HUMANITIES 2319: The Minority Experience in the U.S.

Houston Community College
SEC # 8571/CRN 18297/ West Loop Center Rm C244
Fall 2017 -Fridays 9:30-11:00am

Instructor | Office | Office Hours | Contact Info
--- | --- | --- | ---
Dr. Melinda Mejia | San Jac Bldg. Rm 215 HCC Central Campus 1301 Holman Houston, TX 77004 | Thurs 5:00pm-6:30pm (Central) Fri 11:30am-12:30pm (West Loop) | 713-718-6230 melinda.mejia@hccs.edu

Course Description: This interdisciplinary survey examines the historical, economic, social and cultural development of minorities in the U.S. Topics may include race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, and religion. Core curriculum course. 3 credits Prerequisite: ENGL1301 or higher.

Course Overview: In this course we will explore the minority experience in the U.S. as an object of academic study. The main text for the course is a sociology textbook; however, we will read additional texts from multiple disciplines (sociology, history, literature) and originating from different genres (poems, novels, essays, studies) as well as analyze film and art in relation to the course topic. The course will work through different types of minority groups including racial/ethnic minorities, women, the LGBT community, and the disabled. We will also examine the intersections between the experiences of these varied minority groups as well as the difficulty that arises when we try to articulate a collective “minority” experience. These explorations will be further complicated by the facts that one doesn’t always belong to only one minority group and that one’s belonging to a minority group is usually not voluntary. Furthermore, one of the chief concerns in this class will be to examine the highly charged concept of identity as it is affected by the categories in question: gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability/disability. All this will be done in an attempt to foster critical analysis of the concept of difference in our society and to develop a more nuanced and informed perspective on the life experiences (stress on the plural) of non-dominant groups in the United States.

Course Format/Hybrid Course: This is a hybrid course; that means you will be required to log in to EO2/CANVAS to complete some assignments and view lectures or other resources. Please make sure that you have access to the course online as soon as possible. Any technical problems that you experience on EO2/CANVAS should be directed to Eagle Online/Canvas Support department. The link for technical support including a chat option is http://www.hccs.edu/online/technical-support/Information.

Most of the Online Component of this course will consist of assignment submission links, supplemental information and activities, and some lectures. Not all lectures will be online; some class time will be reserved for lectures as well.

Core Objectives for Language, Philosophy, and Culture: This course is in the 2014 core area, “Language, Philosophy, Culture.” Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.
1. Critical Thinking: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication: to include effective written, oral, and visual communication
3. Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
4. Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to do the following.

1. Analyze the history, culture, and struggles for equality of American minority groups.
2. Articulate an informed personal response and critically analyze works by minorities in the arts and humanities.
3. Demonstrate awareness of multiple cultural perspectives representative of diverse minority groups.
4. Describe the impact of discrimination on the everyday life of minority groups in the context of social, political, and economic circumstances.
5. Analyze minority group interactions in the United States focusing on immigration and migration patterns, assimilation processes, and adjustments to American life.
6. Formulate an understanding of shifting societal perceptions and self-identifications of minority group identities.

**Required Texts:** The texts below are required for our course. They should be available for purchase at our bookstore. Hardcopy versions are recommended but digital copies are fine as long as the student holds him or herself accountable for any issues that may arise due to the difference in format (page numbers, etc).

*Race, Ethnicity, Gender, & Class* by Joseph Healey & Eileen O’Brien, ISBN # 978-1452275734
*Dutchman & The Slave* by LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), ISBN # 978-0688210847
*When Half is Whole* by Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, ISBN # 978-0804775182
*The Hungry Woman* by Cherrie Moraga, ISBN # 978-0970534408

Other readings will be provided or will be available online.

**A Note on Readings:** This course has what I consider a medium to heavy reading load. You will be expected to read anywhere from 40 to 100 pages a week especially since in a way we will be making up for in-class lecture time by reading on our own time instead of meeting in person in a classroom.

**Grade Breakdown:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Quizzes and Exercises</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam # 1:</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam # 2:</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project/Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper with Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Grade</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explication of Grade Breakdown Categories:

**Online Quizzes and Exercises:** As you know, this class has an online component. A large part of the online component will be quizzes and exercises. Quizzes will be over the assigned readings and will test for basic comprehension; they are simply to confirm that you have read. The majority of the exercises will be very short writing assignments. The instructions for these assignments will be posted in our CANVAS COURSE webpage: https://eagleonline.hccs.edu/login/ldap. Due dates will be specified online and on the course schedule which will be provided. **ABSOLUTELY NO LATE RESPONSES or QUIZZES will be accepted. DO NOT ASK.** There will be no more than 12 grade entries (assignments) in this category.

**In-class Grade:** The in-class grade category includes any work that is done in class. Also under this category, a student may be awarded a participation grade. Participation grades are awarded for attendance, for participation in group or class discussions, for being prepared during class time, for showing up to class on time, etc. Thus, you might lose points in this category for not being prepared during class time, for not attending class, or for showing up late habitually. **Missed work in this category cannot be made up regardless of the reason you missed it.** Please see Attendance and/or Late Work sections below for further details.

**Group Research Project and Presentation:** You will have one group research project assignment for this class. Details and instructions for your group project will be provided later in the semester. If you are absent on the day your group is supposed to present, you will receive a(n) 0/F for this category and a 3-point deduction on your final grade. Your group will be allowed to proceed without you. **NO LATE PRESENTATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**Paper:** You will have to write a 6-page term paper for this course. Topics are to be determined. You will receive further instructions in a few weeks. Late papers are accepted. There will be a 5-point penalty for each day the paper is late.

**Exams:** There will be two exams in this class to be taken in person during our Friday meetings. The exams will consist of multiple choice questions, identification, matching, and two short essay questions. A review sheet will be provided one week before the exam. You should not wait until the review sheet is provided to begin studying for the exam. Going over your own notes, power points, discussion notes, and lecture notes at the end of each week will be helpful. Exams can only be made up if proper documentation of an emergency is provided. Check the schedule for exam dates.

**Attendance Policy:** HCC policy establishes that a student may be administratively withdrawn from a course upon missing more than 12.5% of the scheduled sessions. For this class you are permitted two absences from our in-person meetings. A third absence WILL result in a grade penalty of up to 5 points on your final grade. Anything beyond a third absence may result in a grade of FX or in your withdrawal from the course.

Students must attend class regularly to pass this course. Being in class will help you succeed and will ensure that you don’t miss any important information that may be shared during course meetings. If you must be absent, remember that you are responsible for all materials covered during your absence.
regardless of the reason for it and for any changes made to the schedule or syllabus. Get in touch with a peer or send me an email to schedule a meeting with me.

**Missed Work/ Late Work:** Absolutely no in-class work can be made up regardless of your reason for being absent. I also do not accept late work for online assignments and quizzes. To clarify, I do not accept any late assignments except for the Paper. For this reason, being in class every class day and keeping up with your online assignments, lectures, and activities is important. To account for emergencies or mistakes, at the end of the semester your two lowest grades from the In-Class grade category and your two lowest grades from the Online category will be dropped. There will also be at least one opportunity for extra credit. **Exams can be made up only if you have proper documentation of a legitimate emergency.** The professor reserves the right to decide what is or isn’t a legitimate emergency.

**Withdrawal Policy:** You may drop yourself or ask your instructor to drop you. You may drop yourself through your HCCS student center login. **This semester the last day to withdraw (grade of W) is Friday, October 28.** For other important dates including withdrawal with partial refunds see the academic calendar at [http://www.hccs.edu/district/events-calendar/academic-calendar/fall/](http://www.hccs.edu/district/events-calendar/academic-calendar/fall/)

**Scholastic Honesty:** According to the Student Handbook for the Houston Community College System, scholastic dishonesty includes cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion and is punishable by a grade of 0 or F on the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the College. A recommendation for suspension or expulsion will be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary disposition. Plagiarism includes using another person’s words or ideas as your own and/or incorporating them into your own work without quotation marks (if using exact phrasing) and correct citation. Collusion includes any “unauthorized collaboration” with your classmates or any other students—present or past—in the composition of work that you claim as your own. **Plagiarism, collusion, or cheating will result, at a minimum, in a grade of 0 for the assignment. You will not be allowed to rewrite plagiarized work or retake exams on which you cheated.** More than one instance of plagiarism, collusion or cheating in this course will result in an F for the final grade. Please note also that “accidental” plagiarism or collusion will result in the same penalties stipulated above. I know that most of you know what plagiarism and cheating is; however, if I am wrong and you are still not sure what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to contact me to clarify or to inform yourself. There will be a plagiarism topic posted on our COURSE PAGE for your viewing.

**Further Note on Student Conduct:**

**Preparation:** Students are expected to show up to class prepared. This means students should have all their reading assignments completed for that day before coming to class. Active participation will be expected. Always bring your writing materials, assignments, and textbook to class.

**Discussion:** Part of this course will rely on student discussion. Come prepared to share your thoughts in class. I request that you be respectful of others’ work and opinions and that you express your opinions in a respectful manner and only when relevant to the class discussion.

**Group Work:** Part of the work you do for this class will be group work. This group work time is not socializing time. If you feel you must, take the time to get to know your classmates outside of class. During group work you are expected to act responsibly and
respectfully. You will also have to work in groups outside of class in order to complete the group presentation element of the course. Each group member will be expected to participate during the presentation. In both in-class and out-of-class group work your serious participation is fundamental to the success of the group.

**Use of Electronics:** Students should put away their electronic devices upon entering this classroom. I don’t ask that you silence them completely but simply that you put them on vibrate. If I observe you using your phone in class, you will lose points from your in-class grade. (In the case of an emergency please let me know before class that you need to have your phone out). The same applies to the use of other electronic devices. If you are in the habit of taking notes on your laptop or similar device, please write me a formal email requesting the use of such device in the classroom. Otherwise, your electronic devices should not be visible to me at all.

**Tardiness:** In my experience, the traffic encountered in route to West Loop Center is quite unpredictable. For this reason, I will not take attendance or officially start class until 5 minutes after our course meeting time. This gives everyone a small window in case of an emergency. Nevertheless, please plan accordingly. Remember that entering the classroom late disrupts the class. By being on time you are practicing courtesy and respect towards others as well as ensuring you don’t miss out on anything that may be important. If you are running late, do go ahead and come to class anyway. Do not, however, make tardiness a habit.

**Disruptive or Inappropriate Behavior:** Disruptive or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to talking out of turn, sleeping, and use of electronics. If any of the above are observed, you will be docked in participation points. You will not be given a warning but your offense will be documented and points will be deducted. I am also at liberty to have you removed from class, if necessary.

**The “I need a(n) <insert grade> for this course” Phenomena:** Under no circumstances is it appropriate for you to tell the instructor the grade you “need” for this course. It is absolutely unprofessional and unethical to come to the instructor of this class with your personal issues regarding your college grades and academic status/situation. If you are concerned about the grade you will receive make sure you come to class every day, participate in class discussions and activities, do all your work in a timely manner, and meet with me during office hours when you have questions about an assignment. You may also seek extra help from the various tutoring services available. Finally, you may come to me to explain why you may be struggling in the course and we can work on a solution. However, asking me to give you a grade you have not made is unacceptable behavior.

**Support Services:** The following is a list of some of the support services available for students. For more information, visit the Houston Community College website.

- Library
- Open Computer Labs
- Tutoring
- Advisement & Counseling
**Reasonable Accommodations:** Any student with a disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodation must contact the disAbility Services Office. More information here: [http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/ada-counselors/](http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/ada-counselors/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central College</th>
<th>Northwest College</th>
<th>Adaptive Equipment/Assistive Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>713-718.6164</td>
<td>713-718-5667</td>
<td>713-718-6629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman College</td>
<td>713-718-5408</td>
<td>713-718-5604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>713-718-7376</td>
<td>Southeast College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast College</td>
<td>713-718-7053</td>
<td>Interpreting and CART services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>713-718-8322</td>
<td>Southwest College</td>
<td>713-718-7909</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is advised that the student also immediately discuss any accommodations needed with the instructor whether or not those accommodations have been officially requested through the disAbility Office.

**Important Notices:** Students who must repeat a course face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and at other Texas public colleges and universities. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, talk to your instructor or counselor about your study habits, reading skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available.

**Title IX, Discrimination on the Basis of Sex:** Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires that institutions have policies and procedures that protect students’ rights with regard to sex/gender discrimination. Information regarding these rights is on the HCC website under Students-Anti-discrimination. Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance. It is important that every student understands and conforms to respectful behavior while at HCC. Sexual misconduct is not condoned and will be addressed promptly.

For more information, log in to [www.edurisksolutions.org](http://www.edurisksolutions.org). Sign in using your HCC student email account, then go to the button at the top right that says “Login” and enter your student number.

**EGLS3—Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System:** At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the EGLS3 as part of the Houston Community College Student System available online: [hccs.edu/EGLS3](http://hccs.edu/EGLS3)

**SCHEDULE WILL BE POSTED ONLINE BY THURS, 8/25**