

## Rutgers DSW Program Syllabus

**Module Title:** Intro to Restorative Justice

**Principles Instructor:**

**Residency:**

**Date:**

---

### Module Description:

Using lecture, work in groups and pairs, reading reflection, writing reflection, and role play demonstration, the module will present a basic overview of the need for restorative justice and community-based mediation, the historic roots of the models, some of their many applications and models, and will actively critique the models.

### Module Objectives:

1. Learn about and discuss the need for restorative justice and community mediation
2. Frame restorative justice and community mediation as tools of decarceration
  - a. School to Prison Pipeline
  - b. Prosecutors and Criminal Courts
  - c. Policing
  - d. Incarceration and re-entry
  - e. Carceral social work
3. Several historical roots of restorative justice and community mediation
4. Hear and discuss an overview of community-based mediation applications and models
5. Overview of restorative justice models and application and models
6. Experience an interactive role play demonstration of a restorative justice model: community conferencing
7. Discuss of critiques of restorative justice & community mediation
8. Build skills in designing anti-carceral responses to harm in multiple social work settings

### Required Readings:

1. Menkel-Meadow, C. (2007). Restorative justice: What is it and does it work?. *Annu. Rev. Law Soc. Sci.*, 3, 161-187.
2. Goens-Bradley, S. (2020). Breaking racism's insidious grip on restorative practices: A call for white action. *Colorizing restorative justice: Voicing our realities*, 37-54.
3. Leah Jacobs, et al. Defund the Police: Moving Towards an Anti-Carceral Social Work. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 32(1): 37-62.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10428232.2020.1852865>
4. Harmon-Darrow, C., Charkoudian, L., Ford, T., Ennis, M., & Bridgeford, E. (2020). Defining Inclusive mediation: Theory, practice, and research. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 37(4), 305-324. <https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.21279>

## Watch in Class

1. Shannon Sliva (SSW Assistant Professor, U of Denver). 2019. **How restorative justice could end mass incarceration.** TEDxMileHigh Talk. (12 minute video)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPA-p6UUDI4>
2. Mia Mingus. 2019. Transformative Justice: A Brief Description.  
<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2019/01/09/transformative-justice-a-brief-description/>

## Recommended Readings:

### Resources

- Impact Justice: Restorative Justice:  
<https://impactjustice.org/impact/restorative-justice/>
- Transform Harm: Restorative Justice  
<https://transformharm.org/category/restorative-justice/>
- Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice  
<https://zehr-institute.org/what-is-rj/>

### RELEVANT RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS:

- Network to Advance Abolitionist Social Work (NAASW): <https://www.naasw.com/>
- NIA Project. <https://project-nia.org/>
- Children of Promise, NYC: <https://www.cpnyc.org/>
- upEND movement <https://upendmovement.org/>
- Policing and Social Justice project. <https://policingandjustice.org/>
- Center for Policing Equity <https://policingequity.org/>
- Critical Resistance <http://criticalresistance.org/>
- Creative Interventions: Resources for everyday people to end violence. <https://www.creative-interventions.org/>
- End Police Violence Collective – Call by Public Health practitioners, scholars, and professional organizations: <https://www.endingpoliceviolence.com/>
- Rethinking Schools: <https://rethinkingschools.org/>
- Just Discipline Project. University of Pittsburgh. Center on Race and Social Problems.  
<https://www.crsp.pitt.edu/community/just-discipline-project>
- Movement for Family Power: works towards ending the Foster System’s Policing & Punishing of Families: <https://www.movementforfamilypower.org/>
- Abolition Resource Guide, by Micah Herskind. Comprehensive resource list:  
<https://micaherskind.com/abolition-resource-guide/>
- Social Work Abolition Toolkit:  
<https://sites.google.com/view/aswtoolkit/how-social-service-workers-can-support-abolition>  
<https://sites.google.com/view/aswtoolkit/why-social-service-workers-are-fighting-for-abolition?authuser=0>
- Doin’ the Work: Frontline Stories of Social Change Podcast by Shimon Cohen. Episode on abolitionist social work. <https://dointhework.podbean.com/e/abolitionist-social-work-cameron-rasmussen-msw-durrell-washington-msw-michelle-grier-lmsw-vivianne-guevara-lmsw/>
- The digital abolitionist, the abolitionist map:  
<https://www.thedigitalabolitionist.com/the-abolitionist-map>

- Abolition for the People Series: <https://level.medium.com/abolition-for-the-people-397ef29e3ca5>
- Project LETS: Peer Support Is Disability Justice: <https://projectlets.org/>
- Mutual Aid Hub: <https://www.mutualaidhub.org/>

## **Module Assignment: *Imagining Restorative Non-Carceral Responses to Harm***

**Due:** via Canvas.

In this paper of no more than 4pp, students will reflect on what we learned by ***applying restorative and abolitionist or non-carceral approaches*** to ***addressing harm*** and ***restoring justice*** to some event, circumstance, or process in their work, life experience, or something in their community.

Read this article (w/lots of links to alternative response resources):

**North, Anna. What to do instead of calling the police. Vox.com. April 14, 2021**

<https://www.vox.com/2021/4/14/22374196/calling-the-police-violence-alternatives>

Specifically:

- **[EVENT]** Thinking broadly about the wide-ranging reach of the carceral system and the role of social workers in these systems, identify and describe an event, circumstance, or process that you encountered in your job or life that would normally lead to some sort of carceral response
  - *Example 1: (workplace) three girls in a junior high school cafeteria get into a physical fight*
  - *Example 2: (in the news or at a job) a person shoplifted something from a grocery store*
  - *Example 3: (in the news or you witnessed) a car parked in the mall parking lot with three young children by themselves*
- **[USUAL – CARCERAL-SYSTEM RESPONSE]** Identify and describe the normal/routine reaction that such an event, circumstance, or process would provoke from those in your field placement, job, or community. How might this response lead or not lead to justice and to addressing harm?
- **[ALTERNATIVE – NON-CARCERAL RESPONSE]** Consider and describe an alternative response rooted in restorative justice and non-carceral or abolitionist social work that could be considered for such a situation. How might this response lead or not lead to justice and to addressing harm? What could be the challenges to such an approach?