Making the Case for Equity and Inclusion
Sonja M. Spears

Class Syllabus

Research shows that more diverse and inclusive workplaces consistently out-perform their counterparts that do not have such a focus. In this two-credit seminar, students will learn why making space for diversity, equity and inclusion in the culture of their organizations is a just imperative with many organizational benefits. Materials and case studies will help to create a framework which leads with equity which will enable students to create their own strategies for making a way for this important focus in their organizations.

Class will meet for concentrated sessions on March 30, April 6, April 13 and April 27, allowing for robust class participation. The structure of the course is inspired by legal case preparation, in that we will explore the opening statement for the importance of equity, the discovery phase, where students will gather and analyze the strengths and weaknesses involved in making a case for equity and inclusion, and will end with “closing arguments” which will take the form of a final project that students will shape. An additional assignment will be required in addition to the final project and class participation is essential for a successful class experience. Absence from a class session will result in a full letter grade reduction. Students are asked to bring a laptop to the first class.

Course Materials

Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton Sheila Heen, Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most, Penguin Publishing Group, 2010

Dolly Chugh, The Person You Mean to be,


McKinsey and Company, Delivering through Diversity, January 2018