



Course Syllabus

Course Title: Comparative Ethnic Studies

Semester: 1

Credits: .5 Credit

Instructor: Dr. Hepburn-Gray

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Ethnic Studies 2023

Grade: 9th-12th

Length: 18 weeks

Course Description:

This course surveys the long history of cross-racial and inter-ethnic interactions among immigrants, migrants, people of color and working people in the United States and the wider world from the era of mercantile capitalism in the sixteenth century to the present. By making inroads into the dynamic worlds that indigenous people, people of African and Latin American descent, European Americans, and Asian Americans made and remade, the course aims to reach across borders of all kinds, including national boundaries, to cultivate global, transnational and comparative perspectives on race and ethnicity. In particular, it places emphasis on relationships and conflicts between these diverse groups, especially how they were treated and defined in relation to each other. Broadly, this course is concerned with how these groups struggle to stake out their place in a highly unequal world.

This course presents an overview of ethnic studies, stressing the main ideas, key debates, and emerging frameworks. To that end, it equips students with set of tools to better interpret, engage, and transform the world around them. Above all else, it seeks to broaden and deepen their understanding and analyses of the history of race and racism, institutional and global processes of racialization, and ongoing reproduction in the context of popular media and public culture. Throughout, our examination of race and power underscores the importance of history, context, structure, and ideology.

Learning Objectives:

- understand the scope and significance of ethnic studies;
- know the history of racial thinking and its connection to political and economic forces;
- comprehend the historic foundations and systematic reproduction of racial inequality;
- develop tools to analyze race, racism, and racialization;
- compare and contrast racisms and their changing contours and entanglements;

- connect racism with other forms of dehumanization; and
- think critical about current forms of inequality as well as the rhetoric surrounding them.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will better understand the ways in which socio-historical constructions of race and ethnicity have worked to produce racial differences and how these concepts relate to politico-economic structures and social institutions.
2. Students will be challenged to go beyond observing and/or describing social reality or historical events to scrutinizing such events by asking “how,” “why,” “what,” and “for whom” questions.
3. Students will develop an understanding of the concept of white privilege and come to recognize how white privilege functions in everyday social structures and institutions.
4. Students will have honed and demonstrated analytical skills through reading, writing, and publicly presenting ideas and information.
5. This course will provide students with a basis for further study in the social sciences and the humanities.

Readings:

Course Evaluations and Requirements:

Assessments, Journals, Projects, Public Debates (Field Experience), Final Exam

Program Components:

1 – What is Race?

Reading before class: Getting Real, #4; http://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-background-01-x.htm;

In-class film: Race: Power of an Illusion (Part 1)

2 – Race as Social Construction

Readings before class: Getting Real, #21; Ta-Nehisi Coates, “What We Mean When We Say 'Race Is a Social Construct,'" <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/05/what-we-mean-when-we-say-race-is-a-socialconstruct/275872/>

3 – Racism

Readings before class: Getting Real, #2 & #3; Richard Thompson Ford, “A primer on racism”; http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2009/09/a_primer_on_racism.html;

Judith Ellis, "Understanding Racism," http://www.huffingtonpost.com/judith-ellis/understandingracism_b_3635514.html;

4 – Racism

Readings before class: Getting Real #13 & #14, Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631>;

Watch before class: "Can you be motivated by race even if you don't know it?," <http://video.msnbc.msn.com/mhp/52473401#52473401>

In-class film: Race: Power of an Illusion (Part 3)

5 – Colorblind Racism

Readings before class: Getting Real, #5 & #6; Monica Williams, "Colorblind ideology is a form of racism," <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/colorblind/201112/colorblind-ideology-is-form-racism>; "I'm not racist, I'm Colorblind" - <http://www.sociologyinfocus.com/2012/01/30/im-not-racist-im-colorblind/>; Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Good, Racist People," http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/07/opinion/coates-the-good-racistpeople.html?_r=0; **9/19 – Review**

Exam #1

6 – Privilege

Readings before class: Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" <http://nymbp.org/reference/WhitePrivilege.pdf>.

7 -- Privilege

Readings before class: Myisha Cherry, "Why privilege is so hard to give up," http://www.salon.com/2013/08/01/why_privilege_is_so_hard_to_give_up/?source=newsletter; Jamie Utt, "How To Talk To Someone About Privilege Who Doesn't Know What That Is," <http://everydayfeminism.com/2012/12/how-to-talk-to-someone-about-privilege/>; Esther Armah, "The Other National Conversation: White Privilege," <http://newblackman.blogspot.com/2013/07/the-other-nationalconversation-white>

8 - Affirmative Action and the "Reverse Racism Card"

Readings before class: Getting Real, #15 & #22

9 – Native American Mascots

Readings before class: Getting Real, #10

10 – Citizenship and privilege

Readings before class: Getting Real, #9; Vani Kannan, "Model Minority" or Potential Terrorist? Affective Economies, Rhetorics of Silence & the Murder of Sunando Sen," http://studiesonasia.illinoisstate.edu/seriesIV/documents/Kannan_studies_march14.pdf; **10/13**

11 – Stereotypes

Reading: TBA

12 - Stereotype Threat

Readings before class: Claude Steele, "Thin Ice: Stereotype Threat and Black College Students," <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1999/08/thin-ice-stereotype-threat-and-black-collegestudents/4663/>;

13 - Model Minority Myth

Readings before class: Getting Real, #8

Exam #2

14 – Criminalizing Black Bodies

Readings before class: Stevenson 3-46

15 - Racial Profiling

Reading before class: Getting Real, #7 & 19; Nicholas Peart, "Why Is the N.Y.P.D. After Me?" www.nytimes.com/2011/12/18/opinion/sunday/young-black-and-frisked-by-the-nypd.html?r=1&pagewanted=all; <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/06/120621130716.htm>;

Seth Wesler, "How East Haven, Conn., Became Synonymous With Racial Profiling," http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/02/on_sunday_afternoon_about_ten.html

16 - Race and Criminal Justice System

Reading before class: Stevenson, 47-113

In-Class: Stevenson, Ted Talk

17 – War on Drugs and New Jim Crow

Reading before class: Stevenson, 113-162

In-Class Film: House We Live In

18 - War on Drugs cont.

Reading before class: Phillip S. Smith, "Dorm Room Dealers: A Peek into the Drug World of the White and Upwardly Mobile" http://www.alternet.org/drugs/145042/dorm_room_dealers_a_peek_into_the_drug_world_of_the_white_and_upwardly_mobile_/; Stacey Patton & David Leonard, "If you're white, that joint probably won't lead to jail time," http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/if-youre-white-that-joint-probably-wont-lead-to-jailtime/2014/01/10/caa94154-77f8-11e3-af7f-13bf0e9965f6_story.html; Michelle Alexander, "The New Jim Crow: How the War on Drugs Gave Birth to a Permanent American Undercaste," http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-alexander/the-new-jim-crow-how-the_b_490386.html;

19 – Mass Incarceration

Reading before class: Stevenson, 163-203

20 – Just Mercy

Reading before class: Stevenson, 203-256

21 – Imaging Justice

Readings before class: Stevenson, 257-314; Getting Real #23

22– Conclusion: From Baltimore to Ferguson

Final Exam – TBA

This module and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances and shifts in class needs.