

Language, Thought, and Culture ENGL 381, section 1

10:00-11:15 M, W
Prim Library 213
Spring Semester 2015

Instructor: Laura Wetherington
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Office: 2nd floor TCES
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. & 4-5 p.m.

Required Books:

1. *Language and Culture*. Claire Kramsch. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780194372145
2. *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*. 9th ed. Paula S. Rothenberg and Kelly S. Mayhew, editors. Worth Publishers. ISBN: 9781429242172
3. *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Gloria Anzaldua. Aunt Lute Books. ISBN-10: 1879960850
4. *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Claudia Rankine. Graywolf Press. ISBN: 9781555976903

Course Description:

Language, Thought, and Culture is a study of the relationships between words and thought, and between language and culture. We will explore the origins of words and how changes in meaning over time reflect and influence changes in cultural values, beliefs, and aspirations. The theoretical examination of language, thought, and culture will be balanced by real-world discussions of how language and thought create social categories in the contemporary United States. Through analysis of the categories of race, class, and gender, students in this class will be preparing to understand how identities in contemporary culture are constructed in language and thought, and how the relationships between race, class, and gender have been constructed historically.

Student Outcomes: On successful completion of this course, students will be practiced in critical reading skills and writing well-constructed arguments that matter in a variety of academic contexts. They will be equipped to read actively, question critically, generate research questions, and understand academic writing as a process of discovery. They will, in addition, extend the practices of library research developed in English 102.

Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes: Student outcomes will be assessed using the following:

1. Class Preparation, In-Class Discussions, Small-Group Presentations and General Participation
2. Three essays and other written work
3. Student Participation in a Research Cluster

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Please plan to attend every class and stay for the entire period. If you know you will need to leave early on any given day, please let me know before class begins.

After your third absence, each absence will result in a reduction of one letter grade. For example, if you have an 85% at the end of the semester and have missed 5 classes, then your grade will be dropped to a 65%. Chronic lateness will accrue toward absences.

Some absences may be excused and will not adversely affect students' grades. All excused absences require documentation. These include absences followed by a note from a medical facility identifying you were under medical care during scheduled class time and absences followed by documentation of a school-related trip. Other absences may be excused if the situation warrants. It is the students' responsibility to see me to discuss the nature of the absence.

When you plan to be absent, you are responsible for making arrangements in advance for turning in assignments that are due while you are away. Please make it your responsibility to find out what you missed in class and to be fully prepared for the next session.

Conferences and Office Hours

Feel free to drop by my office if you have any questions or problems concerning this class. If you are unable to see me during my office hours, please send me an e-mail so we can set up an appointment that fits into your schedule.

Late Work

As a general rule, I do not accept late work. This policy is borne out of our school's core theme of professional preparedness. Most of the work for this class is outlined in this syllabus, so please plan in advance to complete your assignments on time using this document as a guide. If you find yourself behind on an assignment, please turn in what you have completed by the deadline. Of course, everyone runs into difficulties outside of one's control. If you find yourself in one of those situations, please let me know. We can plan together for how best to meet the remaining assignment deadlines for the course.

Draft Review

I will be happy to review your draft with you in person during my office hours or by appointment. However, I will not comment on drafts by e-mail.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones, mp3 players, and computers create distractions in the classroom. Use of these devices, therefore, is not acceptable during class time. Failure to comply with this policy will affect your final grade.

Turnitin.com

Most written assignments will be turned in using turnitin.com. We'll go over how to do this in class. To enroll in this class on turnitin, you'll have to first create a user account (if you haven't already done so). Then, you can locate the class with the class id 9358448 and enroll with the password "bluebird." Please make sure you allow yourself some wiggle room for trouble-

shooting technical difficulties when turning in assignments. Don't wait until the last minute to upload your work.

Grades: The grades you will receive for your work are identical to the official SNC catalog:

Grade	Explanation	Grade Point Equivalent	Percentage Points
A	Excellent	4.0	100-92
A-	Excellent	3.7	91-90
B+	Above Average	3.3	89-88
B	Above Average	3.0	87-82
B-	Above Average	2.7	81-80
C+	Average	2.3	79-78
C	Average	2.0	77-72
C-	Average	1.7	71-70
D+	Below Average	1.3	69-68
D	Below Average	1.0	67-62
D-	Below Average	0.7	61-60
F	Failing	0.0	59-

Coursework and Grade Breakdown:

Participation

300 points

For the purposes of this class, your general participation means that you have prepared for class in good faith and have done your homework on time; made a proactive, concerted effort to understand the course material; brought all the materials necessary for each class including your computer and any of the texts covered in that day's homework; consistently contributed vocally to discussions; created space for the inclusion of your classmates in discussion; and paid attention to, listened to, and respected the opinions of your fellow classmates.

Full credit for group participation means that you have coordinated with your group to prepare a short presentation of the assigned article or chapter and have developed discussion questions that reflect critical thinking and elicit careful, detailed answers from your classmates. Participation grades will be tallied twice during the semester.

Reading Log

100 points

This is your reader-response log. Here you will document your responses to each of the reading assignments. Elaborate on at least one point from each day's reading and discuss what you've learned in a full paragraph. The reading log is an opportunity to flesh-out questions and ideas for in-class discussion and to begin the analysis you will further develop in your essays. The log will be collected and assessed twice during the semester.

First Essay: Autobiographical Sketch

200 points

This 6-8 page paper will cover some aspect of your awareness of your race, class, or gender consciousness. You may discuss one or several of these awareness issues. You should be able to incorporate assigned readings into your account for clarity and critical support of your insights.

Choose an experience or experiences from your life which provided a powerful challenge to your thinking and living. Essays must be double-spaced, typed, Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1" margins all around, and follow MLA formatting. No late papers.

Second Essay: Critical/Analytical Response

100 points

This 4-6 page essay should be a well-thought out critical/analytical response to either *Borderlands/La Frontera*, *Citizen: An American Lyric*, or both books. Be sure to re-cap any points/arguments within the texts, state your position, and offer evidence. You are welcome to include your emotional responses, but do not limit your discussion to emotional response. Essays must be double-spaced, typed, Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1" margins all around, and follow MLA formatting. No late papers.

Research Project

300 points

In research clusters of two to four people, students will write an 8-10 page collaborative paper. The steps of the research project include:

One-page prospectus (25 points)

Your prospectus should include the topic of your paper, a focused direction for your research, and must be signed by all members of your group.

Final research paper (200 points)

This collaboratively researched and collaboratively written 8-10 page paper should show application of your critical and analytical skills in a focused discussion of your topic. Your topic must be relevant to the themes we've discussed this semester. Essays must be double-spaced, typed, Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1" margins all around, and follow MLA formatting. No late papers.

Group presentation (50 points)

Group presentations will present the findings in your paper. More details and a rubric for presentations will be given later.

One-page performance report (25 points)

Your performance report should discuss your individual participation, your challenges, and your victories as a part of your research cluster.

SPRING 2015 READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

The dates below are due dates. Please complete the assignments and readings in advance of class time. This schedule is subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with in-class and email announcements about changes to our schedule. Unless otherwise noted, written assignments are due before class begins on turnitin.com.

Week One

W 1/21

Introductions

Week Two

M 1/26

Read Language and Culture (L&C) chapter 1

Write Reading Log

W 1/28

Read

from Race, Class, and Gender in the United States (R, C &G)

Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity by

Michael S. Kimmel

White Privilege, Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh

Night to His Day: the Social Constructions of Gender by Judith Lorber

Class in America—2012 by Gregory Mantsios

Write Reading Log

Week Three

M 2/1

Read L&C chapter 2

Write Reading Log

W 2/4

Read

(R, C &G)

Testimony by Sonny Singh

The Problem: Discrimination by U. S. Commission on Civil Rights

Tucson's Ousted Mexican American Studies Director Speaks: The Fight's Not Over by Julianne Hing

Women in the State Police: Trouble in the Ranks by Jonathan Schuppe

Write Reading Log

Week Four

M 2/9

Read L&C chapters 3 & 4

Write Reading Log

W 2/11

Read

(R, C &G)

The Making of the American 99% and the Collapse of the Middle Class by Barbara and John Ehrenreich

Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival by U. S. Commission on Human Rights

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 1954

Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex by Angela Davis

This Person Doesn't Sound White by Ziba Kashef

Write Reading Log

Week Five

M 2/16 President's Day—NO CLASS

W 2/18

Read L&C chapter 5

Write Reading Log

Week Six

M 2/23

Read

(R, C &G)

The Ethics of Living Jim Crow: An Autobiographical Sketch by Richard Wright

Civilize Them With a Stick by Mary Brave Bird (Crow Dog) with Richard Erdoes

Family Ties and the Entanglements of Caste by Joseph Berger

Pigskin, Patriarchy, and Pain by Don Sabo

Write Reading Log

W 2/25

Read L&C chapters 6 & 7

Write Reading Log

Week Seven

M 3/2

Write First Essay: Autobiographical Sketch due (via turnitin.com); Reading Log due (hard copy or turnitin.com)

W 3/4

Read Borderlands/La Frontera pgs 20-73

Write Reading Log

In-class Activities Introduction to Literary Analysis

Week Eight

M 3/9

Read

(R, C &G)

Domination and Subordination by Jean Baker Miller

Defining Racism: Can We Talk? by Beverly Daniel Tatum

Crossing the Border without Losing Your Past by Oscar Casares

For Many Latinos, Racial Identity is More Culture than Color by Mireya Navarro

Write Reading Log

W 3/11

Read Borderlands/La Frontera pgs 75-113

Write Reading Log

Week Nine

M 3/16 –SPRING BREAK

W 3/18—SPRING BREAK

Week Ten

M 3/23

Read Citizen pgs 1-79

Write Reading Log

****Begin thinking about who you'd like to partner with for the research cluster and what you'd like to research. Proposals, signed by all group members, are due April 13th.**

W 3/25

Read

(R, C &G)

Requiem for the Champ by June Jordan

C.P. Ellis by Studs Terkel

Racial Formations by Michael Omi and Howard Winant

Write Reading Log

Week Eleven

M 3/30

Read Citizen pgs 82-161

Write Reading Log

W 4/1

Read

(R, C &G)

The Plutocratic Culture: Institutions, Values, and Ideologies by Michael Parenti

Dred Scott v. Sandford, 1857

More Blacks Live with Pollution by the Associated Press

Write Reading Log

Week Twelve

M 4/6

Read

(R, C &G)

Rethinking Volunteerism in America by Gavin Leonard

Interrupting the Cycle of Oppression: The Role of Allies as Agents of Change by Andrea Ayvazian

Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference by Audre Lorde

A New Vision of Masculinity by Cooper Thompson

Write Reading Log

W 4/8

Write Second Essay: Critical/Analytical Response due (via turnitin.com) Reading Log due (via turnitin.com or hard copy in class)

In-class Activities Introduction to Research

Week Thirteen

M 4/13

Read Group Research

Write Develop Presentation/Final Paper; One-page prospectus due for each group, signed by all group members (hard copy in class)

W 4/15

Read Group Research

Write Develop Presentation/Final Paper

Week Fourteen

M 4/20

Read Group Research

Write Develop Presentation/Final Paper

W 4/22

Read Group Research

Write Develop Presentation/Final Paper

Week Fifteen

M 4/27

Read Group Research

Write Develop Presentation/Final Paper

W 4/29

Read Group Research

Write Develop Presentation/Final Paper

Week Sixteen

M 5/4 Last day of class

Read Group Research

Write Research Paper Due (hard copy—one per group)

In-class Activities Research Presentation Prep

W 5/6 No class-study day

Final Exam Period

Group Presentations due; One-Page Performance Report due (one per person)

SCHOOL POLICIES

Sierra Nevada College Mission Statement: Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

Core Themes: Liberal Arts, Professional Preparedness, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Sustainability

Learning Differences: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, hconover@sierranevada.edu.

The Honor Code: The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code: SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the Honor Code and the consequences of violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM and FABRICATION and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code become part of a student's academic record.

- 1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

The SNC Email System: The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year.

Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having email redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC email account.

WRITING RESOURCES

The Prim Library (<http://libguides.sierranevada.edu/library>) which, in addition to its book collection, houses:

Interlibrary Loan This service allows you to obtain articles or borrow books from other libraries. Some of the library's databases allow direct requests through the database interface. The online catalog allows holds to be placed using your library barcode number.

Scarsella-Boleky Tutoring Center (3rd floor Prim Library) Tutoring is available at no charge, not only to SNC students, but also to members of the Incline Village community. We only provide Tutoring services when our Fall and Spring semesters are in session, and only if qualified Tutors are available. You can also schedule one-on-one tutoring appointments in the following subject areas. To schedule, please fill out the [Tutoring Request Form](#) on the SNC website. Please be considerate and cancel by 10am on the day of your session. Repeated no-shows will be turned away for future appointments.

Incline Village Public Library One of the privileges of being a Sierra Nevada College student, staff or faculty member is that you are eligible to be a member of the Washoe County Public Library system at the Incline Village Public Library. This membership enables Sierra Nevada College students to have easy access to the print, video, and other collections of the Washoe Library system. SNC students are encouraged to enroll and use the Washoe County Public Library system. Washoe County Public Library Cards can be obtained at the Incline Village Public Library, 845 Alder Ave., Incline Village, NV 89451

The Eagle's Eye Newspaper The Eagle's Eye is a student-run publication which covers news of interest and importance to the greater Sierra Nevada College community.

Sierra Nevada Review The Sierra Nevada Review is an annual literary magazine published in May featuring poetry and short fiction. Editors read manuscripts from September until March (manuscripts submitted outside of the reading period risk a long, dusty dormancy). Response time may vary between a month and several months. The editorial staff changes on a yearly basis with the exception of advisory editor, June Sylvester Saraceno.

Writers in the Woods Reading Series: The Creative Writing Department has organized a series of readings and workshops. The Friday night readings remain free and open to all. Workshops

are open to the community for a \$50 registration fee, and may be taken for credit or non-credit. The eclectic group of writers offers something for a wide range of interests—from history to science, drama, politics, comedy and, of course, literature.