



UTILIZING FACULTY COLLABORATION AND  
INTERSECTIONALITY IN CO-TEACHING  
SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY

*Dr. Najla Hrustanović (UB GSE CSEP)*

*&*

*Dr. Rasha Mohamed (Antioch University)*

*University at Buffalo 2023 Inclusive Excellence Summit*

# PURPOSE

This presentation offers a different teaching model that centers on the power of co-facilitation in social justice-based courses. This presentation will explore the benefits of a co-teaching model, its impact on student learning outcomes, and implementation of future advocacy and leadership. Participants will explore opportunities to structure social justice courses in ways that bring about collaboration, community, and inspiration for collective advocacy.



## **Inclusive Excellence Summit Themes:**

- *Creating Cultural Competence on Campus*
- *Promising Practices for Diversity & Inclusion*

The limitations of teaching social justice courses in higher education are two-fold: 1) teaching through a singular white-centered lens due to majority-white faculty pool, perpetuating a cycle of oppression and unintentional harm, 2) faculty of color being assigned as the only faculty teaching these courses, placing undue burden and challenges on faculty of color to teach those courses. In response to these teaching limitations, this presentation offers a different model that centers on the power of co-facilitation in social justice-based courses. This presentation will explore the benefits of this model, its impact on student learning outcomes, and implementation of counselor future advocacy and leadership. What this model makes clear is that there are opportunities to structure social justice courses in ways that bring about collaboration, community, and inspiration for collective advocacy. Recommendations for further teaching research and training will also be discussed.



## OVERVIEW

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants will learn about a co-teaching journey and resulting student experiences from first-hand accounts of two faculty members of varied identity backgrounds and perspectives.

Participants will learn about the benefits of co-teaching practices that utilized faculty intersectionality in an advocacy-based doctoral course, which resulted in students gaining a sense of global citizenship and expansion from individual to collective community-care.

Participants will begin to explore ways in which to implement co-teaching practices in social justice courses and programs within their own institutions.



## BACKGROUND

- *'Civil Enrichment, Public Policy & Resilient Narratives'*  
*(Counselor Education & Supervision Course at Antioch University)*
- *Course Description:* This course is designed to provide CES doctoral students advanced understanding and experience in areas of civil enrichment, public policy, and resilient narratives within global communities. With an emphasis on human rights and community care, this course explores histories of violence and dehumanization; investigates origins of systems of power, privilege, and oppression as they inform public policy and legislative practices; and reaffirms current and ongoing manifestations of supremacy, marginalization, and inequity in communities. Further, this course celebrates the power of communities through a resilience lens, while highlighting principles of cultivating human connectedness and unity through open-heartedness and compassion. Lastly, through relevant information, students are called into action for human rights advocacy and equitable social change.
- *Co-Teaching Format – CES (PhD) & CMHC (MA) Faculty*

1. To become more knowledgeable about civil enrichment practices and to adopt these in everyday living.
2. To become informed on different policy processes, and more specifically, how to get involved and be called into action as social justice advocates.
3. To celebrate community power through a resilience lens, while acknowledging the impact of violence, oppression, and dehumanization across global contexts.
4. To build skills necessary for difficult dialogue through graceful conversations with the intent to rebound and recover in a ruptured relationship/interaction.
5. To build skills related to emotional self-regulation during difficult conversations and increasing self-awareness within the class community and beyond.
6. To expand upon the knowledge gained through this course and to build inspiration for active engagement and contribution to human rights advocacy practices.



## COURSE OBJECTIVES



## COURSE AGREEMENTS

- **COURSE AGREEMENTS** (upon start of term; student additions welcomed)
- [*Is Everyone Really Equal?*, Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017]
  - A list to maximize your learning of social justice content:
    1. Strive for intellectual humility.
    2. Recognize the difference between opinions and informed knowledge.
    3. Let go of personal anecdotal evidence and look to broader societal patterns.
    4. Notice your own defensive reactions and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for
      1. gaining deeper self-knowledge.
  - 2. 5. Recognize how your own social positionality (race, class, gender, sexuality, ability-status,
    1. etc) informs your perspectives and reactions to your instructor and the individuals whose work you study.

# INSTRUCTOR CULTURAL POSITIONALITY

- Dr. Najla Hrustanović – white, Bosnian, cisgender female, able-bodied, Muslim/spiritual, low/middle class SES, refugee & immigrant background
- Dr. Rasha Mohamed – woman of color, Egyptian decent, cisgender female, able-bodied, immigrant background
- Importance of personal intersectional lens on teaching style/approach.

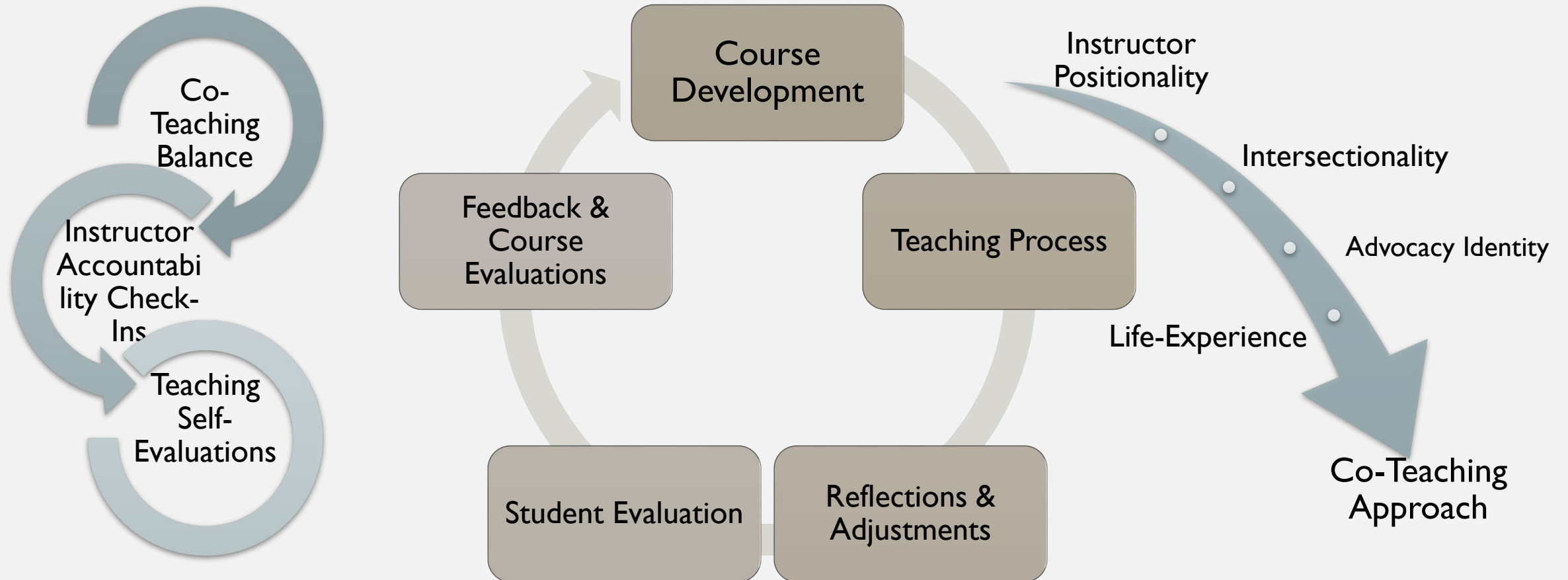


## EXPLORING CO-TEACHING WITH A SOCIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY (SHARMA & COBB, 2018)

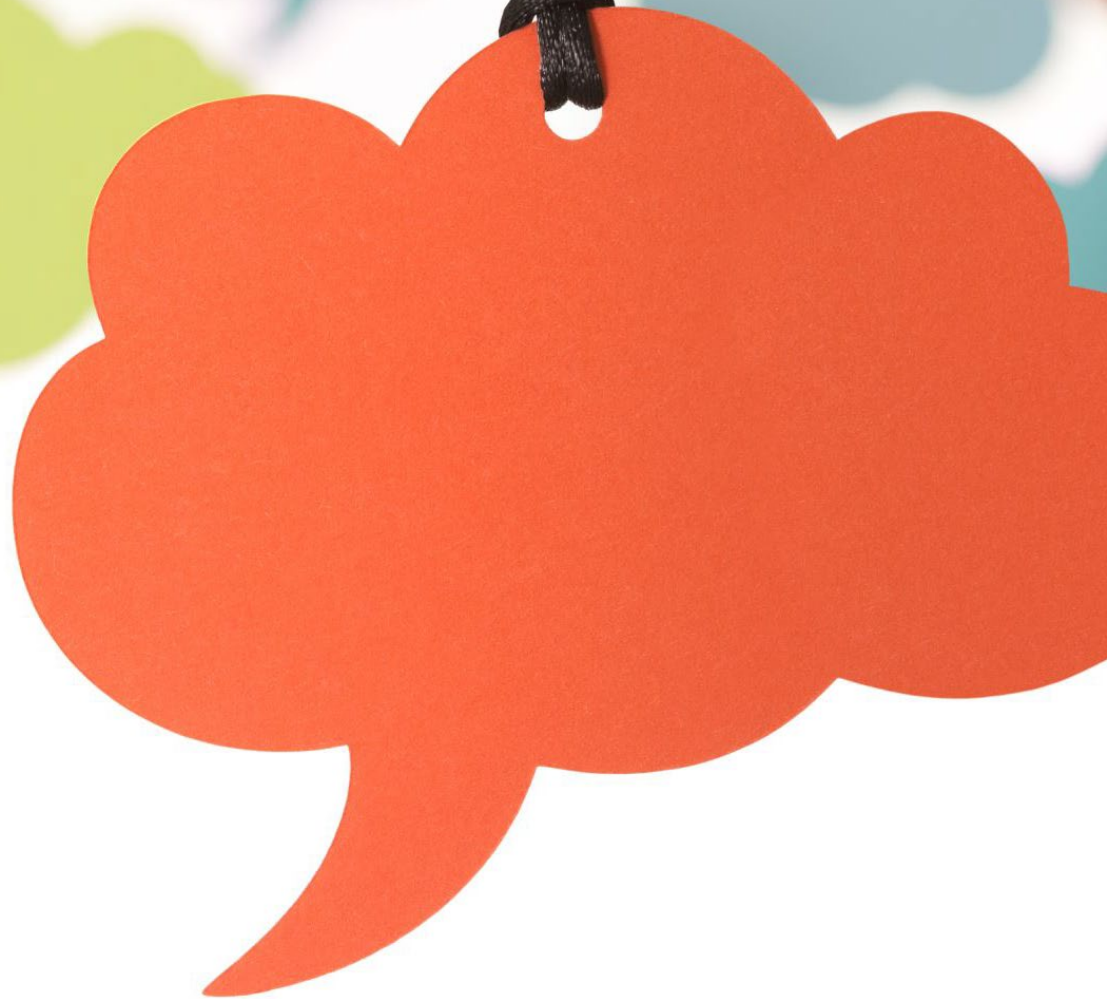
In particular, the authors discuss how the connection between co-teaching and using a social justice perspective provides educators an opportunity to create:

- (1) more engaging discussion about equity issues and schooling
- (2) learning experiences that are reflective non-traditional teaching structures at a post-secondary and public education levels, and
- (3) professional growth for colleagues while participating in co-teaching with a social justice perspective.

# CO-TEACHING FRAMEWORK



## WORKSHOP TIME



- Please pair up with another attendee and discuss how this could be useful in your own work.
  - What things would you consider in your own teaching?
  - What would you add this to this framework?
- Group Share-Outs

## Q&A

Presenter Contact Information:

Najla Hrustanović, PhD, LMHC | [najlahru@buffalo.edu](mailto:najlahru@buffalo.edu)

Rasha Mohamed, PhD, LCMHC | [rmohamed@antioch.edu](mailto:rmohamed@antioch.edu)