

ETHN 189: Race and Responsibility

Instructor: Dr. Nadeen Kharputly

Office hours: Mondays 12:10pm-2pm (and by appointment) in Social Sciences Building 252

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Any changes to this syllabus will be announced in class and via e-mail.

Course description:

What is our responsibility to our community? To society at large? And how do we overcome this responsibility in order to live and write in a way that is faithful to our interests? To explore these questions, we will read a number of texts on the nature of responsibility, particularly as it concerns writers of color and the communities they represent in their works.

On the flipside, what are our responsibilities as a society? How are we complicit in systemic forms of racism, and how do we best understand our responsibility in order to combat these injustices?

Ground rules:

We are discussing complex, difficult, and very necessary topics, and while diversity in opinion is expected and welcome, please be sure to voice your responses generously. This is a space where every student has the opportunity to learn in an open and supportive environment, and in order to maintain this co-operative space I expect everyone in this class to be as open-minded and gracious as possible. Personal attacks and hate speech will not be tolerated. Please go over the Principles of Community to ensure that you adhere by the expected guidelines (<https://ucsd.edu/about/principles.html>)

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this class you will be able to:

- Identify central arguments in the texts we read and examine them from multiple angles
- Take and defend a particular position while considering the viability of other positions
- Talk about the issues presented in this class in an academic manner and engage in thoughtful, gracious debate with peers
- Apply the concepts and readings we discuss to everyday examples

Class readings:

Bring the readings of the day with you to each class.

You will not be asked to purchase any texts. All required readings – PDFs and links to articles – will be available online on TritonEd. Please access the links to news articles via TritonEd; the links here on the syllabus may have changed in the meantime.

Class etiquette:

Please devote our class time to listening attentively to everyone in this space. We are covering difficult topics so your full attention is required

Be mindful of the space you take up – make sure you respond to the questions posed during our discussions directly and efficiently, and do not forget that your classmates need to be able to

participate as well.

Laptops are permitted for referring to the texts and taking notes only. Any distracting behavior – attempting to text discreetly, browsing through social media, etc. - will be cited and disciplined accordingly. Fiddling with technology is rude and distracting to me and your peers. When you are not taking notes and are listening to your peers, please have your laptop screens down.

Communication:

I encourage you to attend office hours whenever you need to talk through ideas and issues, even early on in the quarter. Please check your e-mail at least once a day to keep up to date with any possible changes to our schedule. Expect responses to your e-mails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours over the weekend. Courteous correspondence is expected—e-mails must begin with a salutation (“Dear>Hello Dr. Kharputly”) and end with your signature (Sincerely/Thanks, [your name]”).

Make sure you read over the syllabus and any instructions I have shared via e-mail or TritonEd carefully before you ask any questions. I will not respond to e-mails asking me what my office hours are, for example, or about any information that is readily available on the syllabus.

Course requirements and percentage of final grade:

Participation and attendance 20%

This includes *regular attendance* and *active participation* in class. Your grade relies heavily on participation and attendance, so any absences can quickly take a toll. Please check in with me **immediately** if you anticipate any difficulties with regular attendance.

Weekly share 20%

By the end of each week (Sunday) you will share a resource on TritonEd relating to the theme of the week. Over the course of our discussions you will think of many things that you find relevant to our discussion – news articles, stories, music, YouTube videos, movies, TV shows, etc. In the interest of sharing these with everyone in the class, you will be asked to contribute to our resource database to enrich our understanding of each week’s topic.

Class presentation 15%

5-10 minute in-class presentation. You will pick an article or other resource related to the week’s topic and introduce that article to the class. Sign-up sheets will be circulated in week 2.

Midquarter self-evaluation (due by 5/13) 10%

A 3-5 page assignment. Not only to reflect on your progress thus far, but this should help you explore what you will end up researching for your final project. Further instructions will be sent ahead of time.

Final paper (due 6/11) 25%

A 8-12 page research paper on a topic of your choice. Further instructions will be sent ahead of time.

Self-evaluation (due 6/11) 10%

At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a short (500 words) evaluation of your learning outcomes.

Weekly schedule:

Week 1:

Monday April 2

Introduction

Wednesday April 4

Defining our responsibilities

[No reading]

Friday April 6

In-class exercise

Week 2:

Monday April 9

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June 2014

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Wednesday April 11

Coates continued

Friday April 13

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. "Ending the Slavery Blame-Game," *The New York Times*, August 22, 2010

<https://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/23/opinion/23gates.html>

Barbara Ransby, "Henry Louis Gates' Dangerously Wrong Slave History," *Colorlines*, May 3, 2010

<https://www.colorlines.com/articles/henry-louis-gates-dangerously-wrong-slave-history>

Week 3: Respectability politics

Monday April 16

Damon Young, "The Definition, Danger and Disease of Respectability Politics, Explained," *The Root*, March 21, 2016

<https://www.theroot.com/the-definition-danger-and-disease-of-respectability-po-1790854699>

Fredrick C. Harris, "The Rise of Respectability Politics," *Dissent Magazine*, Winter 2014

<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/the-rise-of-respectability-politics>

Wednesday April 18

Jennifer Lee, "Cultural Lag and the Fallacy of Asian Americans as the Model Minority," *The Society Pages*, April 25, 2017

<https://thesocietypages.org/specials/cultural-lag-and-the-fallacy-of-asian-americans-as-the-model-minority/>

Friday April 20

Tyler Tynes, "Colin Kaepernick, Michael Vick, and the fallacy of respectability politics," *SB Nation*, July 19, 2017 <https://www.sbnation.com/2017/7/19/15990134/colin-kaepernick-michael-vick-and-the-fallacy-of-respectability-politics>

Monique Judge, "Why He Should Have Just Complied Does Not Apply to Stephon Clark," *The Root*, March 22, 2018

<https://www.theroot.com/why-he-should-have-just-complied-does-not-apply-to-st-1824007544>

Week 4: The prison industrial complex: our collective responsibility

Monday April 23

Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (2003)

Wednesday April 25

Davis continued

Friday April 27

Davis continued

Week 5: Prison industrial complex contd.

Monday April 30

Ava DuVernay, *The 13th* (2016) (1hr 40min)

Wednesday May 2

13th continued

Friday May 4

13th continued

Week 6: Prison industrial complex contd.

Monday May 7

Michelle Alexander, selections from *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (2010)

Wednesday May 9
Alexander continued

Friday May 11
Alexander continued

Week 7: Responsibility after 9/11

Monday May 14

Riad Alarian, "Liberal Fascination with 'Islam-Lite' and the Humanizing Muslims Industry," *Muftah*, May 20, 2017

<https://muftah.org/liberal-fascination-islam-lite-humanizing-muslims-industry/>

Hatem Bazian, "Humanizing the human is dehumanizing!" October 2, 2017

<http://www.hatembazian.com/content/humanizing-the-human-is-dehumanizing-preforming-muslimness/>

Wednesday May 16

Podcast: Ahmed Ali Akbar, *See Something, Say Something*, Episode 1: "Saying 'Nah'"

<https://player.fm/series/see-something-say-something/episode-1-saying-nah> (or wherever you listen to podcasts)

Friday May 18

Lila Abu-Lughod. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," in *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (2002): 783-90.

Week 8: Responsibility to society

Monday May 21

James Baldwin, "The Creative Process," in *The Price of the Ticket* (1985)

Wednesday May 23

Roxane Gay, reading TBD

Friday May 25

Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (1994)

Week 9: Responsibility to all women

Monday May 28

NO CLASS - Memorial Day Weekend

Wednesday May 30

Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence

Against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* Vol. 43, No. 6 (Jul., 1991), pp. 1241-1299

In class viewing: Kimberlé Crenshaw, “The urgency of intersectionality,” TEDWomen, December 2016

Video and transcript:

https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality

Friday June 1

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “We Should All Be Feminists,” TEDxEuston, December 2012.

Video and transcript:

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists

Week 10: Conclusion

Monday June 4

Last week’s discussion continued

Wednesday June 6

Final project discussion

Friday March 8

Conclusion

Final papers and self-evaluation due on Monday June 11 by 11:59pm.

Additional information:

The university’s statement on academic integrity must be reviewed before turning in any assignments: <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>. Plagiarism consists of but is not limited to the following: presenting another person’s ideas or language as if they were your own, copying (words AND ideas) from the Internet, and failure to acknowledge and properly cite the sources of the ideas presented. Re-using language from a paper you have previously written for another class is unacceptable. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please check in with me ahead of time. It is your responsibility to be aware of all of this; lack of awareness is no excuse.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you need accommodation for disability purposes or religious reasons so that we may make alternate arrangements ahead of time. It is best to get accommodation from the Office for Students with Disabilities (located behind Center Hall, 858-534-4382) as soon as possible so that we can work together to ensure that your needs are met in the event of an emergency.

Majoring or minoring in Ethnic Studies:

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a university or college requirement. 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, education, public health, social work, non-profit work and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Monica Rodriguez, Ethnic Studies Program Advisor, via email at ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu