ANTH 4416/6416 - Culture, Identity and Power  
Fall 2011  
Wednesdays 2:30-5:15  
322 Manning Hall

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course considers a variety of theoretical approaches to human identity. It examines how culture and power inform understandings and practices related to difference and stratification, and identity formation and reproduction cross-culturally with an emphasis on the ways race, gender, class, indigeneity, and youth identities are constructed, negotiated, and resisted.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
• To explore theories of social constructivism, embodiment, performance, identity politics, and difference making and consider how they contribute to our understanding of race, gender, indigeneity, and disability.
• To explore linkages between social, historic, and cultural aspects of race, gender, indigeneity, and disability.
• To explore how relationships and dynamics of power create and maintain categories and conditions of identity formation and reproduction.
• To analyze the intersections and implications of identity (individual and collective) on inequality, empowerment, and resistance.
• To develop critical thinking and writing skills around questions of identity formation, expression, and identity politics.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READINGS: The syllabus includes a reading schedule. Each week students will be assigned a number of key readings. Unless otherwise noted, all readings are REQUIRED. Students must complete all reading prior to coming to class. Books will be available at the UM Campus Bookstore. Articles and book chapters will be available on eCourseware (https://elearn.Memphis.edu).

Required Texts:

Required Articles and Book Chapters:
In addition to the required text, there are a number of articles and book chapters that are also required reading for the course. They are listed on the reading schedule. All of these readings will be available electronically on the UM Drive and on E-Courseware, as well as in hard copy in 316 Manning Hall.

Films: This class makes extensive use of films, many of which are not rentable and therefore not available to students outside of class. Some of the films may be rated “R.” Exams and writing assignments will be based in part on films seen in class. It is the students’ responsibility to attend class and understand the content of the films.
**Guest Speakers:** Several times throughout the semester the class will host a guest speaker. It is the students’ responsibility to attend class (please be on time), take notes and ask questions, as speakers’ presentations will be included on exams and thematic essays.

**PREPARATION, PARTICIPATION, AND SUPPORT MATERIALS**
This class is designed as an upper-level seminar. As such, the format of the class will include brief lectures to orient students to the central ideas or questions for the week, rigorous class discussion, and periodic in-class activities. The dynamics of the class depend on all of us, and attendance, preparation, and participation are key.

**Attendance:** Beginning on Sept 7th attendance is mandatory. You must also be on time for class. You may miss one class without penalty, but you will lose five percentage points, from your overall course grade for every unexcused absence thereafter.

**Communication is the key.**
Keep Dr. L-P informed if you have an emergency during the semester that will require you to be late or miss a class.
- Excused absences for religious holidays and other events must be cleared with the instructor in advance.
- Excused absences for medical reasons must be accompanied by documentation.

**Seminar Participation:** Seminars are designed to allow students to formulate opinions and ask probing questions. As such, the following tips may be helpful:
- Do not be afraid to speak out about the readings - that is why we are here.
- Allow other people to also speak and participate in the class; please do not dominate the discussion.
- Be courteous and respectful of one another. Do not laugh at or belittle anyone’s remarks. While you may not agree with them (this is fine), try to build a constructive dialogue around your differing interpretations of a reading.
- Listen to what is being said rather than who is saying it – responses should not be personalized, and disagreements in opinion are not to be taken personally. Remember that we will be talking about ideas and learning from one another.
- Participation means **participation**, not simply being present.

**E-Courseware, Email, & Turnitin:** Relevant course materials (readings, assignments, lectures, announcements, discussions, grades) will be placed on E-Courseware. Students are responsible for checking E-Courseware regularly (at least twice a week at a minimum) for course updates and assignments. All papers (thematic essays and final papers) are to be submitted in hard copy and through the E-courseware dropbox.

Email will be the primary way we communicate with each other outside of class meeting; therefore, students should check their email daily and respond to emails related to this class in a timely fashion. All emails from me to you will use the University of Memphis system. If you use a different email system, be sure to forward your UM account to that other address.

**ASSIGNMENTS & PRESENTATIONS**
This is a writing and discussion intensive course. The assignments have been designed to provide students with a variety of different venues (reflection, response, essay, research paper) to work through the ideas and themes presented in this class.
**Reading Reflections (all students):** Throughout the semester, students will work with and share ideas through reading reflections. Students will be divided in two groups – A & B – and will alternate writing reflections (writers) and responding (responders) to others reflections on E-courseware. See reading schedule for rotation and due dates. *Late reading reflections/responses will not be accepted.*

**Writers** - Drawing on the readings for the week, students writing a reflection should identify 2 or 3 key points or ideas and discuss them in approximately 5 paragraphs (approximately 1.5-2 single spaced pages). You are welcome to organize your reflection around one or more of the overarching questions raised for a given week (see reading schedule). In order to get full credit for your reflections, you must post it to the E-courseware discussion board by noon on Tuesday of the week they are due (these will be anonymous posts). You should also bring a hard copy to class on Wed.

**Responders** – Read through the reflections posted on E-Courseware, choose one and respond (you can respond to multiple reflections). In order to get full credit for your response, you must post it to the discussion board on Wednesdays by noon. You should also bring a hard copy to class on Wed.

**Midterm & Final Exams (only US):** There will be 2 take home exams. Exam questions will be handed out in class at least a week before the exam is due. (Each exam is worth 200 points). Due dates for take home exams are October 26th and December 7th.

**Intersection & Implications: Identity in the news (only UG):** For each of the four themes in the class, Students will identify, read, and write about an identity related current event. You will be asked to talk about your current event in class on the dates listed below. Your write up should be 1-1.5 single spaced pages, summarize the issue/event and include answers to the following questions:

- Who are the individuals and/or institutions involved?
- What is the identity issue? What is the secondary identity issue?
- How does this issue/event relate to inequalities based on identity? How could these be addressed?
- What theoretical lens is relevant to this issue/event? Why?
- What more do you want to know – i.e. follow-up questions you might have?

In-class discussion/presentation dates: September 28th, October 19th, November 16th, & December. Dr. L-P’s GA, Ace Madjlesi, will be available to provide guidance and mentoring related to your current event write up and in-class discussion.

**Thematic Essays (UHS & GS):** In lieu of exams, undergraduate honors students & graduate students will write 4 short thematic papers (5-6 pgs. each) throughout the semester. You will be given questions two weeks in advance. Essays should explicitly draw on material covered in readings, lecture, films, and during class discussion.

Drafts for review due Mondays of Intersections/Implications Weeks – REQUIRED for the 1st essay you submit, optional for Essays 2-4.
Final versions are due at 2:30 on Fridays of Intersections/Implications Weeks (Sept 30th, Oct 21st, Nov 18th, & Dec 9th).

Late Thematic Essays will not be accepted.

Research Papers: UHS & GS will choose one of the 4 themes and identify and write a research paper addressing a topic of their choosing on identity. Students are encouraged to focus at least a portion of their paper on the following questions: how have people mobilized around their identity (to address inequality or create solidarity) and what has been the result? Research papers may be based on student’s own fieldwork, an analysis of original material gathered from popular media, or library research (see handout “choosing a research topic” for more information).

Project submissions include:
- Statement of research topic, methods for research (primary data collection in addition to secondary, or secondary sources only): approximately 1-paragraph and include a thesis statement – October 5th
- Revised statement (*only if requested from the instructor) – October 12th
- Annotated Bibliography – October 26th
- Detailed Outline – November 9th
- 10-12 minute presentation to class - December 14th
- 12-15 page double-spaced paper (12 point font, 1 inch margins) - Due: 12/14

Grading

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