

**Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class:  
Retooling Concepts, Reconceptualizing Tools for the Study of Culture  
(Ethnic Studies 183)**

**Fall 2007: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3:20p  
Classroom: SOLIS 110**

Instructor: Harrod J Suarez  
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30-2p @ 247 Social Science Building  
Office Phone: (858) 822-5117  
E-mail: [hjsuarez@ucsd.edu](mailto:hjsuarez@ucsd.edu)

Course Description

In what ways are categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, and class mutually constitutive? In other words, how is it that social categories depend on each other for their coherence, so that it is *impossible* to neatly separate them? How is race an effect of gender, and how is class inflected by ethnicity? As we will see in this course, this impossibility has not prevented certain (for a long time, dominant) analyses from treating them as discrete categories, and moreover, privileging one over the rest. In a classic example, contemporary U.S. culture has been said to emerge from the transition from an industrial to a post-Fordist economy without accounting for the histories of civil rights, immigration, feminism, and so on. This course attempts to bridge stimulating analyses of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, while also looking forward to other categories that demand our critical and analytical attention.

The course pursues this analysis via two avenues. On the one hand we will track a genealogy that thinks critically about the relations between these different categories. Perhaps the most relevant term here is “intersectionality,” a method developed by Critical Race theorists such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, which treats categories as, precisely, intersecting (and thus mutually constitutive). In contemporary scholarship, intersectionality has also led to the development of “queer diasporic” or “queer of color” critique, and we will examine how some texts advance intersectionality to engage with newer analytical categories such as sexuality and diaspora. On the other hand, to give us fertile ground on which to pursue these ideas, we will consider several creative texts that help demonstrate, as well as further develop, the themes for the course. These texts address questions specific to U.S. history as well as the emergence of a global world order. We will attend to the fine details of each text in order to ascertain how it is relevant for our discussion.

By the end of the course, I hope we at least will have begun to tip the surface of a critical examination of contemporary U.S. culture and the intersecting social categories that contribute to its politics.

Finally, please note that this course will engage with some difficult but worthwhile ideas. I will do my best to move at a pace suitable for the course, introducing key terms with the aim to clarify precisely what we mean. If you wish for me to elaborate on anything having to do with the course, please come to my office hours and I will be happy to assist you individually.

Course Materials

Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*

Toni Morrison, *Sula*

Course Reader (Available from University Readers: <http://www.universityreaders.com>)

#### Grading

Attendance.....	10	Scale: A	93-100 pts
Participation.....	5	A-	90-93
Keyword Paper.....	10	B+	86-89
Midterm.....	20	B	83-85
First Three Pages.....	5	B-	80-82
Term Paper.....	25	C+	76-79
Final Exam.....	25	C	73-75
Total: 100 pts		C-	70-72
		D+	66-69
		D	63-65
		D-	60-62
		F	below 60

#### Assignments

**Attendance:** I expect each of you to arrive in a timely manner for each class session and to stay for its duration. Class activities are crucial to the course, and so constitute a small but significant part of your grade.

**Participation:** These points will be distributed in the effort to create a community of critical thinkers who do not just tolerate, but respect, each others' viewpoints. Also, please turn cell phones off during class.

**Keyword Paper:** This is a very short paper (1-2 pages) where you will elaborate on a single keyword introduced in the course material. Because there are several concepts that will likely be new for many students, this exercise will help you articulate your ideas about them, in your own words.

**Midterm and Final Exam:** These exams will cover, in short essay format, the key terms and concepts discussed over the course of the first and second parts of the course, respectively. Students are expected to provide, in clear and concise language, an overview and analysis of key terms and concepts, as well to point to useful examples and discourse briefly about them.

**Term Paper:** Over the course of the term, we will read two novels and watch several films. For the term paper, I would like you to choose one of these texts, hopefully the one that intrigues you the most, and produce an essay of 8-10 pages in length. You should refer explicitly to ideas expressed in course materials, and you may also include other critical sources; for all source materials you use, please provide the appropriate notes and bibliography. Please adhere to this format: double-spaced, one-inch margins, and 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Any variations may result in a lower grade. For notes and bibliography, MLA or Chicago-style will suffice. \*\*MORE TO COME ON THIS.

#### Course Schedule

### Race as a Category of Analysis

Tues (9/25)> Introduction

Thurs (9/27)> Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "Racial Formation"

### Gender and Intersectionality

Tues (10/2)> Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis"

Thurs (10/4)> Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex"

### Sexing Things Up: Analyzing Culture

Tues (10/9)> Lisa Lowe, "Work, Immigration, Gender: Asian 'American' Women";  
Gloria Anzaldua, from *Borderlands/La Frontera*

Thurs (10/11)> Begin Toni Morrison, *Sula*; No class.

### Cultural Texts

Tues (10/16)> Finish Morrison, *Sula*; **Keyword paper due at start.**

Thurs (10/18)> Film: *Looking for Langston*

### Midterm

Tues (10/23)> Film and Term paper discussion

Thurs (10/25)> Midterm Evaluation and Exam

### Queer Diasporas

Tues (10/30)> Juana Maria Rodriguez, "'Welcome to the Global Stage'"

Thurs (11/1)> Jose Esteban Muñoz, "Performing Disidentity"

Tues (11/6)> David Eng, "Out Here and Over There"

### Cultural Texts

Thurs (11/8)> Film: *Paris is Burning*; **First 3 pages of Term paper due at start.**

Tues (11/13)> Begin Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*

Thurs (11/15)> Finish Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*

Tues (11/20)> Gayatri Gopinath, "Nostalgia, Desire, Diaspora"

Thurs (11/22)> Thanksgiving Holiday; **No class.**

### Globalization and Identity

Tues (11/27)> Inderpal Grewal, "Transnational America: Race and Gender after 9/11"

Thurs (11/29)> Niru Ratnam, "Art and globalisation"

### Conclusions

Tues (12/4)> Concluding remarks

Thurs (12/6)> Final exam preparation; **Term Paper due at beginning of class.**

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 13, 3-6 pm. Room TBA.**

### Ethnic Studies Major or Minor

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 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 Yolanda Escamilla, Undergraduate Advisor for the Department of Ethnic Studies, at (858) 534-3277 or [yescamilla@ucsd.edu](mailto:yescamilla@ucsd.edu).

### **Writing Support**

The Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS) offers writing and other academic support for students. Please visit them on the Third Floor of Center Hall, Monday-Friday, 8a-4:30p, call (858) 534-3760, email [oasis@ucsd.edu](mailto:oasis@ucsd.edu).

### **University Policies**

1. The University of California, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or age in any of its policies, procedures, or practices; nor does the university discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

2. Students are expected to complete the course in compliance with the instructor's standards. No student shall engage in any activity that involves attempting to receive a grade by means other than honest effort; for example:

No student shall knowingly procure, provide, or accept any unauthorized material that contains questions or answers to any examination or assignment to be given at a subsequent time.

No student shall complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person.

No student shall knowingly allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, for himself or herself by another person.

No student shall plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his or her own work.

No student shall employ aids excluded by the instructor in undertaking course work or in completing any exam or assignment.

No student shall alter graded class assignments or examinations and then resubmit them for regrading.

No student shall submit substantially the same material in more than one course without prior authorization.

For more information, please consult the UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship.