



**SCWR110 –
INCLUSIVE
REPRESENTATION IN
FILM & TELEVISION**

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Adjunct Professor

DePaul University | CDM | School of Cinematic Arts
CP340/440 | Winter 2024 | Wednesdays 1:30P-4:45P
14 E Jackson Blvd, Room 209, Loop Campus
In-Person

****This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during this Quarter if changes occur, it will be addressed in class & announced/posted on D2L**

It is your responsibility to read this syllabus in its entirety, to regularly check the D2L course page and know what is expected of you in this course

“In the majority of films, we are seeing ourselves through someone else’s lens. A skewed perspective not generated from real-life interactions or experience, but rather from the intake of previous characters on screen who were depicted as less than, sidekicks, diminished. Recognize this when it happens and stop it. Make it your problem, too. Representation matters. Pull up.” – Gina Prince-Bythewood

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Throughout this course, we will be examining intersectional representations of people and communities in film and television through the lens of creators. Through readings, screenings, podcasts, video essays, and in-class discussions students will study how film and television have failed in representing marginalized communities throughout history as well as how creators and filmmakers are now attempting to course correct, battling harmful stereotypes and erasures on screen and finally taking control of the narratives. Students will learn creative tools and tactics to combat harmful and one-dimensional representation and apply it to their own creative work. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of research, lived experience, authenticity to ensure inclusive and equitable representation across all media platforms

LEARNING GOALS:

- Analyze representations of marginalized groups in film and Television series spanning multiple generations and genres
- Identify harmful representations across an array of intersectional identities
- Develop an appropriate vocabulary with which to discuss intersectional media representation
- Explain how diverse backgrounds and perspectives uniquely affect story and character development
- Examine the relationship between on-screen portrayals and their real-world ramifications
- Apply a work-flow process that ensures more inclusive and equitable representation in their own creative practice

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Class Sessions: Mondays 1:30P-4:45P, 14 E Jackson, Room 209 – Loop Campus

Final Session: Class 10 – 03/13

Office Hours: By Appointment. Mondays & Wednesdays 10A-1P ON ZOOM or 14E Jackson Rm. 200B
Schedule through Calendly: <https://calendly.com/cclanas/30min>

D2L: This course is managed on D2L. You will find the required reading materials, assignments, and links to screenings there.

Readings: Readings will be supplied by instructor on D2L.
Recommended Text: Inclusive Screenwriting for Film and Television (King)

Screenings: For some screenings, students will need access to Netflix, Hulu, Max

Recommended Supplies: An internet enabled device like a laptop, tablet, or smartphone

- Throughout the quarter there will be class time allocated to working on group projects that will necessitate access to the internet

GRADING SCALE

A=90%-100% plus/minus = top/bottom 3% of grade range; B=80%-89%, C=70%-79%, D=60%-69%, F=59% and below

FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN (APPROX. & SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Attendance & Participation – 15%

Project Proposal – 10%

Case-Study Essay – 20%

Group Project/Presentation – 15%

Final Essay (2000 Words) OR Media Statement of Inclusion – 40%

An incomplete grade may only be assigned to a student if: (1) The student has experienced an extenuating circumstance near the end of the term, (2) the student is in good standing in the class, (3) the request is made in advance. It is solely up to the discretion of the instructor to grant an incomplete

GRADE PROFILES

- A** Work demonstrates consistently clear, detailed, relevant & accurate understanding of key concepts while showing independent, sophisticated thought. Work consistently improves.
- B** Demonstrates mostly clear, detailed, relevant & accurate understanding of key concepts while showing mostly independent thought. Improves with some lapses.
- C** Demonstrates sometimes clear, detailed, relevant & accurate understanding of key concepts while work remains dependent on teacher/notes/texts. Inconsistent improvement.
- D** Frequently demonstrates unclear, imprecise & inaccurate understanding of key concepts. Does not demonstrate improvement.
- F** Demonstrates undisciplined or non-evident thinking with little to no comprehension of key concepts

COURSE SCHEDULE

TEXT PRECEDED BY READ OR WATCH ARE DUE THE WEEK LISTED

CONTENT WARNING: Because this class focuses on rectifying historic harms in media representation, some texts we analyze will deal with the legacy of sexism, racism, and other forms of social violence. Content warnings for particularly difficult texts will be marked, but a general content warning for all course content is warranted here.

WEEK 1 | COURSE INTRODUCTION: THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION (01/10)

Syllabus Review & Introductions. Media studies 101. Ethical creativity from a creator's perspective. The "Positive" stereotypes vs Negative Stereotypes & What is representation?

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • Face Me "Ty Yamamoto"
• Jay-Z - "Moonlight"
• Trevor Noah - "The Problem with Cop Shows"

IN-CLASS READING: • "Plastic Representation" - Kristen J Warner

WEEK 2 | GENDER (01/17)

Toxic Masculinity & the male gaze. Gender stereotypes. Strong Female Leads and Mary Sue must die!

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • Kevin Can F*ck Himself | Season 1 Episode 1

READ: ☐ What Can a Heroine Do?

☐ Media Masculinity - Bell Hooks

WATCH: ☐ "The Male Glance" - Lilly Loofbourrow

☐ Tuca & Berite | Season 1 Episode 9 - NETFLIX ^^

☐ Tuca & Berite | Season 2 Episode 9 - MAX ^^

^^ This series explores issues of trauma, past sexual assault, and dynamics of an emotionally abusive relationship.

WEEK 3 | GENDER (01/24)

The Bechdel Test and moving toward Intersectionality. Sexism in character description and is she likeable?

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • Fleabag | Season 1 Episode 4

- READ: ☐ Here's Looking at Her: Intersectional Analysis of Women Power and Feminism in Film
☐ On Whiteness and the Racial Imaginary

WATCH: ☐ I May Destroy You | Season 1 Episode 1 & 5 - MAX**

** This series explores issues of consent and sexual assault

WEEK 4 | RACE & ETHNICITY (01/31)

The White Savior Complex. The White Gaze in Hollywood film and television. Racial Stereotypes. The problem with color neutral casting/writing and the real world ramifications

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • America Ferrera, TEDTalk
• Reservation Dogs | Season 1 Episode 1
• King of the Hill | Season 5 Episode 4

- READ: ☐ Excerpt from Hood Feminism
☐ The Cultural Politics of Colorblind Casting

WATCH: ☐ Insecure | Season 1 Episode 1 - NETFLIX
☐ Vida | Season 1 Episode 4 - HULU

LISTEN: ☐ Code Switch Podcast | Changing Color in Comics

WEEK 5 | RACE & ETHNICITY (02/07)

Authenticity and the oppositional gaze. Moving beyond color neutral creation. Narrative sovereignty and subverting stereotypes

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • We Are Lady Parts | Season 1 Episode 1
• Master of None | Season 1 Episode 4

- READ: ☐ The Unbearable Whiteness of Hollywood on Asian American Representation in pop culture
☐ The Unwritten Rules of Black TV

WATCH: ☐ BEEF | Season 1 Episode 1 - NETFLIX
☐ RAMY | Season 1 Episode 7 - HULU

WEEK 6 | QUEER & TRANS (02/14)

What is Queer? Issues in Queer Representation and LGBTQIA+ Erasures.

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • The Bisexual | Season 1 Episode 1

- READ: ☐ Why is Queer TV Getting Worse?
☐ The Bisexual Revolution Will Be Televised

WATCH: ☐ Verilybitchie's Good LGBTQ+ Representation is Boring - YOUTUBE
☐ Fire Island - HULU

LISTEN: ☐ Pop Culture Happy Hour Podcast | Screening Ourselves: Basic Instinct

WEEK 7 | QUEER & TRANS (02/21)

Hetero-, Homo-, Cis- Normativity. Trans Representation. Queering the Narrative Structure

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • Transparent | Season 2 Episode 9

READ: ☐ Representing Trans Visibility and its Discontents

WATCH: ☐ Pose | Season 2 Episode 9 - HULU

☐ Disclosure - NETFLIX

LISTEN: ☐ Queery with Cameron Esposito Podcast | Jacob Tobia

WEEK 8 | DISABILITY VISIBILITY (02/28)

Representations of disability (cognitive, mental, physical) and historical experience. Media stereotypes of disability. Curative logics and narrative structures

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • Undone | Season 1 Episode 5

READ: ☐ Stolen Bodies Reclaimed Bodies

☐ Representation Matters - The Disabled Writers Committee

☐ Organic Representation

WATCH: ☐ Special | Season 1 Episode 1 & 2 - NETFLIX

☐ BoJack Horseman | Season 4 Episode 6 - NETFLIX

☐ BoJack Horseman | Season 6 Episode 16 - NETFLIX

WEEK 9 | SOCIAL CLASS & INCOME INEQUALITY (03/06)

Toxic masculinity & the male gaze. Gender stereotypes and the strong female characters. Why Mary Sue must die!

IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: • Gentefied | Season 1 Episode 8

READ: ☐ Representing the Poor

☐ Inclusive Screenwriting | Chapter 3 | Rethinking the Role of Conflict (King)

WATCH: ☐ Sorry to Bother You - ROKU CHANNEL (free)

☐ Maid | Season 1 Episode 1 - NETFLIX

WEEK 10 | GROUP PRESENTATIONS (03/14)

WEEK 11 | FINAL PROJECTS DUE (03/21)

COURSE OUTCOMES/ASSIGNMENTS

- Class Participation: Show up on time, weekly. Read the readings, watch the screenings, and participate thoughtfully in the class discussions.
- One project proposal
- One case-study essay that explores singular aspects of inclusivity in media. Must be linked to final project (1000ish words each)
- One group project/presentation

- One final essay (~2000 words): Analyze a contemporary film or television series that demonstrates aspects of “organic” representation. The essay should develop an apply an inclusive and intersectional framework for understanding the film/series and how it structurally challenges and/or innovates to create culturally specific representation. The essay should lead to new insights about the film/TV series while also contributing to contemporary media theory around what it means to create inclusive representation.

OR

- Media Statement of Inclusion (~2000 words): Complete an essay that articulates your own ideas about creating inclusive and intersectional media. What would an inclusive and intersectional media “utopia” look like? What kinds of media-making, viewing, and distribution do you want to support? What do you want to refuse? Within the essay, you should also engage in self-reflection on your past practices, as well as which films/TV series (from both inside and outside the syllabus) served as your inspiration.

NOTE: Final essays must incorporate academic criticism as well as a film or television series you explore outside of class. Film/TV review without their own bibliographies and notes are not considered academic criticism. Footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography are mandatory for your own essays (use MLA conventions)

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

Details for all assignments and readings will be discussed in class and posted on D2L. Unless otherwise noted, the due date is the start of class on the day an assignment is due and anything after the start of class is late. This is true even if you are absent. Graded assignments will lost one full letter grade for each week (or partial week) they are late. I can be flexible about this as long as you COMMUNICATE with me about how and when you will fulfill the requirements for any late assignments

Reading Assignments:

Students are expected to fully complete assigned readings on time so they are prepared for class discussions and writing assignments. Reading Matters. When done well, it is the most effective and efficient way to access another’s intelligence, experience, and wisdom. Students who manage their time to allow for careful reading will more successfully learn and participate in this course.

- Highlight at least one quote from each reading that stand out to you, resonate with you, or that represent ideas you would like to discuss or might delve more into in your final project.

Writing Assignments:

This course may require students to write both analytically and creatively. All formal compositions are expected to be typed, properly formatted, and carefully proofread.

ATTENDANCE

If you are well, I hope you will come to class on time and stay for the duration. If you are unwell, or suspect you may have been exposed to COVID, please stay home and take care of yourself. If you know you will be absent or late, let me know and we’ll work something out. Otherwise students are expected to attend each class, arrive on time, and remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops one-third after any unexcused absence.

Three unexcused absences may constitute failure for the course, unless approved by the insutrctor.

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Keeping our DePaul community safe is of utmost importance in the ongoing pandemic.

According to DePaul’s Health and Safety Practices Guidelines, while masking indoors is no longer required, DePaul remains a mask-friendly campus, therefore, if you join a meeting or gatherin and a

participant asks you to wear a mask, you are expected to do so. Further, you are expected to monitor yourself for symptoms each time you plan to come to campus. stay home if you are sick, avoid close contact with people who are sick.

DePaul's COVID-19 response plans are based on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Chicago Department of Public Health and the university's medical advisor from AMITA Health.

For the latest news and resources, please visit [DePaul's response to COVID-19 page](#).

DECORUM AND CIVIL DISCOURSE

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be socially responsible leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in this course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

This class is rooted in an anti-racist, queer, and intersectional feminist ethos. It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the multitude of lived experiences that students bring to class be viewed as a resource, strength, and source of joy. In all of my courses, I strive to include texts by/for/about marginalized creators and theorists. I also encourage open dialogue and spaces for students to express their unique identities and perspectives. Sometimes the topics that we cover in class are challenging, not just intellectually but emotionally. While I expect there to be rigorous discussion and even disagreement in our class discussions, I ask that you engage in discussion with care and honor for the other members in the classroom. I am open to having difficult conversations, and I strive to create an inclusive classroom that values all perspectives and protects those of us with marginalized identities from harm. Please note: There is a big difference between difficult conversations, which involve exploration, questioning, listening, curiosity, and growth, and social violence, which involves the routine presentation or defense of hateful sentiments, resulting in pain, shame, or fear. If you are prone to making socially violent statements, this is not the course for you. Socially violent behavior will be dealt with via discussions with the professor or dean, or possibly, failure of the course. If, at any time, the classroom experience does not live up to this expectation, please feel free to contact me via e-mail or during office hours.

TRIGGER WARNINGS

Learning is uncomfortable. Because this class focuses on rectifying historic harms in media representation, many of our course texts (screenings) will deal with the legacy of sexism, racism, and other forms of social violence. Content warnings for particularly difficult texts will be marked, and I will do my best to foster a classroom in which we can relate courageously, compassionately, and contemplatively with difficult and important content each week. This is a chance for growth. Film can be transformative and cathartic. However, it can also bring up past trauma. We will discuss these topics courageously, respectfully, and honestly as equals. If you ever need to step out, due to something that happens externally or internally at class, go ahead, but you will be expected to take responsibility for missed work and schedule a time to propose an alternative way to engage with the course material.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at:

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/PoliciesandProcedures.aspx>

YOUR NAME & PRONOUNS

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at: <https://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid332>

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY'S LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

At DePaul University, we acknowledge that we live and work on traditional Native lands that are home to well over one hundred difference tribal nations. We extend our respect to all of them, including the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Odawa nation, who signed the Treaty of Chicago in 1821 and 1833. We also recognize the Ho-Chunk, Myaamia, Menominee, Illinois Confederacy, and Peoria people who also maintained relationships with this land.

We acknowledge that these sacred homelands were ruptured by the European invasion of the Americas. In 1493, Pop Alexander VI promulgated the Doctrine of Discovery which seized Native lands and resources with impunity. This doctrine has been used by countries throughout the Americas, including the US to legitimize colonial policies of displacement and genocide toward Native peoples and to justify colonial legacies of white superiority and global capitalism.

We appreciate that today Chicago is home to the sixth-largest urban Native population in the United States. We further recognize and support the enduring presence of Native peoples among our faculty, staff, and student body. And in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, we reaffirm our commitment, both as an institution and as individuals, to help make our community and our society a more equitable, welcoming, and just place for all.

WITHDRAWAL

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system (<https://campusconnect.depaul.edu>) Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

EXCUSED ABSENCE

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at: <https://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html> Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The DePaul University Library (<https://library.depaul.edu>) provides access to authoritative information sources, such as scholarly articles, journals, and books, primary sources, and research databases. Research help is available daily in-person and via chat, email, phone, or text. You may also make an appointment (in-person, phone, or Zoom) with a librarian to discuss your research projects.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Please see <https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/teaching/Pages/online-teaching-evaluations.aspx> for additional information.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval. Information about the Incomplete Grades policy can be found at <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>

CENTER FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling you to access accommodations and support services to assist your success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus – Lewis Center #1420 – (312) 362-8002
- Lincoln Park Campus – Student Center #370 – (773) 325-1677
- Students can also email the office at csd@depaul.edu.

Students who are registered with the Center for Students with Disabilities are also invited to contact me privately to discuss how I may assist in facilitating the accommodations you will use in this course. This is best done early in the term. Our conversation will remain confidential to the extent possible.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <https://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

POLICY ON THE USE OF AI- GENERATIVE AI USE PROHIBITED

Generative AI tools are trained on existing texts, algorithms, and models to generate content like writing, images, and videos based on prompts from users. ChatGPT, Midjourney, Google Bard, and DALL-E are examples of generative AI tools. Please refrain from using generative AI in this course for any purpose. We will be developing skills that are important to practice on your own and using generative AI may inhibit development, practice, or understanding of those skills.

If you're unsure if a specific tool makes use of AI, or if a specific tool is permitted for use on assignments in this course, please contact me. Attempting to pass off AI-generator work as your own will violate DePaul's Academic Integrity Policy.

BASIC NEEDS

Access to nutritious food and reliable housing are factors that influence many students' ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. However, students facing food or housing insecurities may be hesitant to call attention to their ongoing struggles. DePaul University is committed to and cares about all students. To help you manage personal challenges and basic needs security, the university offers several resources.

- Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office for support: by calling (773) 325-7290 or emailing deanofstudents@depaul.edu.
- You can also contact Elizabeth Ann Seton Food Pantry and Sandwich Kitchen and the Dax Program (Chicago - DePaul; email: emily.edwards@depaulusa.org; phone: (312) 362-7931 for support.
- The Center for Access and Attainment has also created a guide for Food and Housing Resources that you can review.

If you are comfortable doing so, please also let me know about these challenges, so that I can help you access resources.

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

University Counseling & Psychological Services (UCAPS) helps remove barriers to learning and support academic success by providing free, goal-focused, collaborative, short-term, confidential, individual, and group counseling services for DePaul's students. UCAPS has a diverse multi-disciplinary staff that includes licensed mental health professionals in psychology, counseling, and social work.

Students* can talk to a therapist or schedule a brief screening and consultation appointment in the following ways:

- To speak directly to a therapist 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, students should call 773-325-CARE (2273) and Press "1" when prompted.
- To schedule a brief screening and consultation (BSC) appointment, students should call 773-325-CARE (2273) during regular business hours and Press "2" when prompted.
- Students can visit go.depaul.edu/ucaps and click the 'Schedule a Consultation' button to use online scheduling for a Brief Screening & Consultation (BSC) appointment. Online scheduling is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. All BSCs scheduled online are for phone appointments. To schedule an in-person or telehealth BSC, please call 773-325-CARE (2273) and Press "2" when prompted.

*Services are provided based on student eligibility. For full eligibility details please visit go.depaul.edu/ucaps.

SEXUAL & RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

As a DePaul community, we share a commitment to take care of one another. Classroom relationships are based on trust and communication. Sometimes, material raised in class may bring up issues for students related to sexual and relationship violence. In other instances, students may reach out to faculty as a source of help and support.

It is important for students to know that faculty are required to report information reported to them about experiences with sexual or relationship violence to DePaul's Title IX Coordinator. Students should also know that disclosing experiences with sexual or relationship violence in course assignments or discussion does not constitute a formal report to the University and may not begin the process of DePaul providing a response.

- Students seeking to report an incident of sexual or relationship violence to DePaul should contact Public Safety (Lincoln Park: 773-325-7777; Loop: 312-362-8400) and/or the Title IX Coordinator (Lincoln Park: 312-362-8970 or titleixcoordinator@depaul.edu).
- Students seeking to speak confidentially about issues related to sexual and relationship violence should contact a Survivor Support Advocate in the Office of Health Promotion & Wellness for information and resources (773-325-7129 or hpw@depaul.edu).

More information is available at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/hpw/shvp.html>. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these services and to seek help around sexual and relationship violence for themselves as well as their peers who may be in need of support.