



# CSU Bakersfield

School of Arts and Humanities

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

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The Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies wishes to affirm the following Social Justice Statement.

## *Who We Are*

The Faculty of Philosophy and Religious Studies pursues the study of human dignity and the nature of justice as central moral commitments and core principles. In our teaching and activism, we aspire to bring a transformative experience to students that enables them to become responsible members of their communities and active participants in public life. We seek to empower students to envision a just society and to embrace the desire to build a compassionate and inclusive community.

Our commitment requires the vision of a just society that works for the expansion of human dignity. Our study of human nature and transformative change embodies a disruptive empathy that seeks to defend and advance the rights of fellow human beings who are not afforded equal rights due to disadvantage or discrimination.

In American society today we find the cruel dehumanization of many members of our community. In our teaching and research, we share with students our deep concern to understand the ways in which we as a nation have not lived up to our values of freedom and dignity for all. We are living in an extraordinary period of our history in which we have witnessed systemic racism, white supremacy, anti-immigrant and anti-LGBTQ policies, Islamophobia, and Presidential authoritarianism, all of which have attempted to silence so many of our friends and neighbors.

We believe that education is ineluctably moral and life-changing in a way that illuminates and deepens our appreciation of the global community. A just society can be partly achieved by amplifying and attending to the voices and lived experience of powerless individuals and groups with whom we share a mutual destiny. To realize our vision, we have adopted the following set of beliefs and values.

## *Our Core Principles*

**Human dignity:** The dignity of every human being is an inherent value that demands respect and is the foundation upon which all rights are grounded. Having access to these rights is a privilege one should not take for granted and incurs one with the responsibility to honor and defend the rights of others.

**Accountability:** Standing by in silence and inaction is wrong. Belief in social justice requires holding ourselves and others accountable for working against all forms of oppression.

**Empowerment:** Achieving social justice is both an individual and social action and thus it requires empowering self and others through sustainable practices and collective liberation.

**Accessibility:** As an educational program we commit ourselves to creating environments that are accessible to all identities. Accessibility may require a focus on those most marginalized and oppressed in our communities.

**Intersectionality:** We recognize the intersections of gender and sexuality with race, ethnicity, class, ability, age, culture, nationality, immigration status and all social systems. We work to build and bridge communities that welcome and affirm people to be their whole selves, honoring their multiple identities and life experiences. We work to fight systems of oppression, centering our work on the impact and experiences of multiple oppressed identities.

*Confronting Issues of Social Justice: Courses in Philosophy & Religious Studies*

RS 3538 Religion & Human Rights (offered Fall 2020)

PHIL 4420 Political Power & Social Justice (offered Fall 2020)

RS 3518 The Holocaust and Its Impact (offered Fall 2020)

PHIL 3548 Race, Class, Gender, & Sexuality (offered Fall 2020)

RS 3368 Women, Religion, and Sexuality (offered Fall 2020)

PHIL 3540 Philosophy of Education (offered Fall 2020)

RS 3518 The American Dream

PHIL 3268 Marxism

RS 4528 Religion, Ethics, and Social Justice