WGSS 286: History of Race & Sexuality in the U.S.
Fall 2021

Instructor: Derek Siegel
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Instructor Pronouns: they/them/theirs
Zoom Office Hours: Mon 4:00-5:15pm EST
To schedule, send me an email!

Class Meetings: Wed* 4:00-5:15pm EST
Classroom: South College W219

*We will only have one synchronous meeting per week, on Wednesday afternoons – with the exception of Week Three (we will be meeting on Monday 9/13)

Course Description
This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary feminist study of sexuality and race. Its primary goal is to provide a forum for students to consider histories of the concepts of sexuality and race in the U.S. We will explore these concepts through theoretical frameworks within and outside of WGSS. It will emphasize the links rather than differences between theory and practice and between cultural, material, and historical approaches to bodies, race, gender, and sexuality. Throughout the course, we will consider contemporary U.S. politics in light of histories of racial and sexual formations, and how these formations shape our own subjectivities.

Course Objectives
• To provide a critical introduction to the concepts of sexuality and race in the U.S.
• To provide an introduction to the historical interconnectedness of formations of race and sexuality in the U.S.
• To emphasize the role of sexuality and race in the formation of the modern self and its social, legal, political, and cultural frames of reference
• To insist on the necessary relationship between theory and lived experiences of bodies

Readings
I have assigned a mix between journal articles, think pieces, book chapters, and other texts. Readings should be done for the date they are listed under on the syllabus. Sometimes I assign only excerpts of a reading, so please pay careful attention to page numbers. Everything without a link on this syllabus is available for free on Moodle.

Weekly Work Flow (A mix of synchronous and asynchronous)
While you have assigned readings and discussion questions for both Mondays and Wednesdays, we will only meet once per week from 4pm – 5:15pm EST. I will not be collecting written responses to discussion questions. Rather, they will help prepare you for our conversation on Wednesday. Mini-recorded lectures will be posted on Mondays to correspond with those readings. We will also be using Slack throughout the week to continue discussion.

Mondays – 1) Read/View Assigned Texts, 2) Watch 5-10 minute recorded lecture, and 3) spend 10-15 minutes responding to discussion questions (for our weekly in-person class). Since we aren’t meeting, some people might find it useful to spend their weekly 20 minutes on Slack on Monday afternoons. I will also be available during that time for office house.

Wednesdays – Come to class prepared to review both sets of readings and discussion questions.

Note: Class is cancelled on Monday 9/6 and Monday 10/11, so there are no required readings on these days. For Week Three, we will meet on Monday 9/13 (no class on Wednesday 9/15)
Anytime during the week – Spend at least 20 minutes on Slack reading and commenting on various discussions (we’ll review slack during the first week, don’t worry if you’re not familiar). Channels for you to engage in include: readings (what stands out, favorite quotes, questions, etc), discussion questions (start and/or continue the conversation), and general (how do you see the content connecting to the news or other aspects of your life? Share and discuss outside sources).

**How to Use Which Technologies (Moodle v Email v Slack)**

**Accessing Assigned Readings & Recorded Mini-Lecture (Moodle)**

All Readings Will Already Be Up on Moodle

Mini-lectures (on Mondays) will be posted in a folder on top of Moodle page.

**Submitting Assignments – Short Essays & Final Project Components (Moodle)**

Discussion Questions – I will email discussion questions on Monday and Wednesday mornings (once I write them!), as well as post them on our Slack workspace.

Office Hours – On Mondays, 4:00 – 5:15pm EST I will be available via zoom, Slack, or email to discuss readings, assignments, check-in, or just chat. I’ll create one-on-one zoom calls for anyone who’d rather talk face-to-face than over chat/e-mail. Limited in-person hours available.

**Course Requirements & Evaluation**

1. **Active Participation (25%)**
   Based on 1) attending and participating in discussion groups, 2) your participation on the Slack workspace (students should spend at least 20 minutes on Slack/week), and 3) coming to office hours during Weeks Four or Five (I’ll share more info about that!).

   The participation grade will be based, in part, on several self-evaluations throughout the semester, probably on Weeks Six and Ten.

   Note: For now, I have no specific expectations for Slack participation, other than that you’re reading and posting (at least part of the time in response to others), engaging course content, and practicing respectful dialogue. Depending on how things go, we might come up with more specific expectation, which I’d communicate clearly.

2. **Short Essays (45%)** – Each short essay (2-3 pages) is worth 15% of final grade. I will make the prompts and rubrics available at least one week before the deadline.

   **Short Analysis of Course Readings** – Due Friday 9/24 (15%)
   **Short Analysis of Course Readings** – Due Friday 10/22 (15%)
   **Short Reflection Paper** – Due Friday 11/12 (15%)

3. **Final Project (30%)** – Each student will select a topic that they will explore through the lens of race and sexuality, including readings from the syllabus and their own outside research. This assignment is not meant to replicate what we’ve already covered, so you’ll need to choose a different topic or stake out a specific sub-topic within something we’ve already covered. The early proposal will let me give feedback, and as the date gets closer I’ll share more info!

   **Final Project Proposal** – Due Friday 11/19 (5%)
   **Final Project Paper (5 Pages)** – Due Wednesday 12/15 (25%)
**Academic Honesty & Writing Support**
I expect you to write your own original content and adhere to high levels of academic honesty. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary action and will receive an “F” in the course. You are encouraged to read and discuss course topics widely; however, make sure to use your own words and cite others when you’re referencing ideas that are not your own. If you’re overwhelmed, please don’t plagiarize! I’m a resource, as well as the research librarians and the Writing Center, which provides free, 1-on-1 help by appointment.

**Disability & General Accommodations**
Whether or not you have official disability accommodations, I encourage you to meet with me in office hours or via email to discuss any issues you may anticipate this semester. The sooner we talk, the better! I understand that we’re living in a pandemic and that you all are not only taking other classes, but negotiating a wide range of other stressors and responsibilities. Which is to say that I’ll do my best to reasonably accommodate your needs. Don’t hesitate to reach out.

**COVID-Safety and Precautions**
All students should follow university guidelines, regarding vaccination, testing, and masks. As we learn more about what COVID has in store for us, we’ll make collaborative decisions about what we expect from one another. Communication is key so that we can all feel as safe as possible.

**Course Readings** – Highlighted dates are when we will meet, synchronously, in-person.
Please come prepared to discuss all readings assigned for the week.

Unit 1: Introduction + Key Terms

**Week One – Syllabus Review**

**Wed Sept 1**
Please read the syllabus for our first meeting! Come with questions 😊

**Week Two – Intersectionality, Structure, Social Constructs**

Mon Sept 6 – No Class, Labor Day

**Wed Sept 8**

**Week Three – Sex & Sexualities**

**Mon Sept 13**
Wed Sept 15th – Last Day of Add/Drop / Class Cancelled, Yom Kippur

Week Four – Race & White Supremacy

Mon Sept 20th

Wed Sept 22nd

Unit 2: Producing “Other-ness”: A Historical Perspective

Week Five – Eugenics & Reproductive Justice

Mon Sept 27th

Wed Sept 29th
2. 10 Reasons to Rethink Overpopulation – Population & Development Program @ Hampshire

Week Six – Xenophobia, Othering, and Being an “American”

Mon Oct 4th

Wed Oct 6th
   https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1184607.shtml
**Week Seven – Constructing “Normal” Sexuality**

Mon Oct 11th – No Class, Indigenous People’s Day

Wed Oct 13th

Unit 3: Contemporary Sexual and Racial Politics

**Week Eight – More than the Nuclear Family: How We Take Care of Each Other**

Mon Oct 18th

Wed Oct 20th

**Week Nine – “Just Not Attracted to People Like You,” Manufacturing Desire**

Mon Oct 25th

Wed Oct 27th

**Week Ten – Creating the Modern LGBT Movement**

Mon Nov 1st
Wed Nov 3rd
1. Read all three “Against Equality” Memos (they’re each extremely short!)
   http://www.againstequality.org/about/marriage/
   http://www.againstequality.org/about/military/
   http://www.againstequality.org/about/prison/


Week Eleven – Sex Work & Racial Justice

Mon Nov 8th

   Workers in the United States.” pp. 15-21

   impacts-sex-workers-just-like-predicted/

Wed Nov 10th
1. Khan, Cristina. 2019. “Constructing Eroticized Latinidad: Negotiating Profitability in the

Unit 4: Anti-Racism & Solidarity

Week Twelve – Transnational Feminisms

Mon Nov 15th
1. Dependency Theory (1 page): https://udel.edu/~jdeiner/depend.html

   So Could Organized Workers.” https://jacobinmag.com/2021/03/ever-given-suez-canal-global-
   supply-chains-economy-workers


Wed Nov 17th
   Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others.” pp. 783-790.

   transnationalism* 3 (2): pp. 6-16.

Week Thirteen – No Class

Mon Nov 22nd – Class Cancelled
Wed Nov 24th – No Class, Thanksgiving Break
Week Fourteen – Politicizing Everyday Life

Mon Nov 29th

**Wed Dec 1st**

Week Fifteen – To be Determined

Mon Dec 6th
Wed Dec 8th