

**RACE, GENDER AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**WGS 2250-80**  
**WINTER 2015**

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### **Course Description**

This course analyzes multiple forms of social oppression and inequality based on race (and color), sex (and gender), sexual orientation (and identity), and class in the United States. It will examine systemic aspects of social oppression in different periods and contexts and the ways that systems of social oppression manifest themselves on individual, cultural, institutional and/or global levels thus becoming self-perpetuating but not wholly unaltered structures. Individual and group agency, strategies of resistance, and visions for change will also be studied.

### **Required Text**

Adams, Maurianne, Warren Blumenfeld, Carmelita (Rosie) Castañeda, Heather Hackman, Madeline L. Peters, and Ximena Zúñiga (Eds.). 2013. *Readings in Diversity and Social Justice*. Third Edition. New York: Routledge.

Additional reading material will be posted on Bb.

### **Course Objectives**

- To develop an understanding of the concept of diversity as it relates to notions of justice, oppression, tolerance, inequality, and difference.
- To explain the differences between individual prejudices and institutionalized systems of social oppression.
- To critically examine theoretical explanations for the development and perpetuation of systems of social oppression.
- To discern commonalities and differences in the development of various systemic aspects of oppression and inequality.
- To prepare students for effective citizenship in a diverse society and world.
- To develop an understanding of individual agency and collective action in envisioning and creating a just, fair, and healthy society.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

### University Core Curriculum Diversity and Justice (Area 4) SLOs:

After completing this course students will be able to:

- Distinguish issues of diversity (recognition of diversity) from those of equality as elements of a fair, just, and healthy society.
- Identify historical and/or contemporary dynamics of group inclusion/exclusion as they relate to inequality and discrimination across diverse cultures and regions
- Employ concepts such as justice, oppression, tolerance, inequality, and difference.
- Identify systems of oppression at local, national, regional and global levels
- Identify problem-solving strategies in the areas of diversity and justice.

### WGS 2250 SLOS:

Students will be able to:

- Effectively express in class discussion and in writing an understanding of how diversity relates to structures of inequality.
- Explain the difference between individual prejudices and systems of social oppression in essays, exams, and/or class discussions.
- Demonstrate in writing knowledge of the historical development and practices of various forms of social oppression.
- Think critically as demonstrated by effective use of the conceptual frameworks used to analyze diversity and multiculturalism, inequality, and justice in exams and/or research papers.
- Integrate knowledge and ideas by demonstrating an understanding of the multiple and intersecting ways that inequality based on social oppression manifest themselves in everyday practices in exams and/or research papers.
- Discuss individual agency and collective strategies of resistance in class discussions, exams, or research papers.

## **Course Requirements and Grading Policy**

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments and percentages:

### **Reading Summaries (40% of overall grade)**

Every four days you must submit a summary of the assigned readings. A summary restates the author's main point, purpose, intent, and supporting details in your own words. Make sure you state the author's name and the title of the article in the first sentence. This summary should include one question for further inquiry into the topic assigned. Please pose a question that can possibly be answered, not a rhetorical question or one that would require several books to answer such as "How can we stop racism?" Formulating this question will help you think critically about issues of race, gender, sexuality and class as they affect society today.

There will be four of these responses, which must be submitted through Blackboard no later than 11PM on the following days: December 26, December 30, January 4, and January 8. When submitting these responses, please label your document with your first initial and last name, and paper number. Example: E Sabogal Summary 1. Make sure you save your summaries in Rich Text Format (RTF). Instructions on how to complete your summaries are posted on the “Assignments - Instructions” section of Blackboard.

Please note that if your summary is not submitted on time, the “Assignment – Submit” section of Blackboard will close and you will not be able to submit your assignment. I will not accept late papers or papers sent to me via email. NO EXCEPTIONS.

### **Discussion Boards (40% of overall grade)**

There will be two discussion board assignments:

#### **1) FORUMS (20%)**

You are required to post an answer to the discussion question that I will post by 6PM on the following days: December 26, December 29, January 3 and January 7. The questions will come from the readings due the next day.

After you have posted a response to my original question, you must then respond thoughtfully to at least one of the answers posted by a fellow student. You must post your first and second responses no later than December 28 (FORUM 1), December 31 (FORUM 2), January 5 (FORUM 3), and January 9 (FORUM 4) by 11PM.

Responses must be well thought out. Don't submit work that is rushed or in an “instant message” or “chat room” format. For more information, see the instruction sheet of online discussion assignment in the “Assignments - Instructions” section of the Blackboard site.

#### **2) Responses to links and videos posted about the four main topics discussed in this class: Racism, Classism, Sexism, and Heterosexism (20%)**

Please make sure that your computer has streaming capabilities. In order to watch a streaming video you must have Windows Media Player. You are also required to watch videos, go to websites and/or take quizzes.

These materials are posted in the “Course Material” section of Blackboard. You will need to post your reactions to four assignments by 11PM on the following days: December 29 (RACISM response), January 2 (CLASSISM response), January 6 (SEXISM response), and January 10 (HETEROSEXISM response). Instructions for responses to links and videos are posted in the “Assignments - Instructions” section of Blackboard.

Please note that you must keep up with the stipulated deadlines. Your responses to the online discussions must be submitted on time. No exceptions.

### **Reviews of Films (20% of overall grade)**

As part of the course you will also be required to watch two movies and write a short review of each. These movies are available through the WPU library, and through most public libraries. They are also available through Netflix.

The instructions and format for viewing and responding to the films are posted on Blackboard. The first film review will be due on January 3 and the second film review will be due on January 11 by 11PM.

**Please note that you must keep up with the stipulated deadlines. If assignment is not submitted on time, discussion boards will close and you will not be able to submit your assignment. I will not accept late work. No exceptions.**

### **Grading Scale and Criteria:**

A = 94 – 100	A- = 90 – 93	B+ = 87 – 89
B = 84 – 86	B- = 80 – 83	C+ = 77 – 79
C = 74 – 76	C- = 70 – 73	D+ = 65 – 69
D = 60 – 64	F = below 60	

A: Unusually outstanding performance in all areas of the class

B: Exceeds description of assignments

C: Satisfactorily meets assignments and overall class performance

D: Work submitted and class performance fall below class description and expectations

F: Incomplete or unacceptable work and class performance.

### **WPUNJ Student Email and Blackboard:**

The class will communicate through the university email account. All students are to check this account daily.

To access WPUNJ Student Email point your web browser to <http://wpconnect.wpunj.edu>, enter your username and password, then select the **Mail** tab. If you are logging on for the first time you'll be asked to set your time zone and language.

Blackboard courses will use student email; third-party email addresses will not work on Bb.

### **How to Access Blackboard:**

To log on to Bb point your web browser to <http://bb.wpunj.edu> and click the Login button in the upper left. Then enter your username and password in the spaces provided and click login again -- you'll find your course Bb sites listed on the right.

Some things to be aware of as you work with Blackboard:

1. You probably won't find all your courses listed; the only ones that will appear are those that have been activated by the professor teaching the course. Professors who don't use Blackboard will not activate their courses.
2. Your username is comprised of your lastname and firstinitial, usually appended with a numeral. If you don't know your WPUNJ system username password you can use the Username lookup link at <http://bb.wpunj.edu> , or go to it directly at: <http://www.wpunj.edu/username>

3. If you are already logged in to the WPUNJ system through WPCConnect you won't have to re-enter your username and password -- just click the first login button.
4. Blackboard documentation can be found in two places: at Bb Home, <http://bb.wpunj.edu>, before one logs in, and in the Blackboard Support tab after one has logged on.
5. You can always obtain help with any technology-related issue, including Blackboard, by filing a ticket with the Web Help Desk. Your ticket will be shunted to the appropriate tech who will respond as quickly as possible: <https://www.wpunj.edu/helpdesk/>

## **Policies and Procedures**

I expect that every member of the class will respect the views, opinions and beliefs of the other members. We may not always agree, but we must always respect the right of others to differ in their thoughts. It is possible, that in a class of this nature, the discussion may at times go to areas where people would want their privacy of disclosed information respected. I would hope that this is something that we can all adhere to and keep issues of a confidential manner between ourselves as a class.

### Exam Policy

**NO** late examinations will be given unless you have an emergency, which must be supported by written documentation.

### Submission of Required Work

Students are expected to complete assigned readings and assignments on time. Late assignments will not be accepted. No exceptions.

### Student Conduct & Plagiarism

You are **required to read** the “Academic Integrity Policy” in the Student Handbook or the most recent Undergraduate Catalog.

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will include, but not be limited to the following examples:

1. Cheating during examinations includes any attempt to (1) look at another student's examination with the intention of using another's answers for attempted personal benefit; (2) communicate in any manner, information concerning the content of the examination during the testing period or after the examination to someone who has not yet taken the examination; (3) use any materials, such as notebooks, notes, textbooks or other sources, not specifically designated by the professor of the course for student use during the examination period or (4) engage in any other activity for the purpose of seeking aid not authorized by the professor.
2. Plagiarism is the copying from a book, article, notebook, video or other source, material whether published or unpublished, without proper credit through the use of quotation marks, footnotes and other customary means of identifying sources, or passing off as one's own, the ideas, words, writings, programs and experiments of another, whether or not such actions are intentional or unintentional. Plagiarism also includes

submitting, without the consent of the professor, an assignment already tendered for academic credit in another course.

**The penalty for plagiarism is a grade of F for the course.**

Academic Support Services:

Students can receive free tutoring in most general education subjects and participate in study skills workshops through the Academic Support Center (973-720-3324) located in Hunziker Wing 218.

Students can also receive help in analytical writing, preparing research papers, and developing work-processing skills by contacting the Writing Center (973-720-2633) located in the Atrium.

**Important:** Please remember: if you are having difficulties, talking with me is the best way to resolve them. I can't help you if I don't know what is going on.