

**CES 101.03**  
**Introduction to Comparative Ethnic Studies**  
**3: DIVR; I**  
**Fall 2017**  
**CUE 114**  
**T/Th 1:25 - 2:40**

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**office hours:**  
**W 2:15 - 4:15**  
**and by appointment**

**Course texts**

Tanya Maria Golash-Boza, *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*. New York: Oxford UP, 2014. \$89.95.

Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Minneapolis: Graywolf, 2014. \$20.

We will also read and view various handouts, films, and Web sites, and we will follow current events. You are responsible for keeping up with these as they pertain to assignments.

**Course objective and outcomes**

In fifteen weeks we can only be introduced to the many stories of racially marginalized peoples in the United States. Who are these peoples? How do they differ from and resemble each other? How do they differ from and resemble Euro-Americans? How have differences and similarities changed? And what further changes might we expect in our future? We will examine stories of immigration, enslavement, removal, and exclusion—ways in which, for example, exclusion has manifested, and continues to manifest, as denial of equal educational opportunities to young people of color. But this is not a course in suffering and whining. Nor is it a course in “political correctness.” This course does not exist to claim that all white people are racists, or even that any individual white is racist. Our focus is on institutional policy and practice.

Even today most U.S. schools teach a narrowly Western, northern European, white curriculum. Texas and Arizona schools are only extreme examples, where the histories of the marginalized have been effectively banished so that white heritage alone will be privileged. Elsewhere, however, “diversity” in the curriculum means only an “add-on” devoted to, for example, indigenous cultures on Columbus Day and black culture in Black History Month: time and space set aside for “special” stories of slavery and Indian massacres, told emphatically in past tense to emphasize their pastness, implying that today “we” (i.e., white people) would never think to engage in such practices. And yet people of color are still systematically excluded from equal access to equally good education and healthcare. And our media are saturated with the perspectives of the dominant culture—white culture. Lest you doubt this, consider that “success” for people of color is confined to a range so narrow and predictable that it creates stereotypes: black basketball players and Asian American mathematicians are familiar, while black neurosurgeons and Asian American artists are not.

By the end of the semester, to do well in this course, you should have learned to contextualize historical and current events in U.S. racial narratives; and you should learn the perspectives of historically marginalized peoples.

## Course requirements

*Attendance:* Attendance is required. On most days I will distribute an attendance sign-up sheet. On randomly selected days—not announced in advance—I will ask you to respond to a simple Reading Question (see below) drawn from the reading assigned for that day. If you are absent, or if you arrive too late to hear the Reading Question, or if you failed to read the assigned text, then you will count as absent. Since we meet only twice weekly, you will be allowed no more than two unexcused absences, after which you will lose a half-letter for each additional absence.

*Participation:* You will be expected to participate. I may not get to know you all by name, and so let me know that you have participated so that you may receive credit. Participation takes many forms—aside from comments in class, there are letters to editors, posts on policy and civil-rights Web sites, membership in activist justice-seeking groups, even presentation of your research at conferences—but some form of it is required.

*Reading Question:* At the beginnings of several class meetings this semester, I will ask you a Reading Question, drawn from assignments due on that day. The question will be simple and direct, and if you have read the assigned text you will provide a correct answer. To get credit, write your name clearly at the top of your sheet of paper, and write your brief answer clearly. I will keep these during the semester.

*Presentations:* You will lead class in discussion of an assigned reading. These Text Presentations involve merely leading a discussion of an assigned text. Ask about authors' arguments and evidence. Offer your own observations—your ideas, not your opinions. You may use media or slides, but use these to illustrate your argument, not to replace it. Prepare to present for roughly ten to fifteen minutes—no fewer than ten, or your grade will be affected. (These instructions are subject to change if our class is large. I will then announce new instructions.)

*Midterm and Final Exam:* Both the midterm and final exam will be relatively short, asking a few objective questions and requiring two or three brief essays.

## Grades and assessment

Attendance and participation	20 percent (but see note on Attendance above)
Presentations	10 percent
Midterm	30 percent
Final Exam	40 percent

## Course policies and community standards

Ideally, each class meeting will be a lively, student-directed and student-centered discussion of our course material. Short of that ideal, you will still come to class prepared to discuss readings assigned for that day. I hope we will model a good community, driven by shared concerns and goals even when we disagree. To do well, please note the following guidelines:

1) For all reading assignments, be sure to read authors' explanatory footnotes and to scan their sources. *Bring the assigned reading to class.*

2) Extra credit opportunities exist. I will announce opportunities as they come to my attention. Generally, however, you are responsible for keeping up with events on campus and in the area and letting me and your classmates know about them in advance, so that you may write a one-page analysis of them for extra credit.

3) Do not read outside material in class, and turn off all media devices unless you can show that you are using them for note-taking. This is an issue of common courtesy.

4) I will be very disappointed if, at some time during the semester, you do not find extremely distasteful or disagreeable a comment made by me or a classmate. Argue—defend your position, demonstrating your knowledge of history. But do so respectfully. Name-calling is not educational. Neither is hate speech—which will not be tolerated.

5) The best way to show your respect is by listening. Cultivate good listening skills, if you have not done so already. And ask questions.

6) Consider others' views. Reflect on your own social location and your privileges.

7) Learn a historically informed definition of racism—Ruth Wilson Gilmore's definition at the end of this syllabus is a good place to start—and challenge all racist discourse.

8) Reflect your own grasp of history and social relations by respecting shy and quiet classmates, and by deferring to each other's experiences.

9) Finally, understand and consider the rage of people who are victims of systematic injustice. James Baldwin wrote that people of color have an obligation to feel and express rage over this nation's history of racism. If injustice does not fill you with rage, then you should ask yourself why.

*Note on language:* In our readings and discussions you may encounter words or phrases that will be, to some sensibilities, coarse or vulgar or racist. By themselves, no “mere” words are offensive. What makes a word vulgar or racist is its usage by a particular speaker in a particular context. Some whites complain that they are not allowed to say the “n” word without being labeled racist while black men use it among themselves all the time. Why does this complaint reflect a historical ignorance? When you see and hear such words, consider their context. Who speaks them? Why? And to whom?

**Academic integrity:** “Academic integrity is the cornerstone of higher education. As such, all members of the university community share responsibility for maintaining and promoting the principles of integrity in all activities, including academic integrity and honest scholarship. Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course. Students who violate WSU's Academic Integrity Policy (identified in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 504-26-010(3) and -404) will fail the course, will not have the option to withdraw from the course pending an appeal, and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration as defined in the Standards of Conduct for Students, WAC 504-26-010(3). You need to read and understand all of the definitions of cheating: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=504-26-10>. If you have any questions about what is and is not allowed in this course, you should ask course instructors before proceeding. If you wish to appeal a faculty member's decision relating to academic integrity, please use the form available at <conduct.wsu.edu>.”

**Students With Disabilities:** “Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center to schedule an appointment with an Access Adviser. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center or Disability Services. For more information contact a Disability Specialist on your home campus.” 509-335-3417, Washington Building 217; <http://accesscenter.wsu.edu/>, Access.Center@wsu.edu.

**Safety and Emergency Notification:** “Classroom and campus safety are of paramount importance at Washington State University, and are the shared responsibility of the entire campus population. WSU urges students to follow the “Alert, Assess, Act” protocol for all types of emergencies and the “Run, Hide, Fight” response for an active shooter incident. Remain ALERT (through direct observation or emergency notification), ASSESS your specific situation, and ACT in the most appropriate way to ensure your own safety (and the safety of others if you are able). Please sign up for emergency alerts on your account at MyWSU. For more information on this subject, campus safety, and related topics, please view the FBI’s Run, Hide, Fight video and visit the WSU safety portal.”

### **Schedule**

*Please note: Assignments are subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with changes. Texts are identified by their authors.*

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Aug 22: Course and community introductions.

Aug 24: Continue introductions. Come to class prepared to discuss a current news event. Video.

Aug 29: Golash-Boza, chapter 1: “The Origin of the Idea of Race.”

Aug 31: Golash-Boza, chapter 2: “Race and Citizenship,” pp 35-50.

Sept 5: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 2.

Sept 7: Golash-Boza, chapter 3: “Racial Ideologies from the 1920s to the Present,” pp 63-84.

Sept 12: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 3.

Sept 14: Golash-Boza, chapter 4: “The Spread of Ideology: ‘Controlling Images’ and Racism in the Media,” pp 93-107.

Sept 19: Golash-Boza, chapter 6: “White Privilege and the Changing U.S. Racial Hierarchy.”

Sept 21: Continue to discuss chapter 6.

Sept 26: Golash-Boza, chapter 7: “Understanding Racial Inequality Today.”

Sept 28: Continue to discuss chapter 7.

Oct 3: Golash-Boza, chapter 8: “Educational Inequality,” pp 205-220.

Oct 5: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 8.

Oct 10: Rankine, pp 5-55.

Oct 12: Rankine, pp 56-135.

Oct 17: Rankine, finish book.

Oct 19: Golash-Boza, chapter 9: “Income and Labor Market Inequality,” pp 235-250.

Oct 24: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 9.

Oct 26: Golash-Boza, chapter 10: “Inequality in Housing and Wealth,” pp 267-278.

Oct 31: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 10.

Nov 2: Golash-Boza, chapter 11: “Racism and the Criminal Justice System,” pp 293-308.

Nov 7: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 11.

Nov 9: Golash-Boza, chapter 12: “Health Inequalities, Environmental Racism, and Environmental Justice,” pp 325-341.

Nov 14: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 12.

Nov 16: Golash-Boza, chapter 13: “Racism, Nativism, and Immigration Policy,” pp 355-373.

Nov 21 and 23: NO CLASS.

Nov 28: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 13.

Nov 30: Golash-Boza, chapter 14: “Racial Justice in the United States Today,” pp 389-400.

Dec 5: Golash-Boza, finish chapter 14.

Dec 7: Final notes.

Dec 15: Final examination, 1:00 to 3:00.

### **A useful definition of racism**

Racism, specifically, is the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005. 28.

### **Some keywords**

Marginalization	Institutional racism/personal prejudice
Racialization	Dominant narrative
Uneven development	Underdevelopment
Neoliberalism	Social Darwinism
Top-down/bottom-up history	Resistance
Multiculturalism	Diversity
Freedom and rights discourse	Social justice discourse
Environmental racism	Colorblind racism
Divide-and-conquer	Difference
Culturalism	Colonization
Identity politics	Scientific racism
White privilege	