FIG: Citizenship, Democracy & Difference

The following paradox is the thread that weaves together the three courses of this FIG: there are alarming racial disparities in Dane County, Wisconsin even though it is home to a world-class public research university that has public service (embodied in “the Wisconsin Idea”) at the heart of its mission. The three instructors associated with this FIG plan to be in close communication and will meet jointly with the students periodically during the semester. It is their hope that participating in this FIG during their first semester on campus will be just the beginning of the participating students’ civic engagement both on campus and in the community at large.

The political science course in this FIG will focus students' attention on the role of citizens in contemporary U.S. democracy, with particular attention to racial and ethnic difference. This course is a service-learning, otherwise known as a community-based learning, course that will require students to work with a community organization a minimum of three hours per week as a means to become better acquainted with racial justice issues in the community and organizations working to eliminate racial disparities.

The history course in this FIG will provide the background necessary for students to understand the complexity of issues with respect to racial justice in the contemporary United States.

The Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Ecology course will enable students to develop leadership skills and a civic identity that will enable them to pursue social change during the rest of their time here on campus and after graduation.

*Though all students are welcome to enroll in this FIG, it is uniquely intended for first year students of color who will connect with peer, faculty, and community leaders in order to explore power, privilege and oppression, civic engagement, personal leadership, and social justice in community with one another through this FIG. The Linking Class #2 was created in partnership with the Multicultural Student Center (MSC) on campus.*

**Main FIG Class:** Political Science, 201, Citizenship, Democracy and Difference

**Linking Class #1:** History, 150, American Histories: The Nineteenth Century

**Linking Class #2:** Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Ecology, 375, Leadership and Civic Engagement for Social Change

*If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Robert Brown, Assistant Director at the Multicultural Student Center (MSC), at robert.brown@wisc.edu or 608-265-2873.*