GALLATIN SCHOOL, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Transfer Student Research Seminar:
Identity and the Cultural Constructions of Race and Ethnicity
FIRST-UG 804-001
(15538)

Spring 2015
Day and Time: Monday and Wednesday, 4:55pm-6:10pm
Classroom: Silver Center for Arts and Sciences (SILV) Room: 402
Office Location: 1 Washington Place, room 409
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:30-4pm and by appointment
Email: law12@nyu.edu
Phone: 917) 609-3918
Mailbox: 1 Washington Place, 4th floor

Description:
Identity: the ways in which we see ourselves; the ways in which others see us; the dynamic relationship between these two seemingly distinct and often irreconcilable poles is the underlying theme of this first-year research seminar. We will focus specifically on the ways in which we create, build, rebuild, and live our racial and ethnic identities in constant dialogue with contemporary American societal constructions of race and ethnicity. As students develop and hone their research skills, we will explore questions including: What is race? Is it immutable? How do we know it when we see it? How is it distinct from ethnicity? What is gained and/or lost by considering or not considering race today? In what ways do other facets of identity, for example gender, sexuality, religion, nationality, and class, inform, challenge, reconstruct, or deconstruct our racial identities? As we explore of variety of primary and secondary texts – fiction, nonfiction, essays, plays, and film – we will employ a number of methodological frameworks, including historical, sociological, and cultural lenses to enhance our understanding of race and ethnicity in America.

Objectives:
Identity and the Cultural Constructions of Race and Ethnicity will introduce students to a variety of texts that explore the formation of racial and ethnic identity. Students will develop a basic working knowledge of the discourse around the construction of racial identity while simultaneously enhancing their understanding of the process of research and writing. Students will also work on building an argument, using primary and secondary materials effectively, honing their critical thinking and analytical skills, and mastering the mechanics of quoting, citing, and documenting evidence.

Requirements
Students are required to complete weekly reading and assignments and to be prepared to discuss them during class meetings. To facilitate discussion students will post 2 questions about the assignment on NYU Classes by 8:00pm each Tuesday. These questions can address the themes, style, argument, evidence, and/or technique of the primary text and should provide a point of engagement with the material. Students will also present select texts to the class. Students will write one 4-page analytical essay, one 4-page historiographical essay/literature review, and a 3-4-page prospectus, with an annotated bibliography. Students will also complete
very short take-home and in-class writing assignments, which will form the building blocks of the more substantial assignments, which, in turn, will help students formulate, research, and respond to questions about identity, race, and ethnicity in a final 12-page research paper. Prior to submitting the final paper, students will present their research to the class.

**If you feel you would like additional help with your writing, please contact the Gallatin Writing Center at 1 Washington Place, room 423.**

See: www.nyu.edu/gallatin/writingschedule for instructions on how to make an appointment.

Class Policies

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.

Unexcused absences will impact your final grade. If you have a compelling reason for missing class, talk to me in advance and complete make-up work.

HARD COPIES OF ALL PAPERS.

GRADES FOR LATE PAPERS WILL BE REDUCED BY 1/3 OF A LETTER GRADE PER DAY.

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES. NO CALLS. NO TEXTING.

YOU DO NOT NEED A LAPTOP.

Plagiarism

All written work must be the original creation of the student. Nothing may be copied from other publications, the Internet, or another student’s work. Please be very careful to avoid plagiarism – intentional or inadvertent. Err on the side of caution: it is definitely better to over-cite than oversight. If you are unsure consult Turabian, the On-line Writing Lab, or ask me.

NYU’s policies on plagiarism:

The Instructor will uphold the University's code of academic and personal conduct for all instances of plagiarism. You may find this code in your NYU Gallatin Bulletin, page 100. You can download the bulletin at: http://www.nyu.edu/gallatin/pdf/GallatinBulletin.pdf

Evaluation/Grading

Attendance, class participation, extra short assignments, and discussion questions 20%
Analytical Essay 15%
Historiographical Essay/Literature Review 15%
Prospectus 15%
Presentation of class text 5%
Presentation of Research 5%
Final Essay 25%
Texts (available at the NYU Book Store):
Diaz, Junot, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
Haddon, Mark, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
Hwang, David Henry, *M Butterfly*
Jacobsen, Matthew Frye, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*
Kushner, Tony, *Angels in America, Part 1: Millennium Approaches*
Prasad, Chandra, *Mixed: An Anthology of Short Fiction on the Multiracial Experience*
Said, Edward, *Orientalism*
Yoshikawa, Mako, *One Hundred and One Ways*

Texts (available from Prof. Woodard)
Woodard, Leslie, *The Silver Crescent*

Electronic Texts (available on NYU Classes - resources)
Spickard, Paul, "Contemplating Multiraciality"

ON-LINE WRITING LAB: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)


LIBRARY SUBJECTS GUIDE: [http://subjectguides.library.american.edu/citation](http://subjectguides.library.american.edu/citation)

Films
Spottiswood, Roger, Dir., *And the Band Played On*

Recommended Texts:
Turabian, Kate L., *Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers*

**WEEK 1:**
Monday, January 26th
Introduction
“What Are You?”
Analytical Essay

Wednesday, January 28th
What is Identity? Race? Ethnicity?

**WEEK 2:**
Monday, February 2nd
What is Research? What is a discipline? Interdisciplinary?
The Process

**HARD COPIES OF THE FIRST DRAFT OF YOUR FIRST ESSAY (ANALYTICAL) DUE IN CLASS. (Do not panic – it’s just a draft.)**
**Tuesday, February 3\textsuperscript{rd} at 7pm:** **POSSIBLE FIELD TRIP!?**

Wednesday, February 4\textsuperscript{th}

Discuss: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

**WEEK 3:**

Monday, February 9\textsuperscript{th}

Beginning your research: Choosing a topic, selecting a methodology, & formulating
research questions

Wednesday, February 11\textsuperscript{th}

Workshop analytical essay

**HARD COPIES OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS DUE IN CLASS**

**WEEK 4:**

Monday, February 16\textsuperscript{th}

*PRESIDENTS DAY HOLIDAY!* 😊

Wednesday, February 18\textsuperscript{th}

Discuss: *Mixed*

**HARD COPIES OF FINAL REVISION OF FIRST ESSAY (ANALYTICAL) DUE IN CLASS**

**WEEK 5:**

Monday, February 23\textsuperscript{rd}

Historiographical Essay/Literature Review

Discuss: “Contemplating Multiraciality”

Wednesday, February 25\textsuperscript{th}

Discuss: *Memoires of a Geisha*

**WEEK 6:**

Monday, March 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Primary Sources, Secondary Literature

**HARD COPIES OF SECOND ESSAY (HISTORIOGRAPHICAL) DUE IN CLASS**

Wednesday, March 4\textsuperscript{th}

Discuss: *One Hundred and One Ways*

**WEEK 7:**

Monday, March 9\textsuperscript{th}

*Visit to Bobst Library, room 619*
Wednesday, March 11th
Discuss: *Whiteness Of A Different Color*

**WEEK 8: SPRING BREAK! 😊**
Monday, March 16th

Wednesday, March 18th

**WEEK 9:**
Monday, March 23rd
The Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography
Discuss: *Orientalism* (Introduction and chapter one)

**HARD COPIES OF A LIST OF 3 PIECES OF SECONDARY LITERATURE AND 5 POSSIBLE PRIMARY SOURCES DUE IN CLASS**

Wednesday, March 25th
Discuss: *Orientalism* (chapter two)

**WEEK 10:**
Monday, March 30th
Discuss: *Orientalism* (Chapter 3)

**HARD COPIES OF YOUR PROSPECTUS AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ARE DUE IN CLASS**

Wednesday, April 1st
Discuss: *M Butterfly*

**WEEK 11:**
Monday, April 6th
The Introduction and thesis

Wednesday, April 8th
Discuss: *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

**HARD COPIES OF THE FIRST DRAFT OF YOUR OPENING PARAGRAPH DUE IN CLASS**

**WEEK 12:**
Monday, April 13th
Workshop opening paragraphs

Wednesday, April 15th
Workshop opening paragraphs

**WEEK 13:**
Monday, April 20th
Revisions; So What?! And Trouble Shooting

**HARD COPIES OF THE FIRST DRAFT OF FINAL ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

Wednesday, April 22\textsuperscript{nd}
Discuss: *Angels in America, Part 1* and *And the Band Played On*

**WEEK 14:**
Monday, April 27\textsuperscript{th}
Discuss: *The Silver Crescent*

Wednesday, April 29\textsuperscript{th}
Presentation of Research

**WEEK 15:**
Monday, May 4\textsuperscript{th}
Presentation of Research

Wednesday, May 6\textsuperscript{th}
Presentation of Research

**WEEK 16:**
Monday, May 11\textsuperscript{th}
Final Class
Presentation of Research & Wrap Up

**HARD COPIES OF FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS**