

Race, Gender and Class 207
COURSE DESCRIPTION AND SYLLABUS
Winter Quarter 2010

	<i>Instructor</i>	<i>Class Meeting/Times</i>
	Ethan Johnson Office Hours: 12:30-1:30 Thursdays 321 NH 503-725-5713 (office) ejohns@pdx.edu	Tuesday and Thursday 2:00-3:50PM CLY 203

Overview & Learning Objectives

In this course we will explore the concepts of race, gender and class from the perspective and experiences of people of African descent in the United States. I believe that in order to make sense of inequality we must first understand that there is rarely if ever a single reason that disparities in wealth and life expectations differ between racial and cultural groups; there are multiple and cumulative reasons. Through an examination of race, gender and class we can begin to see the many and varied factors contributing to inequality in our society. The objective of this course is to examine and reveal through the lives and experiences of people of African descent how race, gender and class intersect and shape our world and society. Key to this course will be defining specific terms and concepts the authors use in order to understand exclusion and marginalization.

Required Reading: Besides Gender, Race and Class: an Overview by Chancer and Watkins all readings will be available on WEBCT.

Foundations of the Course

1. Attendance, Participation and Engagement (40 points): This course is based on individual as well as group commitment and engagement throughout the semester. The learning in the class will largely take place through dialogue about reading materials, group projects, and class generated themes and experience. It is expected that each participant come prepared to every class meeting, listen actively and respectfully to the thoughts and opinions of class members, and enrich the class by contributing ideas and insights. This class is a dynamic and collective creation. Input in discussion and dialogue is critical to its success. **For every class you miss 1 point will be subtracted from your attendance participation points.** Excused absences due to sports/medical reasons are accepted. However, I must see a note from the doctor and/or schedule of games. *Participation, attendance and creating a mutually respectful environment are shared and mandatory responsibilities.*

2. Personal Accounts (30 points): We will end the class with a "Personal Accounts" writing assignment. This assignment is designed to help you and the class think about how race, class and/or gender has shaped your life. In this paper your job is to write about how your life experiences have been shaped by race, gender and/or class and critically interpret these experiences in a **five to six-page double space typed essay** (No less than 1250 and no more than 1500 words). Don't just describe your experiences, but critically interpret and analyze them as well using the assigned literature we have read and discussed in class. For this writing assignment, I ask that you discuss your *most empowering and most disempowering gendered, racial, and/or social class experiences*. These experiences can be work, family and/or school-related or they can draw upon other circumstances in your life. In addition, they may be separate events, connected events, or different sides of the same situation. More information about the format and content of this assignment will be given in class. **You will receive no credit/points if you do not turn in this assignment on time.**

Final Exam Schedule Winter 2010:

The following is the final exam schedule: Mon., March 15th 1015-1205.

4. Mid-Term Exam (15 points each): There will be two take-home mid-term exams for this course. The first is due on the Tuesday of the 5th week and the second on Tuesday of the 9th week. The Mid-term exams will each cover all the material that has been covered in the course up to the time of exam. The exam will be based on class discussions, movies and readings. **I will provide the exams the Thursday that precedes the day the exams are due. In fairness to other students that turn in there exams on the assigned day, I will only accept late exams if you can provide a doctors note or other valid proof for your absence.**

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Week 1 (January 4th-8th): Overview and Introductions, What is Race, Gender and Class?

Tuesday: Overview of course and introductions.

Thursday: Overview of course and ice breaker.

Week 2 (January 11th-15th): Gender Refined and Defined

Read chapters 1 and two in Gender, Race and Class by Chancer and Watkins pages 1-48.

Class Discussion

Thursday: Class discussion

Week 3 (January 18th – 22nd): Race and Class

Read chapters three and four in Gender, Race and Class by Chancer and Watkins pages 49-104.

Week 4 (January 25th – 29th): Housing Segregation

Read chapter five in *Gender, Race and Class* by Chancer and Watkins; “Racial Residential Segregation in Urban America” by Robert Aderlman and James Clark Gocker pages 404-423; and “Bleeding Albina A History of Community Disinvestment, 1940-2000” by Karen Gibson.

Thursday: viewing of movie *Local Color*.

Week 5 (February 1st - 5th): Incarceration, Employment and Affirmative Action

Read “Affirmative Action: “What We Know” by Harry Holzer and David Neumark pages 463-490 and “The Mark of a Criminal Record” by Devah pager pages 208-231.

Week 6 (February 8th – 12th): Colorblind Racism

Read “The Central Frames of Colorblind Racism” by Eduardo Bonilla Silva (2003) pages 25-52 and “Covert Racism in the United States and Globally” by Rodney Coates pages 169-187.

Week 7 (February 15th – 19th): Health

Read Race, “Socioeconomic Status and Health: The added effects of racism and discrimination” by David Williams, pages 173-188 and “When Racism Hurts, Literally” by Madeline Drexler at http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/07/15/how_racism_hurts___literally/.

Thursday: View movie “Unnatural Causes”.

Week 8 (February 22nd – 26th): Education

Read “Notes on Understanding Curriculum as a Racial Text” by William Pinar pages 60-70 and “The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Education Other People’s Children” by Lisa Delpit pages 21-47.

Week 9 (March 1st – 5th): Race and Sexuality in the Media

Read “The Next M. J. or the Next O. J.? Kobe Bryant, Race and the Absurdity of Colorblind Rhetoric” by David Leonard, pages 284-313 and *Get Your Freak On: Sex, Babies and Images of Black femininity* by Patricia Hill Collins, pages 119-148.

Thursday: View Movie “The Life and Times of Sara Baartman”

WEEK 10 (March 8th – 12th): Colorism

Read “Black and Brown Bodies Under the Knife” by Margaret Hunter pages 53-67 and “The Persistent Problem of Colorism: Skin Tone, Status and Inequality” by Margaret Hunter pages 237-254.

Grading: All work will be turned in during class periods. I will not provide grades over the phone

or the internet. It is your responsibility to be aware of your grade during the academic term and to make an appointment with the professor if you have any questions. I WILL NOT GIVE APPROXIMATIONS OF YOUR GRADES DURING CLASS TIME. If there are questions about the grade for this class, the student should make an appointment with the professor.

How to Calculate Your Grade

Attendance and Participation	40
Personal Accounts	30
Mid-Term Exam	<u>30</u>
	100

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	1-59
A-	90-93	B	84-86	C	74-76	D	64-66		
		B-	80-83	C-	70-73	D-	60-63		

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be offered at the professor's discretion.

Cell Phones and Computers

Cell phones and computers should be turned off and not used during class time. If cell phone use or computer use becomes disruptive you can be dismissed from the class according to the rules as stated in the Code of Student Conduct and Responsibility.

University Laws

**Portland State University supports equal educational opportunity for all regardless of sex, race, national origin, age, marital status, handicap, religion or sexual orientation¹.*

**The following constitutes conduct as proscribed by Portland State University for which a student or student organization or group is subject to disciplinary action: All forms of academic dishonesty, cheating, and fraud, including but not limited to: (a) plagiarism, (b) the buying and selling of course assignments and research papers, (c) performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons, (d) unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information and (e) falsification of research data².*

**Students with disabilities need to contact the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor will refer you to the following PSU offices for a referral indicating how we can best help you. It is important to obtain a referral in order to best accommodate your needs:*

- Learning disability screening and assessment at Counseling and Psychological Services;*
- Disability Resource Center. Academic accommodations in classroom (note-taking, interpreting).*

¹ For more information read the "Policy Statement on Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities of Students," <http://www.ess.pdx.edu/osa/osa_ahtm>.

² In "Code of Student Conduct and Responsibility," <http://www.ess.pdx.edu/osa/osa_b.htm>.

*Other accommodations as indicated through testing results. Disability Resource Center, SMSU
435, 503-725-4150.*

*--Call or stop by Counseling & Psychological Services for more information, M343 SMC, 503-725-
4423³*

³ For more information please contact the *Disability Office Center*,
<http://caps.pdx.edu/learning_disabilities.htm#Services>.