

SOC 232 — Diversity in the U.S. Population      Prof. Ivy George  
 SP 2014      Frost 323, ext. 4408  
 T R 9:45-11:20      Office Hours: MW 11.25-12.15 pm, T,R 1.15-2.50pm  
 FWLR/MAC/ 212      e-mail: ivy.george@gordon.edu

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the significance and functions of social differences in human society. It examines the ways in which region, citizenship, race, religion, class, gender, physiology and sexuality have been socially constructed as “difference” in U.S. society. It has a three-tiered focus. First, it introduces the student to the experience of “difference” through autobiographical narrative. Second, it examines the concept of diversity from multiple social scientific perspectives. Third, it exposes the student to contemporary debates on immigration, minority rights, religion, bilingual education, identity politics, school desegregation, law enforcement, terrorism, media, etc. We will conclude by looking at legislations, social policies, social movements relating to social diversity and examine how these move us along as a democracy.

## **PLAN OF STUDY**

This semester demands extensive reading and requires critical engagement with the literature and a readiness to react to the readings in class. Curiosity and a commitment to the subject will enrich the experience of the course. Regular attendance is expected.

## **TEXTS**

*Racism*, Albert Memmi

*Race, Class and Gender in the US*, Paula Rothenberg, Ninth edition, 2014 (Worth Publishers)

Links to articles from the Boston Globe and the New York Times will be sent out regularly.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Class discussion (10%):** Students will be evaluated for their class participation. The grade will be given at the end of the semester. Students who speak in class regularly and thoughtfully, and who demonstrate that they read the assigned readings will receive a high grade. Students who rarely speak in class, who are inattentive, or do not appear to have read the assigned readings will receive a low grade. Regular attendance is assumed.

## **Journals (30%):**

These journals are effectively responses to readings in Paula Rothenberg’s “Race, Class, and Gender in the US.” Each journal entry **should be 6 pages long, double spaced and typed. Try to print on both sides of the paper to conserve use of paper. You will submit 6 journals and each submission is worth 5 points.**

In journals #1-6 you will select three essays from Rothenberg’s parts 1, 2, 3-4, 5, 6-7, and 8-9.

**In addition to the attached essay writing guidelines, see pointers for effective journal writing below.**

1. Use proper grammar, syntax, and diction.

a. Subject-Pronoun agreement:

GOOD: This job gives a community freedom to do what it wants.

BAD: This job gives a community freedom to do what they want.

GOOD: When people are good, they do good things.

BAD: When a person is good, they do good things.

b. Affect-Effect: Know the proper ways to use *affect* as a noun and a verb, and know how to use *effect* as a noun and a verb.

c. Avoid Split Infinitives:

GOOD: He told them to walk slowly.

BAD: He told them to slowly walk.

d. Know Differences Between It's and Its:

*It's* is a contraction of it is.

Example: It's a nice day.

*Its* is a possessive pronoun.

Example: Its color is gray.

e. Avoid Neologisms:

Examples: nowadays, kinda, sorta, oftentimes, mega, truthiness

2. Do not use the following qualifiers in your writing: I think, I believe, I feel, in my opinion, I suppose, or any other phrase that qualifies a statement.

GOOD: The sky is blue.

BAD: I believe the sky is blue.

3. When you give your perspective or your experience as an example of a point you are making, ask yourself, "Can my perspective or experience be generalized to

the perspectives or experiences of large groups of other people? Or is my perspective or experience unique to me?" It is proper to write about your own experience, but be sure to tie that experience into the point that you are making that can be generalized to the experiences of other people.

4. Think sociologically. When you consider an issue take the issue away from the level merely of the personal or the individual to the level of the social, political, economic, religious, and cultural. **DO NOT GET STUCK IN THE PERSONAL.**

C. Wright Mills, the famous American sociologist, reminded us about the connection between private troubles and public issues. That connection is fundamental to this class.

5. Be sure your writing goes beyond the descriptive to the analytical. It is good to describe something you have read or something that was discussed in class. But be sure to move the description of issues to the level of analysis of those issues. That is, analyze what you have described by linking the description to analytical themes that have emerged in class and in your readings (or that you have encountered in other classes). Usually description considers *what* and *how*; whereas, analysis considers *why* and *to what end*.

Description: The sun gives off white light. (consider what the sun does)

Analysis: The sun's white light is the result of rays of the full color spectrum. (consider why the sun does what it does)

**Journal #1 due Feb 20, 2014 (Part 1)**

**Journal #2 due Mar 4, 2014 (Part 2)**

**Journal #3 due Mar 27, 2014 (Parts 3-4)**

**Journal #4 due April 10, 2014 (Part 5)**

**Journal #5 due April 24, 2014 (Part 6)**

**Journal #6 due May 6th, 2014 (Part 8-9)**

**While the above are the submission dates at the present time, there is every possibility that there will be shifts by a day or week due to the uncertainty of the extent to which we would have covered materials in class by the set dates. This will require some flexibility on your part as my goal is to cover the material thoroughly and take the time necessary to do it. I will of course do my best to stay close to the plan laid out in the syllabus.**

**I will adhere to the due dates. There will be no extensions. You will have more than plenty of time to plan for eventualities. If you are not able to turn in your journal on time you will lose the 5 points due for that journal. Work on the next submission!!**

**Mid Term Exam (March 3rd) - 30%**

**Final Exam – May 12<sup>th</sup> (9-11am) 30%.**

**More than 2 absences in class attendance will result in a 2-point drop in grade for each absence. Please take your final exam on the scheduled day and make your holiday plans accordingly.**

**Those who take the exam in class (non-ASC students) have to finish the exam in class and not complete it at the ASC for want of extra time (to be fair to your peers).**

**All course requirements have to be met in order to get a passing grade.**

**PLEASE DO NOT E-MAIL YOUR WORK TO ME. I need a hard copy and make sure you have a disc copy on hand in case of loss of the hard copy.**

### **CODES OF CONDUCT IN CLASS**

- 1. PLEASE DO NOT TURN OUT TO CLASS AS IF YOU ARE BOUND FOR THE SHORE, SPORTS EVENT OR A DINNER DANCE. REMEMBER YOU HAVE COME TO BE A MATURE THINKER SEEKING HIGHER THINGS.**
- 2. PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES ON ARRIVAL AND NO TEXTING IN CLASS.**
- 3. PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR MEALS TO CLASS. WATER IS PERMITTED.**
- 4. IT IS ASSUMED THAT YOU KNOW THE NECESSARY CUES ON NAPPING, CHATTING AND OTHER INAPPROPRIATE AND DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOURS.**
- 5. LAPTOPS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS.**
- 6. HABITUAL TARDINESS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

7. **WHILE WE WILL BE DISCUSSING SOCIETAL PATTERNS AND TRENDS NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY, WE WILL NOT USE GORDON COLLEGE TO APPLY ANY OF OUR SOCIAL ANALYSIS.**
8. **THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ADDRESS THE STUDENT IN THE EVENT THAT THE ABOVE CODES ARE VIOLATED.**

## PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS TEACHING AND LEARNING

I believe that at a very fundamental level, each of us houses the teacher and the learner in ourselves. Our lives along with the world we live in make up the center stage on which such activities take place. This being my conviction, it then follows that I the “teacher” am a learner and you the “student” are a teacher as well. It is important then that in the classroom we draw on our earlier learning and contribute to the learning of others around us. Male or female, please try not to use “I am quiet/shy/etc.” as an excuse not to participate in class. All of you have it in you.

I believe that non-participant “accumulation” of information is what renders most education programs either impotent or elitist. Neither outcome is acceptable for the Christian. Needless to say such participation by way of questions, answers or observations demands diligent preparation for class and regular attendance.

Another significant component of your educational endeavour is to be in possession of basic literacy (the capacity to read, write and process information). Exams and papers will test these capacities. While we live in a “talk” and “visual” culture, you need to be effective as thinkers and writers to round off your academic competencies. So please apply yourselves to your reading and writing assignments and seek help when necessary.

Learning and teaching in the pursuit of life, liberty and justice for all is a challenge and I invite you to pursue these with me. Have an enjoyable term!

## COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS

Gordon College is committed to assisting students with documented disabilities (*See Academic Catalog Appendix C for documentation guidelines*). A student with a disability who may need academic accommodations should follow this procedure:

1. Meet with a staff person from the Academic Support Center (Jenks 412, X4746) to:
  - a) Make sure documentation of your disability is on file in the ASC,
  - b) Discuss the accommodations you are eligible for,
  - c) Discuss the procedures for obtaining the accommodations, and
  - d) Obtain a **Faculty Notifications Form**.

2. Deliver a Faculty Notification Form to each course professor *within the first full week of the semester*; at that time make an appointment to discuss your needs with each professor.

Failure to register in time with your professor may compromise our ability to provide the Accommodations. Questions of disputes about accommodations should be immediately referred to the Academic Support Center. See **Grievance Procedures** available from the ASC.

### Guidelines for a Clear and Well Constructed Essay

1. An essay should have a clear statement of your theses. Your thesis is whatever you are arguing in the body of the essay. For example, you may wish to argue that the idea you are examining contains important implications that are not drawn out by the author and that give additional weight to the significance of the idea. Or, oversights or other defects in the way the idea is delineated and that these require a reconceptualization of the idea in a manner you specify in the essay. Or, your thesis may be an insight of your own to which your careful consideration of the subject matter has led you.
2. The opening paragraph should contain the clear statement of the thesis and an indication of the plan or progression of the essay as a whole. This enables the reader to see how you move from your initial thesis to your conclusion.
3. Each paragraph thereafter should begin with a topic sentence, i.e., a sentence that states the controlling idea of the paragraph.
4. The order of the paragraph should conform to the plan of the essay set out in the introductory paragraph.
5. The essay should conclude with a paragraph that summarizes the argument of the essay as a whole.
6. You should quote only when it is necessary and when the quotation advances your argument or confirms your interpretation of the material. Avoid long quotations. Quotations containing more than three lines should be indented and single-spaced.
7. Provide references for every quotation and direct paraphrase.
8. Use the active voice except where it would sound awkward.
9. Make your sentence construction as straightforward as possible.
10. Number your pages.

11. Use #12 for print size.
12. Check your spelling.
13. Use gender inclusive language where appropriate and necessary.
14. Read essay aloud, if possible to another person, before making the final draft.
15. Provide a bibliography with complete bibliographic information.

**\*\* I HAVE NOT OUTLINED IN DETAIL WHAT THE DESIGNATED WEEKLY CLASS READINGS ARE BECAUSE WE WILL HAVE TO BE FLEXIBLE IN TERMS OF THE MATERIAL COVERED EVERY WEEK. HENCE I WILL ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING WEEK'S READING AT THE END OF EVERY WEEK.**

**ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE WILL HAVE TO BE MET FOR A PASSING GRADE**