**Ethnicities and Conflicts**

**Honors 204, Fall 2014**

Dr. William Paul Simmons

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| Class: Tu Th 12:30-1:45  Location: Modern Languages 301 | Office Phone: 520.626.7884  NOTE: I do not check this very often. It is better to use my cell (480.388.0718), but use it judiciously. Best to email me: |
| Office: Gender and Women’s Studies (925  Tyndall Ave) 108B and  Slonaker House Living Room/Patio | [williamsimmons@email.arizona.edu](mailto:williamsimmons@email.arizona.edu)  Skype ID: toutautrejd |
| Hours: T 11-12:15  Th 11-12:15, Th 1:45-2:30  And by Appointment | [www.williampaulsimmons.com](http://www.williampaulsimmons.com)  <http://gws.arizona.edu/william-paul-simmons> |

**Course Attributes**

General Education: Diversity Emphasis

General Education: Tier 2 Individuals and Societies

**Catalog Description**

What do we mean when we speak of ethnic conflict?  How does it arise?  How do ethnic differences spill over into violence?  We will examine definitions of ethnic identity, the relationship between ethnicity and nationalism, and pursue case studies of specific regions.

**Course Description**

Courses on race and ethnicities are often either structured around a litany of conflict situations from around the globe or they perpetuate a polarizing identity politics by highlighting the identities of racial and ethnic groups without seriously examining their intersections. In this course we will not merely focus on group identities or group conflicts. We will explore the seemingly intractable problems in ascribing group identities and examine a wide variety of means for resolving conflicts. We will look to non-hegemonic ethnicities not only as a source of conflict as is often done, but as a resource for innovative methods of conflict resolution.

This course takes an interdisciplinary approach. If there is an emphasis it is from a political and legal perspective, but a number of other disciplines will be brought to bear in our analyses. Our theoretical standpoint can be broadly classified as critical; relying on postmodernism, post-colonialism, critical race theory, whiteness studies, and transnational feminisms. We will explore how histories of colonialism, racism, and oppression continue to haunt the present. Personal narratives, especially from members of marginalized groups, will be presented throughout the semester.

This is not a passive course. Students are expected to actively engage with the material inside and outside of class. Students will be involved in the co-creation of knowledge by conducting research to address real-world issues and by directly engaging with relevant community stakeholders.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of the semester it is expected that students will*, inter alia*:

1. Be exposed to several recent ethnicity-based issues both in the U.S. and globally.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of recent theoretical advances in the study of ethnicity with a focus on such theoretical concepts as the social construction of race and ethnicity, cauterization, intersectionality, states of exception, structural violence, and the coloniality of power.
3. Have explored several “Western” and “non-Western” forms of conflict resolution; including interrogating the more fundamental question of what it means to resolve conflict.
4. Better understand how histories of racism and oppression continue to shape current events in the U.S. and globally.
5. Better understand the scholarly literature on ethnicity and conflict from several academic disciplines.
6. Be exposed to working in the community on issues of ethnicity and conflict and to bring insights from that experience into conversation with academic work on the topic.
7. Better understand how individuals and groups work for justice on issues of ethnicity and conflict.
8. Be introduced to basic legal analysis skills, including the ability to use precedents, logic, and evidence to evaluate recent cases on indigenous and immigration law.
9. Improve their ability to work productively and efficiently in groups on problem-based assignments.
10. Be more passionate about learning about social justice and human rights as they intersect with ethnicities and conflicts.

**Course Requirements**

**Short Assignments** (25 Points +)

Several short assignments will be required. These will consist of reflection papers (3), personal letters, attending campus events, and serving as an in-class newscaster. Students can earn up to three extra credit points by attending an extra campus or community event and writing a reflection paper. NOTE: Each Tuesday, beginning with the third week, groups of students will be responsible for preparing and performing a newscast (i.e., This Week in Ethnicities and Conflicts). Students will be expected to adeptly field questions from their colleagues and the Instructor.

**Community Engagement Assignment** (30 Points)

Students will complete ONE of the following:

Community Participation (and Research Portfolio):

Students will arrange for, and complete, a “mini-internship” with one of the many local community groups dealing with issues of ethnicity and conflict. This might include organizations working with refugees, the homeless, prisoners or former prisoners, victims of domestic violence, immigrants, at-risk students, low-income families, sex workers, the elderly, the disabled, etc. The instructor will assist students in lining up a placement appropriate to their interests and convenience. Students are expected to work approximately 15 hours through the semester in some substantive capacity for the organization. Students will compile a portfolio of work products, organizational literature, personal reflections, and relevant scholarly literature.

Short Film

Pairs of students will work together to create a short film based upon a current, local issue related to ethnicity and conflict. This should involve engagement with local stakeholders working on the issue. The films might be reviewed during a mini-film festival at the end of the semester.

Alternative Action Research Assignment

Alternatively, a student can develop, with extensive input from the Instructor, an empirical research project on a topic of relevance to this course and that involves community engagement. This will entail drafting a research design with an introduction, well-developed literature review, and data and methods section. If feasible, students will also be expected to complete some data collection and analysis. NOTE: this is not a typical course research paper. Students will be expected to develop a project that contributes, or has the potential to contribute, to the scholarly literature on ethnicity and conflict. Further NOTE: this may require getting approval from the university human subjects review board.

Portions of these assignments will be due throughout the semester according to this tentative schedule:

Week 3: Initial Ideas (2 Points)

Week 5: Rough Outline of Internship Duties, Film Script, or Research Project

(3 Points)

Week 8: First Draft of Film, Research Design, or Progress Report on

Internship with Personal Reflections (5 Points)

Week 13: Near-Final Draft of Project (10 Points)

Week 15: Final Film, Research Project, or Internship Portfolio (10 Points)

**Group Assignments (45 Points):**

Students will be required to fully participate in three group projects. Individual student grades will be determined by a combination of their group’s final product and the Instructor’s perception of each student’s contribution.

1. Inventory of local activism related to prisons, the criminal justice system, and ethnicity. Small groups of students will choose a topic related to the book *The New Jim Crow* and conduct a short literature review (4-6 sources) on the topic that includes academic sources, government reports and NGO reports. Students will also make a list of community “experts” on their topic and conduct a qualitative interview with at least one key stakeholder. They will then prepare a short bulleted report and oral presentation for the class.
2. We will conduct a moot court or moot peace talks with a focus on indigenous peoples from Colombia. If we do this as a moot court it will be based upon a case that could be heard by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Students will be divided into groups and each group will prepare a legal brief on the merits of the case and then argue the case in front of a panel of student judges. We will also explore alternative conflict resolution techniques such as indigenous talking circles and possibly therapeutic jurisprudence.
3. Our last group assignment will explore legal remedies for the large influx of immigrant women and children in Arizona through a moot immigration court. Students will have to take on several roles in our moot court including an asylum applicant, an attorney, and an immigration judge.

**Attendance**

Since class sessions will be conducted mostly in seminar or group format, attendance, preparation, and participation from all students are crucial for the success of this course. Students missing more than five class periods will lose **five points** from their course grade. Excessive tardiness (10 minutes late) or other disrespectful and disruptive behavior in class (**misuse of electronics**, use of inappropriate language, disruptive conversations, etc.) qualifies as an absence. Coming to class consistently unprepared can also lead to a grade reduction.

All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for students who show affiliation with that religion. Absences pre‐approved by the UA Dean of Students will be honored (e.g. athletes, debate team, military absence, hospitalization, death in family).

**Late Papers**

**All late assignments will be penalized two points per day!**

###### Grades

Your grade will be determined as follows (based on 100 possible points):

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| --- | --- |
| 90 points and above | A |
| 80-89 | B |
| 70-79 | C |
| 60-69 | D |
| 59 and Below | E |

## Reasonable Accommodations

The instructor will be happy to work with students who require reasonable accommodations for disabilities or other circumstances. Students who wish accommodations for a disability should contact DRC as early as possible to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is very important that you be registered with Disability Resources 1224 East Lowell Street, Tucson, 85721, (520) 621-3268, FAX (520) 621-9423, email: [uadrc@email.arizona.edu](mailto:uadrc@email.arizona.edu) ,website: <http://drc.arizona.edu/>) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations.

You must register and request that the Center or DRC send me official notification of your accommodations needs as soon as possible. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

**Other Course Policies**

**A Note on Note Taking**

I rarely will lay out material in a linear, expositional fashion (e.g., “there are 3 main causes of X”, “racism is defined as Y”. Instead, I prefer a more holistic or phenomenological approach to the material where we explore what racism means or the multiple intersecting causes of an event. While this approach more accurately represents the reality that we encounter, it usually requires a different type of note taking. You should jot down main ideas, your thoughts and feelings, connections with other material from this or other classes, etc. Of course, be sure to write down assignment due dates and tips for successfully completing the assignments.

**Appropriate Conduct**

Threatening behavior will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to University policy. For more information on appropriate and inappropriate student conduct, see

<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policiesandcodes/studentcodeofconduct>

<http://policy.web.arizona.edu/disruptive-behavior-instructional> <http://policy.web.arizona.edu/threatening-behavior-students>

**Notification of Objectionable Materials**

This course contains material that some students may find objectionable. If you believe material to be covered will be objectionable, you should consult with the Instructor as soon as possible to discuss potential alternative materials and assignments.

**Confidentiality of Student Records**

As required by law under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), student records are confidential. This law and its applicability to your educational records may be accessed at: <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm>

**Changes to the Syllabus**

Information contained in this course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

##### WARNING!

**Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism includes not only the exact duplication of an author's words but also an unacknowledged close paraphrase. When in doubt give a citation**. **SPECIAL NOTE: Be sure not to plagiarize when preparing case materials. Students should be especially careful when cutting and pasting material from cases, briefs, and other sources.** **Use quotation marks and/or citations where appropriate**. For more information consult the university Code of Academic Integrity at <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity>

## Required Books

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age oColorblindness*. New Press. (ISBN = 0822350750, $19.99)

Hatzfeld, Jean. 2010. *The Antelope's Strategy: Living in Rwanda After the Genocide.* Picador (ISBN = 9780312429379, $17.00).

Ilibagiza, Immaculée. 2007. *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*, Hay House. (ISBN= 1401908977, $14.95).

Additional (mostly) short readings will be required as needed and will usually be posted on D2L.

Readings should be done by the beginning of class on the date assigned.

Information will also be regularly posted on D2L and by Email

**STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE ACCESS TO D2L!**

Course Outline and Readings

NOTE: I anticipate having several guest speakers join the class in person or via Skype, so we may have to adjust parts of this schedule to accommodate our guests.

**Prelude Introduction, Overlapping Knowledge Communities and Information Literacy**

Week 1

**Module 1 Ethnicities and Conflicts in the Great Lakes Region of Africa**

Weeks 2-5

Readings: Ilibagiza, *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*

Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak* (Selections)

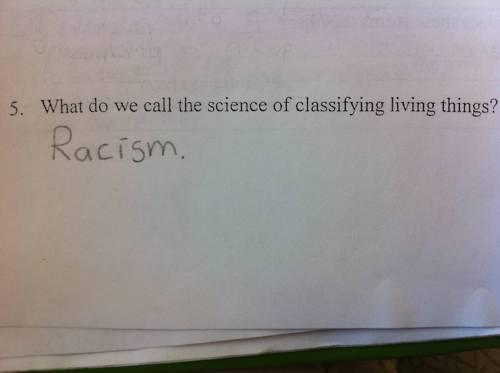
Omi and Winant, “Racial Formations” (D2L)

Chowkwanyunmay, “Race is Not Biology” (D2L)

Movies: *In Rwanda We Say…The Family That Does Not Speak Dies,* by Anne Aghion

*The Greatest Silence: Rape in Congo*, by Lisa Jackson

Assignment: Reflection Letters (5 Points)

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**Module 2 Mass Incarceration and Race**

Weeks 5-8

Readings: Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*

Rafay, “Bleak Housing and Black Americans: Some Problems in the Use of Racial Disparities in Incarceration as a Reason for Reform”

Simmons, “Arendt, Little Rock, and the Cauterization of the Other”

Films: *Unforgiven* (about James Cameron)

*In This House* by Eugene Jarecki

Assignment: Inventory of the Criminal Justice System in Tucson (15 Points)

**Module 3 Indigenous Rights, International Law, and Alternative Resolution Formats**

Weeks 9-12

Readings: Simmons, “Remedies for the Women of Ciudad Juárez through the Inter-American Court of Human Rights”

Amicus Curiae for Amnesty International, *Case of the Kichwa People of Sarayaku vs.Ecuador*

*Moiwana v. Suriname* (2005)

Films: *We Women Warriors*, by Nicole Karsin

Moot Court: *Kankuamo Women v. Colombia* or Colombian Peace Talks

and Indigenous Talking Circles, and Other Alternative Dispute Resolution Techniques (15 Points)

**Module 4 Immigration and Structural Violence: States of Exception and the Coloniality of Power**

Weeks 12-14

Readings: Simmons and Mueller, “Introduction”

Simmons and Téllez, “Sexual Violence against Migrant Women and Children”

Other Readings, TBA

Movies: *De Nadie* (YouTube) by Tin Dirdamal

*La Patrona* (YouTube) by Tin Dirdamal

*Justice for My Sister* by Kimberly Bautista

Assigned: Moot Immigration Court (15 Points)

**December 1 Events Assignments and Community Engagement Assignment Due**

**Module 5 Israel and Palestine**

Weeks 15-16

Readings: TBA

Speakers: TBA

Assigned: Summary Paper (5 Points)

**NOTE: There is no Final Exam for this Course (Yay!)**

**Our Last Day of Class: Tuesday, December 9, 2014 (Yay!)**

