

Suffolk Community College, Selden, New York 11784

PHL113-101: PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN LIBERATION

Instructor: Dr. Gertrude Postl
Fall 2020, CRN 97428
Modality: Combined Online (COMBINEONL)
Meeting Times on Zoom: M 9:30-10:45

Office: Southampton Building 120
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Office Hours on Zoom: M/W/R 11:00-12:00
T 2:00- 3:00

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 critical analysis and information management;

TEXTS:

— Online Links and pdfs;

REQUIREMENTS

1) THREE REACTION PAPERS

Choose one text or film from three of the four sections of the course and write a reaction paper of about 400-500 words. Briefly summarize the main arguments of the given text or film, then present any observations, responses, agreements/disagreements, or overall criticism you might have. It is encouraged to argue your own position in response to the issues raised in the text or film. You may also connect the text to actual events (historical or current), other texts, films, artworks, etc. **Do not use any outside sources!!! Just work with the text in question and the material presented in class.**

Criteria for judging Reaction Papers: comprehension of the given text or film; willingness to engage with it; quality of own arguments and ideas in response to the text or film; concise and persuasive presentation of own arguments; creative connections made.

Deadlines:

- I. Conceptual Foundations – due 10/9
- II. Oppression/Class – due 11/2
- III. Oppression/Race – due 11/30
- IV. Oppression/Gender – due 12/18

Papers received after the deadline for a specific section will not be accepted.

2) ONE MIDTERM AND ONE FINAL EXAM (due 10/30 and 12/23)

Exams will consist of brief essay questions on the readings and the course material in general. They are open book format and will be posted on Blackboard. Completed exams have to be submitted on Blackboard no later than noon the following day. Late exams will not be accepted.

3) OCCASIONAL BRIEF HOME ASSIGNMENTS

Students have to submit a brief reaction to a question. No set dates, home assignments will be posted as we go along, and they will not be graded.

4) PARTICIPATION, READING ASSIGNMENTS

Participation will be assessed on grounds of participation during class meetings, regular submission of assignments and active presence on the Blackboard Discussion Forum. Discussions conducted there shall serve to demonstrate students' ongoing engagement with the course material, and they will not be graded. This part of the course is to encourage the exchange of ideas among students and is a substitute for classroom discussion. There will be only minor interventions by the instructor.

5) ATTENDANCE

Attendance is based on being present during real time class meetings on Zoom every Monday.

GRADING:

Three Reaction Papers: 45% of the final grade
Two Exams: 40% of the final grade
Home Assignments: 5% of the final grade
Participation, Attendance: 10% of the final grade

W GRADE

Students can withdraw before the official withdraw date (11/10) without faculty approval. After this date faculty approval is required. The last possible date for student submission of a withdrawal form with the faculty signature is the last day of the semester.

ATTENDANCE ON RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

As provided for in New York State Education Law §224-a, student absences from class necessitated by religious observance will be deemed an excused absence, with no academic consequences. Students must notify their professor in advance of their religious observance, via their College email accounts or otherwise in writing, of their intention to be absent from a particular class due to a religious observance; notification should occur at least one week prior to the religious observance. Observing students shall be granted reasonable arrangements and/or be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up missed quizzes, tests, assignments, and activities covered in their absence. Please refer to the College's [Religious Observance Policy](#), which is available on the Office of Legal Affairs' website, for additional information.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Suffolk County Community College provides reasonable accommodations to registered students with disabilities who have self-identified and been approved by the Office of Disability Services. Once approved for reasonable accommodations, such students will be provided with a laminated letter, describing the specific accommodations. Students must present this laminated letter to each of their professors before accommodations can be provided. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential consultation.

Disability Services Contact Information:

Ammerman Campus

Call the Disability Services Office at 631-451-4045, email the Office at disabilityserv-ammr@sunysuffolk.edu or stop by to make an appointment at Room 202 in the Ammerman Building.

Eastern Campus

Call the Disability Services Office at 631-548-2527, email the Office at disabilityserv-east@sunysuffolk.edu or stop by to make an appointment at the Student Success Center in the Peconic Building, Room 122.

Michael J. Grant Campus

Call the Disability Services Office at 631-851-6355, email the office at disabilityserv-west@sunysuffolk.edu or stop by to make an appointment in Caumsett Hall, Lower Level 20.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Suffolk County Community College provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge by submitting coursework that is uniquely theirs and giving proper attribution to the work of others. Participating honestly in the SCCC academic community ensures that students can take pride in their education and their contributions to scholarship. Without academic integrity, students gain unfair advantage over others and prevent their own intellectual progress. As a student in this class, you are expected to uphold the SCCC core value of Integrity and understand the Special Procedures for Academic Dishonesty in the relevant sections of the [SCCC Student Code of Conduct](#).

The Code prohibits academic misconduct, which includes any action that results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, or receiving credit for work that is not their own. Academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors: **cheating** on exams; **plagiarizing** - using another person's work or ideas without crediting them; **complicity** - helping a student, or being helped, to engage in academic misconduct; **multiple submissions** - submitting the same work for credit in more than one course without the instructor's permission; **falsification and forgery** - inventing information or falsifying the identity of a student.

Information about the Student Code of Conduct, plagiarism and the citation process is in the [Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Guide](#).

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

In alignment with our institutional mission and strong support of diversity, equity and inclusion, Suffolk County Community College reaffirms its commitment to providing access to higher education and a welcome environment to **all** students. No matter your age, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, family status, U.S. citizenship status, religion, socio-economic status, political ideology, military-connected status, or intellectual or physical ability - you belong here. Therefore, in this class, we will maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect, civil discourse and cross-cultural communication.

SCHEDULE

Week 1-2 (9/2- 9/11) asynchronous only:

Introduction: class, race, gender in philosophical and contemporary perspective; concept of course;

M 9/7: **No meeting – Labor Day**

M 9/14: **Lecture:** oppression, liberation; the intersection of race, class, gender
Watch: Movie: *Precious* (2009, dir. Lee Daniels), available on Netflix and Amazon Prime

I. CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

M 9/21: **Lecture:** Intersectionality
Read: Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color"
<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mapping-margins.pdf>
Watch: Kimberle Crenshaw – Intersectionality TED talk:
https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en

M 9/28: **Lecture:** Identity Politics
Read: Cressida Heyes, *Identity Politics*, entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-politics/>

M 10/5: **Lecture:** Types of Oppression
Read: Iris Marion Young, “Five Faces of Oppression”:
<https://www.sunypress.edu/pdf/62970.pdf>

F 10/9: **REACTION PAPER ON CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS DUE!**

II. OPPRESSION -- CLASS

M 10/12: **Lecture:** Marxist Analysis of Class
Read: Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, from *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Part I (“Bourgeois and Proletarians”) and Part II (“Proletarians and Communists”):
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>

M 10/19: **Lecture:** Marxist Analysis of Gender; Marxism and Feminism
Read: Friedrich Engels, from *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (pdf); Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism” (pdf)

M 10/26: **Lecture:** Contemporary Relevance of Marxism; Capitalism and Race
Read: David McNally, from *Global Slump* (pdf)
Watch: Richard Wolff and Cornel West on Contemporary Relevance of Marx, Capitalism and White Supremacy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zYAH-BZZTs>

T 10/29: **MIDTERM EXAM POSTED!**

F 10/30: **MIDTERM EXAM DUE AT NOON!**

M 11/2: **REACTION PAPER ON CLASS DUE!**

III. OPPRESSION -- RACE

M 11/2: **Lecture:** History of Race and Racism
Read: W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks*, Chapter I: “Of our Spiritual Strivings”:
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/408/408-h/408-h.htm>
 Frantz Fanon, from *Black Skin, White Mask*, Chapter 5:
https://monoskop.org/images/a/a5/Fanon_Frantz_Black_Skin_White_Masks_1986.pdf

M 11/9: **Lecture:** The Civil Rights Movement
Watch: Movie: *I am Not Your Negro* (2016, dir. Raoul Peck), documentary on James Baldwin, available on YouTube, Netflix, Amazon Prime

W 11/11: **LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES WITH GUARANTEED W!**

M 11/16: **Lecture:** Contemporary Situation of Race and Racism
Read: Ta-Nahisi Coates, from *Between the World and Me* (pdf); Vanessa Wills, “‘Black Lives Matter’ as Identity Politics and Class Struggle” (pdf)
Watch: Black Lives Matter Explained: The History of a Movement (2020):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YG8GjLbbvs>

M 11/23: **Lecture:** Feminism and Anti-Racism
Read: Patricia Hill Collins, “Black Women and the Sex/Gender Hierarchy” (pdf)
Watch: Interview with women founders of Black Lives Matter:
https://www.ted.com/talks/alicia_garza_patrisse_cullors_and_opal_tometi_an_interview_with_the_founders_of_black_lives_matter?language=en#t-545820

M 11/30: **REACTION PAPER ON RACE DUE!**

IV. OPPRESSION – GENDER

M 11/30: **Lecture:** Philosophical Analysis of Gender – Equality Feminism vs. Difference Feminism
Read: Simone de Beauvoir, Introduction to *The Second Sex*:
<http://www.sfu.ca/~decaste/OISE/page2/files/deBeauvoirIntro.pdf>
 Hélène Cixous, Catherine Clément, from *Sorties* (pdf)

M 12/7: **Lecture:** Women of Color and Lesbian Feminism
Read: “The Combahee River Collective Statement”:
https://americanstudies.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Keyword%20Coalition_Readings.pdf
 Monique Wittig, “One is Not Born a Woman” (pdf);

M 12/14: **Lecture:** Transgender
Read: Julia Serano, “Trans Woman Manifesto”:
http://s18.middlebury.edu/AMST0325A/Serano_Trans_Woman_Manifesto_Feminist_Theory_A_Reader_547.pdf
Watch: Movie: *The Brandon Teena Story* (1998, dir. Susan Muska, Greta Olafsdottir), available on Netflix and Amazon Prime

F12/18: **REACTION PAPER ON GENDER DUE!**

M 12/21: Gloria Anzaldua, “La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness”:
<https://f-origin.hypotheses.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/3462/files/2018/11/4.-ANZALDUA-Borderlands.-La-Consciencia-de-la-mestiza.pdf>

T 12/22: **FINAL EXAM POSTED!**
 W12/23: **FINAL EXAM DUE AT NOON!**