ES 101: INTRODUCTION TO ETHNIC STUDIES

WINTER 2012 SYLLABUS

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UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

CRN 22590

MON/WEDS 2-3:20 PM, 101 LLCS

4.0 CREDITS

GRADUATE TEACHING FELLOWS (GTFs): MeCherri Tarver (mecherri@uoregon.edu), Maurice R. Magaña (mmagana@uoregon.edu), and Jesse Lowe (jlowe@uoregon.edu) For office hours, section times, and additional information, see the GTF in charge of your section.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce you to the academic field of ethnic studies, raising questions about the ways that race and racism shape our experiences and world across a range of time and places: When and how did the concept of race arise? How does race connect with other forms of difference such as class, gender and sexuality? How do our personal experiences with racial identity and racism relate to the structure of our society? What does it mean to claim racial "colorblindness"? How have ethnic studies scholars explored areas such as immigration, popular culture, education, sports, and labor? How have concerns for social justice and equity shaped the field of ethnic studies?

We will explore these issues through readings, discussions, lectures, films, and several guest speakers. No introductory course can comprehensively examine all of these topics, or claim to represent all prevailing perspectives. Instead, ES 101 surveys a variety of issues, topics and debates to introduce you to this field and encourage future research and inquiry during your college career and beyond.

REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED BY ES 101:

ES 101 is required for Ethnic Studies majors and minors. As a multidisciplinary course that draws primarily from the social sciences, this course satisfies a social science group requirement (>2). In addition, this course considers race and ethnicity in the United States from historical and comparative perspectives across many different demographic groups, thereby satisfying an American Cultures multicultural study requirement (AC). As a 100-level course, this course is intended primarily for 1st and 2nd year students.

TEXTS REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS, AVAILABLE AT THE UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE

A two volume custom reader has been produced for ES 101, and is sold together new for $65. It can only be purchased at the Duckstore, and is only sold as a two volume set. The first volume includes selections from The Matrix Reader: Examining the Dynamics of Oppression and Privilege, edited by Ferber, Jiménez, O'Reilly Herrera, & Samuels. The second volume includes selections from Rethinking the Color Line: Readings In Race and Ethnicity, edited by Gallagher. The specific volume for each reading selection is
indicated on the syllabus. In addition, for a few class meetings, there are required readings that are available on the Blackboard website.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**
In order to pass the course, all students must complete both the midterm and final exams and submit at least five weekly reading reflection papers. (In other words, if you do not complete at least five papers and both exams, you cannot receive a P, A, B, or C.) In addition, absence from discussion sections will adversely affect your grade (see below).

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**WEEKLY RESPONSE PAPERS (40% OF FINAL GRADE):**
Each week in the syllabus lists a set of 4-5 reading response questions. After completing the reading you must prepare a two page typed response (approximately 500 words) to those questions and submit them during your weekly section. You should use a standard 12 point font with 1” margins, double-spaced.

Your final grade for this portion of the course is calculated based on the 8 highest grades you receive for weekly papers. This means you can submit up to 10 papers (one per week) and the lowest two scores will be dropped. Alternatively, you can choose to only submit 8 weekly papers. If you submit fewer than 8 papers, you cannot receive full credit for this portion of the course. A grading rubric, explaining how the assignments are graded, can be found on Blackboard.

**EXAMS (50% OF FINAL GRADE):**
The midterm exam is an in class exam. The final exam is a take-home that will include a combination of short answer questions and longer essay questions. Exams assess your ability to retain and apply the key ideas from the class, to draw conclusions from themes discussed throughout the course, to synthesize multiple reading and video assignments, and to craft persuasive arguments citing direct evidence from assigned readings. The midterm exam is worth 20% of your grade and the final is worth 30%. Both must be completed in order for you to pass the course. **EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.**

**SECTION PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE (10% OF FINAL GRADE):**
Attendance is required in your discussion section. Absences will count against your participation and attendance grade. You are expected to attend all lectures, and in-class assignments done during lecture sections count toward your participation grade. Furthermore, you will be responsible for material from in-class videos and lectures on the exams and quizzes. A guide to how participation and attendance are graded can be found on Blackboard.

**FINAL GRADE**
A guide to how grades are calculated is posted on Blackboard. Please note that if you do not complete at least five weekly reflection papers, the midterm, and final, you will not pass the course, regardless of your total grade. No incompletes will be given for this class.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability related barriers to your participation, please notify me as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu or http://ds.uoregon.edu/DS_home.html.

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**E-mail Etiquette**

As a rule, you should understand your relationships to GTFs and professors as professional relationships. When corresponding by e-mail, always include a salutation (“Dear Prof. HoSang” or “Dear Ms. Tarver”) and a closing that identifies who you are (“Sincerely, Maria Rodriguez”). Please also note that we might not check our e-mail more than once per day, or at all on weekends or in the evening, and we might not have time to reply immediately. Please have patience and do not hesitate to follow up with a second e-mail or in person during office hours or before, during, or after class if we have not replied to e-mail.

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**Electronic Devices**

Wireless and handheld devices and cell phones must be turned off prior to class and away. Please do not text in class. I strongly prefer that laptops not be used during class. You must see me personally if you would like to be exempted from this rule and you will be required to sit in the first two rows of class with the wireless switch turned off.

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**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. Please review the University’s policies at: http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/tabid/68/Default.aspx

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**Student Conduct**

The topics covered in this course are often emotionally charged and are not always easy to discuss openly. You are expected to engage the issues in a mature, reasonable, and respectful manner, and to show respect for other students, the GTFs, and the professor at all times. We are all accountable to create a climate of mutual respect in the classroom. While differences of opinion are vital and will be encouraged, common courtesy as well as University policy prohibit personal attacks and discriminatory conduct.

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**If you are having difficulty in the class**

If you find yourself struggling in the class, it is best to take immediate steps to address the situation; your grade cannot be adjusted at the end of the term because of extenuating circumstances. Consider instead:

A. Coming to the office hours of the professor or your GTF with questions or issues to discuss
B. Meeting with classmates in a regular study group to review readings or prepare for exams
C. Taking advantage of the many on-campus resources intended to support students: Student Support Services, the Teaching and Learning Center, the Writing Lab, etc. accessed through the Teaching and Learning Center at 68 PLC.
SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Note: Readings, films, and lecture topics may be subject to minor modifications, which will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard. Make sure your email is linked to the course Blackboard site.

UNNATURAL CAUSES
AT THE RIVER I STAND

WEEK #1 INTRODUCING ETHNIC STUDIES


W (1/11) Lecture: “How Racism Affects Us All”

Required Reading:
- “Racism Without ‘Racists,” Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (Matrix)
- “Kristin v. Aisha; Brad v. Rasheed: What’s in a Name and How It Affects Getting a Job,” Amy Braverman (Colorlines)

Weekly Response Question (Bring 2 paged typed response to your weekly discussion section):

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva writes “How is it possible to have this tremendous degree of racial inequality in a country where most whites claim that race is no longer relevant?” Explain how Bonilla-Silva specifically answers this question? What parts of his explanation do YOU find most and least compelling and persuasive? Does the Braverman article and the article by Toure support Bonilla Silva’s argument? Does the lecture and discussion of race in Oregon history seem to support Bonilla-Silva’s argument? Be sure to use examples from the texts to explain your response.

WEEK #2 THE MYTHOLOGY AND INHERITANCE OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

M (1/16) MLK Day—No Class.

Last day to drop classes without a “W” on transcript

W (1/18) Lecture: “Dr. King and the Mythology of Race”

In-Class Video: At the River I Stand (1993)

Required Reading:
- “Racism and the White Backlash” by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Community? (Harper & Row, 1967) (Blackboard)

Response Questions for Week 2
What are the main arguments Dr. King is making about the historic nature of racial oppression in his essay? According to Dr. King, how specifically did anti-Black racism become such a powerful force in US history? Finally, based on the definition of “mythology” covered in class on January 11, what specific myths do you believe King is trying to challenge in his essay? Be sure to use examples from the text to explain your response.

Extra Credit Opportunity--Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 7:00 pm. Hope in Hard Times: A conversation with two of America's leading organizers - Kris Rondeau and Saket Soni, UO Knight Law Center, room 175, 1515 Agate St.

**WEEK #3 WHAT IS RACE?**

M (1/23) Lecture: “What do we see when we see race?”

Required Reading:
- “Drawing the Color Line,” Howard Zinn (Colorlines)
- “How Our Skins Got Their Color,” Marvin Harris (Colorlines)

In-Class Video: Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 1


Required Reading:
- “Racial Formations,” Omi and Winant (Colorlines)
- “Many Americas: The Intersections of Class, Race, and Ethnic Identity” Gregory Campbell (Matrix)

For Week 3 sections, also read “My Race Based Valentine” Time Magazine (Blackboard).

In-Class Video: A Class Divided

Response Questions for Week 3

In the assigned essay for this week, Howard Zinn writes: "The point is that the elements of this web are historical, not 'natural.'" Explain what Zinn means by this distinction between "historical" versus "natural" How does the difference between "historical" versus "natural" function in Harris' brief essay on skin color? What does Omi and Winant's idea of "racial formation" contribute to our understanding of how racial categories are not "natural"? What examples do you see of the concept of racial formation in the article by Campbell?

**WEEK #4: Whiteness**

M (1/30) Lecture: “The Invention of the Caucasian”

Required Reading:
• “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy,” George Lipsitz (Colorlines)
• “Transformative Assets, the Racial Wealth Gap and the American Dream,” Thomas M. Shapiro (Colorlines)
• “How Jews Became White,” Karen Brodkin Sacks (Matrix)

Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 2 (“The House We Live In”)


Required Reading:
• “White Privilege Shapes the U.S.” Robert Jensen (Matrix)
• “Failing to See,” Harlon Dalton (Matrix)
• “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women’s Studies,” Peggy McIntosh (Matrix)

In-class video: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 3 (“The House We Live In”)

Response Questions for Week 4

ES 101 is taught at the University of Oregon every term. Every time the course is taught, many students prove extremely reluctant to talk about this week’s topics: whiteness and white privilege. Over many years, instructors uniformly report that many students either become very passive and disengaged during the discussion, while others might become overtly frustrated or even hostile. For your reflection paper for this week, you should select at least three of the readings/authors assigned for the week and explain how they would explain why whiteness and white privilege are so difficult to discuss for many people. That is, what would George Lipsitz say about this? What might Peggy McIntosh say? Robert Jensen? You can choose any three authors assigned for this week (no need to do all 6), but you should describe how they would explain this dynamic, drawing from the readings as necessary. Finally, at the end of the paper please explain your own perspective on this topic. Why do you think this topic is so consistently difficult to discuss? Explain.

Week #5: COLORBLINDNESS AND ITS CRITICS

M (2/6): Lecture: “Why not colorblindness?”

In-Class Video: Banished (2007)

Required Reading:
• “The Ideology of Colorblindness,” Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres (Colorlines)
• “Color Blind Privilege: The Social and Political Functions of Erasing the Color Line in Post-Race America,” Charles A. Gallagher (Colorlines)

W (2/8): Lecture: “Race, Health and Colorblindness"
In-Class Video: Unnatural Causes: Place Matters

Required Reading:

- “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action,” Audre Lorde (Matrix)
- “Los Intersticios: Recasting Moving Selves” Evelyn Asultany (Matrix)

Response Questions for Week 5

Based on your understanding of the readings assigned for this week, how would you define "racial colorblindness?" Why do authors Guinier & Torres and Charles Gallagher reject the idea of racial colorblindness as a solution to racial inequities? What do you think authors Audre Lorde and Evelyn Asultany believe about the idea of colorblindness? How can you relate the idea of racial colorblindness to the selections of the film Banished shown in class on Monday? Be sure to use examples from the reading or film to illustrate your arguments.

WEEK #6:

M (2/13): In class midterm.

W (2/15): Songs of Freedom

Required Reading:


Thursday February 16: Bernice Johnson Reagon, 7:30 PM, Beall Concert Hall

Response Questions for Week 6

To be announced.

WEEK #7 CONCEPTUALIZING PRIVILEGE

M (2/20) Lecture: “Discrimination and Privilege”

In-Class Video: Fenced Out! (FIERCE)

Required Reading:

- “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference,” Audre Lorde (Matrix)
- “Rape and the War Against Native Women,” Andrea Smith (Colorlines)

W (2/22) Lecture: “Complicity and Solidarity”

Required Readings:
“La Güera,” Cherie Moraga (*Matrix*)
“Toward a New Vision: Race, Class and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection,” Patricia Hill Collins (*Matrix*)

**Response Questions for Week 7**

In *La Güera*, Cherie Moraga writes: “[as women] each of us, in some way has been both oppressed and oppressor. We are afraid to look at how we have failed each other. We are afraid to see how we have taken the values of our oppressor into our hearts and turned them against ourselves and one another.” Use examples from Moraga’s article assigned for this week to explain clearly what she means in this statement. Do you think Audre Lorde and Patricia Hill Collins would agree or disagree with Moraga’s statement? Explain why. What does Andrea Smith’s article reveal about the ways that gender, class and race intersect? Finally, was there a part of any of these readings that struck you as particularly interesting, insightful, or relevant to your experience? Explain.

**Midterms Returned**

**WEEK #8 PRISONS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

M (2/27) Lecture:

_Last day to withdraw from classes or change grade options_

Required Reading:

- “No Equal Justice: The Color of Punishment,” David Cole (*Colorlines*)
- “And the Poor Get Prison,” Jeffrey Reiman (*Colorlines*)
- “The Mark of a Criminal Record,” Devah Pager (*Colorlines*)

W (2/29): Lecture: “Crimmigration”

In-Class Video: _Sentenced Home_

Required Reading:

- “Driving While Black: A Statistician Proves that Prejudice Still Rules the Road,” John Lamberth (*Matrix*)

**Response Questions for Week 8**

The assigned readings explore the ways race, class, and religion can shape the criminal justice system through a troubling contradiction. On the one hand, the law is supposed to be “colorblind” and not favor or discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of characteristics such as race, religion, class, or gender. On the other hand, the authors assigned for this week suggest that the criminal justice system is not “colorblind” or race-neutral, and that the prison population does not simply reflect who in society commits crimes. Drawing from at least four of the readings for this week, explain how these authors...
specifically account for the racial disparities witnessed in the criminal justice system. Be sure to demonstrate your understanding of the specific arguments they make. Finally, if you were in charge of establishing criminal justice policy in the US, what reforms, if any, would you propose to make? Explain your answer.

**WEEK #9  RACE AND EDUCATION**


In-Class Video: *Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement. (Part III, Taking Back the Schools)*

**Extra Credit Opportunity**: Tuesday March 6, 3:30 PM, Knight Browsing Room. Professor Nayan Shah, “Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality and the Law in the North American West.”

**Required Reading:**

- “Excerpts from The Chicano Movement: 1965-1975,” Manuel Gonzales (*Matrix*)

W (3/7): Lecture: “Resistance: Organizing Among Immigrant Youth”

In-Class Video: “Papers: Stories of Undocumented Youth”

**Required Reading:**

- “Dishonoring the Dead,” Jonathon Kozol (*Matrix*)
- “An Indian Father’s Plea,” Robert Lake (Medicine Grizzlybear) (*Matrix*)

**Response Questions for Week 9.**

In his assigned article for this week, Jonathon Kozol quotes essayist Marina Warner as commenting, "There are cheap children and there are expensive children" (p 112). How does this quote relate to the broader argument of Kozol’s essay? How might you relate the quote to Robert Lake’s essay? In what way did the Chicano movement, as explained by Manual Gonzales, seek to challenge the idea that some children's lives were worth more than others? Finally, how do you think Warner’s argument applies to the students featured in the documentary on the Chicano student walkouts shown in class on Monday?

**WEEK #10  WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

M (3/12): Lecture: “Popular culture and race”

**Required Reading:**

In-Class Video: *In Whose Honor?*

W (3/14): Lecture: “Where do we go from here?”


**Response Questions for Week 10**

Across the course, we have been confronting evidence that race and racism still play a powerful role in shaping life in the U.S. According to Debra Merskin, what role does advertising play in advancing racist assumptions about Native Americans? What role do major sports play, according to Richard Lapchick? Finally, how do you believe author Thomas Shapiro would answer the following question: "What steps can the government as well as individuals take to lessen the impact of racism in the U.S. today?" How would you personally answer this question?

Take-home final distributed the last day of class, due no later than **Wednesday March 21** at 3:15 in LLC 101. Exams completed earlier than this time may be submitted to Professor HoSang’s locked mailbox outside of PLC 936 (DO NOT submit it to the political science office, place it in the mailbox).