

Ethnic Studies 109
Introduction to Women's Studies

Instructor: Kimberly Pollock

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- **Required Texts:**
- **Amrita**
Banana Yoshimoto
- **Like Water for Chocolate**
Laura Esquivel
- **By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept**
Paulo Coelho
- **Temple of My Familiar**
Alice Walker
- **The Mistress of Spices**
Chitra Divakaruni

Course Description:

This course will employ a feminist analysis of the construction and enforcement of gender differences and gender inequalities in various contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the intersection of race, class, sexuality and nationality in the lives of women. Topics include feminist theory, motherhood, popular culture, sexual autonomy, racism, and activism in the United States.

This course is designed to explore the role that race, plays in our social, economic and political structure. Through readings from sociology and literature, will look at how this master constructs form culture.

Instructor's Philosophy:

I strongly believe that each of us is responsible for what happens in this classroom. Students are just as capable of making a class great as the instructor. We are studying communities and cultures, and in the process we are also creating a new community in our own classroom. We are all still striving, still learning. The key to a successful class is mutual responsibility. We all have a myriad of valuable insights to offer. I will expect each of you to be committed to the course, just as you will expect commitment from me. I am excited to learn with you. It is my hope that we can have a fun, enriching quarter. Therefore, expect to do a good bit of work, and plan on participating fully in class.

Policies in support of the Course Objectives:

1. Be Here! I expect each student to be in class, on time, each day, for the full time allotted for the class. Absences will affect the final grade in the following way: MORE THAN 5 ABSENCES FOR ANY REASON WILL RESULT IN THE STUDENT NOT BEING ALLOWED TO TAKE THE FINAL, AND THE STUDENT WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF "F" FOR THE COURSE. MISSING MORE THAN 15 MINUTES OF THE CLASS COUNTS AS AN ABSENCE. For more on the absence policy, consult the policy sheet for the Arts and Humanities Division.
2. Work must be turned in on time and presented in a professional manner.
3. We must listen to each other. This one will be difficult for all of us. We have to give respect, and create an atmosphere in the classroom where we can all feel comfortable enough to make mistakes. We must also be able to express our opinions even if what we have to say is not popular, or easily received. True learning can only take place in an atmosphere which is safe enough to examine any ideas which arise. It is the responsibility of each of us to keep this classroom safe.
4. In a similar vein as #3, I expect to hear from you. Part of the thought process is verbalization. Both speaking and writing help to clarify our thoughts. Participation counts. Therefore, I expect all students to be prepared for each class, and to contribute.

Tests, Projects and Papers:

- Each student will write three (3) essays, of 3-5 pages in length. Each paper will be worth 20% of the final grade.
- Twice a week students will turn in a 1-2 pg. response paper to the readings. These papers will be part of the class participation grade which will count for a total of 20% of the final grade.
- There will be a mid-term and a final exam at the end of the quarter. Each exam will be worth 20% of the final grade.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop interdisciplinary connections while exploring the sources of identity and intercultural conflict.
- To develop teamwork and collaborative skills while cooperating in an intellectual endeavor; to investigate ideas together, respect others' insights and opinions, and develop areas of consensus and agreement.
- To develop self-reliance and responsibility for one's own learning: taking initiative, following up ideas and intuitions, evaluating one's own progress, and developing learning goals.
- To learn methods of discussion and discourse of a controversial and complex topic.

- To develop critical reading skills; to be able to understand, and weigh the strength and weakness of, an author's argument.
- To develop research skills and the ability to support an original thesis.
- To practice and improve writing effectiveness, become more aware of the process of writing, and be better able to gauge the competence of one's work.
- To investigate the sources of international conflict, and evaluate the relative importance of social, political and economic factors in leading to conflict.
- To become a decent human being.
- To understand the ways in which self-concept, culture, beliefs, values, the environment, and behavior interact.
- To develop an appreciation for the wide diversity of human identities as well as an appreciation for common threads and values.
- To develop competencies in functioning in a diverse global society, making cross-cultural interactions more productive and rewarding.

If you have a documented disability that will require some type of accommodation, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can make whatever arrangements necessary.

My office hours are for your use. Come and see me any time you have a question of a problem with the course or your work.

I am looking forward to this quarter, and hope that we can do good things together.