

## SCRIPT

*[Armando]*

The SCAE program is an exciting opportunity for personal growth and reflection, as well as academic and professional development. Like any master's program, the coursework will be academically rigorous and you should expect to spend a significant amount of time each week committed to course readings, writings, and reflections. However, our program differs from many others because the courses and program as a whole are designed to facilitate a learning community and collaboration between classmates. Many students comment that they leave the SCAE program feeling like they are part of a family. We'd like to explain how the program encourages this sense of community and personal connection between classmates.

Course sessions are taught through class dialogue; this means that we never sit in rows facing a power point. There is very limited, if any, direct instruction from the professors. Rather, in class sessions we sit in a circle and engage in critical dialogue about the content of the readings we completed for that week. Sometimes the conversations are structured in small groups where we might create mind maps, discuss specific themes from the readings, or reflect on how the themes play out in our personal or professional experiences. Other times we engage in whole class conversations. In these cases, students are encouraged to pose questions from the readings to their classmates, share their insights or critiques, or comment on how the readings inspired personal reflections and development.

The SCAE coursework covers topics that may affect many of our lives personally, such as: immigration, gender based oppression, social reproduction, imperialism, and microaggressions. The structure of class sessions is designed to encourage students to reflect on the connections between social inequalities and their own lives, and this process can be challenging. However, through dialogue and interactions in and outside of classes, we are able to find comfort in knowing that we are supported as we engage in challenging personal reflections.

*[Anna]*

Aside from readings and dialogue, the SCAE program emphasizes academic writing. In most courses, students choose a topic and complete an academic paper connecting their topic to educational and social justice. For some students, the transition to writing for academic audiences is a challenge; however CSULB and the SCAE program provide many supports. CSULB offers a writing center and the college of education offers academic writing workshops, which are sometimes free of charge! Additionally, we often review peers' writing and offer feedback on ways to strengthen their work. Our professors always provide thorough feedback on our academic writing, and in most cases, we have the option to revise and resubmit work for a revised mark.

In addition, students continue to develop personal connections with their classmates outside of the classroom. Many students have chosen to participate in our student-driven organization. Through the student org, we've planned socials, professional

development workshops, and alumni events. Additionally, many students choose to involve each other in their academic and professional efforts aimed at social justice. Students and graduates have commented that the program provides an invaluable opportunity for networking within the field of social justice education. Finally, students may choose to attend academic conferences, participate in research assistant positions, or organize community events to bring what they've learned in the classroom into their broader spheres of influence.

*[Armando]*

In short, although the SCAE program is academically rigorous and can be personally challenging, the program is developed to provide you with a large amount of support. For students who choose to become involved in the broader SCAE community, opportunities for professional, academic, and personal development are almost infinite!