Course Description:

I'm not given a second chance. I am overdetermined from the outside. I am the slave not to the “idea” others have of me, but to my appearance.

- Frantz Fanon

Visuality is a specific term to refer to the way in which power relations construct our visual field. In other words, how we make sense of what we “see” is mediated by existing power relations. Visuality classifies through the power to name, categorize and define, thus producing what is legible. This system of classification is a means of social organization that began with the casta system and slavery, but is now structural in its reproduction and expansion of colonial effects such as racial and sexual profiling and the coloniality of gender. Visuality also speaks to the naturalization of this system of classification that has serious immediate and long-term material consequences: it functions to both renew power relations and preempt colonial subjects from organizing for their collective interests. For this reason presenting a counternarrative to visuality has been central to queer of color critique.

Required Texts:

Books can be purchased at the UCSD Bookstore:


All other course readings can be viewed and downloaded via TED.

- Please bring copies of the readings to class.
- Please note: Readings may be edited or added depending on class discussions.
Accommodations:

I would like to ensure this class is accessible to everyone. Please contact me as soon as possible if you require any specific accommodations for a disability or medical reason.

Course Requirements:

Short Paper: 20%
3-5 pages. Summarize key themes from Alcoff and Ahmed. Conclude with your own reflection on the readings.

Précis (two of them): 20% each = 40%
Please see TED under the “instructions” tab for specific guidelines on how to write a précis.

Participation: 20%
Please see below.

Final Presentation: 10%
Create a 5-minute presentation including media. Feel free to draw from any of your written assignments from the class, or bring in additional visual material.

Final paper: 10%
Write a reflection paper based on the course

Attendance/Participation:

Seminar style classes are discussion based. So while I will lecture to help elucidate, contextualize or elaborate a particular concept, it is also expected that students will come to class ready to engage in a discussion.

Please arrive in class having completed the assigned readings for the day. Informed and engaged discussion is a critical part of the learning process and everyone is expected to contribute.

Please note: this is an upper division course with very dense reading material. I strongly recommend that you have some background in CGS or Ethnic Studies before taking this course.

Grading Policy:

Students must complete all assignments to get a passing grade in the class.

All submitted assignments should be double-spaced in 12pt font Times New Roman or equivalent.
**Class Schedule:**

January 5  
Welcoming and Introductions

**UNIT 1**  
**On Visibility**

January 7  
Linda Martín Alcoff, “Racism and Visible Race.”

January 12  
Linda Martín Alcoff. “Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment”

**UNIT 2**  
**Orientations**

January 14  
Sara Ahmed. “Sexual Orientations,” from *Queer Phenomenology*

January 19  
Sara Ahmed. “A Phenomenology of Whiteness.”  
**Short Paper Due**

**UNIT 3**  
**On Looking**

January 21  
Jean-Paul Sartre. *Excerpt from Being and Nothingness*

January 26  
Frantz Fanon. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Pages xi—44

January 28  
**Film (stream on Kanopy):** Black Skin, White Masks  
Fanon cont’d. Pages 45—88

February 2  
Fanon cont’d. Pages 89—184

February 4  
Fanon cont’d. Pages 185—206  
**Précis Due**
UNIT 4
On Perception

February 9
Film: When Worlds Collide

February 11

February 16
Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Excerpt from Phenomenology of Perception

UNIT 5
On Knowing

February 18
Jacqueline Martinez. Phenomenology of Chicana Experience and Identity. pp 1—31
Keyword: Semiotics

February 23
Martinez cont’d pp 33—80

February 25
Martinez cont’d pp 81—133
Précis Due

Prelude to Presentations

March 1
Film (at library or stream): Two Spirit directed by Lydia Nibley or Fire directed by Deepa Mehta or a film you recommend.
Online discussion: 1 paragraph responding to the film you watched.

UNIT 6
Presentations!

March 3
Presentations

March 8
Presentations

March 10
Presentations
Final Paper Due March 14th, 6pm at SSB 226