

Philosophy 216
Philosophy and Cultural Diversity
Spring 2014 CRN: 38962
10:00-10:50 MWF, 115 LA

Instructor: Dr. Scott Pratt
Office Hours: 2-3 M, 2:30-3:30 W & by Appt
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Course Description:

In this course students will consider different conceptions of self that emerge in diverse cultural contexts in American society. These conceptions lead to questions about the nature of race, the role of experience, the relation of selves to religion, the nature of borders, the construction of selves in society, and the connection between self and place. In the process of the investigation, students will also be introduced to the practice of philosophy where philosophy is understood, in part, as a mode of inquiry that can contribute to the resolution of social conflict. At the beginning of the last century, W. E. B. Du Bois asserted, "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line." To the degree that America in the 21st Century still faces the problem of how to be a culturally diverse society, philosophy provides a means to address the problem. The course can be applied to the **Arts & Letters group requirement** and the **University multicultural requirement** (as an "AC" or American Culture course).

Required Texts:

Gloria Anzuldúa. *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 3rd ed. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2007.
Vine Deloria, Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat. *Power and Place*. Boulder: Fulcrum Books, 2001.
Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2002.
Readings on the course web site.

Books are available at the University Bookstore.

Additional readings will be posted on the course web site.

The course web site is located at <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/>.

Course Information

Course Format/ Pedagogy

It is important that you keep up with the readings. You should be careful to plan time to read and REREAD the texts at two levels. At one level, you should work to understand what the author is trying to say. At another level, you should respond critically to the views presented. Do the views make sense? How are they justified? How do they relate to the others views we are considering? Careful and critical reading is important: the content of these texts becomes philosophically meaningful only through your interaction with it.

In lecture and discussion sections, we will discuss matters that that can be highly charged and very personal. In the context of discussing race and the experience of cultural difference, students often disclose very personal information about their lives. As part of the philosophical conversation, you must handle such disclosures sensitively and with respect. It is important in discussion to be open to think about and discuss diverse experiences and points of view, including those you do not share.

Every lecture will be accompanied by a Prezi presentation. The link to the Prezi will be made available weekly. These slides are used to frame the discussion, but do not contain the primary content of the lecture. Be sure to take notes in class.

If you have a documented disability and need accommodations, please let me know right away.

Course Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking, reading, and writing skills through use of a broad range of research methods, including collaborative projects and scholarly essays that deal with primary and secondary sources in the literature and are written in an academic format.
2. Present and assess views that differ from one's own, particularly perspectives relative to gender, race, class, and culture, including non-Western philosophical perspectives, within an inclusive classroom environment.
3. Compare, contrast, and critique representative authors from various philosophical traditions and historical periods.
4. Engage in philosophical inquiry that examines a broad range of topics such as human nature, the self and the community, political authority, morality, knowledge and reality.

In a course that satisfies the **Arts and Letters General Education requirement**, students will have a meaningful opportunity to engage actively in the modes of inquiry that define philosophy as a discipline through material that is broad in scope and demonstrably liberal in nature (that is, courses that promote open inquiry from a variety of perspectives).

In a course that satisfies the **American Cultures requirement of the University Multicultural requirement**, students will focus on race and ethnicity in the United States by considering racial and ethnic groups from historical and comparative perspectives. The University identifies five racial or ethnic groups: African American, Chicano or Latino, Native American, Asian American, European American. This course will discuss aspects of each.

Course Requirements:

1. Reading Quizzes. There will be 10 weekly reading quizzes (short, multiple choice, either in class or through Blackboard). To help you prepare, you will receive a set of reading questions to guide your reading of the required texts. The lowest two scores will be dropped.
2. Participation. Attendance and active participation are required, both in lecture and discussion section. Your participation grade will reflect all three factors: lecture attendance, discussion attendance, and participation in discussion. In general, attendance at all lectures and discussion sections with regular participation in discussions will receive an A. Two missed discussions (without a valid excuse) will generally lead to a C grade (modified up or down by lecture attendance and participation in discussion). Four missed discussions will lead to a failing participation grade.
3. Other assignments. Other assignments may include several brief surveys (on Blackboard) and at least one short written report on a talk at an on-campus conference.
4. Essay 1. There will be a set of separate, short autobiographical readings for discussion sections. These autobiographies will provide material for applying the theoretical material presented in the other readings and discussed in lecture. Six theories of "self" (ways of answering the question "Who are you?") will be presented in the lectures. These theories describe aspects of the self and a general framework for relating them. The autobiographies for discussion sections give examples of "selves" that can be analyzed in terms of the various theories. Essay 1 will consider an autobiographical selection and analysis of it in terms of the theories discussed in the first half of the class. Essays will be no longer than eight pages. The specific assignment will be distributed one week before the paper is due. In light of instructor comments, you will be allowed to rewrite the paper to receive a higher grade.
5. Essay 2. The final paper for the course will ask that you present a short autobiography and then consider it in light of the theories we have discussed in the course. The assignment will give you the chance to apply the material we have discussed to your own sense of self in order to understand yourself in terms of one or more philosophical conceptions of who you are. The paper will be no longer than ten pages and will be due during finals week (see schedule below).

Course Grade

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments and distribution of a total of 500 points.

<i>Reading Quizzes</i>	120 points	<i>Essay 1</i>	100 points
<i>Participation</i>	100 points	<i>Essay 2</i>	150 points
<i>Other Assignments</i>	30 Points		

What kind of paper deserves an “A,” “B,” etc.? The following rubric reflects the general standards of the Philosophy Department at the University of Oregon.

- A** = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.
- B** = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.
- C** = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.
- D** = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
- F** = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

Please note: what counts as “excellent” or “OK,” for example, depends in part upon the nature and level of the class in question.

Participation/Attendance 10% of Final Grade

A - Exceptional: To achieve an A the expectations are that student has perfect attendance in discussion section and near perfect attendance at lecture, he/she is recognized as a leader in discussion sections and consistently both contributes to and brings the conversation to a deeper level, without dominating the discussion to such an extent that it inhibits participation by other students.

B - Very Good. To achieve a B expectations are that the student will miss no more than one discussion section and have very good attendance at lectures (present around 95% of the time). Takes a very active role in discussion section and remarks are consistently helpful and on topic.

C - Good. To achieve a C expectations are that the student will miss no more than two discussion sections and has good attendance at lectures (present around 90% of the time). Participates in discussions, but not consistently.

D - Poor. To achieve a D expectations are that the student will miss no more than four discussion sections and attend lecture (around 80% of the time). Participates in discussions sporadically.

F - Failing. Misses more than four discussion sections and/or has poor attendance at lecture and/or is not a positive contributor to discussions.

To calculate grades for “participation” GTFs will weigh all of these factors in a holistic manner at the end of the term.

Exam/Paper Grading

93% or above	A	73-76%	C
90-92%	A-	70-72%	C-
87-89%	B+	67-69%	D+
83-86%	B	63-66%	D
80-82%	B-	60-62%	D-
77-79%	C+	0-59%	F

Students registered with the P/NP grading option must receive at least 70% in order to receive a P.

Academic Honesty

It is my practice to assign 0 points for any assignment in which a student has engaged in acts of academic dishonesty, which include:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts.

Students will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever: 1) one quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another's product; 2) one uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words; 3) one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material—unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (68 PLC, 346-3226). In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise prepared totally or in part by another person, even if that person is acting as a tutor or editor (and ends up substantially producing part of the work).

Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.

Examples include, but are not limited to: 1) citing information not taken from the source indicated; 2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise; 3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.

Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise.

Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student's work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one's work in a test situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

Course Calendar

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MWF 10:00-10:50

PHIL 216

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Unit 1 **Racial Selves and Modern Persons**

Week 1

M 3/31 Introduction to Philosophy and the Issue of Cultural Diversity
W 4/1 Du Bois, "The Forethought" and "Of Our Spiritual Strivings."
F 4/3 Du Bois, "Souls of White Folks."

Discussion Section Readings will be posted weekly on Blackboard.

Week 2

M 4/7 McIntosh "White Privilege," Leonardo "White Supremacy"
W 4/9 Leonardo
F 4/11 James Cone, *The Spirituals and The Blues* (excerpt)

Week 3

M 4/14 Liu "The Accidental Asian"
W 4/16 Descartes "Mediations" (Selections)
F 4/18 Locke "Essay Concerning Human Understanding"

Week 4

Unit 2 **Given Selves and Border Selves**

M 4/21 Hume, "Treatise of Human Nature"
W 4/23 Nasr, Chapter 1, pp. 115-142
F 4/25 Nasr, Chapters 4 and 6

Week 5

M 4/28 Nasr, Chapter 7 and Epilogue
W 4/30 Irshad Manji, "The Letter" and Maysam J. Al-Faruqi, "Women's Self-Identity in the Qur'an and Islamic Law," pp. 72-82
F 5/2 NO CLASS; Discussion Sections WILL meet.

Week 6

M 5/5 Anzaldúa, Chapter 1
W 5/7 Anzaldúa, Chapters 2, 3, & 4
F 5/9 Conference Attendance: "Alternative Sovereignities: Decolonization Through Indigenous Vision and Struggle," University of Oregon, Discussion Sections WILL meet.
Essay 1 due at Discussion section and online through Blackboard.

Week 7

M 11/8 Anzaldúa, Chapters 5 & 6
Conference report due online through Blackboard by 5:00 pm.

W 5/14 Anzaldúa, Chapter 7

Unit 3 **Postmodern Selves and Indigenous Persons**

Week 7

F 5/16 Hacking "Making Up People"

Week 8

M 5/19 Foucault, "Lecture Two: 14 January 1976" from *Power/Knowledge* [lecture blackboard]
W 5/21 Grande "American Indian Geographies of Identity and Power"

F 5/23 Grande.

Week 9

M 5/26 NO CLASS

W 5/28 Deloria and Wildcat Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4

F 5/30 Deloria and Wildcat Chapters 5, 6 & 7

Week 10

M 6/2 Deloria and Wildcat Chapters 8 & 10

W 6/4 Deloria and Wildcat Chapter 14

F 6/6 Final Class

Thursday 6/11 10:15 ESSAY 2 DUE

Note that the schedule of readings is subject to change during the quarter. All changes will be announced in advance during class. If you have questions about the assignments, projects, or subject matter, please let me know or talk with your GTF.