

## DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE ETHNIC STUDIES

CES 220.1  
Introduction to Multicultural Literature  
119  
Fall 2007  
Place: Todd 411  
Day/Time: TTH: 2:50-4:05

Instructor: Rory Ong  
Office Room #: Wilson  
  
Office Phone #: 5-7089  
Office Hours: W: 1-3 pm  
or by appointment  
Email: [rjong@mail.wsu.edu](mailto:rjong@mail.wsu.edu)

### Course Description and Goals:

W.E.B. DuBois' notion of "double consciousness" is often used to describe the lived realities of "racialized" immigrants in the U.S. Many have interpreted DuBois as referring to individuals who have a dual ethnic and national identity, but who are wrongfully lumped into a single racial category by others. However, DuBois also referred to double consciousness as the ability to see oneself through the oppressor's eyes, as the oppressor imagined the oppressed. Double consciousness is therefore not just about living in two, perhaps even three or four, distinct worlds but is also about the contradictions, complicities, and struggles that ensue from experiencing life from a multi-situated condition.

Introduction to Multicultural Literature will explore the multiple, yet complex and often contradictory, experiences, competing consciousnesses and representations of racialized communities through American writers of fiction. We will be reading novels and short fiction by American Indian, African American, Korean American, Latino, and South Asian writers. Their narratives will provide insight not only into the conflicts experienced by marginalized communities and individuals, but will also highlight the existence of oppressive conditions that often produce such marginalization. Within such contexts we will be examining themes as migration, nation, citizenship, social and cultural identity, family, memory, gender, and various processes of racialization.

### Required Texts:

Leslie Marmon Silko. Ceremony. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.  
Toni Morrison. The Bluest Eye. New York: Plume Books, 1994.  
Nora Okja Keller. Comfort Woman. New York: Penguin Books, 1998.  
Sandra Cisneros. House on Mango Street. New York: Vintage, 1991.  
Interpreter of Maladies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.  
Supplemental Readings available at Cougar Copies.

### Course Requirements:

#### In-Class Responses

You will be asked to periodically respond to questions concerning the readings and/or other class material (films, discussions, etc). These will only take up 5-10 minutes of our class time. These are considered "participatory" assignments to gauge the extent to which you come to class prepared (i.e. having read the reading before hand) and how well you are paying attention to discussion and generally comprehending the material. In-class (sometimes take-home) writing assignments will count 15% toward the total grade.

#### Chapter Discussion/Presentation and Paper

You are required to sign up to discuss and write on one of the class readings to help the class to engage in that day's reading assignment. Like the in-class responses, the chapter discussion/presentation and paper is considered a participation assignment. This will involve writing a short review of the reading(s) (2-3 pages long, typed and double-spaced), as well as discuss your findings **briefly** to the class (5-10 minutes) highlighting 2 or 3 key points

of your review. There will be one or two of your classmates who will present along side of you, so I encourage you to meet and collaborate on topics, themes, so that there is breadth and depth in the presentations (rather than duplication). The review/summary must thoughtfully engage and discuss the assigned readings. The written account of the presentation is due the day of the reading in class. The discussant/presentation and paper will count as 25% of the total grade.

#### Midterm and Final Exams

There will be two exams—a midterm and a final. Both the mid-term and the final will be take home exams. Students will complete them in the form of a short paper (5-6 pages, typed and double-spaced). Students will choose from a set of questions that the instructor will handout on issues or themes covered in the readings. You will have 1 week in which to complete the exams. The Midterm will cover the first set of readings for the semester, the final will cover the second set of readings for the semester. Both exams count as 30% each.

#### **Policies:**

##### Grading

Grades will be averaged in the following proportions:

In-Class Responses	15%
Chapter Discussion/Presentation and Paper	25%
Take Home Essay Exam #1	30%
Take Home Essay Exam #2	30%

##### Grading Scale

100-98=A+ it reflects the	Suggests that student's work is outstanding to excellent;
97-93=A critical insight	content and focus of the course and shows thoughtful and
92-90=A- and articulated.	into the complexities of the material. Always well written
89-87=B+ reflects a very strong	Suggests the student's work is very good to good; it
86-83=B doesn't go the	and solid understanding of the material. Occasionally
82-80=B- articulated.	extra step in critical analysis. Always well written and
79-77=C+ grasp of the	Suggests the student's work is adequate; it reflects a fair
76-73=C lack of	material but doesn't go very far in analysis or reflects a
72-70=C- comprehension of the issues represented in the literature.	
69-63=D	Suggests the students work shows a fundamental effort, but does not comprehend the material or reveals a lack of reading the course materials.

##### Attendance

In accordance with the Student Handbook, attendance in this class is mandatory. If you know in advance that you will have to miss class for a legitimate reason, contact me to see whether arrangements can be made to make up any work that will be missed. If you have not finished an assignment for a given class period, attend class anyway to avoid missing further assignments and in-class work/discussions. Only institutional excuses will

**accepted. If you have more than four (4) unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered one point for every absence thereafter.**

#### Extra Credit

There may be many opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. I will announce those opportunities as they come up. Extra Credit assignments must relate to the course content of CES 220. Extra Credit should be in the form of a short 1-2 page review of the event, lecture, or film attended--typed and double-spaced. To receive the possible full credit, students not only review but must also discuss how the event, film, or lecture compliments the content of this course. Students are allowed to turn in 2 Extra Credit assignments only. Each Extra Credit may count as much as 2.5 pts toward the student's overall final grade (for a total of 5 extra credit points).

#### Disability Accommodations

The Department of Comparative Ethnic Studies supports members of our community who request disability accommodations. Please notify me during the first two (2) weeks of class for any requirements needed for the course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Admin Annex Bldg, Room 205). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

#### Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and fraud, is prohibited. The proper use of primary or secondary research sources and without proper citation or

acknowledgment, or copying and claiming someone else's work as your own, is illegal and is not acceptable in this or any other class at WSU. Whether intentional or unintentional, academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the assignment in question, or a grade of "F" for the entire course. Should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty, we will discuss the situation with you before penalties are enforced.

#### Classroom Etiquette

**Out of respect for your classmates and the instructor, all cell phones must be turned off. iPods and any other devices for listening to music, podcasts, radio, or text messaging are also prohibited in class. Unless you have a documented disability, no earphones are allowed in class. Any use of these items during class will automatically result in a loss of 5 points from the student's final grade.**

**Syllabus:** (Subject to Change)

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| Tuesday, August 21:  | Handout and Review Syllabus. Introduction to the Course. Handout reading "Introduction to Multicultural Conditions" by David Theo Goldberg. |
| Thursday, August 23: | Discuss the article "Introduction to Multicultural Conditions" by David Theo Goldberg (handout).  |
| Tuesday, August 28:  | Discuss the article "Introduction to Multicultural Conditions" by David Theo Goldberg (handout).  |
| Thursday, August 30: | Also, discuss the Afterword to <i>The Bluest Eye</i> . Video Clip from <i>A Question of Color</i> .   |

- Tuesday, September 4: Discuss the "Preamble" and "Autumn" in *The Bluest Eye*.
- Thursday, September 6: Discuss "Winter" *The Bluest Eye*, by Toni Morrison.
- Tuesday, September 11: Discuss "Spring" and "Summer" *The Bluest Eye*, by Toni Morrison.
- Thursday, September 13: Film: *Illusions*, by Julie Dash.
- Tuesday, September 18: Discuss "First Nations in the U.S.A" by Franke Wilmer (Supplemental Reading available at Cougar Copies).
- Thursday, September 20: Discuss pp. 1-63, in *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko.
- Tuesday, September 25: Discuss pp. 64-139, in *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko.
- Thursday, September 27: Discuss pp. 139-201, in *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko.
- Tuesday, October 2: Discuss pp. 201-262, in *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko.
- Thursday, October 4: **Midterm/Take-Home Essay #1 due.**
- Tuesday, October 9: Documentary: *Silence Is Broken*.
- Thursday, October 11: Discuss Chapters 1-5, in *Comfort Woman* by Nora Okja Keller
- Tuesday, October 16: Discuss Chapters 6-11, in *Comfort Woman* by Nora Okja Keller.
- Thursday, October 18: Discuss Chapters 12-15, in *Comfort Woman* by Nora Okja Keller.
- Tuesday, October 23: Discuss Chapters 16-18, in *Comfort Woman* by Nora Okja Keller.
- Thursday, October 25: Discuss the article "Entering the House on Mango Street" by Julian Olivares (Supplemental Reading available at Cougar Copies).
- Tuesday, October 30: Discuss pp. 3-38, in *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.
- Thursday, November 1: Discuss pp. 39-87, in *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.
- Tuesday, November 6: Discuss 88-110, in *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.
- Thursday, November 8: Documentary: *I'm British But . . .*
- Tuesday, November 13: Discuss "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine" in *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.
- Thursday, November 15: Discuss "Interpreter of Maladies" in *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.

Mon-Fri, November 19-23: **Thanksgiving Holiday Break.**

Tuesday, November 27: Discuss "A Temporary Matter" and "Sexy" in *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.

Thursday, November 29: Discuss "Mrs. Sen's" and "The Third and Final Continent" in *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.

Tuesday, December 4: Film: *The Namesake*.

Thursday, December 6: Film: *The Namesake*.

Monday, December 10: **Final Exam Due by 5:00pm in Wilson 119.**