**American Whiteness: Privileges, Terrors, Power**

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**Course Description**

Critical race theorists have illuminated the various ways racism is manifested, historically and contemporarily, as white supremacy, especially drawing attention to how whiteness as a power construct maintains racialized politics and polities. This course engages Critical Race and Critical White Studies in order to better understand how “whiteness” perpetuates itself and racism as well. In this course we will critically examine the concept of whiteness, and what it has meant to the (white) public over time. You will be introduced to theories of whiteness as power and terror, as a privileged status, as property, as visible identity that has been racialized as the norm, and as gendered intersections.

**Course Requirements, Grades, and Attendance Policy**

Students will write two exams, and 12 weekly response papers. Participation and attendance are required. The first 2 **unexcused** absences will each lower your grade by an entire letter grade; any **unexcused** absences after 2 will result in an “F” for the semester. Excused absences must have documentation; and, more than 3 will result in an “Incomplete” for the semester.

 Exams @100 points each =200

 Response Papers =100

 Total =300

 Letter Grade Single Exam Grade Cumulative Grade

 A 93 - 100 279 - 300

 A- 90 - 92 270 - 278

 B+ 87 - 89 261 - 269

 B 83 - 86 249 - 260

 B- 80 - 82 240 - 248

 C+ 77 - 79 231 - 239

 C 73 - 76 219 - 230

 C- 70 - 72 210 - 218

 D+ 67 - 69 201 - 209

 D 63 - 66 189 - 200

 D- 60 - 62 180 - 188

 F < = 59 < = 179

# RESPONSE PAPERS

Students are required to write **12** **WEEKLY** response papers, one for each reading assignment listed below. The response papers should be 1 single-spaced page, 12-point font. The papers should be thoughtful engagements with major themes or ideas presented in the reading(s). After picking a theme, or set of themes, you should very briefly summarize the theme/idea; then, you should proceed to put forward your own ideas, points of agreement/disagreement, etc. Each paper is due at the beginning of class in which a given set of readings will be discussed.

**Texts**

There are 7 required books, and one article (which can be accessed online). During the semester, I may add some short readings to the syllabus as I see fit. Note: the reading for this course is important; please finish each set of readings on time and be prepared to discuss, at length and in detail, each text. The required texts include:

*The Racial Contract* by Charles Mills

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

*White* by Richard Dyer—**The 20th Anniversary Edition (2nd Edition, 2017)**

*When Affirmative Action Was White* by Ira Katznelson

*Reproducing Racism* by Daria Roithmayr

*Affirmative Reaction* by Hamilton Carroll

*Black on White: black writers on what it means to be white*, edited David Roediger

**Course Schedule**

January 16: Course Introduction: Irredeemable Whiteness

January 23: Read: *The Racial Contract*, Pages 1 through 80

January 30: Read: *The Racial Contract*, Pages 81 through 133

*Black on White*, Part VI: White Terrors

February 6: Read: *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Intro and Chs 1 through 10

 *Black on White*, Part III: The White World and Whiter America

February 13: Read: *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Chs 11 through 19

*Black on White*, Part IV: Some White Folks

February 20: Read: *White*, Introduction and Chs 1 through 3

 *Black on White*, Part I: Confronting Whiteness and Seeing

Through Race

February 27: Read: *White*, Chs 4 through 6

**March 6: Midterm Exam**

March 13: **Spring Break, No Class**

March 20: Read: *When Affirmative Action Was White*, Preface and Chs 1 to 4

March 27: Read: *When Affirmative Action Was White*, Chs 5, 6, and Appendix

*Black on White*, Part II: Whiteness as Property

April 3: Read: *Reproducing Racism*, Introduction and Chs 1 to 5

April 10: Read: *Reproducing Racism*, Chs 6 to 10 and Conclusion

April 17: Read: *Affirmative Reaction*, Introduction and Part 1

 *Black on White*, Part V: White Women, White Men

April 24: Read: *Affirmative Reaction*, Part 2 and 3

 “Dismantling Whiteness: Silent Yielding and the Potentiality of

Political Suicide” by Jungkunz (In *Contemporary Political Theory*)

**Final Exam: May 1 at 12:00**