

# Black Lives Matter\*: Dialogue and Action

The deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Tamir Rice have prompted a broad range of emotions across the United States. Social protests in Ferguson, Missouri and around the U.S. have attracted national and international attention. Many are reminded of the shootings of Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis, and others harken back to the tragic death of Emmett Till in 1955. In reflecting the spirit of this living movement, this series of programs has been named “Black Lives Matter” acknowledging that ALL Black lives are relevant and must be considered in our discussions and action.

## \*History of Black Lives Matter

<http://blacklivesmatter.com>

#BlackLivesMatter was created after the murder of Trayvon Martin in 2012. Black Lives Matter broadens the discussion to include all black lived experience – among them queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, and women.

#BlackLivesMatter is a tactic to (re)build the Black liberation movement.

Marc Lamont Hill

Wednesday, January 21, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Russel H. Kirkhof Center, 2250 Grand River room

Marc Lamont Hill, author and activist, is a journalist who is frequently tapped by top news organizations for his views on everything from sexuality to politics to religion. He is a regular commentator for CNN, MSNBC and Fox News Channel. Hill also writes a column for the Philadelphia Daily News.

Hill serves as distinguished professor of African American studies at Morehouse College. He is a founding board member of My5th, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating young people about their legal rights; Hill also works with the ACLU Drug Reform Project. He earned a doctoral degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of “Beats, Rhymes, and Classroom Life: Hip-Hop Pedagogy and the Politics of Identity” and “The Classroom and the Cell: Conversations on Black life in America,” in addition to editing several other books.

## Revolutionary Rebellions ... And Then What?

Dr. Lisa Perhamus, assistant professor &

Padnos/Sarosik endowed professor of Civil Discourse

Thursday, January 22, 2:30-3:45 p.m.

Russel H. Kirkhof Center, room 2263

What is the difference between a riot and a rebellion? Is uncivil discourse ever appropriate? How do people honor human dignity in the face of violence? In this dialogue-driven session, we will explore these questions as we grapple with what it means to create revolutionary social change. We will watch a short excerpt from the documentary, "American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs," in which she describes the pragmatic and intellectual challenges that emerged from the 1967 Detroit Rebellion. Our discussion will include current incidents of social response to systems of injustice. This session seeks to maintain a solutionary mindest as we examine these issues.

# Screening of "Visions of Abolition: From Critical Resistance to a New Way of Life - Part I Breaking down the Prison Industrial Complex"

Change U film and talk-back session.

Friday, January 23, 6 p.m.

Russel H. Kirkhof Center, room 2263

See [www.gvsu.edu/socialjustice](http://www.gvsu.edu/socialjustice) for more information and related events.

## Change U: Social Justice Training: Confronting Structural Violence

Saturday, January 24, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Russel H. Kirkhof Center, GVSU Allendale Campus

Change U consists of mutual and applied teaching and learning facilitated through large group presentation, small group discussion, skill building/sharing, group brainstorming, and the development of strategies and tactics to resist systemic injustice. This social justice program uses a relational organizing model, which promotes community building and learning from the lived experiences of all who participate. Valuing our deep ties to the community, Change U is free and available to GVSU students, faculty and staff, as well as community members from West Michigan. We seek to develop a critical analysis in order to envision the kind of world we want to live in, to practice that vision in how we organize, and to struggle together for collective liberation.

This activist assembly is designed to investigate the often unseen and unnamed realities of structural violence that exist within economic policy, police departments, the military and the Prison Industrial Complex. The assembly will investigate these issues and discuss how structural violence disproportionately impacts Trans and Queer youth, communities of color, immigrant communities and working class communities in Grand Rapids and around the world. We will also begin the conversation and the process of developing organized resistance to various forms of structural violence, through skills sharing and the collective creation of campaigns for radical change. Break out sessions will be facilitated by faculty as well as community activists and students, including a session by Black Lives Matter: Grand Rapids.

Registration required. Visit [www.gvsu.edu/socialjustice](http://www.gvsu.edu/socialjustice) to see a schedule of events and to register.

## Black Lives Matter Panel Discussion

Wednesday, February 4, 4–6:00 p.m.

Russel H. Kirkhof Center, Pere Marquette

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Black Male Scholars Initiative present a select panel of Black male leaders, who exemplify the various aspects of the Black perspectives in America and the West Michigan community.

Moderator - Dwight K. Hamilton, associate vice president for Affirmative Action & Title IX Officer, GVSU

Panelists:

- Stephen R. Drew, attorney, Drew, Cooper & Anding
- Cle Jackson, president, NAACP Chapter of Grand Rapids
- Joe Jones, president, Grand Rapids Urban League
- Dr. Andre Perry, founding dean, College of Urban Education, Davenport University
- Chris Sain, educator and author, Grand Rapids Community College
- Dr. Robert L. Stevenson, Jr., pastor and adjunct professor, GVSU



# Black Lives Matter\* : Dialogue and Action

Women’s Lives as a part of Black Lives Matter  
Tuesday, February 10, noon-1:00 p.m.  
Russel H. Kirkhof Center, Women’s Center Lounge

The Women’s Center monthly “Talk Back Tuesday” noon discussion focuses on current topics and events! This month we will focus on the role and representation of women of color in the “Black Lives Matter” movement. We invite participation from the campus community to join in and expand the dialogue around power, privilege and systems of oppression.

Events in Ferguson Did Not Occur In A Vacuum  
Wednesday, February 11, 6:30-8 p.m.  
Russel H. Kirkhof Center, Pere Marquette

Panelists:  
Dr. Louis Moore, history professor and coordinator of the African African American Studies program, will address the history of police brutality and criminalizing blackness.

Dr. Brian Johnson, criminal justice professor, will discuss the police use of force and police training issues related to race and the use of force.

Dr. David Alvarez, professor of English and an affiliate of GVSU's Middle East Studies program will address the ways in which postcolonial studies can help us situate police shootings of African-Americans within two international frameworks: (i) the nexus between modern imperialism and systemic racism in the US and elsewhere, and (ii) official US support for state-sponsored repression in the global South.

Professor Christine A. Yared, J.D., lawyer and adjunct professor, Women & Gender Studies, will discuss how prosecutors are misusing the grand jury system, the significance of the officers' decisions to testify and law enforcement’s obligation to protect our First Amendment right to protest, while maintaining public safety.

The police shootings of Michael Brown, Eric Garner and other unarmed black men and women, their investigations and grand jury proceedings did not occur in a vacuum. GVSU Professors will provide a context for understanding these incidents and offer steps people can take to create change. There will also be time for audience questions.

The objectives of this panel discussion are to:

- Educate students about the relevance of various disciplines to this issue.
- Challenge professors to think about how they can weave ideas, history and information from their disciplines which relate to this issue into the classroom.
- Shine a floodlight on the fact that these shootings did not take place in a vacuum.
- Offer steps that need to be taken to foster change.
- Inspire students, professors and others in the GVSU and West Michigan communities to take steps to be a part of the solution.



Building Transformative Responses to Violence  
Mia Mingus, community educator and organizer  
Tuesday, February 24, 6- 8 p.m.  
Russel H. Kirkhof Center, 2250 Grand River room

Mia Mingus works for disability justice and transformative justice responses to child sexual abuse. This lecture will introduce the concept and framework of transformative justice, working to respond to violence without causing more harm or violence. It comes from oppressed communities and is essential in our intersectional work to end oppression. What would it take to respond to violence in our communities without relying on state systems? How can we work for prevention and response, individual and collective justice, and individual and systemic transformation in our responses to violence? Transformative justice requires us to rethink our work to respond to violence and offers an inspiring and compelling vision of what’s possible.

What Should (n’t) I Say? A Conversation for Well-Meaning Faculty at a Pre-dominantly White University  
Dr. Patty Stow Bolea, professor, School of Social Work and Dr. Dana Munk, Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center  
Wednesday, March 11, 2-3:30 p.m.  
DeVos Campus, University Club,107C

When civil rights issues and unrest are rampant in greater society, faculty may (or may not) feel compelled to engage in open discussion about these events with their students. While it is important to unpack these issues with students, not knowing what to say and/or how to say it can be a barrier for faculty to engage with students in meaningful ways. Despite the best preparations, intentions, and group discussion skills, it is common for discussions to be superficial in nature, involve few rather than all students, and end with a demonstration of the inherent difficulties rather than a meaningful shared understanding.

Using case study analysis, this session will explore ways that faculty can engage in more meaningful conversations about sensitive issues with students. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to reflect on barriers in their own teaching that prevent them from facilitating crucial conversations relevant to contemporary oppression and bias.

Teach-In: Power, Privilege and Difficult Dialogues  
Thursday, April 2, 8 a.m.-10 p.m.  
Mary Idema Pew Library and Russel H. Kirkhof Center (exact room assignment will be announced)

This is the second annual Teach-in, entitled Power, Privilege and Difficult Dialogues. The Teach-in is intended for the purpose of mutual education among students, faculty and staff of the GVSU community and intended to address topics related to inequality and systems of oppression, as well as social justice and liberation. Recognizing the multi-faceted dimensions of these topics, this Teach-in will be a daylong event. The learning objectives of Power,

Are you interested in hosting a discussion or facilitating a program? If so, email your thoughts and ideas to the director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Connie Dang, at [dangc@gvsu.edu](mailto:dangc@gvsu.edu). The series will be ongoing and updates will be posted on the OMA website [www.gvsu.edu/oma](http://www.gvsu.edu/oma).

Events are open to the GVSU community and the public. For information on parking or for individuals requiring special accommodations, please contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (616)331-2177 or email us at [oma@gvsu.edu](mailto:oma@gvsu.edu).