ETHN 102: Science and Technology in Society: Race Gender & Class

Prof. Kalindi Vora
Winter 2015: T. Th. 12:30-1:50pm, Solis 111
Office Hours: T. 3:30-4:30, and by appt. SSB 221

This survey course offers an interdisciplinary and transnational examination of how bodies, knowledge and power are entangled with science and technology. We will examine how scientific discourses and technological practices generate particular and contextual notions of what the body means, how bodily difference is understood, and how this is related to political, cultural and economic power. We examine social difference, including race, class, gender, sex, sexual orientation, and national citizenship as these are constructed and represented through various technologies and scientific ways of knowing.

The goals of this course are to understand scientific and technical knowledge and practices as culturally contextualized categories of knowledge that are always situated within the politics of difference. In other words, we think through notions like scientific objectivity and technological neutrality by surveying the way research is planned and conducted, and how different applications of scientific and technical knowledge in fields like medicine, pharmaceuticals, archaeology, reproductive technologies, and public health relate to their access and outcomes in different populations and communities.

Assignments and Evaluation:
Students are expected to complete the readings for each course meeting before they attend that class, and to bring the readings for the entire week to each class meeting. Readings are available through E-res (password kv102) or (rarely) the course website. Readings marked with an asterisk are recommended but not required, and can be resources for final research papers.

Grading is based on participation, pop-quizzes, discussion leading, one in-class midterm exam, and one final exam.
Participation: Attendance is mandatory and constitutes your participation grade. A maximum of 2 excused absences (note required).
Pop quizzes: A correct answer passes and an incorrect answer does not. Pass=retaining your participation points. No pass=one point removed from participation grade at end of course for each no pass.
Discussion leaders: (1 turn as leader, 1 turn as media discussant). During the course, each student must prepare to lead discussion twice during the quarter on a given week’s readings. Each class meeting will have 4 facilitators, two discussion leaders will read out their discussion question that connects at least two readings. Two media facilitators will connect something from current events to that week’s readings.
Midterm Exam: Format: Two 500-word essay questions + final project proposal.
Final presentation/paper: 1500 word research essay on topic related to course material

*It is highly recommended that each student follow one science-based journal, popular journal or news feed that includes international news. Science, Scientific American, NYT “Science” column, New England Journal of Medicine, etc.
** If you wish to speak with me, I will be available before and after class, as well as in my office hours. I do not answer email except when extremely urgent.

**Percentages and Grades:**

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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>Discussion leading</td>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
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<td>Final paper and presentation</td>
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**Attendance.** Every unexcused absence will affect your participation grade, and two excused absences are permitted before it affects your participation grade. In order to be counted as present you must arrive on time and stay until the conclusion of lecture or section.

**Electronic Devices and Laptops.** Cell phones and other electronic devices (PDA/iPod/iPad, laptops etc) may not be used for talking, texting, checking email or surfing the web. You may however use such devices to take notes in class and to search for information related to class discussion when prompted by the professor. Repeated use of electronic devices for other purposes distracts others and will negatively affect your grade.

**ADA Statement.** If you have a documented disability needing accommodations, please inform me and bring a notification letter outlining your approved accommodations. I will make all reasonable efforts to assist you. If, as a result of a disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you must notify me in writing within one week of receipt of the syllabus. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for Students with Disabilities, 858/534/4382.

**Cheating and Plagiarism.** Whether intentional or inadvertent, plagiarism is a serious violation. All work submitted in this course must be your own. The use of sources such as ideas, quotations, paraphrases, or anything written by someone else must be properly acknowledged and cited. If you have questions about the proper citation of sources, please ask your Teaching Assistants. Students who plagiarize, or who cheat on an exam, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with University policy. Students are expected to be familiar with UCSD's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at: http://www.senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14.

**Discussion Ethics.** This class is intended for students interested in challenging commonly held understandings of race, gender, sexuality, class, and nation. Given the nature of the course there will likely be a wide range of opinions. Ideally the course will prompt you to think for yourself and to raise questions about conventional views and received wisdom. However, please engage one another in discussion with respect and consideration. These norms are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community that we are all expected to follow (http://wwwvcb.ucsd.edu/principles.htm).

**Reading and discussion Schedule:**

**Week 1 (3/31, 4/2): Groundwork for Historical and Social Scientific Approaches to the Intersectional Study of Science and Difference**

- Sandra Harding, “Postcolonial Science and Technology Studies: Are There Multiple Sciences?” pp. 130-154. (TED)
- Understanding Race quiz: http://www.understandingrace.org/humvar/quiz.html
- Facilitation sign-up

**Week 2 (4/7, 4/9): Genetics and the long history of biological determinism**
TUESDAY 4/7: OUT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENT (TED)

  *recommended: Kim Tallbear, “Introduction.” Native American DNA.

Week 3 (4/14, 4/16): Race and Labor on the Internet
- Lisa Nakamura, Digitizing Race: Introduction + Ch. 3 “The Social Optics of Race...”
  *in class: analysis of clips from Minority Report; The Matrix; Sleep Dealer

Week 4 (4/21, 4/23): Medical Research and Social Difference
- “Health Hero: Organization Provides Emergency Care When Police Refuse.” (TED)

Week 5 (4/28, 4/30): Robotics: Difference and Ability
- Kelly Dobson, Machine Therapy, (excerpts) (TED)
  Midterm review; final proposal guidelines

Week 6 (5/5, 5/7): MIDTERM
**T. February 8th: In-Class Midterm**

Thursday 2/10: Open office hours during class to discuss individual proposals.
Week 7 (5/12, 5/14): Should Information be Free? Hacktivism, Privacy, and Intellectual Property

**Tuesday 5/12: 3 pg. final paper proposal due**


*Networking Exercise in class*

Week 8 (5/19, 5/21): Reproductive Technologies: Population and Visualization


Week 9 (5/26, 5/28): Research Ethics, Access to Technology and Social Justice

Conference presentations and feedback

Week 10 (6/2, 6/4): Research Ethics, Access to Technology and Social Justice

Conference presentations and feedback

Wednesday June 10th: **Final paper due 11:00am via TED**

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**Majoring or Minoring in Ethnic Studies at UCSD**

Many students take an ethnic studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of “interest” yet have no information about the major or minor and don’t realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An ethnic studies major is excellent preparation for a career in medicine, law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the ethnic studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Daisy Rodriguez, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor, at 858-534-3277 or d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu.