OVERVIEW
This course will focus on the use of art and education as a tool for positive social change. Within various social justice movements, the mass incarceration of people of color has spawned much debate and controversy. Many grassroots groups have taken up this issue in the attempt to educate and potentially reverse and halt the effects of the prison industrial complex (PIC). In addition, many of these groups make use of traditional artistic expressions in the struggle to educate and organize around these issues. Poetry (including spoken word & Hip-Hop), music, film, theatre and visual arts are all tools that have been used to examine what the PIC is, how it affects society, and how organizers can act as change agents in this struggle. Students will learn how to use these tools and develop workshops with a clear educational objective. The course will feature guest lectures, film viewings and possible visiting artist performances. Students will be required to participate in developing and facilitating an arts-based social justice education workshop, which will take place at Riker’s Island.

Topics that will be covered include:

i. What is the prison industrial complex (PIC)? What are the factors that contribute to it? Why is it a topic of controversy?

ii. What is Social Justice Education? What is the role of education in prevention and reducing recidivism amongst young people?

iii. How are the arts currently used in correctional facilities? What is the role of the arts in empowering inmate populations? (i.e. Hip-Hop culture)

iv. What are the current discussions surrounding criminal justice reform and alternatives to incarceration? Who are the people organizing around these issues? How are they organizing around this issue? What resources are available to educate people about these issues?

EXPECTATIONS
Attendance: Students are responsible for attending class regularly and being prepared with all assignments and readings as outlined in the syllabus. Attendance will be recorded and will affect grades. Class participation is essential. Students are allotted two excused absences. Failure to attend a third class will result in the drop of one letter grade. Each class missed thereafter will result in the loss of one half a letter grade. Attendance and participation count for 20% of the
overall final grade. Students are responsible for making up work missed in class by the following class. *This course requires a substantial amount of work outside of regular class time. Students are required to attend all scheduled Saturday sessions.*

**Evaluation:**

Grading will be based on in-class participation and the completion of 3 assignments – two individual and one group (see below). The grading will be determined as follows:

- Presence – 20%. This includes attendance and class participation, which includes discussion of readings, peer editing and participation in class activities (including ALL Saturday sessions). Students will be expected to reference readings in class EVERY session.
- Workshop Planning and Execution – 40%. Includes preparation sessions, performance in the field, class analysis, and journals.
- Journal Assignments – 40%. Includes reading reflection, participation and collaboration on project and final analysis.

Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the designated due-date. Extensions will only be granted under extraordinary circumstances, and only when requested prior to the due date. Late assignments will be penalized.

**EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES:**

On occasion an event will occur at NYU or in the community that we will encourage you to attend. If you choose to attend the event that we recommend, you may write a 3-5 page reflection paper (using the journal prompts) about the event and the connection to your work in the class. Extra Credit assignments are due within 14 days after attending the event. Funding may be made available for other extra credit opportunities.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

*Journal Assignments (40%) (Due Dates: October 1st, 22nd, November 5th, and 19th December 10th):* There will be five journal entries assigned during this course. The first four journal entries should be between 2-4 pages, the final journal entry should be 6-8 pages. Students should cite all work. *Plagiarism will not be tolerated.*

This course includes three core components: 1) Readings and in-class discussions of theory and research on the criminal justice system, education, and youth. 2) Practical skill building in arts & culture workshop facilitation. 3) The design and facilitation of workshop sessions with students at Riker’s Island. You will be expected to reflect on your experiences in all three components of this course in your journal.
Specific Reflection Prompts for your Journal:

- Assess yourself, your participation in class, both your ability to contribute to discussion and to listen and learn from others. Similarly, during the group workshop design process, what is your contribution, how are working with others?

- Speculate on how you might apply what you are learning to the design and facilitation of your session with the students.

- Form connections to readings (and cite them) during the practical sessions and while designing and leading Riker’s workshops.

- Your responses to the readings drawing from your experiences with the students as well as past experience that you bring to this course (remember to cite the readings).

- Once you begin facilitating the workshops, record your observations of the group, what are they learning and how do you know? What was successful? What was challenging? What would you do differently, if you were to facilitate this session again?

- What are you learning from observing your peers facilitate sessions? About facilitation, structure, ways of engaging the group?

- What questions are you formulating about this kind of work, the criminal justice system, issues of race, class, gender, and privilege? Dare to formulate provisional answers to those questions.

**Final Journal Assignment (DUE December 10):** The final journal assignment will include reflections of each workshop at Island Academy and an analysis of your experience planning and executing your group’s workshop. Include information about group dynamics, planning strategies, challenges, strengths and your impression of the impact of your workshop (self-evaluation) as well as connections to readings, lectures and other materials presented in class. Each student must submit their analysis on the last day of class. **This final assignment should be 6-8 pages.**

**Riker’s Island Workshops (40%):** Students are expected to work in groups of 3-4 on a lesson plan that they will facilitate with a class of incarcerated students at the Riker’s Island Correctional Facility. The workshop must be no more than 50-minutes. Students are expected to work collaboratively on the design of the workshop and the workshop facilitation. Each student will be expected to use their journals to reflect on their own contributions and that of their peers through out the workshop planning and facilitation process.

**A. Workshop Structure:**

Building a collaborative learning community with Riker’s Island students will be a central focus of the course. University student-teachers will be responsible for planning and leading a series of arts-based workshops with a clearly defined educational goal, and create a space in which
incarcerated students can voice their perspectives on a wide range of issues affecting their daily lives. Sessions at Riker's will use utilize the arts and popular culture to explore topics such as personal narratives, perspectives on the criminal injustice system, and the role of media in the creation of public policy. The class will seek to refine artistic and analytical skills through a series of critical literacy and arts-based activities that explore personal/familial experiences, community trends and historical events/movements.

Given the high turnover rate of students on the Riker’s Island campus, we will structure each class session (more or less) as an independent module that is not dependent on attendance to previous classes. Each 50-minute class would involve the following components:

1. Introduction/Demonstration/Background

2. Original Arts-based Educational Workshop, led by university Student-Teachers

3. Evaluation and large-group wrap-up discussion and/or student showcase during which the Riker’s Island students share their artistic expressions with the entire class.

B. Workshop Planning:

During the initial six-week period, we will begin to finalize plans for the weekly Riker's Island workshops. Students will be working in small groups of 4-5 students to devise a detailed plan of action for at least two different workshops. A number of pedagogical approaches should be used. By week three, each small group will choose their focus and begin developing a workshop plan.

Students will attend one workshop preparation session on a Saturday. During this Saturday session students will be expected to “test run” their workshops with their classmates and receive critical feedback on content and facilitation.

Workshop Preparation Sessions:
Saturday, September 29th 10-5pm & October 20th 10-5pm

Students will be required to meet outside of class to effectively complete the workshop planning.

The resulting workshop plans must contain the following elements:

C. Workshop Overview

Due: October 13th (via email)

1. Two paragraphs describing the thematic focus and educational goals of the lesson plan.

2. Specific works of art (lyrics/poems) to be used by acclaimed artists, spoken word poets, hip-hop artists, videos, plays, or other mass media.
3. Types of activities you plan to incorporate such as writing exercises, theatre games, movement exercises etc.

D. Detailed Lesson Plan:

DUE: October 22nd (in class)

Each Lesson Plan should contain the following elements:

1. **Objectives:** a list of the specific outcomes each workshop will achieve. These should be more specific than the educational goal(s) that you outline in the workshop description. These objectives should be measurable at the conclusion of the workshop (i.e., act as a checklist for the elements you plan to accomplish).

2. **Motivation or Hook:** a description of a short activity, reading, performance, question, or discussion that will interest and motivate students about the topic of the workshop.

3. **Required and/or Supplementary Materials:** List any necessary materials (texts, pen, paper, CD player, etc.) **If necessary, include a budget.**

4. **Plan of Action:** a detailed description of the specific activities, discussions, in-class readings, or other creative assignments for the workshop. Describe, in detail, the steps the group will take to facilitate the activity/discussion. Each group should include questions, which will be addressed. **A lesson plan template will be provided during the first planning workshop.**

VERY IMPORTANT: *Please time each activity or discussion. Generally, no single activity should last over 10-15 minutes.*

5. **Wrap up:** a description of how the workshop should be concluded. The wrap-up might be a chance for students to share their creative work completed during the workshop, or might simply be a short discussion or activity that synthesizes the material.

6. **Assessment:** Ask how do we know if students have comprehended the learning objectives stated above? List evaluation and assessment strategies.

**FINAL LESSON PLANS ARE DUE THE MONDAY BEFORE YOUR GROUP IS DUE TO FACILITATE THEIR WORKSHOP AT RIKER’S.**

E. Workshop Execution

The Riker’s Island class of approximately 15 students will be in attendance for each workshop. Each week, a different group of Student-Teachers will be responsible for leading one workshop. Each workshop will be evaluated in class the Monday following the workshop at Riker’s. In evaluating the workshop execution, emphasis will be placed on the group’s preparedness, energy, and creativity in conveying ideas, facilitating activities and engagement of Rikers' youth
in activities and discussions. Bear in mind that because of the nature of facilitating a workshop in a jail, surprises are bound to happen. **BE PREPARED.** You will also be evaluated on how well you can deal with such surprises. If things interfere with your plan, you must be ready to work around them. Have a plan B.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Additional reading and resources will be posted to Blackboard.

*This books will be distributed via email as a PDF.

**REQUIRED SATURDAY SESSIONS**
October 20th 10am-5pm (Lesson Plan trial run and feedback) Center for Spiritual Life Room: 475

**All Riker’s Dates/Times**
Start Time is 9AM and End time is 1PM; please allow for travel time.
November 3th, 10th, 17th,
December 1st, 8th

**COURSE/ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**
**Mon– 9/10**
Topic: Introduction, Goals & Structure
Objectives: Introductions and discussion and explanation of course goals and requirements. Discussion: Ground rules/Guidelines.

READ:
* RDSJ pp. 1-73
* The New Jim Crow pp. 1-94

**Week 2**
**Mon– 9/17**
Topic: Root Causes of the PIC Part 1: (Race)

READ:
* RDSJ pp: 141-178
* The New Jim Crow pp.95-248

**Week 3**
**Mon– 9/24**
Topic: Root Causes of the PIC Part 2: (Socioeconomic Class)
Objectives: View: The Lottery & Discuss origins and implications for school to prison pipeline.

READ: RDSJ: 533-556 Are Prisons Obsolete?

Week 4
Mon – 10/1
Topic: What is the Prison Industrial Complex?
Objectives: Defining the Prison Industrial Complex. Explore views and issues surrounding the current state of prison issues in the US. What is the prison abolition movement? What are alternatives to incarceration?

READ: Pedagogy of the Oppressed Part 1 (and selected readings)

Week 5
Mon – 10/8
Topic: Race, Education, the PIC and Capitalism
Objectives: Discuss the relationship between the prison system, race, and education (including the term “School to Prison” Pipeline). Introduction to Critical Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed.

READ: Pedagogy of the Oppressed Part 2 (and selected readings)

Week 6
Mon – 10/22
Topic: Introduction to Social Justice Education
Creating inclusive and engaging curriculum through the SJE frameworks.

READ: Riker’s High (and selected readings)

Week 7
Mon – 10/29
Topic: Arts Based Education Part 1
Objectives: Hip-Hop & Pedagogy presentation and View and discuss Rikers High.

READ: Love, Race & Liberation (and selected readings)

Week 8
Mon - 11/5
Topic: Arts Based Education Part 2
Riker’s Island Work
Objectives: Critique of last workshop. In class time to work on Lesson Plans. View and discuss What I Want My Words to Do to You

READ: Decoded Part 1 & 2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Mon - 11/12</th>
<th>Riker’s Island Work</th>
<th>Test run of workshops. Discussion and analysis of experiences. In class time to work on Lesson Plans. Discuss Decoded &amp; Hip-Hop culture.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>READ:</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Decoded Part 3 &amp; 4</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Mon - 11/19</td>
<td>Riker’s Island Work</td>
<td>Test run of workshops. Discussion and analysis of experiences. In class time to work on Lesson Plans. Discuss Hip-Hop culture &amp; political movements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>READ:</td>
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<td><em>Upstate</em></td>
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<td>&gt;Week 11</td>
<td>Mon - 11/26</td>
<td>Riker’s Island Work</td>
<td>Discussion and analysis of experiences. In class time to work on Lesson Plans. Discuss themes such as youth incarceration, family violence, and intimacy as raised in <em>Upstate</em>.</td>
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<td>READ:</td>
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<td>As assigned.</td>
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<td>&gt;Week 12</td>
<td>Mon – 12/3</td>
<td>Riker’s Island Work</td>
<td>Discussion and analysis of experiences. In class time to work on Lesson Plans.</td>
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<td>READ:</td>
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<td><em>View &amp; Discuss American Violet</em></td>
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<td>&gt;Week 13</td>
<td>Mon – 12/10</td>
<td>Last Class</td>
<td>Final reflections on Riker’s workshops and turn in final journals and extra credit.</td>
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