EPSY 199: Whiteness and the University Discovery Course
Ethnography of the University Initiative
Wednesdays 3:00-5:45 pm
236 Wohlers
Spring 2010

Instructor:
Lisa B. Spanierman, PhD
188T Education Building
217-244-0787
lbspan@illinois.edu (best chance of reaching me)
Office hours: Wednesday 2-3pm and by appointment

Course Description:
This course offers an introduction to the interdisciplinary critical whiteness studies literature and addresses concepts such as the social construction of race, white privilege, white racial identity development, and white anti-racism. It also focuses on various qualitative research methods that scholars use in the empirical investigation of whiteness. Throughout the course, we will consider the ways in which the various content and methods may apply to understanding whiteness at predominantly white universities.

Course Objectives:
As part of the Ethnographic University Initiative, we will work together to establish a collegial research community in the class. Thus, as you develop your independent research projects we all will have opportunities to give and receive feedback throughout the semester. My hope is that you will strengthen your understanding of the research process and your self-efficacy as researchers. By effectively investigating some aspect of whiteness at the University of Illinois, we will contribute in meaningful ways to understanding how whiteness operates in one of the contexts in which we live. Specific objective include:

- Gaining a basic understanding of key constructs in critical whiteness studies and applying theoretical perspectives to the University of Illinois context
- Enhancing your existing research aptitude and developing new skills (e.g., learning interview techniques, formulating research questions, designing an investigation to answer your question, and collecting pilot data)
- Presenting your research at the Ethnography of the University Student Conference
UNIT I INTRODUCTION

Week 1 (Jan 20): Introduction to Course
- Review Syllabus
- View Ethnography Short Video
- In Class Poster Session with Previous Whiteness Students

Week 2 (Jan 27): Orientation to EUI
Ethnography of the University Initiative
- Nancy Abelmann, Co-Director
- Review IDEALS Archives
- Week #2 Reaction Paper Due

Week 3 (Feb 3): The Social Construction of Whiteness
- Barrett, J. E. & Roediger, D. How white people became white.
- Dyer, R. The matter of whiteness.
- hooks, b. Representations of whiteness in the Black imagination
- Watch Video: Race the Power of an Illusion (Part III)
- Jason Romero, EUI Coordinator “Using Moodle”
- Week #3 Reaction Paper Due

Week 4 (Feb 10): White Talk
- Walk to Education & Social Science Library; BRING LAPTOPS
- Nancy O’Brien: Searching the literature and utilizing library resources
- Week #4 Reaction Paper Due

UNIT II EXPLORING WHITE PRIVILEGE
**Week 5 (Feb 17): White Privilege - What’s That?**


- McIntosh, P. *White privilege: unpacking the invisible knapsack.*


- Watch Video: White Privilege (What’s That?) - Investigating the Invisible
- Week #5 Reaction paper Due

**Week 6 (Feb 24): Confronting White Privilege**


- Crafting Research Questions and developing IRB Summary Paragraph
- Week #6 Reaction Paper Due
- Submit Annotated Bibliography

**UNIT III WHITE RACIAL ATTITUDES AND IDENTITY**

**Week 7 (March 3): Racial Identity Development**


- Watch Video: Skin Deep
- Submit IRB Summary Paragraph & Concept Paper

**Week 8 (March 10): Costs of Racism to Whites**


- Workshop: University of Illinois Observation Exercise
- Week #8 Reaction Paper Due

**Week 9 (March 17): Research Methods**

*Interview workshop*
- Practice interviews with classmates
- Develop interview protocol
- Interview nuts and bolts
- Discuss survey items
- Bring potential interview questions to class
- Submit University of Illinois Observation

**Week 10 (Spring break, no class)**

**Week 11 (March 31): Color-blind Racial Ideology**


- Week #11 Reaction Paper Due
- Interviews must be conducted by April 2
Unit IV (White Anti-racism / White Allies)

**Week 12 (April 7): Moving to Antiracism Action**

- Workshop key themes
- Merinda Hensely presents: *Guidelines for preparing your research poster*
- Submit Interview Transcriptions and Analysis

**Week 13 (April 14): Preparing Your Poster**
In class workshop

- Peer feedback on poster
- We will discuss titles, text, images, and so forth
- Bring “rough sketch” of poster to class

**Week 14 (April 21): White Antiracist Allies**

- Video: Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible
- Week #13 Reaction Paper Due

**Week 15 (April 28/29): EUI Conference: Preparation and Presentation**
- APRIL 28: Meet for 1 hour in class to practice poster presentations
- APRIL 29: Present poster at Ethnography of the University Student Conference (3-8pm)
- Submit all EUI Forms (informed consent, etc.)

**Week 16 (May 5): Wrap-Up**

- Complete ICES Evaluations
- Celebration!!!
- Submit Research Reflection Paper (See template)

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**Evaluation:**
Participation/Reaction Papers = 30 points
Annotated Bibliography = 30 points
Concept Paper = 15 points
Observation = 20 points
Interview Transcripts & Analysis = 40 points
Poster Presentation = 50 points
Research Reflection Paper = 15 points
Total = 200 points

Grading Scale:

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<td>A</td>
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Class Participation and Weekly Reaction Papers
We are co-creating a collegial intellectual community in which we develop as researchers of whiteness. Thus, it is essential that you complete the readings for each class and actively participate in group discussions.

You will be asked to write a short reaction paper (2-3 pages) to each set of weekly readings. In your papers, please address personal reactions (thoughts or emotions) that you experienced as a result of the readings, in-class films, and our group discussions. Because we are learning about research methods, whenever possible, please provide suggestions for research projects that emerge from your understanding of the concepts. For example, after reading McIntyre’s “White Talk,” you may consider an observational study of White students enrolled in ethnic studies courses.

Annotated Bibliography (Due February 24)
You will complete an annotated bibliography of 5-7 scholarly writings (i.e., book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles) on whiteness. Ideally, you will select readings in a specific area of critical whiteness studies that will inform the development of your research questions. See handout for annotation specifics.

Concept paper (Due March 3)
Please provide an approximately 2 page discussion of your research idea. Your job is to describe your idea succinctly and to “sell” it to me. Topics may include, but is not limited to the following: What is your general topic? What specific questions are you thinking of investigating? Are you familiar with any prior work in this area? Why is this of interest to you? Why might this topic be of interest to others (to the field of critical whiteness studies)? What are some potential implications of examining this topic?

University of Illinois Observation (Due March 17)
Based on the University of Illinois Observation Exercise in class, you will venture out on campus and observe something related to your research questions. What seems to be taking place in the picture (i.e. an event, an activity, etc.); What in the scene leads you to your conjectures?; Describe the environment, setting, or ambiance; Consider the people in the picture – What do you observe about them (i.e. in terms of age, attire, etc.)? How do you think the people are related to one another? and How does your perception of the people and setting relate to your overall understanding and interpretation of the scene?

**Interviews Transcripts and Analysis (Conduct Interviews by April 2; Analysis Due April 7)**

Each student will conduct interviews with two University of Illinois participants. Interviews will follow a semi-structured protocol, to be developed in class. Each will be audiotaped. The purpose is to ask a variety of open-ended questions to participants that will help answer your research question(s).

After completing the interviews, each student will transcribe both interviews verbatim. You will submit the interview transcripts along with a 2-3 page analysis in which you will extract common themes. Wherever possible, link to the literature that we discussed in class or that you annotated for your bibliography.

**Poster Presentation (“Rough Sketch” due April 14)**

See handout.

**Research Reflection Paper**

See template.

**Relevant Web Links**

- EUI Home Page: [http://www.eui.uiuc.edu/](http://www.eui.uiuc.edu/)
- EUI IDEALS: [https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/755](https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/755)
- Moodle Log-in: [http://courses.las.illinois.edu/](http://courses.las.illinois.edu/)

**Academic Integrity:**

If you are unclear as to any of the university policies about standards of academic integrity, please review Article 1, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Academic Integrity: [http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part1_1-101.html](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part1_1-101.html). You are responsible for knowing your rights, potential infractions, and penalties.

I am committed to the education of each student in this course. If you find yourself having difficulty, please contact me immediately. Do not wait until an assignment is due, or until the end of the semester. I encourage you to attend office hours, make an appointment, or contact me via email.

**Disabilities Accommodations:**

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, please contact me and DRES as soon as possible.