COMMUNITY ACTIVISM, SOCIAL POLICY AND LAW
COURSE SYLLABUS

SOLDY FOR THE
INCONVENIENCE
WE ARE TRYING
TO CHANGE THE
WORLD
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THE PROFESSOR

NAME: Marcia Johnson  
TELEPHONE: (713) 313-1027  
EMAIL: marcia.johnson@tmslaw.tsu.edu  
LOCATION: Office 236B  
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday and Thursday  
1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m.  
Virtual only

COURSE BOOKS & MATERIAL

REQUIRED

1. *Infinite Hope: How Wrongful Conviction, Solitary Confinement, and 12 Years on Death Row Failed to Kill My Soul* by Anthony Graves, Beacon Press, 2018

SUGGESTED

4. *Course Supplement*, Professor Marcia Johnson, available on my Blackboard Class Page

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

COMMUNITY ACTIVISM, SOCIAL POLICY AND LAW

In keeping with the university’s mission to be “a student-centered comprehensive doctoral university committed to ensuring equality, offering innovative programs that are responsive to its urban setting, and transforming diverse students into lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and creative leaders in their local, national, and global communities”, this course examines applying law and policy to consciously shape society. Our approach to the course is to study law as informed by the knowledge and techniques of the social sciences, policy analysis and public interest. Policy analysis is designed to explore areas that will enthuse students’ strong intellectual and practical interests in developing policy in light of short and long term interests and applications. Public Interest is designed to energize students’ strong intellectual and practical interests in public interest law. This course requires the production and submission of a law-review quality paper in accordance with the student handbook.
CLASS OBJECTIVES

My objective is to help students who are interested in being change agents for their community through community organizing and activism to learn skills necessary to make things happen. Additionally, they need to understand how law can play significant roles in leading the way to positive productive transformation. Through reading assignments, classroom discussion, research and writing, students will tackle major problems that negatively impact the urban community and examine ways to solve them.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, should demonstrate knowledge of the following concepts and issues:

- the intersection of socially and culturally-constructed identities based on race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, sexuality, class, age, ability, and religion;
- the categories of discrimination and their effects, including but not limited to racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism;
- societal granting of unearned privilege;
- how local action connects with regional, national, and international conditions;
- the contexts in which mass movements in societies emerge

They should be competently able to

- consider issues from multiple perspectives;
- identify and evaluate theories and assumptions about social policy and the law;
- self-reflect about the learning process;
- critically analyze written and visual texts;
- find and evaluate scholarly sources;
- write clearly and effectively;
- develop original, effective arguments using evidence based reasoning.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- Virtual Classroom
  All classes will be taught virtually through BlackBoard Collaborate Ultra.

- Cell phones
  All electronic devices, other than your personal computer or laptop must be turned off or muted during class.

- Attendance
  Attendance is mandatory.
**Grading**

The grade for the course will be as follows:

- Interim (weekly) research submissions: 30%
- Final Research Paper: 70%

**Research Requirement**

Students must complete a substantial research and writing project that meets the minimum requirements as outlined in the Student Handbook. *The final paper is due on the last class day no later than noon.*
## Scoring Rubric for Research Paper

**STUDENT NUMBER ______________**

**COMMUNITY ACTIVISM, SOCIAL POLICY AND LAW SEMINAR**

(FOR GRADED ON 100 POINT SCALE)

FALL SEMESTER 2020
Professor Marcia Johnson

### FORMAT

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<th>Possible Points</th>
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### SUBSTANTIVE

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<td>Evidence of Comprehensive and thorough research on topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualitative: Extensive footnotes showing multiple sources of information</td>
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<td>Blue book citations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substantially follows the detailed outline submitted and approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Original Analysis includes originality of opinions expressed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing style includes organization and structure of paper, rhetoric, style, grammar, sentence syntax etc.</td>
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**TOTAL**

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**Professor’s comments:**
Professor may include written feedback
# THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW

**TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2020 – 2021**

### FALL SEMESTER 2020 (Modified 13-Week Schedule)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation (online)</td>
<td>Mon-Fri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Day of Class</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day to ADD/DROP</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labor Day (NO CLASSES)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Purge of all unpaid course selections</em></td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mid Term Examinations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mon – Fri</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day to Drop a Class with grade of “W”</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day of Classes</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year Professors’ Grades due</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Period (NO CLASS)</td>
<td>Thurs- Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations</td>
<td>Mon – Thu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commencement Exercises</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Orientation (online)</td>
<td>August 3 – 7, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First Day of Class</strong></td>
<td>August 10, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Day to ADD/DROP</td>
<td>August 12, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Labor Day (NO CLASSES)</strong></td>
<td>September 7, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mid Term Examinations</strong></td>
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<td>October 30, 2020</td>
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<td>Last Day of Classes</td>
<td>November 4, 2020</td>
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<td>First Year Professors’ Grades due</td>
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<td>Reading Period (NO CLASS)</td>
<td>November 5-8, 2020</td>
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<td>Nov 9 – 19, 2020</td>
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<td>Commencement Exercises</td>
<td>November 21, 2020</td>
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### SPRING SEMESTER 2021

**TBA**

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*Please note that the calendar events and/or dates are subject to change.*

Updated July 1, 2020
COMMUNITY ACTIVISM, SOCIAL POLICY AND LAW

PART 1: INTRODUCTION – Weeks 1-3

Before class view the following videos and be prepared to discuss during class:

**Week One:**

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&p=youtube+how+to+organize+community&id=13&vid=90d9bb23e00d5e8b4cc5460b6b22ffcb&action=view

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&p=youtube+how+to+organize+community&id=14&vid=6a6ac43d6b6d4f6dfa7d1493bfa77a74&action=view

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sFmylP-Qmk

**Week Two:**


https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&p=youtube+how+to+organize+community&id=10&vid=15d01a2634bb696e48a4ca6f06e3cca9&action=view

**Week Three:**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQwa-phBpCU

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arxtiW88GnI
A. To the course
B. To Community Activism
C. Infusing Law in Community Activism

The history of Texas Southern University’s legislative purpose to identify and solve urban problems. What the university has done and failed to do to meet its obligations under this legislative mandate. What can the university do in the future?

During this week, we consider community activism, its purposes, various perspectives, community organizing toolkits and trending topics. We also examine community activism through the acts of agents for change including the activism of people in sports and entertainment. We look at the personal costs to activists as well as the cost of activism.

We also look at the changing dynamism of activism through the lens of social media and technology.

OUTCOMES

Students will understand the fundamentals of community organizing, locality development, social planning, systems advocacy and consensus building. They will understand the importance of inclusion. They will also have adopted their topic for research and writing their research paper.
PART 2 SOCIAL POLICY—Weeks 4-6

Week 4

**Reading Assignment:** *Infinite Hope: How Wrongful Conviction, Solitary Confinement, and 12 Years on Death Row Failed to Kill My Soul* by Anthony Graves, Beacon Press, 2018

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrC5pmDqQbfNEAA9Hg0nIlQ;_ylu=X3oDMTBncGdyMzQOBHNIYwNzZFVY2gEdnRpZAM-;_ylc=X1MDMTM1MTE5NTcwMARfGmyBGFjdG4DY2xrBGNzcmNwmlkA3pRb2lmeckV3TGpHa0NYa3BYWVRQbVFMCuU1qWXdNQUFBUFEZVhENGeEznDeWhzLWF2YXN0LTAwMQRmCjIDc2EtZ3AEB3ByaWQDUFZ3OGNKOVZTMIMwTjRkLi5QVhc1QQRuX3JzbHQNjAEBh9zdWdA5zB3JpZ3pZGVVLnNlYXJaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzcHFDzHDHBHxc3RybAMEcXN0cmwDNDAEcXVlcnkDeW91JTIwV0VUcVdGjTSUyMHJlZm9vYhQ0X3N0bXADMTU5Mzg3ODk3OQ--;p=you+tube+criminal+justice+reform&ei=UTF-8&fr2=p%3As%2Cv%3Av%2Cm%3Asa&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&ast&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast

Week 5

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrDQ2rDqQbfZ3gAN7s0nIlQ;_ylu=X3oDMTBncGdyMzQOBHNIYwNzZFVY2gEdnRpZAM-;_ylc=X1MDMTM1MTE5NTcwMARfGmyBGFjdG4DY2xrBGNzcmNwmlkA3pRb2lmeckV3TGpHa0NYa3BYWVRQbVFMCuU1qWXdNQUFBUFEZVhENGeEznDeWhzLWF2YXN0LTAwMQRmCjIDc2EtZ3AEB3ByaWQDUFZ3OGNKOVZTMIMwTjRkLi5QVhc1QQRuX3JzbHQNjAEBh9zdWdA5zB3JpZ3pZGVVLnNlYXJaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzcHFDzHDHBHxc3RybAMEcXN0cmwDNDAEcXVlcnkDeW91JTIwV0VUcVdGjTSUyMHJlZm9vYhQ0X3N0bXADMTU5Mzg3OTE2Mw--;p=you+ube+social+reform&ei=UTF-8&fr2=p%3As%2Cv%3Av%2Cm%3Asa&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast&v=1420772026&fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspart=avast

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrDQ2rDqQbfZ3gAN7s0nIlQ;_ylu=X3oDMTBncGdyMzQOBHNIYwNzZFVY2gEdnRpZAM-
Week 6

During these weeks students will discuss specific social issues of the day, digging deeply into the concepts of social engagement and addressing social policies development and change. Specific areas of discussion will look at how policy creates and maintains inequality in areas that include public education; gender equity; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Polygamous/polyamorous, Kink (LGBTQIAPPK); race; housing, economics and economic development.
Outcomes

Students will consider various policies that impact how we view one another based on the lines of demarcation that we draw. They will also understand the roles of advocacy in developing and changing policy.
PART 3 LAW AND JUSTICE—Weeks 7-9


For the next three weeks, we look at the dynamism between law and social change, with special attention given to lawyers and judges who have made a difference. We also look at the evolving conservatism of the courts throughout the United States to determine what it means for us and our children and theirs.

We also look at the conservative political and social agenda, its successes and its failures.

**Reading Assignments**

**Law:**
- The Civil Rights Act of 1866
- The Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Voting Rights Act of 1965
- The Fair Housing Act of 1968

**Cases**
- Dred Scott v. Sandford
- Brown v Board of Education
PART 4 COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—Weeks 10-12

Over the course of these three weeks we consider ideas involving communities’ health and welfare. We consider various methods for strengthening our communities, making them sustainable and managing growth. We consider gentrification, its long history, the impact of capitalism as a driver of gentrification and whether it is a good thing. We also consider governmental programs and financing challenges to creating change.

Law: The Fair Housing Act

Cases:

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc.
Hawkins v. Town of Shaw, 461 F.2d 1171 (5th Cir., 1972)

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspar=avast&p=youtu+how+to+organize+community#id=5&vid=aa5dd5e7f79897960f3fd464ec2f0&action=view

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspar=avast&p=youtu+how+to+organize+community#id=9&vid=b3f84d9546f76e621a01a84d96d8b73d&action=view

https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-avast-001&hsimp=yhs-001&hspar=avast&p=youtu+how+to+organize+community#id=9&vid=b3f84d9546f76e621a01a84d96d8b73d&action=view

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