**SOCIAL JUSTICE 104 SO MANY CHOICES**

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DEAN**

**DEFINING CHOICES**

**TOPIC 1**

**It is time for YOU to choose what cause you want to engage in.** Remember the cause must be one you are absolutely committed to because there are going to be times when you are confused, disappointed and exhilarate so being totally engaged is paramount for you to have success.

1. Voting rights

Exercising the right to vote is one of the social justice issues prioritized in 2020 and beyond. If one wants to make institutional change it is imperative laws are change and new ones created to stop systemic problem..

2. Climate justice

One of the most significant challenges is to strengthen social responses to environmental changes. The effects of climate change can be seen all over the news from wildfires in California and the Northwest to record-breaking temps in the Arctic have increased the awareness of how serious our problem is today and for future generations.

3. Environment and Climate Change

Today’s world is changing fast, and Mother Nature is at the forefront. With all the massive storms that are becoming more frequent, and the record droughts and floods across the nation, there is no doubt that something has shaken up our natural world. But what can we do about it?

Environmental effects must be addressed, including everything from the crumbling infrastructure of bridges and roads to the fact of climate change, and how it is affecting everything from farming to fishing. What individuals can do to help alleviate problems for the environment should also be seriously considered.

4. Gun Violence

Many medical professionals consider gun violence to be a public health crisis. From homicides to mass shootings to suicides, gun violence is a particularly troubling problem in the U.S., where homicides tied to firearms is the highest among developed nations. However, the impact of gun violence goes beyond those who have been killed. Those who have been injured, witnessed gun violence or lost someone also suffer long-term effects, both mentally and physically.

5. Obesity

America is one of the unhealthiest countries in the world. The rate of obesity has skyrocketed in recent decades and shows no signs of slowing down. As a result, Americans are dealing with the problems that are often related to obesity, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and other ailments that put a strain on the healthcare system.

6. Discrimination and Racism

Racism has a long history in the United States, and its impact can be found in every facet of education, business, media and day-to-day life. After the killing of George Floyd in Minnesota and several other high-profile police shootings, Black Lives Matter protests took place across the country and have continued as activists demand substantial change through federal legislation that would enact police reform and address systemic racism within the criminal justice system.

It seems like this issue should have gotten better, but if anything, it has gotten worse. Racism flares up quite a bit lately, especially in terms of people of color, in what might be anything from simple misunderstandings to true corruption. Places like Ferguson, Missouri and Florida are hotbeds of the problem. Discrimination doesn’t just stop with color, it extends to religious beliefs, such as the backlash against Muslims in the country, as well as sexual preference as seen with numerous incidents of gay and lesbian couples facing social problems and even violence.

7. Sexuality and Gender

Beyond discrimination based on age, other hot topics both currently and historically are gender and sexuality. In recent years, gender has morphed into a complicated topic that goes beyond the binary designations of male and female.

8. Bullying

Obesity can also have an impact on another important social issue: bullying. The data ndicates that obesity and other appearance issues are among the top reasons children report being bullied.

Despite recent anti-bullying initiatives, more than 20% of American students report being bullied. A third of those being bullied report that it happens at least once or twice each month.

Additionally, 24% of middle school students report they have been victims of cyberbullying, or bullying conducted online.

**TOPIC 1**

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 1**

Explain why you select X cause? Personally do you have any experience with the cause you selected? What do you see is the problem you want to pursue and why?

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 2**

Nationally, regionally, statewide, citywide or locally what other organizations are participating in a similar cause? Select one and explain that groups mission and vision.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 3**

You would prefer to create your own new organization or partner with another that you have already selected and why for either?

**DISCUSSION QUESTION 4 with the Dean**

**PLEASE SET UP A PHONE CALL OR ZOOM CALL WITH THE DEAN FOR 15-30 MINUTES.**