

**Philosophy 216**  
**Philosophy and Cultural Diversity**  
Fall 2009 CRN: 15865  
11:00-11:50 MWF, 180 PLC

Instructor: Dr. Scott Pratt  
Office Hours: 1:00-3:00 W & by Appt  
Office: 335 PLC, 346-5549  
e-mail: spratt@uoregon.edu

### **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 at the beginning of a new 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:**

Course Packet.

Readings on the course web site.

Gloria Anzuldúa. *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

Books and course packet 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 PowerPoint presentation. Copies of these will be made available each day following the lecture. 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.

### **Classroom Conduct/Seating/Computer Use**

Unless you have a documented disability that necessitates the use of electronic devices, please refrain from using laptops, cell phones, blackberries, iPods, headphones, and any other electronic devices. If you do have a documented disability that makes it important for you to have the technology at hand, just let me know in person. All students are required to sit in a particular section of the lecture hall with your GTF starting on Friday of the

first week of class. It is your responsibility to know the name of your GTF and which section you are in. Once your GTF gets to know you, he/she will monitor attendance during lecture and figure this into your participation grade for the course. Questions in lecture are encouraged, but given the size of the class and the need to address a wide range of issues and concerns, it will be necessary to limit discussion. However, discussions sections will provide ample opportunity for discussion. I also encourage you to take advantage of my office hours and those of your GTF.

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

### **Surveys**

At the beginning of each of the three units of the course, you will be asked to complete a survey on Blackboard. Surveys will be available immediately after the class period previous to the day the survey is to be completed. Surveys must be completed on the assigned date by 5:00 pm to receive credit, with the exception of the first survey, which will be open longer for those who join the class late. The survey results will be presented to you in class. **The surveys can only be accessed through the blackboard site for lecture.**

### **Examinations**

There will be three examinations. Each examination will include multiple choice and short answer questions. Questions will draw on the assigned readings, lectures, and material from your discussion section. Study guides including key terms and topics to be covered on the exam will be distributed in class before each examination. Each examination will include one TAKE HOME ESSAY QUESTION. The question will be given on the study guide and you are to complete your answer outside of class and turn in your answer electronically to your GTF. The first exam essay is due at the time of the first in-class exam on **October 19**. The second exam essay is due by 11:00 am on the Monday following the second in -class exam (**November 9**). The third exam essay will be due at the beginning of the final exam, **December 8** at noon. Each essay should not exceed 1,200 words (four pages) and **MUST BE TYPED**. Note that late exam essays will **NOT** be accepted without special arrangements with your GTF.

### **Participation/Attendance**

Attendance and active participation are required, both in lecture and discussion section. Your 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.

### **Course Grade**

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

Survey Completion (50 points, 17 per survey)	5%
Participation (100 points)	10%
Exam 1 (100 points)	10%
Exam Essay 1 (100 points)	10%
Exam 2 (150 points)	15%
Exam Essay 2 (150 points)	15%
Final Exam (200 points)	20%
Final Exam Essay (150 points)	15%

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.

**Exam/Paper Grading**

92% 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

**Academic Honesty**

It is my practice to assign a grade of F for the course to students who engage 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.



F 11/27 NO CLASS

**Week 10**  
M 11/30 Deloria and Wildcat Chapters 9 & 10  
W 12/2 Deloria and Wildcat Chapters 13 & 14  
**Exam Study Guide Distributed in Class**  
F 12/4 Final Class

**T 12/8 12:00 NOON EXAM ESSAY DUE**  
**F 12/11 10:15 FINAL EXAM, 180 PLC**

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.