

Whiteness Studies: Identity and Inquiry

CES 104; Fall 2020

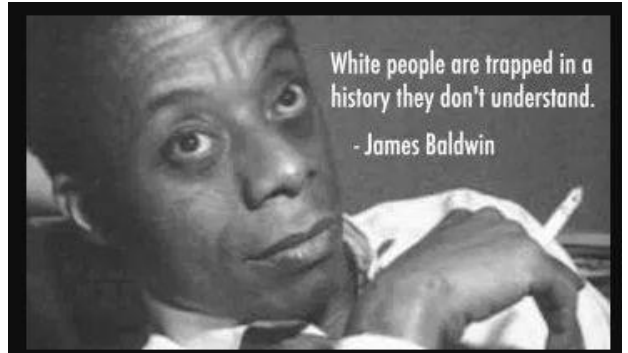
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Office Hours: M-Th 8:30-9:20 and by appointment



Course Introduction:

Welcome to Whiteness Studies! I look forward to working with you this quarter and sharing with you my passion for this growing and vital field of study. My hope is that this class encourages you to think differently about yourself, whiteness, race, racism/white supremacy and gives you some tools to work toward becoming actively anti-racist.

In the United States conversations about race are equated with conversations about people of Color and race is treated as something that people of Color (and only people of Color) 'have' or belong to. But white is also a racial category and part of the perpetuation of racial inequality is that we act like it is not. The purpose of this course is to make whiteness visible. We will investigate what whiteness is and what does it mean to be white. We will examine the formation of whiteness in the US, who counts as white and how this changes historically. We will critically interrogate why whiteness is invisible to so many white people, what white privilege is, and how whiteness operates (yes – even by good, progressive “woke” liberals) to maintain white supremacy. Finally, we will consider what it looks like to engage in anti-racist practice/activism today.

Required Texts:

All readings are scanned for you and placed on Canvas.

Structure and Online Learning:

I want to acknowledge that we are all adjusting to online classes due to this pandemic and that for many, taking classes online is a new experience and perhaps not ideal. I am with you! I certainly prefer face-to-face connection and contact with you (one thing this pandemic has made me more aware of and grateful for is how much energy and meaning I get from interacting with students everyday... I miss it!) As we adjust, adapt, and embark on this quarter, the one thing I want to make very clear is that I am here to help you and we can all work together to help navigate this class and get through this.

As I was setting up and planning this quarter, I solicited a lot of feedback from students about what adjustments have been working and not working since classes moved online. While I know the way I am choosing to set this course up is not perfect/ideal for all students, I am trying to integrate what I heard from the majority. As such, this course is set up to be asynchronous. What that means is that there will not be a certain time or day that you will *have* to be online and attend class. You will be able to work on course assignments when it is convenient for you and your schedule. There will be due dates for all assignments, but what time you work on these is up to you. I will be holding space 1-2 times per week for a virtual class – come ask questions, engage, talk, check in. These virtual classes will not be required; they are additional opportunities for you to seek community and connect about course content.

My expectation and recommendation for successfully getting through this class is treat this class as if you were taking it in person. What I mean by that is you need to be “showing up,” doing work, reading, and engaging in the course every day. If you are taking a class in person, you are spending 5 hours per week in the classroom and then doing homework outside of that class time. Treat this class the same way. Set aside a particular time each day that is dedicated to

working on CES course content. You should plan to budget and spend around 1-2 hours PER DAY to work on your assignments and be engaged in the class.

Learning and Course Outcomes:

After participating, discussing, and completing this course, a successful student will demonstrate:

- Analyze how whiteness is socially, politically, and legally constructed in the U.S.
- Investigate and reflect upon how white privilege is institutionalized in American society
- Identify the ways whiteness shapes one's everyday experiences
- Understand how whiteness is perceived from a global perspective

General Course Expectations:

In order for us to have a successful, respectful, open, engaging, and cooperative learning environment, we all need to have a common understanding of what positively contributes to our overall class dynamics and what hinders and hurts it. The following are some of the basic expectations that serve as the foundation of our class.

What you can EXPECT OF ME as your instructor:

Preparation: My goal is for you to learn and succeed in this class. I have invested a lot of time preparing, structuring, organizing, and designing this course site with hope that the materials and assignments will enhance your learning.

Promptness: I commit to returning your work to you in a timely, reasonable fashion (my rule is you will get all work returned in 7 business days, although the vast majority of work is returned sooner than that). I will respond to your questions and emails promptly as well (usually within 24 hours).

Availability: I am available to you should you desire help. I encourage you to come to my virtual office hours whenever you have a question or concern, and I encourage you to advocate for your own needs. If my office hour time does not work, we can schedule an appointment, video chat, or phone conversation that fits both of our schedules. Just email me and we can set something up.

Quality Work: I want you to succeed in this class (as well as in school in general!) I will have high expectations for you and know that will the right support and help (if it is needed) that you can and will succeed. I will do my best to provide you with that support. I also will work very hard to make this class as successful as possible by choosing course materials and assignments that are interesting and engaging and striving to bring my best to this course.

Honesty, Integrity, and Fairness: I will present information that is grounded in social-science research and will do my best to answer questions based on my understanding of that research and information. If there is something that I do not know, I will let you know that I do not know it. If there is something that is my own personal opinion about something, I will let you know that this is *my* perspective and what *I* think about the matter. Your grade will be based upon what I detect that you have learned about sociological content, not on my personal thoughts about you.

Respect and Inclusion: I believe everyone in our class has the right to feel welcome and safe from personal attack and thus I will listen to you and be constructive and thoughtful in my comments, even if we disagree.

What I EXPECT OF YOU throughout the quarter:

Preparation: You should be looking at what is due each week early in the week and planning your workload accordingly. You should be checking Canvas (including the Calendar) regularly.

Promptness: You should comply with all due dates, as **I do not accept late work. All assignments are due at noted times on the listed due date...NO EXCEPTIONS (that includes computer problems).** I highly recommend that you plan to turn in your work early. I can open most formats (word, PDF, etc.) but cannot open PAGES files (so convert to a

different format). Submit your work to me by uploading through the Assignments pages on Canvas. **It is your job to get your work in on time.**

Availability: You should be logging in and working on assignments **5 days per week and planning to spend 1-2 hours per day on course work.** You will not be required to be online at a certain time or day for this course. However, you will see that I have set all assignments up each week to be **due on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.** The reason I am doing this instead of just having everything due each Sunday at 11:59 is because I have found in my many years of teaching and experience that students wait until the last possible day (or the weekend), they get overwhelmed by the amount that is due, and the result is lots of missing assignments, poor grades, and disengagement with the class.

Quality Work: When participating in any component of this course, your comments should indicate to me that you have read and understand the course material. Some students wrongly assume that they can simply "wing it" in this class and still receive a high grade. This class is not based on opinion – it is based on sociological research, data, concepts, theories, and analyses.

Honesty, Integrity, and Fairness: This means no cheating and no plagiarism. If you cheat/plagiarize, you fail. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge if you have borrowed any ideas, terms, or phrases, even if you have borrowed from a classmate OR from the book. Please do not copy and paste material from google, wikipedia or any other website into your assignments, as this is a severe form of cheating (that is very easy to catch, by the way). If you have any hesitation, or if you are in doubt about one of these issues, feel free to ask me.

Respect and Inclusion: Disrespectful attitudes toward me or others will not be tolerated.

Students with Disabilities:

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD/ADHD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access in your classes, programs, activities, and any other services, please contact the DRC. If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus. The DRC office is located in building B Room 132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by the office at B132, calling our front desk phone number (425) 564-2498, emailing drc@bellevuecollege.edu. Deaf students can reach us by calling TTY: (425) 564-6189, or by Skype (account name DRCatBC). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at Disability Resource Center (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>).

Reasonable Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience:

Students who will be absent from course activities due to reasons of faith or conscience may seek reasonable accommodations so that grades are not impacted. Such requests must be made within the first two weeks of the course to the office of the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs (see Bellevue College Policy 2950 (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id2950/>)). In the event you feel you are being discriminated against based on faith or conscious, you may refer to the procedures outlined in the college's Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy 1440P (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-1440p/>).

Note about Communicating:

If at any point throughout the quarter you are confused or unclear about the expectations of the course, course material, a grade you received, or any other matters, I strongly encourage you to email me. It is my goal that all students succeed in this course; but, I can only help you if you meet me half way. Furthermore, if you are having personal problems or other issues going on outside of school, please let me know. I recognize that we all have lives outside of school, and am very willing to work with students, but I can only do so if I know there is a problem!

Grading:

Final grades are based on **five major categories**. (1) Notes on the Readings and Lectures, (2) Videos, (3) Film Questions/Reflection, (4) Discussion Boards, and (5) Exams. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

Notes:

Notes on Readings (14 at variable points/each)	185 points
Notes on Lectures (7 at 10 points/each)	70 points

Videos:

Watch and answer questions (3 at 15 points/each)	45 points
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Films:

Watch and answer questions provided (3 at 25 points each)	75 points
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Discussion Boards:

Small Group Discussion Board (8 at 20 points/each)	160 points
Introductions/Getting to Know Your Peers Discussion	15 points

Exams:

Exams (2 at 100 points/each)	200 points
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TOTAL

750 points

The following are the letter-grade equivalents to the course points:

Course Grade	Point Total	Course Grade	Point Total
A (92.5-100%) =	694 - 750 points	C+ (77.5-79.4%) =	582 - 596 points
A- (89.5-92.4%) =	672 - 693 points	C (72.5-77.4%) =	544 - 581 points
B+ (87.5-89.4%) =	657 - 671 points	C- (69.5-72.4%) =	522 - 543 points
B (82.5- 87.4%) =	619 - 656 points	D+ (67.5-69.4%) =	507 - 521 points
B- (79.5-82.4%) =	597 - 618 points	D (59.5-67.4%) =	447 - 506 points
		F (0-59.4%) =	0 - 446 points

Description of the 5 Grading Categories:

1. Notes on the Readings and Lectures: (255/750 points– 34% of final grade)

For most assigned readings and lectures, you will need to submit notes about the content covered in that reading/lecture. Doing notes on readings/lectures are crucial for success in this class (and in college in general) – writing things down, summarizing, and synthesizing is a major stage in *how* we learn (a stage which many students tend to skip over!) The purpose of these notes is to:

- help you keep up with the readings (reinforcing good study habits/skills)
- help you to learn how to identify key points and themes from readings and put them in your own words
- help you to synthesize and process the information you are taking in to better learn the material

You will submit your notes on Canvas either in a Word document or if you prefer to hand write them, you can take a photo and upload (make sure your images are viewable). **You can use your notes on your quizzes and exams**, so it is in your best interest to do an outstanding job defining key terms, identifying major themes, and providing examples for yourself.

These notes are for you, to help you. Writing down the information you are reading helps you retain it – trust me, this is not busy work! On multiple occasions, I have compared grades between classes where there is the same content and assessments - the only difference is in one class I require notes and in the other I do not. The difference is staggering (roughly a 10% difference in overall grades). These work. Do them. Do them well. Think of notes as easy points and an investment in a better overall final grade!

Notes can be as thorough as *you want*. You know how you learn best (better than I do), so if you are a student who needs to write more details, please take the time on these and do so. On exams, I am going to be assessing big picture ideas. I am never going to ask you statistics, the names of a particular person, a specific date, etc.

There is a minimum requirement but there is no maximum. The **minimum guidelines** are as follows and notes might follow this format:

YOUR NAME	TITLE OF ARTICLE/CHAPTER	DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A minimum of 3 main ideas or important points that are discussed <u>throughout</u> the reading (not just the beginning!) Think of these as the “big picture” themes of the reading – if you were going to tell someone what it was about, what would you say?• Then, list and define any key terms. I highly recommend putting these in your own words so you can understand what is being said and also coming up with an example!		

2. Videos: (45/750 points; 15 points each – 6% of final grade)

There are several video clips that you will watch throughout the quarter. You will be answering questions about the videos or providing your thoughts/response to these clips. These video clips build on what is being talked about in the readings and discussion boards.

3. Films: (75/750 points– 10% of final grade)

You will be asked to stream 3 films throughout the quarter (I have provided links to all of them, so there is no streaming service needed to purchase.) You will be answering questions on the films.

4. Discussion Boards (160/750 points - 23% of final grade)

Small Group Conversations (8 at 20 points each – 21% of final grade): CES classes are discussion-based. The purpose of discussion boards is for you to engage in virtual dialogue with your classmates about course content - to hear what your peers have to say, what their thoughts and opinions are on topics as well as talk about your own thoughts and opinions. I am setting you up in small groups of about 6-8 students. Your groups will remain the same throughout the duration of the quarter in order for you to build intimacy and connection with these classmates (and because race/racism is often such a difficult topic for many whites to discuss, my hope is that with consistent groups that you get to know some of your peers and thus can be able to open up, go deeper, be more honest). The reason I am breaking you up into small groups instead of having one large class discussion is because I have found that reading 36 posts by all classmates is way too much (and that most students don't!). So, I am trying to ease your workload. I have also heard from students that discussion boards can feel forced. I get it. However, I will also say that what you put in to discussion boards, you get out (meaning, if you simply treat this as busy work or a check box and do not attempt to *actually* engage with your classmates, that is what it will become). Show up. Talk. Connect. Ask questions. Try to make this meaningful!

For each small group conversation, I will provide you with a prompt. There will be a due date for your initial post about the prompt (and you will receive a grade of up to 10 points based on the quality of your initial contribution). You will also be required to respond to at least 2 of your other group members (and you will receive a grade of up to 10 points). Quality responses ask questions and deepen the conversation – this requires time and thought! Thoroughly reflect on and think about the point you are making. Clarify or expand on a relevant concept if important points are missing, vague or incorrect; look at the issue from another angle or perspective; add pertinent information; ask a question that forces your classmates to think more in depth on the topic.

Introductions/Getting to Know Your Peers Discussion (15 points – 2% of final grade)

During the first week of the quarter, I have provided some prompts to aid us in building community in the class and getting to know one another. Similar to the other Discussion Boards, you will be required to post an initial post and respond to two of your classmates.

4. Exams: (200/750 points; 100 points each – 27% of final grade)

There will be two exams (essentially a midterm and a final exam - note the final exam is NOT comprehensive). Exams are designed to make sure you understand important course concepts and themes. Exams will include multiple choice and short answer questions. You will have two hours to complete these exams. Due dates are noted on the calendar.

My Recommendations for Studying for Exams:

- You will be provided with a review sheet of key/core concepts. Go through that review sheet, writing out the definitions for key terms in your own words and come up with several examples for each key term. Your exams are not testing your memorization skills; they are assessing how well you understand the information and can apply that understanding to different contexts.
- **DO NOT** rely on Google or Wikipedia or other outside sources. These are not sociological and often incorrect. Not to mention, this is plagiarism. So, you cutting and pasting from google = a 0 on that question. No exceptions.
- **Organize your notes.** You should be taking notes while you read and listen to the lectures. When you are taking the exams, you will need to find information quickly. Perhaps create a note sheet of just key definitions that you are having trouble remembering. Perhaps organize sections in themes. Anything that you do to write and rewrite information is studying and will help you retain the information.

Calendar

Week One:

Monday, September 21st: Start of the quarter

- Log onto the course site, play around, get a feel for the class
- Post your Introduction Discussion Board to your classmates (7.5 points)

Wednesday, September 23rd by 11:59 pm:

- Introduction Discussion Board Replies to Classmates due (7.5 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #1 (10 points)

Friday, September 25th by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #1 replies due (10 points)
- Read Chapter 3 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 3 (see syllabus for minimum requirements and expectations) – 15 points



Week Two:

Monday, September 28th by 11:59 pm:

- Whiteness Project reflection questions due (10 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #2 (10 points)

Wednesday, September 30th by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #2 replies due (10 points)
- Read Chapter 9 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 9 (15 points)

Friday, October 2nd by 11:59 pm:

- Watch 2 White privilege videos; reflection questions due (10 points)

Week Three:

Monday, October 5th by 11:59 pm:

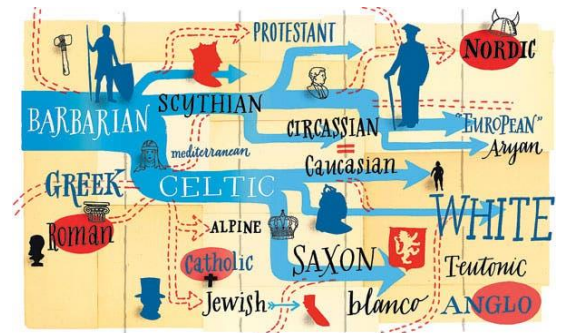
- Watch 8-minute lecture on White Socialization and Segregation
- Submit notes on White Socialization and Segregation (10 points)

Wednesday, October 7th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 6 - take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 6 (10 points)
- Watch 9-minute lecture on The Invention of Whiteness
- Submit notes on The Invention of Whiteness (10 points)

Friday, October 9th by 11:59 pm:

- Watch 7-minute lecture on Whiteness as Property/Optional Ethnicities
- Submit notes on Whiteness as Property/Optional Ethnicities (10 points)
- Read Chapter 4 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 4 (15 points)



Week Four:

Monday, October 12th by 11:59 pm:

- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #3 (10 points)
- Watch lecture on White Supremacy and Racism
- Submit notes on White Supremacy and Racism (10 points)

Wednesday, October 14th by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #3 replies due (10 points)
- Read Chapter 7 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 7 (15 points)

Friday, October 16th by 11:59 pm:

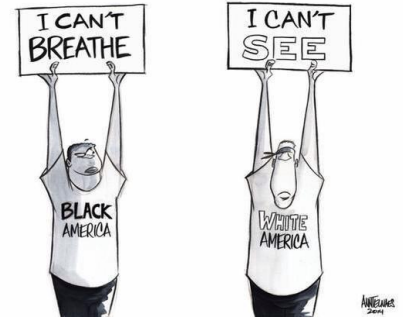
- Watch 3 systemic racism video clips and answer the questions provided (10 points)



Week Five:

Monday, October 19th by 11:59 pm:

- *I Am Not Your Negro* Film Discussion Questions/Reflection Due (20 points)



Wednesday, October 21st by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 8 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 8 (15 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #4 (10 points)

Friday, October 23rd by 11:59 pm:

- Watch lecture on Colorblindness
- Submit notes on Colorblindness (10 points)
- Discussion Board #4 replies due (10 points)



Week Six:

Monday, October 26th by 11:59 pm:

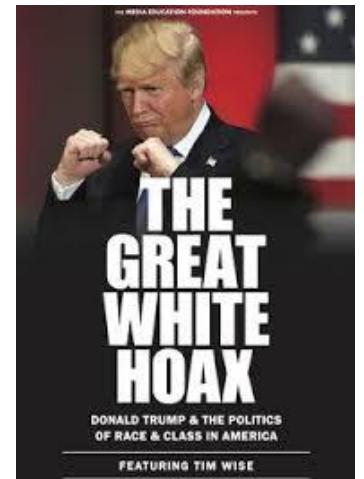
- Exam #1 Due (100 points)

Wednesday, October 28th by 11:59 pm:

- *Great White Hoax* Film Discussion Questions/Reflection Due (20 points)

Friday, October 30th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 10 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 10 (15 points)



Week Seven:

Monday, November 2nd by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 12 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 12 (15 points)

Wednesday, November 4th by 11:59 pm:

- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #5 (10 points)



Friday, November 6th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 14– take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 14 (15 points)
- Discussion Board #5 replies due (10 points)



Week Eight

Monday, November 9th by 11:59 pm:

- Read White Fragility Part 1 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on White Fragility Part 1 (10 points)

Wednesday, November 11th by 11:59 pm:

- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #6 (10 points)

Friday, November 13th by 11:59 pm:

- Read White Fragility Part 2 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on White Fragility Part 2 (10 points)
- Discussion Board #6 replies due (10 points)



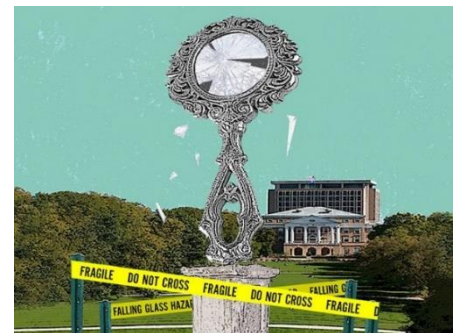
Week Nine:

Monday, November 16th by 11:59 pm:

- Read White Women's Tears – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on White Women's Tears (10 points)

Wednesday, November 18th by 11:59 pm:

- *Get Out* Film Discussion Questions/Reflection Due (20 points)



Friday, November 20th by 11:59 pm:

- Read Chapter 16 – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Chapter 16 (15 points)



Week Ten:

Monday, November 23rd by 11:59 pm:

- Watch lecture on Tears, Tone, Silence and Exceptionalism
- Submit notes on Tears, Tone, Silence and Exceptionalism (10 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #7 (10 points)

Wednesday, November 25th: Holiday – No work due!

Friday, November 27th: Holiday – No work due!

Week Eleven:

Monday, November 30th by 11:59 pm:

- Watch lecture on Calling In vs. Calling Out
- Submit notes on Calling In vs. Calling Out (10 points)
- Discussion Board #7 replies due (10 points)



Wednesday, December 2nd by 11:59 pm:

- Read Where Do We Go from Here – take notes while you are reading the chapter
- Submit your notes on Where Do We Go from Here (10 points)
- Submit initial post for Discussion Board #8 (10 points)

Friday, December 4th by 11:59 pm:

- Discussion Board #8 replies due (10 points)

Week Twelve:

Monday, December 7th by 11:59 pm:

- Exam #2 due

