

**WEST 1010 – Introduction to
Social Justice Studies
Spring, 2020
Thursdays, 1:40-4:20pm**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2-4pm
and by appointment

Location: Columbine 322

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will:

- Identify race, class, gender and sexuality as social constructs
- Understand how these identities intersect to form systems of privilege and oppression in individual, interpersonal and institutional levels and how these systems of power have been reproduced and sustained over time
- See how communities have responded to and resisted these systems of power
- Think critically about the relationships between race, class, gender, and sexuality
- Develop a knowledge base about systemic privilege and oppression in the United States
- Examine ideological theories, practices, and organizations that engage with social justice discourses
- Improve their ability to synthesize and critically evaluate complex theoretical arguments
- Develop critical reading, writing, and thinking skills

COURSE DESCRIPTION

WEST 1010 is a survey course that introduces students to the growing interdisciplinary field of race and gender studies. We will explore the meaning of the basic concepts in the fields of Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies, and examine contemporary inequality, primarily in the United States. Race and gender intertwine in their workings; we will thus examine the ways in which they intersect—along with other variables, including class and sexual orientation—to shape our lives, opportunities, and experiences. Through critical analysis, this course focuses on how systems of inequality are maintained and perpetuated, with an emphasis on the concept of social change.

This class is based upon the premise that oppression (in the form of racism, sexism, and homophobia, etc.) and privilege exist. We all experience varying degrees of privilege and oppression—a reality we will come to explore at length throughout the course. Because oppression and privilege are measurable social realities, it is not the professor's role to "prove" to students that these systems exist. We will accept, honor, and examine the experiences of oppression and privilege that occur in U.S. society. Moreover, difference—in and of itself—does not create inequality; rather, systems of

inequality create social and political differences, which perpetuate inequality based on intersecting social identity locations that include, but are not limited to race, sexuality, gender, and class. We will explore a variety of ways in which these systems of inequity function and impact the lives of people within and beyond the United States. We will consider key concepts and issues such as the historical, cultural, and sociological construction of social identity locations. We will examine the ways in which race and/or ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality inform our everyday lives at both the micro and macro levels. We will also discuss the creation of legislature and public policy regarding language, immigration, disability, and affirmative action. Finally, the course introduces and assists students in developing strategies for critically engaging manifestations of injustice wherever they may find it.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Technology & Classroom Behavior. Please refrain from behavior that is distracting or interferes with the learning of others, such as using electronics or talking over others. The bulk of our class time will be spent in large group discussion, which requires your active participation. To facilitate this, I strongly discourage the use of electronics (laptops, cellphones, tablets) in the classroom. Of course, there are many legit reasons why you might want to use technology – e.g. your textbook is only available to you on an ereader, you have a disability, you are a parent who needs to keep a cell phone on for a child emergency. Basically, use your common sense and be present for the duration of the class

Absences and Late Work. Absences for illness, or the serious illness or death of an immediate family member may be excused with the appropriate documentation, e.g. a doctor's note, or with my advance approval. Please talk to me as soon as practicably possible if you know that you will be missing a class. Late assignments will be accepted without deduction only on *sufficient prior* arrangement with me.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct. Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. All work for this course must be completed by the person submitting it for evaluation. Anyone found guilty of plagiarism, cheating, forgery, falsification, or other forms of academic dishonesty will fail the course.

If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification. You plagiarize, you fail. Seriously. When in doubt, just ask me. I am here to help! For useful information about plagiarism, see: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/definition.html>

UCCS expects all students to conduct themselves as honest, responsible and law-abiding members of the academic community and to respect the rights of other students, members of the faculty and staff and the public to use, enjoy and participate in the University programs and facilities. For additional information, see UCCS's Student Conduct Code at: <https://www.uccs.edu/dos/student-conduct>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, please register with Disability Services and provide them with documentation of your disability. They will work with you to determine what accommodations are

appropriate for your situation. To avoid any delay, you should contact Disability Services as soon as possible. They are located in Main Hall room 105; their phone number is 719-255-3354, and their email is dservice@uccs.edu

Student Educational Records. All records related to this course are confidential and will not be shared with anyone, including parents, without a signed, written release. If you wish to have information from your records shared with others, you must provide written request/authorization to the office/department. Before giving such authorization, you should understand the purpose of the release and to whom and for how long the information is authorized for release.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- (1) *The Matrix Reader: Examining the Dynamics of Oppression and Privilege*. Edited by Abby Ferber, Christina Jimenez, Andrea O'Reilly Herrera, and Dena R. Samuels. McGraw-Hill Education, 2013.
- (2) Allen Johnson's *Privilege, Power and Difference*. Allan Johnson. McGraw-Hill, 2017.
- (3) Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Graywolf Press, 2014.
- (4) Additional articles will be available on Canvas

*****Please note this is an intensive reading and writing class*****

EVALUATION CRITERIA and GRADES

Course Assignments

- 20% Attendance and Participation
- 20% Micro-Presentations
- 20% Critical Autobiography (3-4 pages)
- 20% A Look at Injustice Analysis Paper (8-10 pages)
- 20% Final Pecha Kucha

Attendance and Participation – 20% of Grade

We will be working together as a learning community; therefore, *attendance and informed participation are essential components of this course*. Students are expected to attend class on time and for the duration of the session. Everyone is afforded one absence without penalty throughout the academic term. Any absence after the first, regardless of rationale, will negatively impact your course participation grade. All absences are treated the same and do not allow for missed work to be made up without the expressed consent of the professor. Additionally, students are expected to enter on time and remain in class throughout the duration of the session. Late arrivals and early dismissals will result in half of the session's attendance/participation points to be deducted from the student's earned points for that day.

There is a difference between being physically "here" in class and being intellectually present. Students are expected to be present and engage with the proceedings of the course sessions, having prepared

for class by reading or reviewing all assigned materials prior to the dates for in-class discussion. In addition, students are expected to come to class with an open mind and a willingness to learn and contribute by posing questions, participating in discussions; actively listening to others; and being aware of current events related to the course subject matter.

Course participation grade will evaluate the following behaviors:

- attending class regularly and prepared by having read or reviewed all assigned materials prior to the date's in-class discussion
- attending class with an open mind and a willingness to learn
- contributing by posing questions, offering thoughtful comments and responses
- actively listening to others, soliciting and inviting critical and relevant feedback

Micro-Presentations – 20% of Grade

In groups of 3-4 people, each student enrolled in this course will present on one of the readings/topics according to the schedule determined by the sign-up sheet. This presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length and allows your group to demonstrate critical reading skills, fluency in academic discourse and public speaking. While contribution levels may vary depending on group dynamics, each member is required to contribute equitably during the in-class presentation.

There are three components to this assignment, which are weighted equally:

- (1) Each group must present a collectively written 2-page analysis of the reading. The analysis is *not a summary*, but an academic discussion regarding the major themes and/arguments raised by the text. This must be submitted electronically in advance by 8:00 am on your presentation date. The point is to articulate an understanding of the reading as it relates to social in/justice with a succinct articulation of the main arguments or themes with supporting evidence. *Only one collective and collaboratively written group essay is required.*
- (2) Each group must present a formal 20-minute presentation and activity that draws upon, but is not a reading of the analysis. Your written analysis may be a starting point for your verbal presentation, but should not be the sole content of it.

Additionally, multimedia must accompany each presentation. This is the lecture portion of your presentation. Five slides of text is a bare minimum requirement. Thus, if your lesson / activity / presentation contains 5 generic Prezi/PowerPoint slides of text, it will be graded at C- level. The more creative and interactive your group's activity/lesson/presentation is, then the higher the grade level. In creating your activity/lesson/presentation, you may also choose to include external audio/video; this should be limited to 3 minutes in length and extremely relevant to your presentation. Whatever your group chooses to do as an activity, it should be clear the relationship between what you have constructed and the assigned reading. Mere "discussion/questions" or mimicry of previous activities will negatively impact your group's grade.

- (3) Your presentation should conclude with questions to generate class discussion led by your group. The discussion period is *not included* in your required 20-minute lecture portion, but begins immediately after and may continue for however long makes sense. Hence, your group will want to raise engaging and open-ended questions that motivate your colleagues to dialogue with you.
- (4) After you finish giving your micro-presentation, I encourage each person in the group to email me (kdevries@uccs.edu) a brief summary of how much you contributed to the overall project. This email is not required but is helpful for me to assess group dynamics.

Critical Autobiography (3-4 pages) – 20% of Grade

As we embark upon this journey of discovering, discussing and examining how institutions of power are shaped in the United States of America through constructs of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, age ...etc., the hope is that we will become more aware of ourselves and how we are individually and collectively implicated in these systems of privilege and oppression. As we learn about ourselves, you will have the opportunity in this assignment to critically engage your own growing awareness and identity formation. This critical autobiography gives you the opportunity to utilize the scholarship we have encountered to reflect upon what is shaping your worldview, character, and identity. More information on the specifics of this assignment will be provided in class.

A Look at Injustice Analysis Paper (8-10 pages) – 20% of Grade

Throughout the semester, we will encounter numerous broad and specific instances of social injustice. These encounters will give you the tools to recognize contemporary instances of systemic injustice. For this assignment, you will write a research paper that critically examines a form of social injustice of your choosing. More information on the specifics of this assignment will be provided in class.

Final Pecha Kucha – 20% of Grade

Building on the research and knowledge you acquired in putting together your “Look at Injustice Analysis” paper, your final project for the course requires you to create and give a PechaKucha 20x20 presentation. A PechaKucha 20x20 is a simple presentation format where you show 20 images, each for 20 seconds. The images are set to advance automatically while you provide a narrative (i.e. you talk) to the audience to explain the images. More information on the specifics of this assignment will be provided in class.

Grading Scale

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

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK 1 COURSE OVERVIEW

**Thursday
January 23** Review syllabus and expectations.

WEEK 2 KEY CONCEPTS – CONSTRUCTED IDENTITIES

**Thursday
January 30** Intro and Chapters 1 & 2 of Allan Johnson's *Power Privilege and Difference* (40pp)
Abby Ferber's "Constructing Identities & Examining Intersections" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp7-15) (8pp)
Patricia Hill Collins' "Toward a New Vision: Race, Class and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 97-108) (12pp)
Judith Lorber's "The Social Construction of Gender" (Canvas) (6pp)

WEEK 3 SYSTEMIC PRIVILEGE, and RACE

**Thursday
February 6** Chapter 4 of Allan Johnson's *Power Privilege and Difference* (12pp)
Dena Samuels' "Understanding Oppression and Privilege" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 139-145) (14pp)
Marilyn Frye's "Oppression" (Canvas) (11pp)
Alison Bailey's "Privilege: Expanding on Marilyn Frye's 'Oppression'" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 165-174) (9pp)
McIntosh, Peggy. "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" (Canvas) (7pp)
Michael Omi & Howard Winant's "Racial Formation" in *The Matrix Reader* (p. 51) (5pp)

WEEK 4 HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

**Thursday
February 13** Chapters 5-7 of Allan Johnson's *Power Privilege and Difference* (30pp)
Batstone and Mendieta's "What Does it Mean to be an American?" (Canvas, 4pp)
Christina Jimenez's "How We Got Here: The Historical Context" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 191-197) (6pp)
Gregory Campbell's "Many Americas" (in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 198-219) (21pp)

Critical Autobiography Due to Canvas by 11:59pm on Monday, February 17th

WEEK 5 HISTORICAL CONTEXTS cont.

**Thursday
February 20**

Rauna Kuokkanen's "Globalization as Racialized, Sexualized Violence" (Canvas, 19pp)

Excerpts from *The White Man's Indian*. (Canvas, 34pp)

Dina Gilio-Whitaker's "Settler Fragility: Why Settler Privilege Is So Hard to Talk About" (short article, link on Canvas)

Elizabeth Martinez's "Seeing More than Black and White" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 134-138) (4pp)

Joy Harjo's "I Give You Back" in *The Matrix Reader* (p. 146) (1p)

WEEK 6 SYSTEMIC PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION, and GENDER/SEX/SEXUALITY

**Thursday
February 27**

Anne Fausto-Sterling's "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough" (Canvas) (4pp)

Anne Fausto-Sterling's "The Five Sexes, Revisited" (Canvas) (4pp)

Perry's "Doing Gender and Doing Gender Inappropriately" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 415-439) (24pp)

Katz's "Invention of Heterosexuality" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 36-43) (7pp)

Kimmel's "Masculinity as Homophobia" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 44-50) (6pp)

WEEK 7 SYSTEMIC PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION and DISABILITY

**Thursday
March 5**

AJ Withers' "Building Models and Constructing Disability" (Canvas) (11pp)

Eli Clare's "The Mountain" (Canvas) (12pp)

Susan Wendell's "Social Construction of Disability" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 93-96) (3pp)

Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli's "You're Not A Real Boy If You're Disabled" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 124-131) (7pp)

Listen to KPFA interview with Corbett Joan O'Toole about her book, *Fading Scars: My Queer Disability History* (Canvas) (30min)

WEEK 8 SYSTEMIC PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION, and CLASS

**Thursday
March 12** Chapter 3 of Allan Johnson's *Power Privilege and Difference* (12pp)
Allen's "Social Class Matters" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 61-75) (14pp)
Readings on Forced Relocations and Removals (9pp) (Canvas)
S. Metcalf's "Neoliberalism: The Idea That Swallowed the World" (long article) (Canvas)
Louis Menand's "Karl Marx, Yesterday, and Today" (long article) (Canvas)

WEEK 9 EXTRA TIME FOR RESEARCH & WRITING

**Thursday
March 19** No class. Work on your Look at Injustice papers.

Look at Injustice Paper Due to Canvas by 11:59pm on Friday, March 20th

WEEK 10 SPRING BREAK

**Thursday
March 26** No class this week. 😊😊😊😊😊

WEEK 11 SOCIAL JUSTICE and ART

**Thursday
April 2** Listen to OnBeing interview with Claudia Rankine (51min) (Canvas)
Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* (read the entire book)
Natalie Loveless's chapter, "Haraway's Dog" from *How to Make Art at the End of the World* (Canvas) (19 pp)

WEEK 12 SYSTEMIC PRIVILEGE, OPPRESSION, IMMIGRATION, and FOOD JUSTICE

**Thursday
April 9** Chapter 8 of Allan Johnson's *Power Privilege and Difference* (14pp)
William Robinson's "Aquí Estamos Y No Nos Vamos!: Global Capital and Immigrant Rights" (Canvas) (8pp)
Kari Marie Norgaard's "Denied Access to Traditional Foods"(Canvas) (10pp)
Gonzales's "Excerpts from the Chicano Movement" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 314-326) (12pp)

WEEK 13 TRADITIONS OF STRUGGLE and TRANSFORMATION

**Thursday
April 16** Chapter 9 and Epilogue of Allan Johnson's *Power Privilege and Difference* (33pp)
Audre Lorde's "The Transformation of Silence into Action" in *The Matrix Reader*
 (pp. 616-618) (2pp)
Leslie Feinberg's "We Are All Works in Progress" in *The Matrix Reader* (pp. 442-
 447) (5pp)
Excerpts from Angela Y. Davis's *Freedom is a Constant Struggle* (15pp) (Canvas)

WEEK 14 TRADITIONS OF STRUGGLE and TRANSFORMATION

**Thursday
April 23** Ursula Le Guin's "Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction" (6pp) (Canvas)
Rebecca Solnit's "How Change Happens" (web link on Canvas)
AnaLouise Keating's "Pedagogies of Invitation" (21pp) (Canvas)
Excerpts from Aurora Levins Morales' *Medicine Stories* (25pp) (Canvas)

WEEK 15 FINAL PRESENTATIONS

**Thursday
April 30** Final In-Class Presentations

WEEK 16 FINAL PRESENTATIONS

**Thursday
April 7** Final In-Class Presentations

FINALS WEEK

**Thursday
April 14** **The final for our class is scheduled for 12:40-2:40pm**
Final In-Class Presentations