

## ETHN 100A: Theoretical Approaches

Ethnic Studies 100A  
Fall 2019  
Tu-Th 12:30-1:50 PM  
Mandeville B-104  
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### COURSE ORGANIZATION

This course investigates the relationship between racial knowledge and power, paying special attention to disciplinary constructions of the “racial subject.” We will identify how these different disciplinary formulations of race and ethnicity describe racial “problems” and prescribe racial “solutions.” At the same time, we will examine critiques of these prescribed solutions, especially the strategies of “inclusion” and “visibility,” as well as their proposed strategies for racial emancipation. The objectives of the course are to elucidate the power of language and discourse, and to develop the tools to recognize and challenge “common sense” assumptions about and solutions to “race.”

**\*Note:** This syllabus is subject to change; the syllabus of record is kept updated and posted on the course website on CANVAS.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

A major in Ethnic Studies is designed to impart fundamental skills in critical thinking, comparative analysis, social theory and research, and written expression. These skills will prepare students to meet the increasingly rigorous expectations of graduate and professional school admissions committees and prospective employers for a broad liberal arts perspective. They will also empower students to engage meaningfully in social justice work.

Learning goals for ETHN 100A:

1. Identify a book/article’s central argument/thesis and situate it within the larger theoretical and political discussions in which it makes an intervention.
2. Read across texts in order to identify the convergences, divergences and contradictions between different projects and approaches.
3. Produce a theoretical framework paper (which can serve as a foundation for ETHN 100B and 100C).
4. Critically analyze power and inequality in a comparative, intersectional, and global framework.
5. Communicate complex ideas effectively, particularly in writing.

### COURSE OBLIGATIONS

**Note: Please bring texts to class:**

- Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Second Edition). Zed Books, 2012. Available at UCSD Bookstore, Price Center.
- Reader on E-Reserve: reserves@ucsd.edu

### Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own and original. Each student is expected to be familiar with and abide by UCSD's policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at

<https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/policy.html>

### Discussion Ethics

This class is intended for students interested in challenging commonly held understandings of race, gender, sexuality, nation, and class. Please engage one another in discussion with respect, generosity, and consideration. Abusive and harsh language, intimidation and personal attacks will not be tolerated. These norms are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community that we are all expected to follow. For more information about the UCSD Principles of Community, visit

<https://ucsd.edu/about/principles.html>

### Accommodations

If you have a medical condition or different physical or learning needs for which you may need accommodation in order to participate fully and successfully, please speak with me individually so that we can make necessary adjustments. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for Students with Disabilities:

<https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/students/typesaccommodations.html>

If you prefer to be called by a different name or referred to as a different gender than the one under which you are officially enrolled, please inform me, so that we can adjust accordingly.

### Electronic Devices

All phones must be turned off or set to vibrate/silent in the classroom. You may use your laptops (or tablets) to take notes, and to access the internet during class sessions for instructor-authorized, class-related purposes. Let's respect the classroom as a place of learning and exchanging of ideas.

### Course Assignments & Expectations

- |                                     |                        |     |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----|
| • Précis Assignment                 | Due: 10/17             | 10% |
| • Midterm                           | Due: 11/7              | 30% |
| • Progress Report                   | Due: 11/20             | 10% |
| • Theoretical Framework Paper       | Due: 12/13 @ 2:30 p.m. | 30% |
| • Active Class Participation Report | Due: 12/13 @ 2:30 p.m. | 20% |

#### 1. Précis Assignment

Writing précis (literally means "cut short") forces you to read purposefully. The goal is to communicate the main thesis and the major points in the most succinct form, which will make it easier to synthesize and compare it with other works at a later time. An effective précis retains the logic, development, and argument of the original reading, but in much shorter form.

Important: Write concisely: choose your words carefully and arrange them skillfully in order to get the maximum amount of meaning into the minimum space.

For this assignment, please turn in a 300-350 word précis of Chandra Mohanty's "Under Western Eyes" that addresses the followings:

- What is/are the piece's main argument(s)?
- Into what debates is the piece intervening, how and why, and for what ends?
- Which disciplinary or theoretical conventions does the author employ and

why?

Be sure to write in direct, assertive language, and entirely in your own words.

## 2. Midterm – Hybrid format

The midterm exam will consist of three parts:

- Part I – 1 Short Answer (100-150 words)
- Part II – 1 Short Essay (200-250 words)
- Part III – 1 Essay (500-550 words)

## 3. Progress Report for Theoretical Framework Paper

Progress report should include:

- Clearly-identified area of research interest – 1-2 sentences
- **Annotated bibliography** of the 10 texts that you will reference in your paper.
  - a) Describe the author's main arguments and conclusions.
  - b) Explain why the source is useful for researching your topic.

## 4. Theoretical Framework Paper

The theoretical framework paper is *not* a research paper. Rather, it is a *critical analysis* of the existing published research on a specific topic of your choice, which will serve as a jumping off point for further research. Your topic should be an *area of research interest*, rather than a specific research question. Your task is to identify, summarize, synthesize, and assess the relationship among different projects and approaches, and relating this research to your topic. The purpose of the assignment is for you to familiarize yourself with the research published on your topic in order to position/situate your project relative to other work.

The total number of texts referenced should not be fewer than ten, although students may focus their paper on an in-depth examination of 4-6 key texts.

Length: 2250-2500 words (8-10 pages double-spaced).

## 5) Attendance and active class participation — self-assessment, see Guidelines below.

### Reading and Lecture Schedule

Note: \* denotes available on E-Reserve

#### Week 0. Sept. 26: Introduction

#### Week 1. Oct. 1 & Oct. 3 – Ethnic Studies and Ghostly Matters

*Orienting questions:* What is knowledge? What counts as knowledge? How do we come to know what we know? How have different academic disciplines produced the racial subject? What is positivism?

\* Avery Gordon, "Her Shape and His Hand," 3-28 in Avery Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

\* Lisa Cacho. "Introduction: The Violence of Value," 1-33 in *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. NYU Press, 2012.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Introduction and Chapter 1.

**Week 2. Oct. 8 & 10 – Power and Knowledge: Writing the Racial Subject**

**Orienting questions:** What is the relationship between power and the formation of knowledge? What is epistemic violence? How are Africa and Third World women constructed in the Western imaginary? What is discursive colonialism?

- \* Achille Mbembe, "Introduction: Time on the Move," 1-23 in *On the Postcolony* University of California Press, 2001.
  - \* Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse" 51-80 in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. University of Indiana Press, 1991.
- Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Chapters. 2-5.

**Week 3. Oct. 15 & 17 – The Sociology of Race Relations**

**Orienting questions:** What are the differences and similarities between scientific racism and cultural racism? What is the legacy of the "race relations cycle"? What is "cultural racism" and how does it rationalize and perpetuate racial inequality?

- \* Robert Park, "Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific," 138-151 in *Race and Culture*. Free Press, 1950.
  - \* Robert Park, "The Bases of Racial Prejudice," 230-243 in *Race and Culture*. Free Press, 1950.
- Carol C. Mukhopadhyay and Peter Chua. "Cultural Racism." *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism*, 2008. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/cultural-racism>

PRÉCIS ASSIGNMENT DUE THURSDAY, OCT. 17

**Week 4. Oct. 22 & 24 – Culture and Power**

**Orienting questions:** How does social science research construct families of color as "the problem"? How are race, class, gender, and sexuality mutually constituted? What is the politics of pleasure and why does it matter? How is culture a terrain of struggle and resistance?

- \* Oscar Lewis, "Introduction," xi-lii, in *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty*. New York, Random House, 1966.
  - \* Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), 1-55.
  - \* Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Sex, Race, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*, Chapter. 6: 162-192. University of California Press, 2002.
- Yessica Garcia, "Intoxication as Feminist Pleasure: Drinking, Dancing, and Un-Dressing with/for Jennie Rivera." NANO: New American Notes Online, 2016, Issue 9. <https://www.nanocrit.com/issues/issue9/intoxication-feminist-pleasure-drinking-dancing-and-un-dressing-jenni-rivera>

**Week 5. Oct. 29 & 31 – Structures of Racial Capitalism**

**Orienting questions:** What is the relationship between race and capitalist labor relations? How are whiteness and property interrelated? How has capitalism emerged in conjunction with patriarchy, racism and colonialism? How do affective and biological labor index new forms of exploitation and accumulation?

- \* Oliver Cox, "Race Relations—Its Meaning, Beginning, and Progress." 321-352 in *Caste, Class, & Race*. New York, Doubleday, 1948.
- \* Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," 176-283 in *Critical Race Theory*. Kimberle Crenshaw *et al*, eds. New York: New Press, 1996.
- \* Kalindi Vora, "Limits of Labor," 25-42 in *Life Support: Biocapital and the New History of Outsourced Labor*. University of Minnesota Press, 2012.

**Week 6. Nov. 5 & 7 –****Nov. 5 – Catch up and Review Day****Nov. 7 – Midterm**

MIDTERM THURSDAY, NOV 7

**Week 7. Nov. 12 & 14 – Settler Colonial Studies, Indigenous Studies and Terripelago**

**Orienting questions:** How does an indigenous framework differ from a race framework? How do we mark, cross, exceed, and disrupt the colonial conditions of knowledge production? How to move away from a land — and nation — based epistemology to one that centers movements, currents, crossings, water, islands, and archipelago?

J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, "'A structure, not an event': Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity," *Lateral* 5.1 (2016). <http://csalateral.org/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui/>

\*Craig Santos Perez, "Transterritorial Currents and the Imperial Terripelago." *American Quarterly*, Volume 67, Number 3, September 2015, pp. 619-624.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Chapters 6-9.

**Week 8. Nov. 18 & 20 – Body Politics: Homonormative, Transnormative, and Debility**

**Orienting questions:** How are bodies sources as well as subjects of knowledge production? What is the nexus of trans and disability? What is the relationship between disability, debilitation, and debility?

\* Jasbir Puar, "Intimate Control, Infinite Detention." Chapter 3 in *Terrorist Assemblages*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Jasbir Puar, "Hands Up, Don't Shoot!" *The New Inquiry*, Sept. 15, 2017.

<https://thenewinquiry.com/hands-up-dont-shoot/>

Jasbir Puar, "Bodies with New Organs: Becoming Trans, Becoming Disabled."

*Social Text* Vol. 33, no. 3, Sept 2015: 45-73. <http://jasbirpuar.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Social-Text-2015-Puar-45-73.pdf>

PROGRESS REPORT DUE THURSDAY, NOV. 20

**Week 9. – In-Class Writing Workshop**

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Chapters. 10-12*

**Nov. 28 – Holiday**

**Week 10. Dec 3 & 5 – Review and Conclusion**

\* Lisa Cacho, "Conclusion: Racialized Hauntings of the Devalued Dead," 147-168 in *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. NYU Press, 2012.

\* Christina Sharpe, "The Weather," Chapter 4 in *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Duke University Press, 2016.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK PAPER DUE FRIDAY, 12/13 by 2:30 p.m.
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**GUIDELINES/SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVE LEARNING**

This course is designed to promote active participation, critical thinking, and intellectual advancement of *all* students. Toward this goal, I expect you to be active learners and to take responsibility to teach yourself and your classmates. This requires that you unlearn ways of learning that are passive, competitive, and uncollaborative. The American philosopher of education, John Dewey, believed that collaborative or cooperative learning, and the potential tensions that may arise in this interaction, are critical to the qualitative growth of individuals. In the same way, the Brazilian philosopher and educator Paulo Freire equates education with a people's triumph over the attempted "domestication" of their intellect.

**Suggestions for Active Learning:**

1. Attendance (should weigh very heavily).
2. Participate in class discussion on a regular basis.
3. Write and accumulate study notes on the readings.
4. Volunteer (in advance) to take responsibility (as an individual or as a group) to initiate discussion in class (discussion questions must be prepared in advance in consultation with instructor).
5. Come to class with written questions on scheduled readings
6. Meet with a study group on a regular basis (once a week, once every two weeks; each student needs to document meeting).
7. Visit professor during office hours to discuss issues raised in class and in the readings; bring one or two classmates with you.
8. Contribute possible exam questions.
9. Watch a documentary film or educational program that focus on communities of color and share your reaction and/or critical insights with your classmates and in a written commentary to instructor (one paragraph).
10. Organize a student panel to dramatize/illustrate the issues of the week (using spoken word, talk show, or another format).
11. Notify the class of events on- or off-campus that address the issues discussed in class.
12. Bring in your favorite piece of music that addresses the class themes and share with the class.

13. Attend a community/organizing event and share your reaction with your classmates and in a written commentary to instructor (one paragraph)
14. Volunteer at a local organization; document your experience
15. Any other creative way you can actively participate in class.

**Self-Evaluation:** You are encouraged to monitor your own participation level, and to evaluate your overall participation and engagement at the end of the course. **Please submit a one page** self-evaluation of your participation in the course, and to recommend a “participation grade” which will account for 20% of your final grade.

Due date: Please submit your self-evaluation when you submit your final Theoretical Framework Paper (Friday, Dec. 13).

### **Some Criteria to Use in Evaluating Your Own Active Learning:**

- Attendance level
- Degree to which I made conscious connections between different theories and explanations covered in class
- Degree to which I made myself available to classmates who needed help
- Degree to which I sought help from classmate or professor/TA when I needed help.
- The percentage of time I came to class having done the reading
- The amount of time I invested in reading, studying, and reflecting on the material
- The degree to which I engaged my classmates or professors in thoughtful questions and comments (including in office hours)
- Degree to which I consciously and genuinely employed the participation methods above to advance my own and my classmates’ learning and intellectual growth.
- Degree to which my motivation for following these suggestions was grounded in my desire to learn and to grow intellectually, to facilitate my classmates’ learning experience, rather than in a desire to impress others.

**LET’S HAVE A GREAT QUARTER!**