

Fall 2015  
RAES 105: Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies  
Tues./Thurs. 1-2:20pm □ Olin 314 □ Whitman College

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#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This team-taught, interdisciplinary course is designed to introduce students to the foundational concepts and critical debates animating the study of race and ethnicity. We will interrogate categories of race and ethnicity, in the United States and globally, in contemporary and historical contexts.

#### COURSE GOALS

Students will:

- Develop a working knowledge of key debates and concepts within Race and Ethnic Studies.
- Cultivate skills in critical racial analysis, including: a) how to analyze along the axis of racial and ethnic difference, b) how to talk with others about race and ethnicity in productive ways, c) how to understand the ways in which race and ethnicity intersect with other hierarchies of difference such as gender, sexuality, class, citizenship, and species.

#### COURSE READINGS

Most course readings are available through CLEo (under “resources”). CLEo is exclusively for student use. Distribution of documents therein violates copyright laws and is strictly prohibited. We will also be reading two texts, *Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine and *Seeing Beauty, Sensing Race in Transnational Indonesia* by Ayu Saraswati, which can be purchased at the Whitman College Bookstore.

Required readings must be completed before class, in their entirety, with care. We may make changes to the reading list as we proceed through the course, but will give students ample warning. Students must print out the readings and bring them to class. We will regularly refer to them.

#### ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, AND TEXT RESPONSES (30%):

Attendance is essential and required. You are allowed 2 unexcused class absences. Three or more unexcused absences will result in administrative action. Habitual lateness and leaving during class time is disruptive to everyone and damaging to your grade. Students who anticipate absences excused by college policy must provide us with a list of dates they will be absent within the first week of class. Excused absences may include days of religious observance and participation in Whitman sponsored events such as athletics, debate, and class trips. The student is responsible for ensuring we receive proper documentation of an excused absence. All other absences, unless approved by the Dean of Student’s Office, are unexcused. When absent, it is the student’s responsibility to get notes, assignments, and announcements from a colleague or via CLEo.

Participation and Text Responses: Participation is essential and required in this course. Participation means making a meaningful and consistent contribution to the class. Students are expected to have read, thought about, and be prepared to discuss the readings in class. All

reading should be completed prior to class and should be brought to class with you. Active engagement with course material in light of current events is crucial to doing well in the course.

**Text Responses:** Unless otherwise announced, students are expected to prepare a brief writing assignment for every class. The Text Response must demonstrate that you have read the text carefully, and grappled with its significance. Each Text Response should include:

- (2-3) sentences identifying the primary argument(s) of the text
- (1) sentence identifying a passage of the text you find particularly striking, and why
- At least (2) questions or comments you would like to offer in class. (One question and one comment, two questions, or two comments are all fine.) Questions can be questions of clarification, questions that highlight inconsistencies in the author's argumentation, or questions about historical context or background. Comments can address anything substantive about the text – how its arguments connect or challenge other texts, how ideas in the text relate to contemporary or historic events, or any personal reflections the text generates for you.
- Include page numbers with all citations.
- You are required to print a hard copy of every Text Response you write, and bring it to class. Emailed and late Text Responses will not be accepted. Do not attempt to upload your Text Response to CLEo. \*\* Be sure to print and bring this assignment to class every day. \*\*
- Text Responses will be used for class discussion and collected at the end of each class. Your grade for the Text Responses will be factored into your participation grade overall.

Class Discussion: Respect for and valuing opposing arguments, viewpoints, and other students are baseline requirements. Students can draw on multiple strategies for engaging in classroom discussion.

- Ask questions about what is unclear; ask for clarification if you get lost or confused;
- Respond to the comments of others rather than directing all comments at the professor;
- Disrupt the "Whitman consensus" with counter-arguments;
- Draw connections with other readings, discussions, current events;
- Point out the real controversies in the readings that make discussion interesting;
- Be unafraid of being wrong and conversely be respectful of the lack of knowledge we all bring to discussions on occasion;
- Acknowledge and be thoughtful about the nuances of an argument;
- Encourage others to speak – avoid conversation-stoppers;
- Keep the discussion on track, while being aware that related ideas can be constructive ways of considering an argument in a new light;
- Prevent others from dominating class discussion by jumping in with a new thought or with a relevant question. This is your class, too.

If you have particular difficulties entering into discussions in class, and would like to try out some strategies for participating more fully, please come see one of us *early in the semester* for assistance. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of office hours in order to discuss course material and requirements, essays, class participation, or anything else relevant to our course.

## GRADE SCALE

Text Responses, Participation:	30%
Eventualizations:	20%
Midterm Essay:	20%
Final Essay:	30%

ETC.

- Students with disabilities who will need accommodations in this course should meet with Juli Dunn, Assoc. Dean of Students (Mem. 330, x5158, dunnjl@whitman.edu) to develop a plan to address your academic needs. All information is considered private.
- Whitman's statement on academic dishonesty and plagiarism applies to this course. Consult your student handbook for the clarifications, reminders, and consequences.
- Late assignments are penalized at 10% per day (including weekends). An excused absence does not automatically extend an assignment deadline. In fairness to your colleagues, we only grant extensions in the most extreme circumstances when accompanied by proper documentation. An assignment due in another course will never qualify as grounds for an extension.
- We do not read drafts of essays. Make an appointment with the Center for Writing and Speaking (COWS), which offers strategies for proofreading your own papers, and much else.
- Laptops and mobile devices are not used in this class. They may on occasion prove valuable to our discussions, but should, as a habit, be powered down during class time.
- You are expected to check your Whitman email account daily.

### **Eventualizations: 20%**

For this assignment, you will work in small groups to create a 10-minute oral presentation that you will deliver in class. Your presentation will mobilize course materials to analyze a contemporary news event pertaining to one of the key course themes: (1) Racialization and Racism, (2) Embodied Blackness, (3) Native Nations and the Politics of Indigeneity, (4) Traveling Whiteness, or (5) Incarceration and Uprising. Groups will be assigned based on student preferences regarding theme, and equitable distribution based on class year, major, and other relevant considerations. Each group will decide collectively which event to present on. Further details regarding the requirements for the Eventualization assignment will be forthcoming. You are required to complete (2) Eventualization presentations; the first is due in class on Tuesday, October 6, the second is due in class on Thursday, November 19.

### **Midterm Essay: 20%**

Your midterm will be an out-of-class essay that will engage and apply course material to date. The essay will be due on Friday, October 16. More guidelines to follow.

### **Final Essay: 30%**

Your final essay will be a take-home essay that will engage and apply material from the second half of the course. The essay will be due on Tuesday, December 15. More guidelines to follow.

## GRADING CRITERIA

A's are earned by clearly superior work, in terms of both content and writing. Papers offer clear, well-defined, and well-expressed arguments, demonstrating an imaginative and sophisticated understanding of the subject matter and its subtleties, and going well beyond the readings and what was discussed in class. They are also well-crafted technically, free of grammatical, spelling, punctuation, and format errors. They are well organized and provide a clear introduction and a substantive conclusion. An A or A- paper stands out from the rest and must be merited.

**B's** are earned by good, competent papers that illustrate a solid understanding of the subject matter, and a good effort at crafting a clear and coherent argument, while generally avoiding awkward and unclear writing, grammatical, spelling, punctuation, and format errors. B+ papers are better than most and have the potential to be excellent work. The B range indicates that we think you are demonstrating an acceptable level of understanding of the course material and an ability to work with it productively.

**C's** are earned by papers that are decent in argumentation and/or in writing. The argument may be undefined or underdeveloped. It generally does not offer more than a minimal summary of course material.

**D's** are earned by papers that are flawed in argumentation and/or in writing. The essay may be especially difficult to follow and afflicted by generally poor or sloppy writing.

**F's** are a clear indication that the paper is unacceptable and well below your capabilities.

**This syllabus is intended as a general guide for students and may be altered at the professors' discretion. All changes will be announced via Whitman email & posted to CLEo.**

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

09/01 Introduction

- Ulali, "All My Relations," from soundtrack of *Smoke Signals* (dir. Chris Eyre, 1998).  
For audio, not visuals: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8LzOXVsC70>

### I. KEYWORDS

09/03 **Thinking/Feeling/Talking Race and Ethnicity**

09/08 **Situating "Race" and "Ethnicity"**

- Ferguson, Roderick A. (2014) "Race" in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*
- Yu, Henry (2014) "Ethnicity" in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*

09/10 **Racial Civics**

- Rankine, Claudia (2014) *Citizen: An American Lyric*, sections I-V
- Recommended: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3L\\_NnX8oj-g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3L_NnX8oj-g)

09/15 **Racial Civics, cont.**

- Rankine, Claudia (2014) *Citizen: An American Lyric*, sections VI-VII

### II. RACIALIZATION AND RACISM

Keywords: racial formation, color blindness, post-racialism, intersectionality

09/17 **Historicizing "Race"**

- Goldberg, David Theo (1993) "Modernity, Race, and Morality"
- Loomba, Ania (2009) "Race and the Possibilities of Comparative Critique" (pp. 501-509)

09/22 **Racial Formation**

- Omi, Michael and Winant, Howard (1994) "Racial Formation" (excerpt)
- Almaguer, Tomás (2012) "Race, Racialization, and Latino Populations in the United States" in *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century*

09/24 **Color Blindness**

- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo (2003) *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States* (excerpts)
- Jeffries, Michael P. (2013), "Postracialism Reconsidered," in *Paint the White House Black: Barack Obama and the Meaning of Race in America*, pp. 81-114

09/29 **Intersectionality**

- Crenshaw, Kimberly (1989) "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics"

10/01 **Intersectionality, cont.**

- Muñoz, José Esteban (1999) *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (excerpts)

10/06 **Eventalization 1**

Fall Break

### III. EMBODIED BLACKNESS

Keywords: blackness, anti-blackness, scientific racism, criminality, the subaltern

10/13 **The Hottentot Venus**

- Fausto-Sterling, Anne (1995) "Gender, Race, and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of 'Hottentot' Women in Europe, 1815-1817."
- Nona Faustine's "White Shoes": [http://nonafaustine.virb.com/news-;](http://nonafaustine.virb.com/news-;http://nonafaustine.virb.com/press)  
<http://nonafaustine.virb.com/press>

10/15 **Criminalizing Black Reproduction**

- Roberts, Dorothy (1997) "Making Reproduction a Crime," in *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*

10/16 Midterm essay Due, 5pm

10/20 **The Fact of Blackness, or Racialization and Violence**

- Fanon, Frantz (1952, 1967) "The Fact of Blackness," in *Black Skin, White Masks*, pp.109-120
- Jeffries, Michael (2015) "Rachel Dolezal: A Lesson in How Racism Works" <file:///localhost/Users/BoogieMAir/Library/Application%20Support/Zotero/Profiles/p5pa4fgm.default/zotero/storage/9V7EGDPX/story.html>
- Williams, Kidada (2015) "Centuries of Violence: For black Americans, it is impossible to separate the massacre in Charleston from hundreds of years of vicious attacks on our churches and communities."

[http://www.slate.com/articles/news\\_and\\_politics/history/2015/06/charleston\\_church\\_shooting\\_for\\_black\\_americans\\_dylann\\_storm\\_s\\_attack\\_is.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/history/2015/06/charleston_church_shooting_for_black_americans_dylann_storm_s_attack_is.html)

#### IV. NATIVE NATIONS AND THE POLITICS OF INDIGENEITY

Keywords: indigeneity, settler colonialism, recognition, sovereignty, resurgence

##### 10/22 **Indian-ness**

- King, Thomas (2003) "What is it About Us that You Don't Like?" from *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*, pp. 121-152.
- Barker, Joann (2011) "Introductions" in *Native Acts: Law, Recognition, and Cultural Authenticity*, pp. 1-20

##### 10/27 **The Politics of Native Belonging**

- Simpson, Audra (2014), "A Brief History of Land, Meaning, and Membership in Iroquoia and Kahnawake" in *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*, pp. 37-65
- Barker, Joann (2011) "Of the 'Indian Tribe'" in *Native Acts: Law, Recognition, and Cultural Authenticity*, pp. 27-40

##### 10/29 **Native Resurgence and Decolonization**

- Deer, Sarah (2009) "Decolonizing Rape Law: A Native Feminist Synthesis of Safety and Sovereignty," pp. 149-167.
- Coulthard, Glen (2014) "Lessons from Idle No More: The Future of Indigenous Activism" in *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, pp.154-179

##### 11/03 **Class Visit to Tamástlikt Cultural Institute**

#### II. TRAVELING WHITENESS

Keywords: privilege, whiteness, modernism, cosmopolitanism, affect, *malu*

##### 11/05 **White Privilege**

- McIntosh, Peggy (1988) "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack"
- Sehgal, Parul (2015) "How 'Privilege' Became a Provocation"
- Rob Schlegel, "White Silence," 2015

##### 11/10 **Housing Whiteness**

- Harris, Dianne (2013) "The Ordinary Postwar House" in *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America*
- *The House We Live In* (2003) (excerpt):  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI\\_8&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI_8&feature=youtu.be)

##### 11/12 **Indonesian White Beauty**

- Saraswati, Ayu (2013) *Seeing Beauty, Sensing Race in Transnational Indonesia*

##### 11/17 **Cosmopolitan Whiteness and Malu**

- Saraswati, Ayu (2013) *Seeing Beauty, Sensing Race in Transnational Indonesia*

##### 11/19 **Eventalization 2**

Thanksgiving Break

## V. INCARCERATION AND UPRISING

Keywords: biopolitics, necropolitics, carceral state, racial profiling, movement

### 12/01 **Detention after 9/11**

- Nguyen, Tram (2005) *We are All Suspects Now: Untold Stories from Immigrant Communities after 9/11* (excerpts)
- “Lost in Detention” Frontline PBS documentary, 53:40):  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/lost-in-detention/>

### 12/03 **The New Jim Crow**

- Alexander, Michelle (2010) “The New Jim Crow” in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*
- Jackson, George (1970) *Soledad Brother* (excerpts)

### 12/08 **#BlackLivesMatter**

- McKay, Tom (2015) “One Map Shows How Many People Police Have Killed in Each State So Far This Year”
- Day, Elizabeth (2015) “#BlackLivesMatter: the birth of a new civil rights movement”  
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/19/blacklivesmatter-birth-civil-rights-movement>
- “How Ferguson and #BlackLivesMatter taught us not to look away”:  
<http://theconversation.com/how-ferguson-and-blacklivesmatter-taught-us-not-to-look-away-45815>
- Burr, Ty (2015) “In the video of Sandra Bland’s arrest, the tape doesn’t lie”:  
<http://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/2015/07/23/video-bland-arrest-tape-doesn-lie/fqhkLb94dREEcjTNb4EcM/story.html?event=event25>

### 12/10 Wrap up discussion

12/15 Final Essay Due, 5pm