

Suffolk Community College, Selden, New York 11784

PHL113: PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN LIBERATION

Instructor: Dr. Gertrude Postl
Spring 2011, CRN 25491
Time: T/R 11:00-12:15 p.m.

Office 120, Southampton Building
Tel. 451-5413 (Main Office: 451-4093)
Office Hours: M 11:00 - 12:00 a.m.
W 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
T/R 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will enable students to:

- (1) identify and comprehend the political concepts of oppression and liberation, the various sources of oppression, and the consequent models of liberation;
- (2) situate contemporary constructions of gender, race, and class within the framework of oppression and liberation, and understand the various aspects of the respective group oppression;
- (3) understand the interrelated dynamics of the various forms of oppression as well as the role this dynamics plays for liberation;
- (4) apply the conceptual insights of this course to their own experience of oppression in order to transform those experiences in a liberating fashion;
- (5) demonstrate skills of information management (basic on-line and library research).

TEXTS:

— Linda Martin Alcoff, Eduardo Mendieta, eds., *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality*, Blackwell Publishing 2003.

— Texts online;

REQUIREMENTS

- 1) FOUR QUIZZES: quiz 1: 2/22 quiz 2: 3/15
 quiz 3: 4/12 quiz 4: 5/12

Quizzes will consist of brief essay questions relating to the readings and the course material in general. The lowest quiz-grade will be dropped. **No make-up quizzes!**

2) TWO PAPERS:

FIRST PAPER: On "Conceptual Foundations" (due March 3)

SECOND PAPER: on either Class, Gender, or Race (due May 5);

Each paper should be **at least three pages long, typed, double-spaced, and in the appropriate academic format** (name, title, correct quotations, etc). Topics for each paper will be provided on a separate handout. Papers will not be accepted after the due-date.

3) CLASS PARTICIPATION, READING ASSIGNMENTS AND BEHAVIOR

Class participation means to participate in the common effort of discussion in order to complement the reading material and to accomplish the aims stated in the course objectives. Unwillingness to participate will result in a lower final grade. "Talking a lot" is not necessarily participation. **Reading assignments** have to be completed before class meetings. It is not enough to read a text; one should also be able to talk about it.

Disruptive or inconsiderate **behavior** (including walking in and out of the classroom during class time) will affect the grade. Cell phones and beepers have to be switched off during class time.

4) ATTENDANCE POLICY

The college defines excessive absence or lateness as more than the equivalent of one week of class meetings during the semester. In this course, students are allowed **no more than three absences!** Any additional absence will affect the grade. Excessive absence or lateness may lead to failure in the course. If a student is late, the time will be added up and will thereby contribute to the amount of absences. It is the student's obligation to sign the sign-up sheet. If a student misses a class due to sickness or other justifiable reasons, evidence needs to be shown as soon as possible! In this case the absence will be excused. If a student drops the class after the official withdraw-date (3/24) without justifiable reason, he/she will receive an "F" for the course. No "W" will be given after the official withdraw-date.

GRADING:

3 Quizzes: 45% of the final grade
Two Papers: 40% of the final grade
Class Participation: 15% of the final grade
 Excessive absence will lower the final grade!

PLAGIARISM:

“In writing, students must fully credit the source of any quoted, paraphrased, or summarized passages and any ideas which they have borrowed. Failure to conform to these academic standards is plagiarism and may result in a failing grade for the course and/or serious disciplinary sanctions as outlines in the Code of Conduct” (SCCC Catalog, p.69). Plagiarism of any kind will result in a “0” for the assignment and in repeated cases in an “F” for the course.

SCHEDULE

Tu 1/25: Introduction: oppression, liberation; political vs. metaphysical freedom; intersection of race, class, gender;
 Th 1/27: Case Study of Race-Class-Gender Oppression – Movie: *Precious* (2009), dir. Lee Daniels;
 Tu 2/1: *Precious* continued;

I. CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR OPPRESSION AND LIBERATION

Sources of oppression: classism, sexism, racism, heterosexism; forms of oppression: domination, violence, (cultural) imperialism, dehumanization, lack of power, discrimination, exploitation, false consciousness; means of liberation: resistance, reform, revolution, subversion; freedom;

Th 2/3: G. W. F. Hegel, Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness (pp.11-16);
 Tu 2/8: Sigmund Freud, Consciousness and What is Unconscious (pp. 29-31)
 Th 2/10: Iris Marion Young, Five Faces of Oppression (online);
 Tu 2/15: Paulo Freire, from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (online);
 Th 2/17: Conceptual foundations continued;

II. OPPRESSION -- CLASS

Tu 2/22: **QUIZ 1**
 Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, from *The Communist Manifesto* (online);
 Th 2/24: Marx/Engels continued;
 Tu 3/1: E.J. Hobsbawm, Class Consciousness in History (pp.126-135);
 Th 3/3: E.P. Thompson, Preface from *The Making of the English Working Class* (pp.136-138);
FIRST PAPER DUE!

- Tu 3/8: Heidi Hartmann, *The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (online);
 Th 3/10: Class Oppression continued;

III. OPPRESSION – GENDER

- Tu 3/15: **QUIZ 2**
 Simone de Beauvoir, Introduction from *The Second Sex* (pp. 149-157);
 Th 3/17: Beauvoir continued;
 Tu 3/22: No Class (Professional Development Day)
 Th 3/24: Monique Wittig, *One Is Not Born a Woman* (pp.158-162);
LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES WITH GUARANTEED W!
 Tu 3/29: Iris Marion Young, *Throwing Like a Girl* (pp.163-174);
 Th 3/31: Teresa de Lauretis, *Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation* (pp.244-258);
 Tu 4/5: Anne Fausto-Sterling, *The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are not Enough* (online);
 Th 4/7: Gender Oppression continued;

IV. OPPRESSION -- RACE

- Tu 4/12: **QUIZ 3**
 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Conservation of Races* (pp.43-48)'
 Th 4/14: Frantz Fanon, *The Fact of Blackness* (pp.62-74);
 4/19, 4/21: No Class (Spring Recess)
 Tu 4/26: Stuart Hall, *New Ethnicities* (pp.90-95);
 Th 4/28: Cornel West, *Nihilism in Black America* (online);

V. INTERSECTION OF CLASS, RACE, AND GENDER

- Tu 5/3: Movie: *Crash* (2004), dir. Paul Haggis;
 Th 5/5: Patricia Hill Collins, *Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection* (online);
SECOND PAPER DUE!
 Tu 5/10: Gloria Anzaldua, *La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness* (online);
 Th 5/12: **QUIZ 4**
 Tu 5/17: Summary, Conclusions;