

**Being Mixed Race in America**  
CES 234.5631 | Winter 2017  
Room L220 | MTWR 9:30-10:20pm

Instructor: Jennifer Lê  
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Office Hours:  
10:30-11:45am M-Th  
and by appointment



### Course Description and Goals

What does it mean to be mixed race? Isn't everyone mixed? Explore what it means to be mixed race in the US. Examine what our society tells us about race and ethnicity and how being mixed challenges those long-held understandings. Themes will include media representations, personal narratives, identity, and many more.

To make appointments, please go to [drle.youcanbook.me](http://drle.youcanbook.me) or scan the code above. Download a free QR Code Reader from your App Store to scan this.

### Course Outcomes

After completing this course, successful students should be able to:

- Explain a structural understanding of race and ethnicity in our increasingly multiracial world
- Analyze the experiences of mixed race individuals and how they are shaped by race, class, gender, and location
- Critically assess the issue of mixed race identity in society by taking into the various understandings and representations of race

### Required Text and Readings

Senna, Danzy. 1999. *Caucasia*. Riverhead Books.

Fuyo Gaskins, Pearl. 1999. *What Are You? Voices of Mixed Race Young People*. Henry Holt and Co.

Additional readings for the course will be available through our Canvas course in the Files tab (in the Readings folder).

### Attendance

Attendance is **required**. Students are allowed to miss TWO class periods without documentation. All other absences must be excused absences; please review the Bellevue College Student Rules on excused absences. More than two undocumented absences will result in a reduction of your overall grade, taken from your overall participation score for the course in direct proportion to the number of classes missed. If you miss zero to two classes, you will not be penalized. If you miss more than two classes, you will lose points for each day absent which can account for up to a full letter grade reduction. If you miss over one-third of classes, a further 1/3 letter grade deduction will be taken out of your grade. Notecards will be used to keep track of attendance (see course requirements).

### Classroom Policies

Please silence cell phones before the beginning of class. Students whose cell phones ring in class or who I see using their mobile devices will receive no points for that day's class participation. Students are permitted to use computers to take notes if they wish. However, note taking is the **only** activity allowed during class. If any students engage in other activities on their computers during class meetings they will receive a zero for that day's class participation after one warning.

As this is a college course, this classroom shall be treated as a professional environment. I expect everyone to be respectful of others. There will be zero tolerance for disrespect including but not limited to racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, and heterosexism.

## Course Requirements

### *Notecards*

(100 points total, 10 points each)

For each non-book club reading, you will be required to submit a notecard with a summary of the main points and important concepts from the reading due for that day. If there are multiple readings, you must write on all readings assigned on a given day. Both sides may be used and you may submit up to two notecards (fastened together) for a single reading. This notecard (3x5 or 4x6 size) is due at the beginning of class each day. Late notecards (not turned in at the start of class and missing due to unapproved absences) will not be accepted.

While you are required to turn in a card everyday, only 11 of them will be graded but will occur randomly. Your lowest scored notecard will be dropped. You will be notified at the beginning of class that your notecards will be graded that day. **You can use your notecards (and only your notecards) on your exams**—so spending some time now defining key terms, identifying major themes, and providing examples for yourself will help you when the exam comes. The assignment sheet for these notecards is available on Canvas.

### *Notecard Worksheets*

(10 points)

A worksheet will be provided to you on the first day of the quarter. Follow the directions for the worksheet and submit by the due date.

### *Online Discussions*

(100 points total, 10 points each)

A new topic of discussion will be available each week. Initial posts—your own response to the discussion topic—are due each week on Friday by 11:59pm PST. Response posts—responses made on your classmates' threads (not including replies made on your own thread)—are due each week on Sunday by 11:59pm PST. You are required to make a minimum of THREE posts each week (one initial and two response posts) but are encouraged to post more to demonstrate your engagement with your peers and the topic. Each post should use critical thinking, be thoughtful, concise, and include related research from the textbook or news sources.

TIP: thoughtful *response* posts should include critical reflection, meaningful questions, and/or related content or research from the textbook or news sources. Simple agreement or disagreement will not count toward your minimum number of posts.

### *Book Club Discussions*

(120 points total, 20 points each)

Throughout the quarter, we will read the book *Caucasia* and meet in small groups, or book clubs. On each designated Book Club Day, each student will have 1) completed the assigned section of the book, 2) come with a printed list of discussion questions (at least 3) and reflections (at least 2) from the excerpt, and 3) be prepared to lead the discussion in their group.

### *Visibility Study*

(100 points)

For this assignment, you will choose one television series (or Netflix series) that you watch or have watched in the past. The series must have completed at least two full seasons and include at least one actress/actor that is mixed race (whether or not that is part of the storyline or character). Using IMDb and other sources,

determine the parentage of the actor(s) of mixed race. In a paper, you will discuss their representation, categorization, series impact, and larger social impact. Students will be required to make their selections (and inform Dr. Lê) at least two weeks before the deadline. No student may use the same series as another. For more information about this assignment, view the assignment sheet in Canvas.

#### *Short Assignments (Shorty)*

(120 points total, 20 points each)

Six times throughout the quarter, a short assignment will be given in class, to be turned in at the start of the following class period. Details will be given in class. These assignments must be typed and printed out for submission.

#### *Mixed Race Contributions: Small Group Presentation and Paper*

(100 points)

In small groups/pairs, students will make a 15-minute presentation detailing the contribution of a well-known or little-known mixed race individual to US society. Using at least four credible sources, the group will compile a short biography, a history of their identity (from personal accounts if available, including how they identify, how they are classified, any associated privileges or stigma, etc.), and their contributions to their community and society at large. Students will be required to choose their person (and inform Dr. Lê) by the deadline on the syllabus. No group may use the same person as another group. For more information about this assignment including sources that are not acceptable, view the assignment sheet in Canvas.

#### *Exams*

(200 points total, 100 points each)

There will be two exams in this course, a midterm and a final. Each exam is worth 100 points. The exams will be composed of multiple choice questions and potential short essay questions. However, there will be no scantron or bluebook needed. You may use your notecards (from above) on the exam.

#### *Attendance and Participation*

(100 points total: 50 for attendance, 25 for participation, 25 for midterm check-in meeting)

Participation includes answering questions when called upon, participating in discussions, and asking insightful and engaging questions related to course material. Active participation will help a borderline final grade. During weeks 5-7 of the course, you are required to set up a meeting with Dr. Lê during her office hours. Use the code from the first page of the syllabus or go to [drle.youcanbook.me](https://drle.youcanbook.me) to schedule it. These informal, low-pressure meetings will be up to 10 minutes in length.

Please keep in mind that you are expected to keep up with the readings through the term. All students are expected to have read the assigned material **before** each class meeting. Attendance is always helpful (and required) to get a better understanding of the material. Please note that a few points can make a difference. I want you to do your very best in this course, and I will help all students as much as I can.

## Grades

Your grade will consist of the following:

TOTAL: 1000 points

A = 930 - 1000+

A- = 900 - 929

B+ = 870 - 899

B = 830 - 869

B- = 800 - 829

C+ = 770 - 799

C = 730 - 769

C- = 700 - 729

D+ = 670 - 699

D = 630 - 669

D- = 600 - 629

F = 0 - 599

Notecard Worksheet – 10 points = 1%

Notecards – 100 points (10 points each) = 10%

Book Club Discussions – 120 points (20 points each) = 12%

Visibility Study – 100 points = 10%

Short Assignments – 120 points (20 points each) = 12%

Small Group Presentation and Paper – 100 points = 10%

Online Discussions – 150 points (15 points each) = 15%

Midterm Exam – 100 points = 10%

Final Exam – 100 points = 10%

Attendance/Participation – 100 points = 10%

Note: There will be no curve in this class, including for single assignments. Your grade is what you earn.

## Extra Credit

There may be opportunities for extra credit throughout the quarter. These opportunities are generally events on campus, which involve a lecture, documentary showing, debate, or a cultural event with an educational component. The requirements for the reflection paper are on Canvas. The papers will be due by 11:59pm one week after the event. Additionally, video links will be posted in the Canvas assignment link. These videos may be watched and analyzed similar to the events. Video link extra credit papers will be due by 11:59pm on the last regular course day. Students may complete TWO of these extra credit opportunities for a possible 15 points each or 30 points total. These extra points are added onto a student's total points for the course. No late work will be accepted without a pre-approved reason. Please view the full assignment sheet on Canvas.

## Late Policy

### *Exams*

All missed exams must be pre-approved by the instructor PRIOR to the due date. Make-up exams will be given at the discretion of the instructor and must occur **before** the due date. Missed exams without prior approval can only be made up if the absence accompanies an approved excuse and if immediate notice is given to the instructor via email or phone.

### *Assignments*

Any missed assignments not pre-approved by the instructor must accompany an approved excuse in order for an extended due date to be given. Unapproved absences will result in zeros on assignments and exams and **cannot** be made up. Approved absences include school-sponsored event participation, hospitalization, childbirth, major accident or injury, or bereavement. It is the student's responsibility to provide the instructor appropriate documentation within a reasonable timeframe. The only exceptions to this policy are late papers, which will receive a 10% deduction per day late, or presentations, which will receive a 10% deduction per day late if class days remain.

## Tentative Schedule

## HOW TO READ THE SCHEDULE BELOW:

Day of the Week
Topic
Reading Due <b>Before</b> Class
Assignment Due

### Week One – January 2-6

M	T	W	R	F
	Intro to the class	Being Mixed Race	Race and Ethnicity	Discussion 1 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
	No reading	Gaskins “Me” and Introduction	Roth	
		Notecard Worksheet DUE		

### Week Two – January 9-13

M	T	W	R	F
Book Club	Race and Ethnicity	Film	Film	Discussion 2 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Senna 1-61 (up to “The Body of Luce Rivera”)	Omi and Winant	No reading	Haney-Lopez	
Book Discussion DUE			Shorty 1 DUE	

### Week Three – January 16-20

M	T	W	R	F
NO CLASS	Interracial Relationships	What Are You?	What Are You?	Discussion 3 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
(college-wide)	Wang AND Gaskins 87-127	Gaskins 19-39	Herman	
	Shorty 2 DUE			

### Week Four – January 23-27

M	T	W	R	F
Book Club	Phenotype	Ethnicity	Authenticity and Belonging	Discussion 4 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Senna 62-131 (up to “From Caucasia, with Love”)	Khanna + Johnson AND Gaskins 40-44, 128-131	Williams-Forson AND Gaskins 238-241	Twine AND Deters	
Book Discussion DUE	Shorty 3 DUE			

### Week Five – January 30 - February 3

M	T	W	R	F
Context	Check a Box	Check a Box	Check a Box	Discussion 5 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Deaux + Martin	Antman + Duncan	Campbell	Gaskins 46-86 AND racebox.org	
Midterm Check-In Meetings BEGIN			Group Selection DUE	

*Week Six – February 6-10*

M	T	W	R	F
Book Club	Exam Review	Midterm Exam	NO CLASS	Discussion 6 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Senna 133-208 (up to “Ashes and Elbow Grease”)	No reading	No reading	(college-wide)	
Book Discussion DUE	Shorty 4 DUE			

*Week Seven – February 13-17*

M	T	W	R	F
Discrimination	Identity: Frameworks	Identity: Options	Identity: Fluidity	Discussion 7 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Gaskins 134-163	Herring AND Rockquemore, Brunsma + Delgado	Liebler AND Gaskins 172-210	Doyle + Kao AND Gaskins 244-252	
			Last Day for Midterm Check-Ins	

*Week Eight – February 20-24*

M	T	W	R	F
NO CLASS (college-wide)	Book Club	Monoracial	Dating	Discussion 8 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
	Senna 209-289 (up to “Compared to What”)	Spickard	Gaskins 216-237	
	Book Discussion DUE		Group Project Person DUE	

*Week Nine – February 27 – March 3*

M	T	W	R	F
Sexualization	Immigration	Health	Colorblindness and Transracial?	Discussion 9 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Purdie-Vaughns + Eibach AND Gaskins 234-237	Lee + Bean	Bratter + Gorman	Bonilla-Silva AND Lewis	
			Visibility Study DUE	

*Week Ten – March 6-10*

M	T	W	R	F
Book Club	NO CLASS	Film	Film	Discussion 10 DUE Responses DUE SUNDAY
Senna 291-374 (up to “Wonders of the Invisible World”)	(college-wide)	No reading	No reading	
Book Discussion DUE Shorty 5 DUE				

<i>Week Eleven – March 13-17</i>				
M	T	W – 11:30-1:20pm	R	F
Film and Discussion	Group Presentations	Group Presentations	Group Presentations	
No reading	No reading	No reading	No reading	
	Shorty 6 DUE			

<i>Week Twelve – March 20-24– Final Exam Week</i>				
M	T – 9:30-11:30a	W	R	F
Final Book Club	Final Exam	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	
Senna 375-413 (finish book)	No reading			
Book Discussion DUE				

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact us as soon as possible.

The DRC office is located in B132 or you can call our reception desk at 425.564.2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Please visit our website for application information into our program and other helpful links at [www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc)

### **Disability Resource Center**

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination. We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.  
<http://bellevuecollege.edu/about/goals/inclusion.asp>

### **Academic Honesty and Integrity**

Cheating, stealing, and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Success for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct at [http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050\\_Student\\_Code.asp](http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050_Student_Code.asp)

### **Copyright Notice**

All documents disseminated by your instructor are under copyright by said instructor. Any re-use or distribution of these materials outside of our classroom without permission is copyright infringement and is considered a crime.

### **Final Comments**

It is my goal to make this course worth your time and effort. Therefore, I will do all that is reasonable and within my power to ensure that you learn and succeed. If you are concerned with any aspect of this course please feel free to contact me.