

WMST 8/ ICS 8: Women of Color in the USA

***Advisory: English Writing 1A and Reading 200, or ESL 5 and 6**

Course Description: Women of Color in the USA is an interdisciplinary, multi-perspective, critical analysis and comparative study of the experiences of women of color in the United States. This course will explore the relationship between women of color and the social constructs of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and identity as they relate to social institutions and national ideologies in the United States. Additionally, we will identify, examine, and authenticate the values, experiences, and cultural contributions of women of color in the United States. ***This class utilizes collaborative learning strategies, which require that students thoroughly analyze material and actively participate in classroom discussions, projects, and presentations.***

I have designed this class with the following goals in mind:

1. Develop your ability to recognize and study social problems affecting women of color throughout history.
2. Understand the importance of race, class, gender, sexuality, and other tools of oppression, as distinct and interrelated aspects of social life.
3. Examine how race, class, gender, sexuality, etc. are socially constructed categories by exploring what gives them meaning, how the categories are maintained or transformed, and how they are related to inequality, and how they lead to oppression of women of color.
4. Explore the significance of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc. in social institutions and individual experiences, interactions, and identities and their relation to women of color.
5. Improve your ability to articulate thoughts about course material during class discussions and in written assignments.
6. Develop analytical skills and the ability to apply sociological concepts to a wide range of social situations, including your personal life experiences.

*This class requires **serious** critical thinking, reading, writing, and reflection.

Required Text:

1. Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology 7th Edition, Margaret L. Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins

2. Privilege: A Reader, Michael S. Kimmel

*You **must bring** your textbooks to class **on class discussion days**. Any additional readings and materials will be available on the class website or can be found on the web as indicated in the lecture/reading schedule.

Course Requirements & Grade Distribution:

1. Class Participation (50 pts)

This class is both a lecture and a discussion course. This course contains a significant amount of reading and requires active participation in discussions. All students must complete the required reading **before** class to ensure a lively and engaged discussion.

A) Attendance Policy: *Participation is essential to getting the most out of this course.* All students are expected to arrive to class on time and leave when class is dismissed. Any student showing up 20 minutes or more late for class will receive an absence for the day. **More than six absences** for the quarter will **lower your final grade** by one letter grade. If **you** are absent, **you** are responsible for getting materials and updates from a classmate.

Name _____
Email/Phone _____

Name _____
Email/Phone _____

2. Maintain a Journal (25 pts each/100 pts Total)

All students must write **(4)** 2 page critical review/responses (journal) in which you will record reflections on the readings, thoughts from the lectures, considerations from the discussions, and any other important events concerning the topic of women of color in the USA. Journals will be a **maximum of 2 pages** in length, **typed, double-spaced, using 12pt. font & PROPER MARGINS**. **Four (4) Journals will be completed during the quarter. They will be due on the following dates:**

****LATE JOURNALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

3. Lead A Group Discussion (50 pts)

Each student is responsible for helping prepare and lead a group discussion based on one of the major themes of the course. *Please feel free to discuss any ideas or thoughts on the direction of your discussion with me.* Each group will lead a class discussion and each individual will be required to submit a **3-4 page paper** on the topic of your discussion, the readings, and their relation to the course.

4. Community/Civic Engagement Project (150 pts)

Participate in an event within your community, or explore a new community, that directly affects, involves, or is about women of color and write a 5 page report about your experience. **Examples:**

- Volunteer with a community service agency that provides services to women of color and **analyze** the experience.

- Interview a woman of color **at least 25 years older** than you and **analyze** their life experiences as compared to the themes of the course. *Please see me for further instructions if you plan on doing this Oral History.*

- Watch a movie, attend a panel discussion, concert, or participate in a community event and **analyze** the experience by comparing & contrasting it with a theme(s) of the course. All films must be **watched in the theatres** or another venue in which there is a substantial audience in order to consider the audience reaction(s).

- Do a character **analysis** of **1 or more** characters in the media, real or created, and discuss how their representation(s) continue or break away from stereotypical assumptions of women of color. e.g. ("Video Vixen," "hot tamale," "Mrs. Buttersworth," "the hypersexual female," "Mrs. Swan, (*Madtv*)" Tyler Perry's "Madea," "ghetto queen," "dragon lady," Oprah, Michelle Obama, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Halle Berry, Lucy Liu, Beyoncé, etc.)

- Analyze a **song** or **poem** about or produced by a woman of color. Each song/poem must be relevant to any topic discussed in class or pertaining to women of color. Make sure to place the

song/poem in **historical context**. It might help to compare & contrast two (2) songs or poems. The **5 page ANALYTICAL ESSAY** must be submitted to the instructor **ANYTIME BEFORE** the final due date. **FINAL DUE DATE** is the beginning of class on:

*******NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE*******

5. Take one (1) midterm and (1) final essay exam. Both the midterm and the final exam will be addressed later in the quarter.

* Tentative dates: **Midterm-** (50 pts)

Final- (100 pts)

6. In-Class Assignments, AS NEEDED. The instructor reserves the right to assign in-class assignments at any time.

*****Important:** The syllabus (Green Sheet) **and** schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. It is the **student's responsibility** to attend every class, stay abreast to all assignments, and maintain an awareness of any schedule changes or examination/due date changes.

Grading:

Your grade will be based on the following formula:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Participation | 50 pts. |
| Journals (4) | 100 pts. (total) |
| Group Discussion | 50 pts. (total) |
| -discussion | 25 pts. |
| -paper | 25 pts. |
| Community/Civic | 150 pts. |
| Engagement Project | |
| Midterm | 50 pts. |
| Final | <u>100 pts.</u> |
| Total: | 500 pts. |

Grading Scale:

A = 500 – 450 B = 449 – 400 C = 399 – 349 D = 348 – 298 F > 297

Class Policies/Essential Information

Rules of Courtesy and Engagement In Scholarly Discourse:

All students are expected to engage in respectful and considerate behavior. In order to maintain healthy environment students must abide by the following guidelines:

1. Do not come late. Latecomers, and those who leave early without notifying me, disrupt lecture and/or discussion **and display a disregard and disrespect** for the learning and teaching environment of the course. If this becomes a problem, you will be asked to leave the class permanently.

2. Electronic Devices All pages, cell phones, MP3 players must be turned off for the duration of

the class (i.e. no text messaging, phone calls, etc). Computers must be used for taking notes for this course only. Any other usage is not permitted.

3. **Active participation** in class discussions and paying attention during lecture is a significant part of your grade. You must come to class on time and prepared. Do not ask others to sign in for you; doing so will forfeit your entire participation grade for the day. If this becomes a problem, you will be asked to leave the class.

4. **Be courteous and respectful at all times.** Students will be required to remain respectful toward all members of the class. In this course, we will be discussing complex issues about which many people have passionate feelings. We must be intellectually open to perspectives that may conflict with our presuppositions. It is essential that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy and respect, even when they diverge from our own. It is important to know that this is a **safe place** for everyone's thoughts. While I encourage diverse views, hostile, violent, and disrespectful comments and behavior **will not be tolerated**.

5. **Any miscellaneous behavior** such as sleeping in class, talking privately with neighbors during lectures and/or discussions, reading other materials, **text messaging**, talking on your cell phone, using the internet, listening to your iPod, coming to class under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, tardiness, asking others to sign in for you, packing up early, and leaving before class is dismissed are signs of **severe disrespect** for one's fellow students, the instructors, and the course materials. Such discourteous and disrespectful behavior will have a harsh, detrimental effect on your participation grade, and **I will ask you to leave the class immediately**.

Add/Drop: It is the **student's responsibility** to pay close attention to the college's add/drop deadlines.

Makeup Exams/Late Papers: No late papers will be accepted by the instructor.

Academic Integrity: Policies on Cheating and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is failure to provide proper citations and attribute ideas and quotes to the original source. Academic responsibility and integrity is crucial. Examples of a lack of academic integrity include **signing in or other students**, or other kinds of misrepresentation to the professor or to other students. Any demonstration of lack of academic integrity will result in the failure of an assignment and possibly the class.

Students with Special Needs

Students with special needs who require reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodation process.

Extra Help

Students are **highly encouraged** to seek help from the professor, teaching assistants, tutoring and **writing assistance** at the Learning Assistance Center. I also highly encourage you to **come to office hours**.