long training at Highlander Institute in New Market, Tennessee to learn about advocacy and grassroots activism. The training will last five days for seven hours a day.

The Highlander Center was founded in 1932 to serve as an adult education center for community workers involved in social and economic justice movements. The goal of Highlander was and is to provide education and support to poor and working people fighting economic injustice, poverty, prejudice, and environmental destruction. We help grassroots leaders create the tools necessary for building broad-based movements for change.

The founding principle and guiding philosophy of Highlander is that the answers to the problems facing society lie in the experiences of ordinary people. Those experiences, so often belittled and denigrated in our society, are the keys to grassroots power.

Today, that philosophy is reflected in the educational programs and services offered by the 21st-century Highlander Center. Highlander serves Appalachia and the South with programs designed to build strong and successful social-change activism and community organizing led by the people who suffer most from the injustices of society. Highlander helps activists to become more effective community educators and organizers, informed about the important issues driving conditions in communities today.

2. Students will return to the Rutgers community to address social justice as a university wide agenda for student leaders. This will consist of, but not limited to presentations, workshops, seminars, and conferences. Upon the completion of the program, students will have the opportunity to participate and facilitate trainings for their peers and the university community.

**C. Practica:**

Students will work with the Social Justice Education staff, select faculty, and other University resources to establish social justice internships, independent study opportunities, and co-curricular projects in community-based organizations for which they can receive credit.

Students will have the opportunity to work with various departments: Women's Studies, Africana Studies, Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies, and many more to complete their projects.

## Frequently Asked Questions . . .

1. **What is the Social Justice Institute's definition of "social justice"?**

For the purpose of this Institute, we are defining "social justice" as both the theory and practice of undoing the inequities and inequalities many groups of people must live with because of who they are, e.g. people of color, poor people, women, old people, young people, LGBT/Q people, people with disabilities, immigrants, etc. The Institute will examine the role oppression plays in everyday life and explore the realities of power and privilege in the contexts of race, gender, sexuality, economic status, nationality, age. The Institute believes that "social justice" is a constantly evolving state which we are always pursuing.
2. **What are some of the benefits to becoming a participant in the Institute?**
  - a) Certification of training in the area of social justice and the opportunities to serve as peer facilitator of trainings throughout the university.
  - b) The chance to train at Highlander Institute in New Market Tennessee during spring break 2007. This nationally recognized institute is the place where noted civil rights leaders, such as, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, Jr. were affiliated.
  - c) Possible credits for independent study through academic departments, such as, Africana Studies, Latino and Caribbean Studies, Women's Studies and others; or
  - d) Potential social justice internship opportunities in New York/New Jersey metropolitan area.
3. **How much of a time commitment does this Institute require?**
  - a) The training institute is divided into two components, a theoretical and classroom experience and a practical application of the classroom work.
  - b) The time is divided over the fall and the spring semesters and averages about a weekend a month. You will be required to complete 30 hours in the classroom. The sessions will begin on Friday evening and conclude by Saturday evening.
4. **Why would I be interested in this type of work?**

You are probably already a student leader or are interested in leadership, and, as such, have witnessed or experienced unfairness and inequality. And because of who you are, you want to do something about the imbalance of power and the misuse privilege. The Institute wants you to be part of that next generation of activists and civic leaders and wants to provide you with the tools to create social change.
- 5) **What happens after I finish the institute?**
  - a) You will be certified as a Social Justice Peer Facilitator for the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus. This will entail trainings of and presentations to the Rutgers community. These opportunities may include but are not limited to:
    - 1) New Student Orientation programs
    - 2) Bridging the Gap presentations
    - 3) The Student Diversity Conference
    - 4) Student development programs
    - 5) Student organization trainings
    - 6) Classroom presentations
  - b) We will also assist you in finding internships and courses that complement what you have learned while participating in the Institute.

# SOCIAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE APPLICATION

## I. Personal Information

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
School \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ GPA \_\_\_\_\_  
Campus Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Major \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Major \_\_\_\_\_  
Minor \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Relevant Coursework

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Campus Leadership Experience (Please attach additional resume if necessary)

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## IV. Honors and Awards

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## V. Additional Information

1. Please attach 2 letters of recommendation (at least 1 letter must be from a Rutgers Staff or faculty member)
2. Please attach a copy of an unofficial transcript to this application. Make sure that it includes your full name.

3. Please write a 500-word essay, typed and double-spaced on a Social Justice Project that you would like to implement in the future. Your essay should answer the following questions

- a) What issue is your project responding to?
- b) Why is this issue important?
- c) What methods would you use to raise awareness about this issue?
- d) Describe how you would implement your project?

**VI.**

**Please submit all completed application materials by October 15, 2006**

**To:**

**Meredith Davis Johnson  
Office of Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities  
3 Bartlett Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901 or email to [rujust@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:rujust@rci.rutgers.edu)**

**If you have any questions please contact Meredith Davis Johnson at [medavis@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:medavis@rci.rutgers.edu) or by phone at (732)-932-1711**