

**COURSE TITLE:** A DIVIDED AMERICA: The Need for Change

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 50

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 5 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 3.33 credits]

**OREGON PDUs:** 50

**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 50

**INSTRUCTOR:** Wendi Fein  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

If we are to be faithful to the Declaration of Independence and the preamble to our Constitution, we must reckon that the growing inequalities in America are not morally and practically sustainable. In our current geopolitical and social climate, there are significant factors that divide American society. This course will examine some of those issues, including housing segregation, education inequities, social displacement leading to drug addiction, loss of democratic representation, immigration, toxic localities, and domestic worker disenfranchisement. We will focus on Norman Lear's America Divided series and its supplemental and extensive curriculum and investigate alternative viewpoints. By delving deeper into what divides Americans, we can also look for common ground and solutions that promote equity. These are critical conversations to have with our students. This course is appropriate for grades 9-12 but can be modified for middle school students. There are no course fees. All materials are online and easily accessible.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

- A better understanding of the issues that divide America
- Become familiar with the pervasive effects of economic disparity and racism, such as police brutality toward people of color, inadequate housing, toxic environments, drug abuse, marginalized people in the workforce, the fate of undocumented immigrants, and more.
- Knowledge of how to make use of the extensive curriculum provided by the America Divided series
- Reviewed and analyzed alternative views on how to address these issues

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
  2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
  3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%
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**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

None. All reading is online.

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### **MATERIALS FEE**

None

## **ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Introduction Preview of America Divided Resources**

Preview the American Divided Series and Curriculum Guide using the links below.

In 400-500 words, respond to the following:

- What motivated you, professionally and personally, to take this course?
- Share a story of inequity that has resonated with you from a personal perspective.
- What topics are you most interested in exploring and teaching in more depth?

<https://americadividedseries.com/>

**Click on the TRAILERS** for each topic. NOTE: Much of the full series is no longer available, but the topics and resources are excellent.

Overview of Curriculum Guide:

[https://americadividedseries.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/America\\_Divided\\_Guide-4.pdf](https://americadividedseries.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/America_Divided_Guide-4.pdf)

Full Curriculum Guide

[https://americadividedseries.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/America\\_Divided\\_Curriculum\\_Booklet.pdf](https://americadividedseries.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/America_Divided_Curriculum_Booklet.pdf)

#### **Assignment #2: America Divided Episode 1**

Watch Season 1, Episode 1 below.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQcexcPsZYk&t=141s>)

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/nQcexcPsZYk>

Write a 400 - 500 word reflection, focusing on the following questions:

- In Common's episode on Chicago's police abuse, he quotes, " If there is no struggle, there can be no progress." What is your perspective? Cite specific examples from the episode.
- "No Right More Basic than the Right to Safe Drinking Water," states Rosario Dawson. Reflect and respond to this quote related to the Flint water crisis. Give specific data from the segment.
- What are the effects of gentrification in NYC and cities around you, as discussed in Norman Lear's segment?
- Reflect and respond to any parts of Episode 1 that you found disheartening, compelling, or hopeful.

#### **Assignment #3: America Divided Episode 2**

?Watch Season 1, Episode 2 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUC1fglXAgI>)

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/NUC1fglXAgI>

Write a 400 - 500 word reflection, focusing on the following questions:

In the follow-up segment on the Flint water crisis, Eric Mays takes us to a place to reflect. What is the historical significance of this place? Is there a monument or place you have gone or want to go to reflect on a poignant time in the US, global, or in your personal history?

- Describe the investigation by Fred Freiberg, LB Williams, and Norman Lear regarding fair housing in NYC. Are these practices happening in your community? Why or why not?
- What are the factors behind the low achievement in Pinella County? Do you see any differences or correlations in your school district or your surrounding communities?

Reflect and respond to any parts of Episode 2 that you found disheartening, compelling, or hopeful.

#### **Assignment #4: America Divided Episode 3**

Watch Season 1, Episode 3 - (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQeb14AXugI&t=602s>)

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/GQeb14AXugI>

Write a 400-500 word reflection, focusing on the following questions:

In Dayton, Ohio, as well as many places throughout the USA, there is a serious opioid epidemic. Describe at least one of the personal stories from Dayton and your response. What happened with Purdue Pharmacology? Explain and share your reaction.

- How is this similar to or different from your own community?
- "Do the undocumented have any human rights?"
- Share two of the stories presented in America Ferrera's segment on immigration in Rio Grande, Texas, and your perspective and reaction.
- Jesse Williams interviewed Michael Hawkins, an SRO officer in Campbell Park, where there is about the 3 times higher rate of arrests in Pinella County schools. Describe the statistics and your response from that interview. What reforms are taking place in the Pinella schools?
- Reflect and respond to any parts of Episode 3 that you found disheartening, compelling, and hopeful.

#### **Assignment #5: A House Divided Episode 5**

Watch Season 1, Episode 5.

(<https://www.youtube.com/embed/L9tqxPv7AW4?autopause=1&controls=1&showinfo=0>)

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/L9tqxPv7AW4>

Write a 400- 500 word reflection, focusing on the following questions:

- Amy Poehler meets with CHIRLA representatives. Explain the California law, Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, its advocates and opposition, and the #8241 legislative vote. What is your opinion?
- Zach Galifianakis states that the people in power stay in power. It's about redrawing the district map to favor Republicans in power. Summarize his conversations with both Margaret Dickson and Rev. Barber. What were the effects? How does political or racial gerrymandering affect constituents and elected officials in general as well as in your district or state?
- Reflect and respond to any parts of Episode 5 that you found disheartening, compelling, and hopeful.

#### **Assignment #6: Compassion & Justice at Work Research**

America's social and economic divide reflects a complex set of systemic, long-standing, and not easily remedied conditions. On the other hand, we can point to local and national success stories in affordable housing, community policing, immigrant rights, equity in education, policies and agencies to buffer the drug crisis, and much more. In this assignment, you will research examples of success in one issue you choose to develop further.

Pick an issue related to how America is divided that you want to research in more depth that will help you understand the divide.

- Spend time researching the issue through reputable articles and videos.
- Describe in 3-4 page essay, Google slides/PowerPoint, 3+ cases that exemplify a solution to an issue.

Your paper should address the following:

- What role did leadership, advocacy, and bipartisanship play?
- What were the legislative actions?
- Include a short bibliography of articles (with links) and videos you drew on in your report.

## ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT

### B. LEARNING APPLICATION

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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### Assignment #7: Topic of Interest : Curriculum Resources

Select a topic of interest from the video/curriculum topics in the America Divided series or others of your choice. Look closely at the various activities, websites and articles within that theme. Bookmark ones that are most appropriate to use when you create your lesson plans for that specific topic in the next assignment. Please submit the list of resources you are planning to use. TOPICS can include, but are not limited to:

- Housing Discrimination/Affordability
- Racism
- Implicit Bias
- Criminal Justice
- Community & Police Relationships
- Education
- School segregation
- Immigration
- Citizenship
- Addiction
- Voting Rights
- Education
- Local Policy
- Environmental Justice
- Public Works & Safety
- School-to-Prison Pipeline

[https://americadividedseries.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/America\\_Divided\\_Curriculum\\_Booklet.pdf](https://americadividedseries.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/America_Divided_Curriculum_Booklet.pdf)

### Assignment #8: Local Community Issue

Through research and interviews, explore the nature and extent in **your local community** of one issue from the any topic related to America being divided or polarized: racial, housing, redlining/redistricting, education or other issues of interest.

Share your knowledge of your topic of choice by designing an infographic or other type of visual poster that can be used in your classroom or in a professional development activity. You can use the following free webtools to create an infographic:

Canva: <https://www.canva.com/create/infographics/>

Venngage: <https://venngage.com/>

PiktoChart: <https://piktochart.com/blog/using-infographics-classroom/>

<https://prezi.com//create-powerpoint-design-template>

Summarize your findings in a 4-5 page paper indicating people interviewed, documents reviewed, and any current solutions being pursued or planned by local officials or community activists.

### **Assignment #9: Unit Lesson Plans**

Complete one (1) of the following: Create a 4 lesson unit on the topic you selected in Assignment 7. Use the lesson plan format below.

#### **Assignment #7- A:**

- Adapt/create a 4 lesson unit on the selected topic, reflecting what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lessons with students in your classroom.
- Write a 250-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback or noteworthy student products.
- Submit your 4 lesson unit to your instructor
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box when you submit your lesson.

**OR**

#### **Assignment #7-B:**

- Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.
- Adapt/create a 4 lesson unit on the selected topic, reflecting what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a 500+ word article concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.
- Please refer to the [guidelines](#) for our blog What Works: Teaching at its Best prior to writing your article.
- When you submit your article to your instructor, please also email a copy to Renee Leon, blog curator, [renee@hol.edu](mailto:renee@hol.edu)
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Submit your article to your instructor
- As you submit your lesson, consider sharing it with other teachers taking our courses by checking

### **Assignment #10: (500 Level ONLY) Research**

Select one of the following areas to do more research, or contact your instructor for approval if you have other areas of interest.

- Research and cite at least 4 examples of how judicial activism on the part of an increasingly conservative court has played its role in the inequalities we see today. 3-4 page paper.
- Research and describe at least two stories where an American community overcame racial, economic, or ideational differences to find a new level of reconciliation and connectedness. 3-4 page paper.
- Portugal embarked on a radical program of decriminalizing drugs. Research the particulars of their policies and practices and their level of effectiveness and describe any such legislation considered in the USA in a 3-4 page paper.
- Research your local NGOs for resources available for housing and food insecurity. Compile and disseminate the list to local food banks, schools, and community centers. Share your reflection on the availability or lack of available resources in your community. 3-4 page paper.
- Pick a topic of inequity prevalent in your community, school, region, or state. Research at least 2 related articles and collect appropriate data. Meet with at least one locally elected governmental official about your findings. In a 3-4 page paper, share any strategic plan that is being considered to rectify the situation and the responses from the government official.

### **C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #11: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

#### **SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

## **INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

## **QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Wendi Fein, M.A., enthusiastically brings her years of teaching experiences since 1980 to the development and implementation of her courses. Presently, she is teaching Adult Education, Developmental Math and English as a Second Language at Tacoma Community College in Tacoma Washington.

She spent 25 years teaching in K-12 public schools with a focus on special education, math, dance, PE, study skills and English/World Cultures. In addition, Wendi has traveled and volunteered extensively, bringing her stories and passion for human rights and equity into the classroom. Wendi holds a B.A. from the University of California, Santa Barbara and an M.A. in Special Education.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **A DIVIDED AMERICA: The Need for Change**

#### **ADDICTION THE EPIDEMIC**

<http://americanaddictioncenters.org/>

American Addiction Centers American Addiction Centers' mission is to provide quality, compassionate and innovative care to adults struggling with addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders. The Centers' purpose and passion is to empower individuals, families and communities by helping them achieve recovery and optimal wellness of the mind, body and spirit.

<http://www.cadca.org/comprehensive-addictionand-recovery-act-cara>

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America On July 22, 2016, President Barack Obama signed into law the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (Public Law 114-198). This is the first major federal addiction legislation in 40 years and the most comprehensive effort undertaken to address the opioid epidemic, encompassing all six pillars necessary for such a coordinated response—prevention, treatment, recovery, law enforcement, criminal justice reform and overdose reversal. While it authorizes over \$181 million each year in new funding to fight the opioid epidemic, monies must be appropriated every year through the regular appropriations process in order for it to be distributed in accordance with the law.

#### **DEMOCRACY MONEY IN POLITICS**

<http://www.vox.com/2014/7/30/5949581/money-inpolitics-charts-explain>

"40 Charts That Explain Money in Politics" by Andrew Pokop Charts and graphs curated by Vox, showing a variety of data related to campaign finance and lobbying at national and state levels.

<http://billofrightsinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Citizens-United-lesson.pdf>

Citizens United vs. F.E.C. High school lesson plan from the Bill of Rights Institute; provides a background essay and a dozen primary sources including political cartoons, foundational documents and the majority, dissenting and concurring opinions from Citizens United, along with document based questions (DBQs) for each.

<http://www.commoncause.org/issues/money-inpolitics>

Common Cause Common Cause describes itself as a "nonpartisan grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy." The "issues" section of their website includes resources related to voting and elections and money in politics.

#### **DOMESTIC WORKERS/EQUAL PAY**

Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help*. Amy Einhorn Books. 2009. Hardback, 450 pages, ISBN 0399155341

Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town as they fight for the rights of domestic worker and the way women, mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends, view one another. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humor, and hope, *The Help* is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don't. It is also a film.

<http://domesticemployers.org/>

Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network Hand in Hand is a national network of employers of nannies, housecleaners and home attendants working for dignified and respectful working conditions that benefit the employer and worker alike. It supports employers to improve their employment practices, and to collaborate with workers to change cultural norms and public policies that bring dignity and respect to domestic workers and all of communities.

<http://community-wealth.org/sites/clone.community-wealth.org/files/downloads/reportburnham-theodore.pdf>

Home Economics: The Invisible and Unregulated World of Domestic Work This 2012 report presents the results of the first national survey of domestic workers in the U.S. and documents the widespread mistreatment of domestic workers—nannies, housecleaners and caregivers—in the United States.

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/02/timeline-domestic-workers-invisible-historyamerica/>

"Invisible Women: The Real History of Domestic Workers in America" This interactive timeline explores a few of the milestones in the

little-known history of domestic workers in America, showing where these workers came from and how far they still have to go.

## **EDUCATION THE CLASS DIVIDE**

<http://www.dignityinschools.org/>

Dignity in Schools “The Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC) challenges the systemic problem of pushout in our nation’s schools and works to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. Dignity in Schools Campaign builds power amongst parents, youth, organizers, advocates and educators to transform their own communities, support alternatives to a culture of zero tolerance, punishment, criminalization and the dismantling of public schools, and fight racism and all forms of oppression.

<http://safequalityschools.org/>

Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track Part of the Advancement Project, a next-generation multi-racial civil rights organization, this campaign provides online reports, tools, infographics and even games to help students, parents, educators, law enforcement and activists dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.

## **FAIR HOUSING**

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/flagwars/lesson-plan/>

National Fair Housing Alliance “Founded in 1988 and headquartered in Washington DC, the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA) is the only national organization dedicated solely to ending discrimination in housing. NFHA works to eliminate housing discrimination and to ensure equal housing opportunity for all people through leadership, education and outreach, membership services, public policy initiatives, advocacy and enforcement.

<https://www.citylab.com/topics/ segregation/?page=2>

Segregation City Lab (from The Atlantic) is an online news source, focused on the issues facing the world’s metro areas and neighborhoods with analysis, reporting and visual storytelling. This link will take you to a City Lab landing page with a collection of articles related to urban segregation.

## **FLINT WATER CRISIS**

<http://www.freep.com/pages/interactives/flintwater-crisis-timeline/>

How Flint’s Water Crisis Unfolded This interactive timeline on the Detroit Free Press website links to articles related to the water crisis spanning from 2010 to the present.

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily\\_videos/ poison-water-in-flint-affects-everyones-healthspecially-kids/](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily_videos/ poison-water-in-flint-affects-everyones-healthspecially-kids/)

“Poison Water in Flint Affects Everyone’s Health—Especially Kids” This 11 minute PBS news report addresses the loss of public trust in Flint, Michigan since the water crisis. Provided warm up and discussion questions spark student thinking about the essential question, “What is the government’s responsibility when it comes to providing safe drinking water?”

<https://thewaterproject.org/resources/lesson-plans/>

The Water Crisis—Lesson Plans for All Grades This free teacher’s guide from The Water Project provides lessons for elementary through high school. The guide includes interactive activities, worksheets, research ideas and resource lists. The guide can be used as a whole or as individual lesson plans across a variety of core subjects.

<https://www.globalonenessproject.org/resources/ lesson-plans/do-we-have-right-clean-water>

Global Oneness Project: Do We Have a Right to Clean Water? The Global Oneness Project offers free multicultural stories and companion lesson plans. This collection of award-winning films, photo essays and articles explore cultural, social and environmental issues with a humanistic lens. Available in both English and Spanish, the high school- and college level lesson plans contain engaging exercises and can also be adapted for elementary and middle school use.

## **IMMIGRATION**

[http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/im\\_uaceducators-guide\\_2016.pdf](http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/im_uaceducators-guide_2016.pdf)

“Immigrant and Refugee Children: Guide for Educators and School Support Staff” Learn about the American Federation of Teachers’ position on immigration reform, and review several model resources schools can use to publicly call for immigration reform and to uphold the rights of immigrant students.

<http://lupenet.org/>

LUPE César Chávez founded LUPE, a community union, rooted in the belief that members of the low-income community have the responsibility and the obligation to organize themselves. Through their association they begin to advocate and articulate for the issues and factors that impact their lives.

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/tip-sheet/article/72811-10-essential-books-about-the-immigrant-experience.html>

Books on immigration experiences for middle and high school students.

## **THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INEQUITIES**

<http://www.blacklivesmattersyllabus.com/>

The Black Lives Matter Syllabus Tour is a national community-organizing project that seeks to mobilize students and local communities through teach-ins, public dialogues and sustained conversations about the past, present and future of the movement for Black lives. It

provides educators and everyday people with tools for thinking about the classroom as a site of protest.

<https://www.cut50.org/>

#cut50 #cut50 is a national bipartisan effort to smartly and safely reduce America's incarcerated population by 50 percent over the next 10 years.