

IAH 207: Literature, Cultures, and Identities
MW 3:00 pm – 4:20 pm; Akers Hall 137
Ideas of Race and Identity

Lead Instructor:

Kristie Dotson
Office: 514 South Kedzie Hall
Office Hour: W 1:50-2:50 pm

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Assisting Instructor:

Andrea Walsh
Office: 542 South Kedzie Hall
Office Hours: Th 4:15 – 6:15 pm & by Appt.
Sections under Supervision:
Section 058: TH 12:40 – 1:30 pm
Section 059: TH 1:50 – 2:40 pm
Section 060: TH 3:00 – 3:50 pm

Department of Philosophy
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Engineering Building 1202
Engineering Building 1202
Engineering Building 2320

Assisting Instructor:

Michael Brown
Office: 529 South Kedzie Hall
Office Hours: MW 1:30 – 2:30 pm & by Appt.
Sections under Supervision:
Section 061: F 10:20 – 11:10 am
Section 062: F 11:30 am – 12:20 pm
Section 063: F 12:40 – 1:30 pm

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Engineering Building 2205
Engineering Building 2243
Engineering Building 3400

Assisting Instructor:

Lauren Woomer
Office: 539 South Kedzie Hall
Office Hours: MW 1:30 – 2:30 pm & by Appt.
Sections under Supervision:
Section 064: TH 12:40 – 1:30 pm
Section 065: TH 1:50 – 2:40 pm
Section 066: TH 3:00 – 3:50 pm

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Natural Science Bldg 205
Natural Science Bldg 205
Natural Science Bldg 204

Goals of Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities:

Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities at MSU seeks to assist students to become more familiar with ways of knowing in the arts and humanities and to be more knowledgeable and capable in a range of intellectual and expressive abilities. IAH courses encourage students to engage critically with their own society, history and culture(s); they also encourage students to learn more about the history and culture of other societies. They focus on key ideas and issues in human experience; encourage appreciation of the roles of knowledge and values in shaping and understanding human behavior; emphasize the responsibilities and opportunities of democratic citizenship; to important issues that occur among peoples in an increasingly interconnected interdependent world.

Catalog Course Description of IAH 207:

An exploration in how literature reflects, creates, and challenges cultural and individual identities. Approaches and materials from literature, philosophy, the arts, religion, and history.

Course Focus:

In this course, we will track the evolution of several ideas of race. In an effort to gain a perspective on the power of ideas, this class will trace the development of several ideas of race. We will look at attempts to define and create the concept of 'race.' We will attempt to trace the idea in terms of the role it has served in literature and historical events. And we will ultimately attempt to answer questions as to whether 'ideas of race' have improved our lives to date. We will address the topic of this course by progressing through Four Parts:

1. Race: Creating Socially Significant Difference.
2. Race: In the Interest of Science...
3. Race: Human Types and Being Human...
4. Race: Racial Identity?

We will draw on a range of significant texts representing several disciplinary perspectives, including philosophy, literature, film, and history. The overall goal of the course is to offer students a chance to learn, think, write, and discuss an idea that has been one of the forces engineering societal value and behavior for at least the past 400 years.

Student Learning Goals:

- To acquaint yourselves with various ways of knowing in the arts and humanities
- To enhance and develop your critical thinking skills
- To practice interpretative skills of diverse kinds of information
- To become acquainted with the power of ideas for orienting societal values and human behavior

Class Assignments:

Discussion Questions (DQs): Students are required to turn in a 3X5 index card with 1) your name, 2) the date, and 3) a question or comment on the current day's reading/activity. Recording who turns in these cards is how attendance will be taken in the recitation sections. Be sure to turn in your cards to the Assisting Instructor supervising your section upon entering class and recitation session.

Students are automatically given 10% credit for their DQ percentage. All students are allowed 3 times to fail to turn in a DQ card for the general lecture (General lecture classes are classes held on Mondays and Wednesdays. See also the Attendance Policy for Recitation Sections.). Every additional missed or incomplete DQ will result in lowering your DQ percentage by 3.3%. For example, a total of four missing DQs will result in receiving a DQ percentage of 6.7% (10% - 3.3%). Five missing DQs will result in receiving a DQ percentage of 3.4%. The sixth missing DQ will result in a DQ percentage of 0%.

Essay Assignments: There are two sets of essay assignments in this class (4 essays total). Each set is composed of two position papers. A position paper is a paper that expresses a conclusion or recommends a position concerning some contested issue. In this class, a position paper is required to include an argument that should take the form of a clearly articulated position followed by reasons to support that particular position. Each of the two sets of papers will require you to articulate and defend a particular position and an opposing position. For example, the first paper set includes the Class Essay and the Enhanced Class Essay. The **Class Essay** is an 800-1000-word essay that I assign to the entire class where you will take a position on a particular issue from previous class topics. The **Enhanced Class Essay** is a rewritten version of the first paper with the inclusion of another 500-750 words arguing for an opposing position.

Final Exam: The final exam is not cumulative. It will cover the material from the third and fourth parts of the reading schedule (Weeks 8-15). The test will be composed of short answer, true and false questions, and a few short essay questions. You will be provided with a study sheet in the last week of class to orient your study for this exam.

Grade Distribution:

Class Essay	20%
Enhanced Class Paper	10%
Sections Essay	20%
Enhanced Sections Essay	10%
Discussion Questions	10%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
	100%

Overall Grading Scale

4 = 100-90%
3.5 = 89-85%
3 = 84-80%
2.5 = 79-75%
2 = 74-70%
1 = 69-60%
0 = 59-0%

Grading Criteria:

Essay assignments will be graded on: clarity of the main thesis, soundness of the arguments used to support the thesis, the use of relevant course material and discussion, and grammatical correctness. In the enhanced essays, you will also be required to give considerable attention to possible objections to your position.

The final exam will be graded on the demonstration of your knowledge of the material. Short answer and true/false questions will have right and wrong answers. The essay questions, however, will be graded on how well you defend your answer (i.e. your argument for a given answer).

Course Texts

Bernasconi, Robert and Tommy Lott, eds. *The Idea of Race*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2000.

Butler, Octavia. *Lilith's Brood*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2007.

Larsen, Nella. *Passing*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2007.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. New York, Hill and Wang, 2006

Required Materials:

3x5 Index Cards

Format of the Course:

There will be a general class session, held Mondays and Wednesday, which will be conducted by the Lead Instructor. That class will be composed of mostly lecture and occasional group work assignments.

Recitation sessions will be conducted at various times on Thursdays and Fridays. The Assisting Instructor assigned to a given section conducts those sessions. Make sure to consult your schedules to identify the Assisting Instructor leading your recitation session (this is the same person you will turn your DQs into daily).

Any and all grading for this course is conducted by the Assisting Instructors. Not only do they conduct the "break-out" sessions, but they also grade all of the assignments for the sections they supervise. I have complete confidence in their abilities and fairness. If you have a question about your grade, you need to address the Assisting Instructor supervising your section. They are the people you will be dealing with concerning your assignment grades. In extreme and special cases, I will review a grade on an assignment. However, you should know that when asking me, as the Lead Instructor, to review your paper and subsequent grade, you are asking me to re-grade your assignment. If I deem the Assisting Instructor's grade to be too lenient, I will lower your grade as I judge appropriate. In short, make sure you actually have a legitimate grade complaint before you allow the issue to escalate to the point where my grading services are needed.

It is your responsibility to be in class. Neither I, as the Lead Instructor, nor the Assisting Instructors perform "make-up" lectures in our offices or recitation sections to catch absent students up on material they were not in class to receive. Please, take the time to get to know other students in the class with whom you can share class notes and direct inquiries concerning missed lectures. Recitation sections serve a range of purposes, including clarifying points from the lecture. One purpose they do not serve, however, is a way for you to catch up on missed lectures. However, if you find yourself unable to understand certain points due to a missed lecture, please feel free to arrange a meeting time with the Assisting Instructor heading your section at which time you can pose *specific questions* about the course material.

Attendance Policy for Recitation Sections:

All students are allowed *two excused absences* from recitation sections (“break-out” sessions held on Thursdays and Fridays) during the course of the semester. Every absence over the excused two absences will result in lowering your overall grade. Each additional absence over the excused two absences will lower your overall grade percentage by 2.5 %. For example, a total of four absences will result in receiving a grade percentage deduction of 5%. Five absences will result in receiving a grade percentage reduction of 7.5% and so on. Attendance will be taken by recording the DQs turned in for the day’s recitation section.

Late Policy for All Classes (General Lectures and Recitation Sections):

Discussion question will be turned in at the beginning of class. You need to be on-time. You are allowed to be late (arriving more than 5 minutes after the beginning of class) *three times* before you begin to lose overall grade percentage points. Each additional late appearance in class over the three excused instances will result in lowering your overall percentage grade .5%. For example, a total of four late appearances will result in receiving a grade percentage deduction of .5%. Five late appearances will result in receiving a grade percentage reduction of 1% and so on. Since the Assisting Instructor leading your section will collect DQs at the beginning of class, they will be recording your lateness.

Late Work:

We do not accept late work, although we do accept work done in advance. You may not skip class and attempt to email us the work that is due – you must physically turn in your work to us if you have not made a previously agreed upon arrangement with us. You also may not come to class more than 10 minutes late and try to turn in the work. All assignments will be collected in the first 10 minutes of class. No work, including DQs, will be collected after those initial 10 minutes.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities should provide me with a copy of her/his VISA. We will be happy to provide aid in any way we can to shape assignments and instruction to meet your academic needs. If you have yet to procure a VISA, please, contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, call 353-9642 (voice), 355-1293 (TTY), or visit MyProfile.rcpd.msu.edu.

Academic Honesty:

In this class, **all** of your work is to be done only by yourself. All work is individual work. Plagiarism is presenting the work or ideas of another person as if they are one’s own. I will not consider any instances of plagiarism to be ‘accidental’ or done ‘with good will’. Examples of plagiarism include, but **are not limited to:** 1) Putting your name on group work to which you have not contributed equally; 2) Submitting work that has been purchased or given to you; 3) Turning in work that you have merely agreed with, but not thought of yourself; 4) Submitting work that was found online; and 5) Incorporating the words of an author without giving that author due credit. There is a minimum of one of two penalties for plagiarism in my class:

- 1.) You will receive a zero on the plagiarized assignment.
- 2.) You will receive a failing grade for the class and your academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean.

Subsequently, at my discretion, I reserve the option to pursue further university action against any student who commits plagiarism. If you have further questions see the Ombudsperson's web page <<https://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestystud.html>>.

Tentative Reading Schedule

IR = *Idea of Race*

Octavia Butler's novel, *Dawn*, can be found in *Lilith's Brood*

Week 1-4: Race: Creating Socially Significant Difference

Week One:

M – 1/10: Introduction

W – 1/12: François Bernier, "A New Division of the Earth" (IR: 1-4)

François-Marie Voltaire, "Of the Different Races of Men" (IR: 5-7)

Week Two:

M – 1/17: NO CLASS

W – 1/19: Immanuel Kant, "Of the Different Races" (IR: 8-23); Part I

Week Three:

M – 1/24: Immanuel Kant, "Of the Different Races" (IR: 8-23); Part II

Johann Gottfried von Herder *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humankind*
(IR: 23 – 26)

W – 1/26: Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, "On the Natural Variety of Mankind" (IR: 27-37)

Week Four:

M – 1/31: Movie: *Race: The Illusion of Race, Part I*
Class Essay Assigned

Week 5-8: Race: In the Interest of Science...

W – 2/2: Arthur de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races* (IR: 45-53)

Week Five:

M – 2/7: Charles Darwin, "On the Races of Men" (IR: 54-78); Part I

W – 2/9: Charles Darwin, "On the Races of Men" (IR: 54-78); Part II

Francis Galton, "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope, and Aims" (IR: 79-83)

Week Six:

M – 2/14: Eugenics and Nazi Politics (ANGEL)

Class Essay Due

W – 2/16: Movie: *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Part II & Nazi Medicine*
Race, Eugenics and Nazi Politics (ANGEL)

Week Seven:

M – 2/21: Elie Wiesel, *Night* (3-46)

W – 2/23: *Night* (47-84)

Week Eight:

M – 2/28: *Night* (85-115)

Week 9-12: Race: On Human Types and Being Human...

W – 3/2: Franz Boas, “Instability of Human Types” (IR: 84-88)

SPRING BREAK – 3/7 – 3/11

Week Nine:

M – 3/14: Alain Locke, “The Concept of Race as Applied to Social Culture” (IR: 89-99)
Enhanced Class Essay Due
Sections Essay Assigned

W – 3/16: Ashley Montagu, “The Concept of Race in the Human Species in the Light of Genetics” (IR: 100-107)

Week Ten:

M – 3/21: Octavia Butler, *Dawn* (5-44)

W – 3/23: *Dawn* (45-96)

Week Eleven:

M – 3/28: *Dawn* (96-144)

Sections Essay Due

W – 3/31: *Dawn* (144-180)

Week Twelve:

M – 4/4: *Dawn* (181-248)

W – 4/6: NO CLASS

Carla Kaplan, “Introduction: Nella Larson’s Erotics of Race” (*Passing* ix-xxvii)

Week 13- 15: Race: Racial Identity?

Week Thirteen:

M – 4/11: Alcoff, “Habits of Hostility: On Seeing Race” (ANGEL)

W – 4/13: Nella Larson, *Passing* (5-35)

Week Fourteen:

M – 4/18: *Passing* (35-59)

W – 4/20: *Passing* (59-82)

Enhanced Sections Essay Due

Week Fifteen:

M – 4/25 Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (IR: 181-212); Part I

W – 4/27: Conclusion: Race as a Social Phenomenon
Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (IR: 181-212); Part II
Movie: *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Part III*

Final Exam, May 3, 2010, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Have a great summer!